

Franklin NH Historical Society News

May 2014

There is a rumor afloat that Spring was just a mental state, something imagined between Winter and Summer, with the latter season actually existing from May to October. But whatever its name, it caused the grass to grow six inches overnight and bring the flowers alive again, signaling the Society's Third Annual Plant Sale, Saturday June 23rd from 10 am to 2 pm (coinciding with the museum's open hours) at the Webster/Tay House, 21 Holy Cross Road at Webster Place. Offering a pot-pourri (pun intended) of desirable perennials, flowering bushes, and even some house plants. Prices are very reasonable and all proceeds go to support the Society's programs and operating expenses. But first is the Society's monthly meeting on Thursday, June 7th, at 7 pm, featuring a NH Humanities speaker, Pamela Weeks, talking about "New England Quilts and the Stories They Tell". Please note that this program is a co-sponsored event to be held at the Franklin Public Library (upstairs) to accommodate a larger crowd and allowing sufficient space in which to display some of the quilts to be discussed. Attendees are also encouraged to bring their own quilts accompanied by the unique tales they may represent. All are welcome, and as always, there is no charge. The library is ADA compliant, with an elevator to the second floor, accessed by the rear door off the parking lot behind the building. Light refreshments will be offered after the presentation and before the monthly business meeting of the Society, to which all are welcome as well, to learn about upcoming projects and events.

The Society is not just about maintaining a museum into which donations are gratefully accepted, or monthly educational programs, but is deeply involved in preserving and acknowledging important historical areas or collections not directly associated with the organization. As examples, in May the banking leading to the plaque honoring the Stevenstown Fort (just past the Webster Place Cemetery) was cleared of brush and sections of railroad ties were installed to help climb the pitched incline. Artifacts from the Grand Army of the Republic Hall were re-labeled and the glass of the 125 year old cabinet was cleaned, to appropriately honor those who served the union in the American Civil War. Working with Middle School teacher (and longtime member of, and contributor to, the Society) Chris Lewis, the Society is organizing a "traveling trunk" of material relating to the history of Franklin, as an exercise to develop in our grammar school children pride in, and knowledge of, our fascinating city. And the exact location (it was somewhere at the top of Willow Hill) of what was called the "Sentinel Pine", "Twin Pine", or "Clark Pine" (see this month's scan), a 300 year old tree that was taken down (because of internal decay) in 1909, is actively being sought in order to erect a plaque on the spot of this significant Franklin landmark. According to Paul Doucette, the corner of Charles and Adams streets is the site. Anyone who can corroborate this information should contact Leigh Webb at 934-8222, or send an inquiry through the Society's website at franklinnhhistoricalsociety.org.

Donations from several members and friends of the Society have arrived in the past weeks to increase the collections and the understanding that those items illuminate. The Society's humble thanks go to: Roger K. Smith of Massachusetts, for scans of Aiken related material, including a broadside from the Aiken Knitting Machine Company and receipts relating to its printing and the selling of the Aiken ticket

punch, with two scans of the Aiken Manor at Webster Lake; Janet Jurta, adding to her donations relating to the St. Mary's School, including her mother's 1912 diploma from Parochial Grammar School, Janet's own 1950 FHS yearbook, and a certificate of appreciation for her volunteer work at the St. Theresa House, known as the Burleigh cottage when it was part of the NH Orphanage; Annette Cain, for a 1977 pamphlet from the Thibault-Sargent Funeral Home plus an unused sticker listing emergency phone numbers courtesy of Dan's Pharmacy; Rita Norander for allowing the Society to scan photos of her family as well as gifting real-photo-postcards of her father on ice skates, posing on a frozen Webster Lake, plus a Mr. D's placemat, and a typed history, with scanned photos, of Gilman Hersey of Hill; and then more glass negatives from O.A. Towne from 1895 from Chris Lewis, as well as sewing patterns for historic costumes and vintage-style clothing. Thank you, all.

Remember, the June meeting is at the Franklin Public Library. See you there!

[This month's image is a scan of the c. 1907 photo of the Sentinel Pine, supposedly framed using wood from the felled tree, that was on display at the Journal-Transcript for the 1928 Franklin Centennial]

