

Franklin Historical Society, March, 2024

The trappings of spring seem to be appearing at an unseasonably fast pace around us. With a continuation of warmish weather, the plants will either bloom early, and be extinguished if another cold snap ensues, or give forth with unusual March color. Did the venerable Farmers' Almanac give any indication of such a phenomenon, or were its authors caught as unawares as we? Should more warm temps be the rule, the annual Society garden clean up may be sooner than originally anticipated, and volunteers will be requested.

The February meeting of officers and board members was very productive, resulting in the determination of a slate of officers and two directors to present to the membership for voting in May, and a list of programs to fill the year with informative discussions and educational opportunities. A new fundraiser suggested by a member was encouraged by those in attendance, using a scavenger hunt offering prizes to not just raise money, but assist in gaining the interest of new members. The Scavenger Hunt may debut during Community Day May 11, with entries available at the Society's tent at Odell Park.

More wonderful surprises continue to appear from dedicated members willing to seek out treasures as yet unknown. The Society's deep gratitude is extended to the following for their timeless donations:

to **Linda Pauwels**, for her indefatigable efforts in saving local obituaries and relevant newspaper articles on a monthly basis;

to **Tara Shore of the Laconia Historical Society** for contacting our Society about material in their keeping that should be in Franklin's archives (boxes of High School photos, yet to be inventoried);

to John **Benham** for a Giles Dairy half-pint glass bottle (remember those, with milk and cookies?);

to **Kathy Fuller** for copies of the current Winter Carnival booklets and pin-back buttons (the issuance of which may now become a tradition of the past);

to **Daniel Heyduk**, author, and October's guest speaker, for a copy of his book "The Pemigewasset Valley: A History";

and to **Frank Genus**, who continues to scour the internet for pieces of lost Franklin history, and this month contributed two Victorian era ad cards and the photos below.

THANK YOU ALL.



From near the entrance of the Orphans Home, featuring the Henry Memorial School and the Webster Memorial Nursery/Infirmary on the left, and the Webster/Tay House on the right, this photo probably dates to c. 1930. Both brick buildings were erected in 1924-25, and the Webster home had lost its extension of a summer kitchen and carriage house somewhere in the 1920's. Gift of Frank Genus.



CDV of the Webster House hotel, with O.B. Davis Proprietor noted on the back, putting this image from before 1895 and prior to the hotel becoming the Odell, under the short-term ownership of Herman Odell. Gift of Frank Genus.

April will begin another season of active meetings offered by, and events attended by, the Society. The first Thursday night will feature a slideshow of "Mystery Photos", which are always a conversation-starter, resulting in a spirited and fun exchange of ideas. The April newsletter will have more details.

And so, as spring gently (?) unfolds, who will spot the season's first robin red-breast, or when will the first daffodil blossom? Is the current trend of pleasant days just a tease, or can we truly celebrate the return of more permanently comfortable conditions?

The only answer can be to enjoy each day as it presents itself, and let nature take its course...