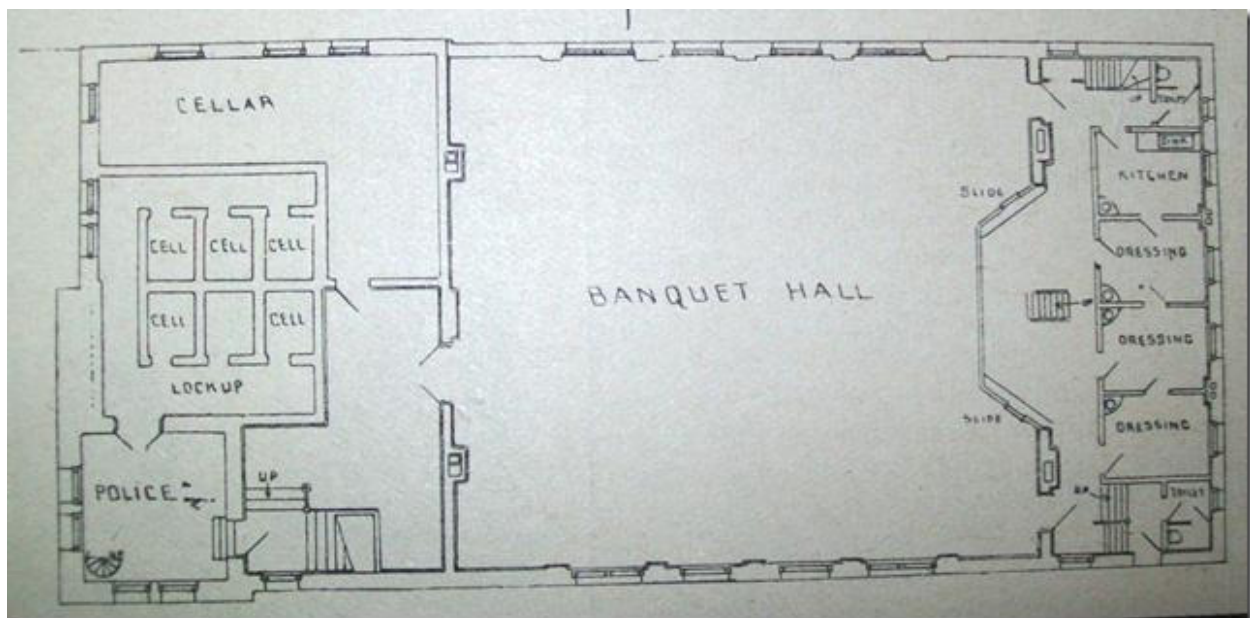


Franklin Historical Society, Newsletter, April 2026

Although the calendar plainly states that Spring is upon us, and it is raining rather than snowing, the chill in the night air speaks volumes to the contrary. Flowers do continue to stretch upward, seeking warmth and light, pushing aside autumn's leftover and matted leaves, to begin a new life cycle and bring back color and vibrancy to a currently dreary landscape. Along with nature's hopeful offering, the Historical Society begins a new season with a different venue for its first meeting. On **Thursday, April 2nd at 7 pm**, the first meeting of 2026 will be at **Peabody Place Senior Center** in the ground floor meeting room. The subject will be a slideshow on the history (and future) of Soldiers Memorial Hall. Please enter through the front door, which will only be open until a few minutes after 7.



From the Journal-Transcript prior to the opening of Soldiers Memorial Hall, 1893, detailing the original basement floor plan. What will this look like after the complete interior renovation? The slideshow will provide the answer...

The presentation will show attributes that for so many years were taken for granted, and will now may be irretrievably altered and lost. Bright spots will be greater public safety when using the building, the Opera house will reopen bigger and better than ever, and the G.A.R. Hall will retain its historic elements and be open to the public for docent-led tours.

Light refreshments will be made available between the program and the regular business meeting (to which all are cordially invited, member or not..yet). Everyone is welcome, there is no admission charge, and the building is ADA compliant.

As the first meeting in 2026, payment of dues by cash or check will be gratefully accepted, along with any donation in support of the Society's mission to preserve and remember Franklin's past.

Along those lines, the Society wishes once again to fully and graciously thank those who continue to benefit future generations by adding to the museum's ever-growing collections.

Thanks go to the following:

Mark and Sally Bussiere for a number of newspaper clippings regarding Mill City Park, the trails, and economic revitalization, a photo of the Opera House, and a typed history of Stone Park and the person for whom its named, and newspaper story and follow-up on the grounding of a freighter off Cape Cod in 1949 (not relative to Franklin, but still interesting...); and **Frank Genus** for a 1940 calendar distributed by Franklin's St. Paul's Church, reminding the congregation that religious devotion does not end at sundown on Sunday.



Page from the St. Paul's calendar.

An inquiry from the Society's website offered a photograph from a family's collection in Maine, looking for an appropriate home. The only identification linked to the image was that of a man from North Andover MA. After sending an email reply expressing the Society's interest with no answer, and leaving two unanswered phone messages, it seems the Society will not be the recipient. Perhaps the potential donor realized that the image was actually of Franklin MA...and changed their mind?

A new season begins, continuing a journey that never ends. History is constantly being made, and the quest to save it, and learn from the lessons it teaches, goes on forever.