

Franklin NH Historical Society News

December 2017

The days are winding down to the end of this year, and the beginning of a brand new twelve months. The final official gathering of the Society will be at its annual Pot-Luck Christmas Dinner and non-perishable food drive on Sunday, December 10th. All members and friends of the Society are invited to Thompson Hall (thank you Glenn Morrill for making the arrangements), with set-up and social hour from 4-5 pm, with dinner from 5-6 pm, and caroling, more socializing, and clean-up until 7 pm. Bringing a favorite dish is always encouraged, but never mandatory. This is an opportunity to share stories, renew friendships, think back on the Society's programs of the previous year and offer suggestions on what we may endeavor to bring to 2018, and in general celebrate this joyous holiday season. If a member has not yet donated a recipe to the upcoming Historical Society Cookbook, now is the perfect time. Add in a tale of connectivity to Franklin, and that list of ingredients and instructions takes on a whole new significance and perhaps, even immortality.

For the last few years, a talk on Daniel Webster has been offered to the Middle School fourth graders, and this year was no exception. With the help of coordinating teacher Heather Subocz, the presentation was given to the three groups of which all the fourth grade classes were comprised. The students appeared to not only enjoy the show, but at the end, show more appreciation and pride in where they lived, which is the primary object of the exercise. Perhaps some will grow up and become members of the Society, and carry on the tradition of preserving the history which inspired them.

Despite not meeting again until April, the volunteers of the Society never cease to give, with cataloging and organizing of the current collections and exhibits continuing through the winter. At the November meeting, Rita Norander donated another photograph to add to her father's legacy, depicting the participants in the 11th national convention of the American Legion in 1929, in Louisville, Kentucky. Rita's father personally attended this event in order to honor the organization to which he was deeply committed. The Society also received, from Marie Creasey, another trunnel—an oak "pin" used to connect the supporting elements of the Republican Covered Bridge. Enterprising young boys scavenged them in 1931 during the span's demolition and sold them as souvenirs, some of which were turned into lamps (of which the Society has a couple). A most sincere "thanks" goes to both for thinking of, and supporting, the Franklin Historical Society.

To gift any Franklin memorabilia, contact can be made either through the Society's website (franklinnhhistoricalsociety.org), write to the Society at P.O. Box 43, Franklin, NH 03235, or call the president Leigh Webb directly, at 934-8222.

It is with great sadness and sense of loss that the Society received news that one of its founding members and long-time curator, Jane Hancock, passed away in late October. During her long and active tenure with the Society, Jane personally compiled several large boxes of three ring binders, filled with newspaper clippings of significant contemporary (1970-2000) events, articles which looked back in time, vintage photographs, books and documents. All of which are now in the process of being sorted and properly inventoried, to be preserved in perpetuity at the Society. Some of that work has already begun, with the balance to be finalized over the coming winter months.

For all those who contributed to the Society in 2017, thank you again. Every fragment of Franklin's heritage, every image, every artifact saved, is another piece to "tell the story", so that all who visit can learn from the wonderful history these objects and keepsakes represent. To all, the absolute best of the Holiday Season, and a wish that health, happiness, and an appreciative sense of history, be yours now, and throughout the coming year.

[This month's photo is from one of Jane's binders, an image not previously in the Society's collection, and is of the Shepard Brothers' Grocery store on Memorial Street. This wooden structure had once stood at the corner of Franklin and Central Streets, but after it caught fire in 1904, was moved to the location seen in the picture (now the

entrance to the municipal parking lot) and rebuilt. The same year it was replaced at its previous venue by the brick Shepard Block that still exists today (temporarily named Toad Hall). Of note, the small wooden sign above the right hand door "John S. Shepard Groceries & Provisions" is actually double-sided, and did hang, before the fire, above the Franklin Street entrance to the original store. It now hangs, as a gift from Rosamond Shepard, in the Society's screened-in porch at Webster Place. The gentleman in the second story window may well be John S. Shepard, Sr., with his son John S. Shepard Jr., peering out at the camera, at his side.]

