

Franklin Historical Society, for July, 2025

Summer ushered itself in with a blast of hot air, before cooling to a tolerable level only days later. Despite no meeting in July, there are always obligations to fulfill at the Society, donations to receive, and educational opportunities to pursue. The most significant of those occurred this month before the fourth graders of Franklin, who at the time were visiting the NH Statehouse with recently elected State Representative James Thibault. The occasion was the unveiling of a painted portrait of Daniel Webster that had graced the interior of the *USS Daniel Webster* atomic submarine during its term of service. As part of the donation of archival material from the Blair family and Chief Petty Ofc. Maurice Tandy (a Franklin resident who served aboard the *Webster*) which celebrated its commission in 1964 and decommission in 1999, was a 1964 newspaper clipping and photo detailing the original gift to the Navy of the painting from the town of Webster.



OIL PAINTING of Daniel Webster by Herman J. Wibel of Concord, center, will be hung in the wardroom of the nuclear submarine named after the famous senator. With Wibel are Executive Councilor James H. Hayes and Gov. John

W. King. The town of Webster is presenting the painting to the submarine's crew, which sent the town the flag draped over the vessel's bow on the day it was commissioned.

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Based on this information, the Society initiated an inquiry as to the current status of the portrait after the *Webster* was converted into a training platform in Charleston SC. When the inquiry went unanswered, Sen. Shaheen's office was asked to intervene, resulting in an explanation from the Navy that the picture was still hanging in the boat, and would remain there.

End of story. Or not?

Eleven years later, the painting turns up with the original letter from the Society taped to the back, prompting an inquiry, this time, from the Navy, if the Society still had an interest in acquiring this revered object. The answer was, of course, a resounding YES, as long as the Webster Historical Society (which had received the bunting from the nose of the *Webster* prior to launch) had no claim, as the display of all other material was exclusively the property of the Franklin Society.

After some back and forth with the Navy, as long as the Franklin Society would pay for shipping, it would then permanently belong here. The deal was made, and through Rep. Thibault, it was shipped to the office of the Speaker of the NH House.

On June 9th, it was revealed to the Franklin fourth graders, in Representatives Hall.



Now the painting is part of the lasting tribute to the service of the *Webster*, along with Chief Petty Officer Tandy's dress uniform, the official photo of the launch, Cmdr. Blair's foul weather jacket, and all the numerous and treasured articles comprising the exhibit.



Other news from the Society: With July 4th being so close to the Society's regular meeting date, it was decided some years ago not to hold a meeting in conflict with this traditional family holiday. Therefore, the next monthly get together will be the first Thursday in August. As residents of the Veterans campus may well be moved in by this date, the program will be an overview of the general history of the area of the campus, to which all are invited.

Because the move to June made fewer volunteers available, and with uncertain weather pending on that day, the Society's participation in Community Day was canceled. Hopefully, in the future, Community Day will return to the second Saturday in May, which represents less of a conflict with the Society's schedule.

After our plant sale, some unsold items were then donated to the Sanbornton Library for their sale, a gesture recognized in a "thank you" letter from the Library.

Recognizing the generosity and thoughtfulness of donors to the Society's collections:

From **Kevin Murphy**, via **Linda Pauwels**, unused note pads from D.O. Laughy at Tamarac Farm, a 1905 photo and 1910 obituary for Jameson Hardy, and from Linda her usual newspaper articles of interest and obits of Franklin residents;

From **Annette Cain** a 1996 Franklin Savings Bank cookbook;

From **Mark and Sally Bussiere** a small ceramic cream pitcher with an image of the Franklin Public Library—commissioned by the F.H. Gerry Company (dry goods) and made in Germany, a practice in which several Franklin businesses were engaged at the turn of the 19th to 20th centuries to promote their companies and profit from the sale of souvenirs connoting significant Franklin landmarks;



From **Dan Darling** limited edition whiskey bottles in the shape of the Old Man in the Mountain and the NH Statehouse;

From **Mike Mullavey** a (modern) t-shirt from the “Watts Water Learning Center”;

From **Dawn Dixon** a bronze commemorative coin upon the 150th anniversary in 1934 of the adoption of the NH state constitution, with the likeness of Daniel Webster, a Frontier Days pin-back button, a number of vintage postcards (of the Twin Pine, the Island (Odell Park), the Republican Bridge, the National Bank’s clock, and three of the Webster Birthplace), a copy of an article on “Where Was He Born” (about Daniel Webster), typed listing of those buried in the Sanborn and Shaw Corner cemeteries as well as all the dates of Sanborn internments, a copy of a vintage “Webster Flour” ad, a Franklin Sesquicentennial plate with wall hanger, a 1977 Webster Birthplace Cabin whiskey bottle, and two framed 1905 Journal-Transcript calendar pages with photos of Franklin Falls (from Cemetery Hill) and the Republican Bridge;

And from **Kathy Fuller**, the loan of Maurice Frederick Gilchrist's 1914-1916 photo album to scan for the Society's digital records (it has been returned).

The Society also received a wedding dress, for which more information is being sought, so this acquisition will be properly acknowledged next month.

To all, THANK YOU.

When considering a donation to the Society, please note that the Society is *always* seeking Franklin **directories**, but has multiple copies of *all* city **annual reports**, for which storage space is now no longer available. However, town reports, primarily those from the civil war period and earlier, will always be welcome.

To all reading this, thank you for your continuing support of the mission of the Society.