

Franklin NH Historical Society News

JULY 2018

June's meeting at the Franklin Public Library with NH Humanities speaker Pamela Weeks educating all in attendance about the history and joys of quilting, was by all measures a rousing success. As the Society's next monthly meeting falls on the day after the true 4th of July and sandwiched between weekends, the subject matter will be of more local interest rather than regional. The program will be a slideshow of scanned items from the Society's impressive repository of scrapbooks, sure to evoke memories and tales from the audience. "Scrapbooks in Review" will be presented at 7 pm, in the Society's Webster/Tay building, 21 Holy Cross Road at Webster Place on Thursday, July 5th. The subject matter will cover epochs from the late 1800's to more contemporary eras, in other words, there should be something from everyone's favorite period of history.

As an update of current projects ongoing at the Society, the removal of vinyl siding from the Webster portion of the Society's building to facilitate repairs to the window trim and sills and damaged clapboard (rotted over time from water incursion) had been on hold for a predictable period of several days without rain, but is now in productive mode (thanks to William Day for the loan of a scissor lift, and Alan Larter for plywood on which to position the machine, and to Steve Foley for coordinating delivery of both). The rotted clapboards around the top of the Webster House front door were replaced today (Wednesday, June 27th) and repairs to the window trim, gap at the eaves, and painting to be done when next the weather allows. And with the help of local historian Paul Doucette, the location of the fallen "Sentinel Pine" has been determined, with the next phase to seek the necessary permission to place a suitable sign or marker on the site. Progress will be reported in future articles.

The "Honor Roll" of donors continues to impress, with new additions to the Society's collections to excite and amaze. The greatest level of appreciation and thanks are extended to the following for their gifts: to John Benham, for three 1924 issues of the Daniell Jr. High Echo signed by Shirley Smythe and a framed photo of the float from Sulloway Mills which appeared in the 1928 Franklin Centennial parade; to Jim and Teresa Collins for a framed photo of the 1932 dedication of the Webster Bust; to Joyce Reeves for a 1947 snapshot of Bessie Rowell; to Pete Sorette, for trying to save as many trophies and plaques as possible from the cabinets at St. Mary's School, with more than twenty now protected at the Society; to Roy and Donna Gilbreth, who found at the Baptist Church yard sale an unopened "Keepsake" package of infant's shoes with the original Holmes and Nelson price sticker; to Paul Doucette, for a CD of recent photos of the Babbitt House, biographical background on Charles Babbitt, and internet links to additional information; and again, to Chris Lewis, who found more O.A. Towne glass negatives! Every donation adds another story to the multi-faceted history of the city we all cherish, honoring its past while creating a foundation on which to build for the decades to come.

A special thank you is extended to Meg Miller of the Peabody Home and John Benham of the Peabody Home board, for allowing the Society to digitally document the Proctor House, with its uncertain future. This house, built in 1900 to replace the original structure which burned that same year, was home to the influential Proctor family, and may face the same fate as the Sulloway mansion to which it had been a

neighbor. In an ideal world, this wonderful home would be purchased by a “steward owner” with the appropriate DIY skills to bring it back to its former glory. Such an undertaking would require considerable funds, expertise in several areas, a singular dedication to purpose, and a passion for preservation. This scenario is not totally outside the realm of possibility, and the Society will continue to keep a positive thought for the home’s salvation and restoration.

[This month’s photo is one of O.A. Towne’s from a glass negative, and comes under the heading of a “mystery photo”. The negative was not exposed properly, so was corrected as much as possible. It is obviously a large municipal building, but from what city or town? If you know, go to the the Society website and click on “Contact” to send an email.]

