

Franklin NH Historical Society News

May 2017

With all the teases of April's warm weather followed by freezing nights, May promises real spring temperatures and the opportunity to (finally) cultivate this year's vegetable and herb garden. May also, for the last twelve years and on the second Saturday of the month, has meant Community Day in Franklin. The Society's volunteers will once again be at a table in Odell Park offering books, postcards, T-shirts, souvenirs, information on membership, and just great conversation about the storied past of our favorite city and its inhabitants. There will be "mystery photos" with which the Society could use your help in identifying, and anyone joining the Society that day will be able to purchase any offered merchandise at 20% off as a thank you! So on Saturday May 13, from 10 am to 3 pm, bring you desire to learn about Franklin and come on by. And just nine days earlier, on Thursday May 4th at 7 pm, the Society will offer its second program of the year, a slide show of images that folks, though not willing to donate quite yet, were willing to have scanned as a digital record for the Society. These scans were created in the hopes that one day the originals might be gifted to be properly preserved and honored. Some of these pictures have never been seen before outside of the family in whose keeping they reside, so the evening may provide some delightful surprises and illuminating glimpses afforded very few. Light refreshments will be provided and all are welcome without charge. The Society's building and meeting place is located at 21 Holy Cross Road at Webster Place, with directions for "first timers" downloadable from the Society's website, www.franklinnhhistoricalsociety.org.

The first meeting of 2017 offered a glimpse into recently donated and/or recently inventoried gems, offered with a sense of humor and plenty of audience participation. Maybe because of the subject matter, even more donations arrived, and will be duly recognized in next month's article. To thank those whose gifts arrived in the previous month, the Society wishes to extend proper recognition to the following: to the Thrift Clothes Closet and all its volunteers for being on the lookout for vintage clothes appropriate to donate to the Society, in this case two mid-twentieth century christening gowns; to Barbara, David and Gerard W, Therrien, for finding a box of mostly 1950's receipts from Franklin businesses, acquired during the tenure of prior owners Merilda and Hormidas Brunnelle while maintaining 2 Canal Street (then known as the Colonial Apartments), giving insight into the financial responsibilities of owning rental units seventy years ago, and something that could easily have been tossed had it not been for the foresight of the donors; to Ernest and Elizabeth Snyder, through their daughter Cheryl Bruno, for a treasure trove of very early Franklin documents (1832 through 1893!) found in the drawer of a sideboard, stored in the basement of 152 Prospect Street, most likely left there by a member of the Hancock family, including receipts "for services rendered" cross referenced in the very first town ledger (also in the Society's collections) and signed by some of Franklin's earliest and most notable citizens!; to Rita Norander, for her mother's 1929 FHS diploma (still rolled and tied with its original red and white ribbons!), pictures of her father and uncles in their WWI uniforms, their NH certificates given in appreciation of their service, and several panoramic photos of their training encampments and units, plus post war memorabilia from the Elks and American Legion; to Rocky Marsh and the City of Franklin for donating the original concrete block with the date of construction which once adorned the Kenrick block (later J.J. Newberry's, removed as part of the building's demolition); and to Roger Smith, from Massachusetts, who came to visit bearing the gifts of Griffin "Loop Coping Saw Blades" in a small packet, an 1889 receipt from C.L. Hunt to J.B. Aiken for photographs taken, and copies of Internet research on the Griffin Hack Saw Mill, still standing and hopefully one day restored and adaptively reused. To one and all, thank you so much. May your generosity be a model for others, to make the Franklin Historical Society even more relevant and meaningful for all.

And lastly, May marks the month in which the Society will be open every Sunday from 10 am to 2 pm. Even if you have been by in the past, there are several new exhibits: honoring those who served in the

military (Memorial Day is this month), a remembrance of the “Sentinel Pine”, and on the screened porch actual signs from Franklin businesses long gone with other interesting artifacts. So much to see! Make it a point to come by any Sunday through Labor Day weekend.

[This month’s pictorial offering was uncovered in the considerable material donated by Rosamond Shepard, and is of the Shepard Brothers store on the corner of Central and Franklin Streets. This wooden structure suffered a fire in 1904, was subsequently repaired and moved to Memorial Street, and replaced with the brick edifice (which exists today) that same year. Notable is the hanging sign on the Franklin Street side, which is now displayed at the Society.]

