

Letter from the President, Franklin Historical Society, 2026

We are more fortunate than some small societies in that we have a significant building endowment on which we can depend to pay major expenses. Even in these turbulent economic times, growth in the past has helped assure that sufficient capital is available in times of need. It is for that reason that I as your president have always been diligent in overseeing types of investment and curtailing expenses wherever possible. In regards to the latter, engaging members in volunteer efforts which could otherwise have been subcontracted to professionals, not only adds security to our accounts, but reminds us all that being part of any non-profit is not just paying dues. The phrase “skin in the game” comes to mind. It is essential to contribute on any level with which individual members are comfortable. It does not always mean physical labor: it could be just as important to suggest program topics or fund-raising ideas, or donate material for the Society’s collections, or support preservation efforts city-wide. Progress is in mankind’s DNA, but such movement should always be mindful of the lessons the past has taught. Physical vestiges of past accomplishments can be the visible reminders we need to be vigilant for future errors. Historical Societies are at the vanguard of that essential duty, for which we should all be proud in the execution of that responsibility.

In the Society’s current position of being a responsible tenant of Easterseals, it is important to understand our role at Webster Place, and be the best of neighbors to residents and users of the property. We are thankful for what Easterseals has already done for the Society, and look forward to opportunities where we may reach out to them to continue a mutually beneficial relationship.

Once again, I want to reiterate the absolute importance for the Society to seek out and cultivate productive relationships with the young people of our community. The ultimate survival of this organization depends on enticing the younger generations to become active in understanding, appreciating, and preserving the history of the places in which we live and thrive. A goal every year should be to recruit new and younger members, while thanking the older members for their continuing support, memories, devotion, and perseverance. We must all work together to ensure that Franklin is the best possible place in which to learn and live.

In the spirit of never forgetting,
Leigh A. Webb
May, 2026