

## **Franklin Historical Society**

**May 2021**

Because the pandemic news globally is still disturbing, despite the leveling off of cases here in NH and the easing of some restrictions, it is still in the best interests of the membership that no in-person May meeting be held. And since no nominations have been forthcoming from the membership, the following slate of Officers and Directors for 2021-2022 is open to a motion and second for voting. The first motion received by email, based on the timestamp, will be considered the motion to accept, and the “second” will be the next email received after that. All members are invited to vote “yea” or “nay”, by email, on the following slate:

President	Leigh A. Webb	
Vice President	Linda Pauwels	
Treasurer	Dan Darling	
Recording Secretary	Karen Darling	
Co-recording Secretary	Dan Cerat	
Curator	Annette Andreozzi	
Asst. Curator	Annette Cain	
Director	Glenn Morrill	Term ending 2024
Director	Karen Grzelak	Term ending 2024
Director	Sandra Burney	Filling term for Steve Foley, ending 2022

[All other Directors will continue to serve out their terms]

Thank you in advance for helping to cope with these extraordinary times by participating in this annual, and important, election via email.

The Society’s investments continue to be strong, and the checking account has been bolstered by donations, new memberships, and dues renewals. Those who owe dues, but have not yet sent in their checks, please consider doing so as soon as you can. This will allow the Society to publish and distribute this year’s roster in a more timely fashion.

Your Society has discovered that certain properties in Franklin are in a state of transition or sale. The Soda Shoppe on Central Street is on the market, and because there are several wall murals inside the restaurant depicting historic locations around the city, attempts have been made to contact the owners to obtain permission to make a photographic record of this artwork. To date, the attempts have not met with any success. The listing agent in Massachusetts had no interest, and the owners have not returned left messages. More success was met with 189 S. Main Street, better known as the Dr. Jesse Merrill House, having

been associated with the Underground Railroad prior to and during the Civil War. The new owners were excited to hear of the buildings history, and are hoping to save the original floors, interior main staircase railing, newel post, and balusters, as well as the decorative details of the front porch. The building is to be rehabbed into a two family, and currently all the windows have been removed and the interior stripped to the studs or original lathe.

In additional news, the Society is helping the Spaulding Academy to better understand the records it holds from the NH Home for Orphans and Golden Rule Farm, which were absorbed by Spaulding in the late 1950's. Often relatives appeal to the Society for information about previous residents the Home, and have been referred to Spaulding. This effort has only been made possible with the help of Sandy Marshall, who now works for the Spaulding Academy, and to whom the Society, and those for whom these records might provide comfort, are indebted.

The words "thank you" always seem so paltry in expressing the immense gratitude to all those who have again contributed to the Society's growing collections. The following items were received with deep appreciation: from **Bronwyn Asplund-Walsh** 8x10 color photos of local (now identified on the verso) celebrities seated behind John McCain during his run for the presidency, snapshots and postcards of Aiken Webster Lake properties, a xerox of the Granite Monthly March 1895 with "A Sketch of Franklin", a 1935 certificate granted to Charles W. Aiken as a member of the Duston-Dustin Family Association, a xerox of a 1980 deed to a Webster Lake property, various letters by and about Franklin residents, and a hard bound copy of "Ancestors of Rogers Johnson"; from **Nita Tomaszewski** various house plants and decorative pots (for the June 6th Plant Sale), Walter Tomaszewski's naval service photos, ID's, and memorabilia, various textiles including lace and an embroidered vest, uniforms (military and Girl Scouts) from the Tomaszewski and Pease families, yardsticks, Franklin business memorabilia, and scrap books; from **Kristopher Poitras** (who contacted us through the Society's Facebook page) a framed 1913 Annual Report photo of Mayor William W. Edwards found in his neighbors home on Pleasant Street; from **Rita Norander** came a Franklin High School photo magnet (courtesy of her sister Helen), two 1919 photos (see below) of "The Four Vagabonds" (Henry Ford, Harvey Firestone, Thomas Edison, and naturalist John Burroughs) as they traveled through NH, briefly stopping at the Aiken Manor, and a companion newspaper photo to a real snapshot of the same event that Rita had donated earlier, of the oldest member of the Elks in 1982, Benne LaPlante; and from **Kimberly Cilley** (who also made contact via Facebook), a wonderful quilt by Margaret Hines that she crafted in 1978 for her daughter Dolores Cox's anniversary present, and entered by Dolores in the 1995 Franklin Centennial Quilt exhibit, with twenty hand-painted squares depicting historic Franklin buildings, structures,

and scenes—fantastic! These monthly gifts never cease to amaze and excite. Thank you again, one and all!

Rob Sargent, our Franklin Library Director, has graciously allowed the Society to peruse and carefully scan any pertinent or historically significant passages in personal diaries of the Aiken family held at the library. In particular, in the pre-Civil War era journals, the Society is seeking any mention of Sylvester Marsh and the Aiken connection to the cog railway. Wouldn't that discovery be something noteworthy! Our thanks obviously go to Rob for extending the Society this courtesy. Perhaps in coming editions of the newsletter some interesting tidbits can be revealed...

On a final note, should anyone wish to donate directly to the Congregational-Christian Church's ongoing campaign to restore the church's steeple, the following information was supplied by LeAnne Fifield:

Watch for upcoming updates on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CCCFranklinNH> & website at <https://www.cccfranklinnh.org>. For those wishing to make direct donations, they may make checks payable to the "Congregational-Christian Church of Franklin" and mail them to Congregational-Christian Church of Franklin, P.O. Box 69, Franklin, NH 03235. To ensure the money goes into the proper fund, please put "Building Restoration Fund" on the **memo line**. Thank you!

*[This month's images: "The Four Vagabonds" captured by their vehicles in a typical candid and somewhat blurred shot by an amateur photographer, with possibly Dorothy and Emma (Mrs. Charles) Aiken standing on the side in the foreground. These notable men created quite a stir wherever they went, followed sometimes with a caravan of up to 50 vehicles carrying support personnel and camping equipment. And below that, the Society's inventory photo of the labor-intensive quilt crafted by Margaret Hines in 1978. Dolores Cox remembers her mother intensely painting each square, and how much time it took.]*



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