

## Franklin NH Historical Society News

April 2017

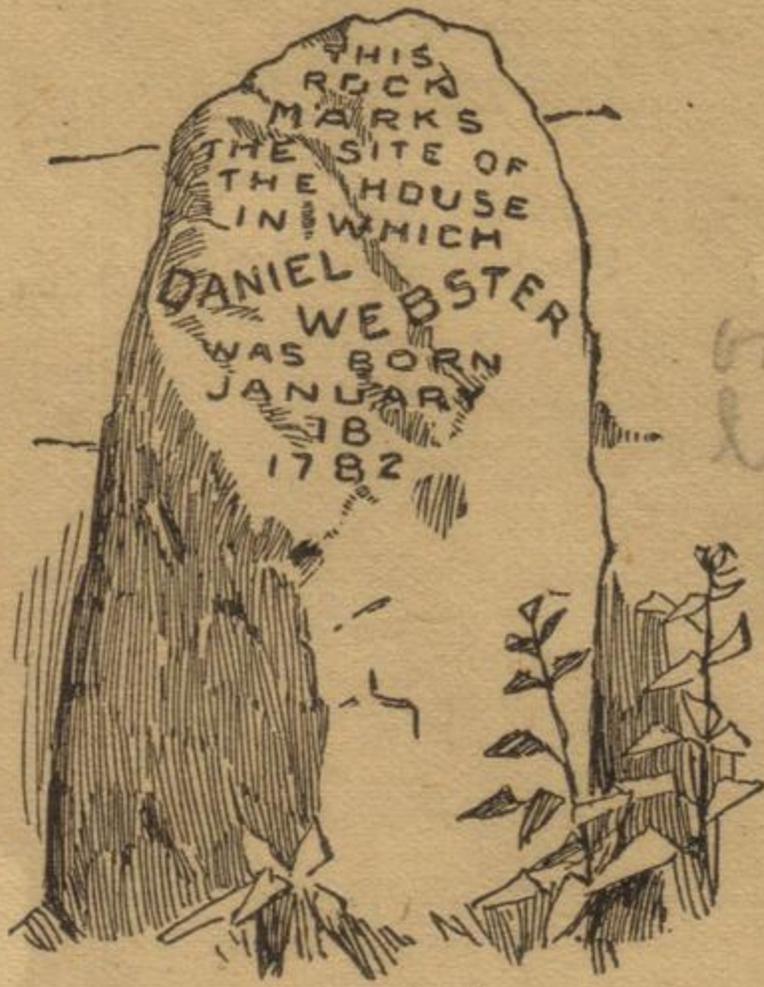
April means spring, with the the garden awakening from its winter's nap, the ground saturated with the season's inevitable mud, and of course the ever popular swarm of black flies to be swatted and cursed. More importantly for the Society, April means the beginning of another year of meetings, events, and fulfilling the Society's mission of preservation and education. Starting off on Thursday, April 6th at 7 pm, the program will be "The Newest Acquisitions and Found Treasures", amazing and unexpected additions to the Society's collections donated and/or inventoried over the last several months. Much of the surprises come from the vast material gifted by Rosamond Shepard after her brother John S. Shepard III's passing last August. The sheer volume of the offerings made sifting through it all quite time consuming, especially factoring in the time spent lovingly absorbed in personal correspondence of the Aiken family (spanning pre-civil war years to the gilded age), newspaper clippings, Shepard journals, documents, ledgers, floor plans, area maps, booklets, and marveling at all manner of artifacts. Add the time taken to research the items in order to place them in their proper historical context, and it can easily be understood how several boxes can take months to sort. In the over 60 years of compiling and writing "The History of Franklin", Alice and her son John S. Shepard, Jr. accumulated a wealth of material, much of which made it to the Society, due to the generosity and historical spirit of both John and Rosamond Shepard. The city of Franklin and the Society owe the Shepard family an enormous debt of gratitude, never to be adequately repaid.

April's presentation will take place at the Society's Webster/Tay building at Webster Place (directions can be downloaded from the website, [www.franklinnhhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.franklinnhhistoricalsociety.org)). All are welcome—one need not be a member to attend any of the Society's meetings or events (although new memberships are always appreciated), light refreshments will be served, and the regular business meeting will follow what will be sure to bring appreciative smiles and awed reactions to these fabulous finds.

To acknowledge some of the newest donations, the Society wishes to thank: Rob Sargent, Director of the Franklin Public Library, for fourteen boxes of photos and fifteen boxes of negatives, most associated with the Journal Transcript newspaper, and all from the period of the 1970's-1990's. The Society is also the recipient from the library of a giant cross section of the famous Sentinel, or Twin, Pine of Franklin, which graced the top of Willow Hill for 300 years. This venerable piece of Franklin history will be on permanent display (it has to be, as cumbersome as this object is to move!) in the Society's museum, starting this month. Thanks also go to: Ken Ackerson for an original 19th century "laundry fork", the perfect companion piece to the three basin sink, already on display, used for hand laundering more than a hundred years ago; and to M. Harriet Taylor (her name when she attended Franklin High School) for an impressive collection of FHS class of 1961 photos and memorabilia, as well as a cornucopia of family photos from several generations (which she has promised to help identify, lending so much more to their historical value).

The screened porch in the rear of the building has been the site of considerable work, with Tabatha Barton and her student volunteer helping to organize items too large to display indoors, such as the aforementioned three basin laundry sink, and business signs from Keegan Hardware (just as it was found stored for years in a garage attic), Dan's Pharmacy, and John S. Shepard Grocery and Provisions. There is much that is new (yet old) to see at your Society!

*[This month's image from the Franklin Historical Society is a scan of artwork associated with an October 5, 1894 article in the Journal-Transcript reporting on visitors from the New Hampshire Historical Society coming to visit Franklin. Upon arrival at the train station, they were taken by carriages to the Daniel Webster Birthplace (long before it was a state park) to view the chiseled rock, commissioned by the Honorable George W. Nesmith, then owner of the property, marking the place of Webster's birth]*



The monument which marks the spot where the house originally stood and which Judge Nesmith provided for, designating the spot where it should be placed, was viewed with interest by the party.