

Franklin Historical Society, September, 2025

Pencils are being sharpened, erasers stored, and backpacks filled with all the prerequisites needed for a return to school. Befitting that atmosphere, Chris Lewis will be presenting **“The History of Franklin’s Schools” at 7 pm, at the Society's Webster Place building, 21 Holy Cross Road, on Thursday, September 4th.** From the geographic spread of a variety of one room school houses geared to teaching children of all ages close to their homes, to centrally located larger schools to which “scholars” (as children attending schools were then called) had to be transported, Chris will cover the growth of education in a community devolving from agrarian, to industrial, in nature. As always, there is no admission fee, all are welcome, and light refreshments will be served between the presentation and the general membership meeting (which does not require membership to attend, and may actually offer insight into the Society’s workings).

Easterseals is readying all buildings to showcase the extensive work completed by the ribbon cutting ceremony on September 18th.

Most, if not all, of the apartments in the former Webster Memorial Nursery and Henry Memorial School buildings are rented, but unfortunately, few of the new tenants have taken advantage of the Society’s presence to learn of the area’s abundant history. Hopefully, with Easterseal’s cooperation, the program offered in August of an overview history of the area from Stevenstown to the present Veterans Campus, can be repeated if residents express an interest in the Society so doing.

Society news: John Ciriello of the Tilton Historical Society stopped by recently and was thrilled to be gifted a box of items related to Tilton that had been accumulated over time in our Society’s collections. They are now back where they belong.

While discussing cooperation between societies, ours was given two boxes from the **Laconia Historical Society**. One small box containing VHS tapes of meetings in 1999 and 2000 focused on Franklin’s revitalization, a 1987 By-pass hearing, several vintage postcards, copies of late 1800s insurance surveys of the Aiken and Sulloway Mills, and two photograph's of Central Street—one from 1961 showing the new granite façade of the Savings and National Banks, and possibly answering the question of why the iconic clock disappeared (see below), and the other of Sanborn Bridge, featuring “SAS Auto Parts” (a precursor to Sanel Auto Parts?).



Looking closely at the corner of Central and Franklin, it is obvious the large clock, installed in 1926 that chimed with various melodious every quarter hour, could not have coexisted with the new granite façade or the single corner traffic signal, and therefore was replaced with the small “modern” clock/thermometer. Ahh, “urban renewal”...



Guesses as to the year taken, or information on SAS Auto Parts?

In the large box from Laconia were 1980' and 90s vintage photos and negatives from the St. Louis Photography Studio, comprised mostly of wedding and family sittings. The donations were greatly appreciated.

It is amazing how many wonderful donations to our collections have come to the Society in just the past month. Here is the list, with enduring thanks to all who contributed.

From **Frank Genus** (who also helped as a docent over the weekend), a RPPC of the "By the Way Inn" at 230 S. Main Street, an 1889 letter by Frank Proctor on bank stationery, disclaiming he had any knowledge of a proposed banquet, with a mention of his brother John, and a March 1858 letter from Annie Nesmith to her brother Sid, regarding home election results (from the annual town meeting) and family matters.

From **Annette Cain** an extra copy of Albert Garneau's history, as an extra research resource.

From **Kathy Fuller (and the Clothes Closet)** an "Iguana Jack" hat (anyone with more information about Jack), two Trumpeter coffee mugs, a circa WWI metal Gillette bed warmer, a 1987 Franklin Firefighters Museum booklet, a Girl Scout song book, and a 1913 State Business Directory (with a very early ad for Benson's Auto!)

From **Kevin Murphy (via Linda Pauwels)** a 3 inch tall diminutive vase depicting the Webster Birthplace, commissioned by Harry E. Merrill caretaker of the BP, a BP folder, checks from 1899

from the New England Novelty Works (asking more questions than answering), Psalm and song books from local churches, two unused Methodist Church notepaper and envelopes, a 1969 area phone book, unidentified CDV's from the Hunt Studio, and miscellaneous business memorabilia.

From **Samuel Papps, Canterbury**, a collection of 8 mm films taken by Rodney and Myrna Tenney in the 1960's, mostly of their pets, heavy snow, flowers, and of various trips they took (the beach, Storyland, and the George Washington Bridge), with a parade in downtown Franklin, possibly the 1963 Winter Carnival of obvious interest. About 2/3 of the twenty or so are digitized, with the rest material for future research.

From **Chris Lewis**, Elks anti-drug message bookmarks, a 1998 Piper Printing business receipt, some "In Memoriam" donation cards for the Franklin-Tilton-Northfield Scholarship, a "Town Card" with phone numbers in the center (both sides) and local business ads around the outside, a 1983 mimeographed Granite State Post Card Gazette, and a 1955 "UN Day" Journal-Transcript photo supplement.

From **Jim Mykland, Director of the Sandwich, NH Historical Society**, a 1912 register book from The Odell, covering most months (the last several pages where damaged by mice). What interesting signatures might be contained within? Includes a color postcard of the Odell postmarked Aug 3 1912, a day the register covers....was the author a guest the day before?

And a promise from **Richard McDermott of NJ**, after visiting and leaving a folder of scans and genealogical material, to consider donating paintings, a ledger from "Tanner" John Hancock, and family photographs of relations from the Smith, Sanborn, and Hancock families.

A busy month, with more weeks ahead to catalog, research, and just enjoy these little treasures.