

January 2016

Spoiled by the warm weather in November and December and hoping that these mild temperatures might last, but certainly knowing better from past experiences, January has arrived with the inevitable vestiges of a real New England winter. All of this means greater vigilance in maintaining the proper temperature in the Society's building at Webster Place. The stinging memory of a frozen pipe from a couple of winters past, and the damage it caused, still lingers. Frequent trips to the Society are necessitated by the ongoing workload of cataloging donations of artifacts and documents as well as further organizing the collections, so a constant heat check serves only as added incentive to visit frequently. While mentioning those donations yet to be cataloged, an apology must go out to Melvin Piper, who gifted his brother's 1940's era Sulloway Mills baseball uniform to the Society last summer which was not immediately inventoried and therefore not acknowledged. Once the error was discovered and corrected, it led to a great idea. With this uniform as its inspiration, the Society now intends to mount an exhibit of sports related apparel in the spring. If anyone wishes to contribute to the proposed display, with either vintage uniforms or equipment, please contact Leigh Webb or Annette Andreozzi at 934-8222. Old fashioned baseball paraphernalia (gloves, bats, balls), football equipment, or any other fifty plus year old sporting gear would add immeasurably to this exhibit while commemorating the owner and documenting another bit of Franklin lore.

Other recent donations for which the Society is deeply grateful: from Carlton Ham, a Franklin Savings Bank 1906 calendar; from Marie Creasey (found at the Angel Fair), two 1940's era 8x10's of a man in uniform identified as Frederick Dube and a lady in a wedding dress, perhaps his bride, and a Franklin sesquicentennial dish; from Maj Desautel and the Thrift Clothes Closet, seat cushions to make the Society's wooden chairs a bit more comfortable to go with others from the same source; from the Charlestown Historical Society, a May, 1906 photo of the "Franklin primary and grammar" classes, taken by a clapboard-sided building, but unknown if it is from Franklin, NH or another Franklin; and after a visit to the Society while researching, from Charles and Frances Swedlund of Illinois, a copy of a c. 1850 daguerreotype of an unknown man quite possibly George W. Nesmith, sitting in a chair under a tree—sound familiar? Could it be at the birthplace, taken right after that famous photo of Daniel Webster? (See this month's image—can anyone confirm this man's identity?). And finally, should anyone have, and be willing to donate, any annual report from the NH Orphans Home (aka the Daniel Webster Home) from 1871 to 1920, please use the contact information above.

The Society participated in the Festival of Trees fundraiser for the Opera House by donating a fully decorated table top artificial tree. That offering was only made possible by the donation of the tree itself by last year's recipient Maj Desautel, the decorations and photographs hung on the tree from Linda Pauwels, the vote of the Society members in support of attendant gifts, and the setting up and actual decoration by a volunteer. Thanks to all who contributed, and congratulations to Sara Tracy, this year's winner, who will be using the tree to brighten up her Welfare Director's office at city hall!

From everyone at the Franklin Historical Society, may you all enjoy the happiest, safest, warmest, and most prosperous of New Years. See you in the spring, when the first Thursday in April will begin the 2016 monthly meeting cycle of interesting speakers, slide shows, reminisces, and stimulating discussion.

[This month's photographic offering from the Franklin Historical Society: could this be a rare image of George W. Nesmith, close friend of Daniel Webster's?]

