



Freedom Historical Society

“Preserving Freedom’s
past for future generations”

www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org

Mid-year Update, 2014

Dear Members,

The goal of The Freedom Historical Society is to preserve Freedom’s past through stories and artifacts, and to show the connection between them. It is only through YOUR support that this happens- we are a totally membership-driven organization and the Society is very grateful for your continued support. If you are not a member, we hope you will become one and support our mission. Without you, we cannot exist. Thank you!!

Below are a few highlights from the first half of 2014.

FHS Video On-line!!

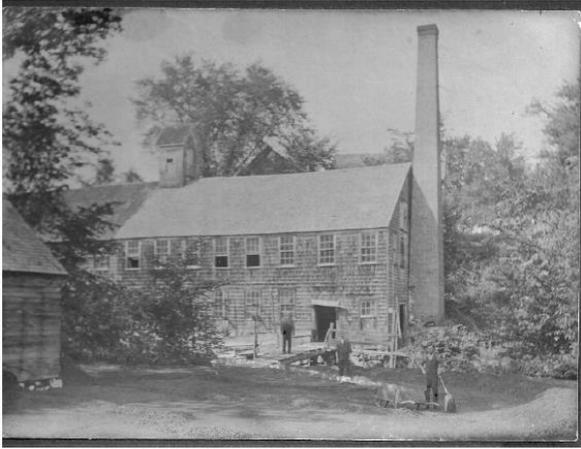
Yes, thanks to a wonderful Board and community-supported effort, and the generous donation of time and expertise from Carol Foord, the Society is pleased to present the video tour “Short tour of the Works Barn museum and Allard House”. Just click on the link on our website’s Home page, www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org. The purpose of this project was three-fold: 1) to allow access to our collection to those less mobile; 2) to give visitors near and far and overview of our collection; and 3) to provide a teaching tool for children and adults at off-site locations. The video was produced by Joe Bradley of nearby Granite NH. The funds to produce the video were raised thanks to the cooking efforts of Board member Sylvia Carney and the raffle purchases of all our wonderful freedom citizens and friends. The lucky dinner raffle winner, Bill Elliott, was able to enjoy a delightful meal with his three guests and be inaugural viewers of the video hot off the press.



Raffle winner’s dinner

Volunteer? There are many small projects that need worked and Board members are not able to get to them all. Can you help? Just a little? We would love to hear from you. Contact John Shipman at 539-5799 or e-mail at jshipman120@gmail.com. Thanks!!

The Freedom Tanning Company



Freedom Tannery on Cold Brook circa 1895

Georgia Drew Merrill's History of Carroll County records in 1889 that in 1858 there were four tanneries in Freedom. Carol Foord's Ossipee Riverlands shows a copy of the photo in our Collection that is identified as the Freedom Tanning Co. circa 1895. This was the tannery about which we have most information (including an old deed to the property), and it stood down behind and to the southeast of our Historical Society's Works Barn, on the eastern side of Cold Brook. If you venture down the hill, you still can see where the building would have been.

The tannery is cited in Dorothy Peck Chapman's booklet "125 Years of Freedom" as being the first of the tanneries, with its business conducted by Augustus and Charles Moulton who also had, according to the 1860 map of the village, their own tanned leather dependent harness shop in the Elias Towle store. The Moulton family lived nearby, on the opposite side of Old Portland Road, in what is now Ed Boyer's home; and the museum Collection includes an old photo of the Moultons outside the then Cape style house they called "Sunnyside". Mrs. Moulton holds a baby daughter who would marry into the Alexander family, and Alexanders would be involved too in the tannery history. Eventually John Churchill purchased and operated the business, and he and his family lived in what we now call the Allard House. We have notes that suggest the Churchills, father and brothers, all participated in this tanning business that continued to be so important to the economic health of Freedom.

Carol Foord's caption to the picture states "To create shoe leather, hides were 'pickled' in salt and tannic acid made from oak or hemlock bark depending on the leather color desired. The tanning process required copious amounts of water for soaking and rinsing." The making of "tanned" leather materials for Freedom's shoe, harness, and leather industries in general must have polluted Cold Brook and Loon Lake in great measures at the time. On Elm Street were two shoe makers, one, Beach, in what is now the old red Harmony Tea Shop, private home of the Wagners; and the other was in Peg Scully's house when it stood on its original site (until moved across the street in 1866/67), where the First Christian Church of Freedom stands today. Elmer Moulton had a harness shop where the late Gail Bickford's barn is now, and his brother Harry Moulton had his harness shop above the Ferren store that was in the Federal House ell complex. There was (1860 map) E.C. Mason's saddle and leather-goods shop where Ogrens live today on Old Portland Road, just west of and next to the Historical Society. The tannery was located close to so many whose livelihoods depended upon its processed goods.

It has been suggested that the Freedom Tanning Co. existed until the 1960s, but the Historical Society continues to research the exact documentation for the end of the business, the demise of the building. We have photographs from different times after 1927, taken from the second floor of the Masonic Hall, that show a view out over the top of the Bandstand. In one the tannery chimney still stands on the western end; in another the chimney is gone. Further research is needed to find just when this building ceased production, existence, in the village. We welcome any help from residents: family memories, documents or photos we might scan for the Collection and return, any missing bits of history we can relate to the old tannery.

2015 Calendar: The 2015 Freedom Historical Society calendar has been released (June 27th) and contains beautiful photos reflecting the theme "Freedom Gardens". Congratulations to the winners of the 2015 Calendar Photo contest: Merton Sargent Jr., Joe Viger, Karen Hatch, Sherry Rehm, Ed Boyer, Silas Feuerborn, Bonnie Burroughs, Bridger Viger, Caroline White, and Kelly Rehm. There were many "honorable mention" photos as well which are included on the back cover. You can pick up your calendar at the Freedom Village Store or at The Historical Society on Saturday mornings. These are now a limited edition since only 225 have been printed. Particular thanks go to Bonnie Burroughs, Nadine Chapman and Dick Many for spearheading this project (again!)



Merton Sargent Jr., Photographer

You can start collecting photos now for your 2016 calendar contest entry; the theme is: "**Freedom Stone Walls**". NOW is the time to get the camera out and catch picturesque stone walls at their peak; but remember, all seasons have their beauty. The deadline for of photograph submissions is April 1, 2015. Please make sure to read and follow the photo guidelines and contest rules-- format does matter.

Bob Cottrell provides consulting help.

As a result of our planning exercise in late 2013, the Board decided in July 2014 to engage Bob Cottrell, a local historian, to help us assess our museum in hopes that he could provide new insight and direction. We have asked Bob to 1) assess the condition of our buildings, with any recommendations; 2) assess our mission and its alignment (or not) with our museum collection; and 3) outline steps necessary to determine what to preserve and how to preserve items in the collection. The Board is struggling with how to make the museum's artifacts better connected to Freedom's stories and make the museum more inviting and meaningful to members and visitors. It would be great to improve our visitations to the museum.

Freedom youth enjoy the Museum

The Society had two events that involved Freedom's younger generation earlier this year.

Freedom Elementary School: Ms. Chelsea Brook's 3rd grade class visited the museum in early June to learn about several aspects of the collection. The students got to learn about four representative areas from Freedom's past: transportation (wagons and sleighs), school days, leather production and shoe making, and old kitchen "appliances". The students got to see firsthand how different things used to be. Thanks to Sylvia Carney, Gale Morris, Nadine Chapman, Scott Cunningham, John Shipman, Dick many and Tom Luke for being docents that day.

Old Home Week: Over a dozen families enjoyed a scavenger hunt in the Works barn museum during old home week 2014. The kids lead the way as they searched for (and found!) 16 items described by picture only. Both youth and adults got to learn about these items and see the

many other treasures in the barn. Cookies and lemonade was served and then three prize winners were selected at random from all the entrants. Congratulation to all that participated and to the winners of gift certificates to Bobby Sue's Ice Cream: Emily Malvo, Amanda Quirk and Lily Burgess.

In the News: Nov. 6, 1936

Freedom man has very close call!

Gerald Allard of Freedom has a few more grey hairs than he had when the week opened on Monday morning. He underwent one of the most nerve racking experiences that man can undergo for a period of about five minutes, and is alive to tell the story.

On Tuesday night he sat up late listening to the election returns, then ate a bowl of cracker and milk and went to bed. Being sleepy he turned in and instead of washing up the bowl and spoon and putting them away, he left them on a table in his bed-room. About three o'clock in the morning he was awakened by the spoon rattling in the bowl. Thinking that a mouse was in the bowl Allard decided to snap on the light, make a lightning spring out of bed and put an end to the mouse. He snapped on the light and sprung -and froze in mid-air- for as the light went on, a large and mature skunk lifted his head from the bowl, gave him a stony and insolent grimace, and went back to lapping up the milk in the bowl.

Allard stood immobile, as motion-less as a statue, trying to figure a way to widen the distance of five feet between him and the skunk. Gerald looked around the room. He saw the quilts and blankets on the bed, he saw his clothes laying in chair, he saw the book case, he the upholstered chairs, he saw the valuable skins and paintings hanging on the wall-for Allard is care-taker of Corey Ford's Freedom estate "Stoneybroke", and lives in the house the year 'round.

He tried to visualize just what would happen if the skunk should decide to exercise that ancient prerogative which is the inalienable right of all skunks. Then he thought about the two dogs sleeping out in the kitchen. If one of them should be awakened by the light and come trotting into the bedroom, than he would have to send not only the house and himself to the dry cleaners, but also the dogs.

Cold -beads of perspiration slid down over his forehead, down over his nose and splashed on the floor. The skunk raised his head and then returned to his meal. Finally the skunk jumped onto a

Mission Statement

"The purpose of the Freedom, NH Historical Society is to collect, research and display objects and records relating to the town's history for educational and cultural preservation." The Society fosters and inspires awareness and appreciation of the town's past through the records and collections in the Allard House and Works Barn Museum, and through its cultural education programs and publications.

2013-14 Board Members

John Shipman, President
 Dick Many, Vice President
 Tom Luke, Treasurer
 Sylvia Carney, Secretary
 Bonnie Burroughs, Director
 Dotty Brooks, Director
 Scott Cunningham, Director
 Gale Morris, Director
 Nadine Chapman, Director

Location & Hours

The Allard House and Works Barn are located at 38 Old Portland Road and are open Memorial Day to Labor Day, 10am to 12pm, and by appointment. Further information is available at www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org

chair, slid down the leg, waddled across the floor, jumped up onto the window sill, turned and gave Allard a final insolent leer, and disappeared into the outer darkness.

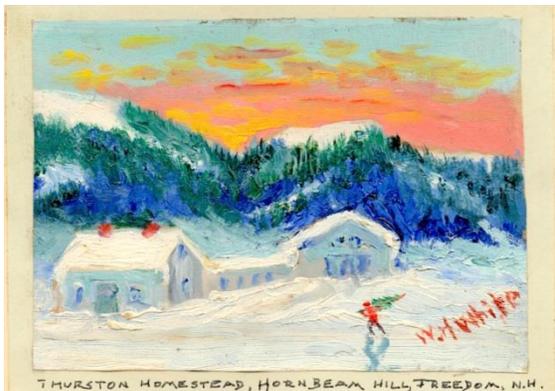
Gerald jumped to the window; slammed it down, and expelled the breath he had been holding for five minutes. Whew!

Personal Stories: We continue to collect stories about people who lived in Freedom and are in the process of making them available on our website, www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org/oral-histories. Gale Morris is also continuing to collect various stories about Freedom and Freedom families; we hope connect these stories with the artifacts we have in the Society's museum. We are grateful to Gale and her editor, Alan Fall, for helping keep Freedom's past alive for us all. If you have Freedom information or ephemera that you feel would be helpful, please contact a Board member. Below is an interesting submittal by Dick Many:

"Freedom Folkways"

Stories told by John E. Thurston

Shared by Richard Many



John E. Thurston, born in 1893, was a quintessential Freedom "old-timer". He grew up on "Hornbeam Hill" which is located behind the Schiller property on the east side of Rt. 153 in Freedom. He attended the one room "Farnsworth School" which was at the foot of the hill. Late in his life, he shared with his wife, Beulah Thurston (who was my great great Aunt), his recollections of growing up in Freedom in the late 1800's and early 1900's. My recollection of John was of a very friendly and gregarious guy who took the time to teach me the art of dowsing for water using his own home made dowsing stick made from the branches of an old tree. I was probably 6 or 7. I think you will find his stories very entertaining, folksy and enlightening. You can read John's oral history by clicking on this link to the Freedom Historical Society website. <http://freedomhistoricalsociety.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/john-thurston-oral-history1.pdf>

Again, thanks so much to all you members for your support and to our hard-working Board!!

Sincerely,


John Shipman, President



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