



Freedom Historical Society

“Preserving Freedom’s Past for Future Generations”

November 2016

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

Well, it is full-on fall as I write this; the leaves have turned and falling. I hope everyone has their firewood in! It’s time we all thought about what we have to do to “wrap up” for winter. And this includes our Historical Society. We are making an effort to “winterize” (as best we can) the resource room so that work on Wednesday mornings can continue as much as is reasonable. We are open Wednesdays 10am-12pm or by request. Feel free to visit!

While we have made good progress on many fronts, the biggest news is the 2016 museum attendance - 365 visitors signed our log book this season, and that is a substantial upswing from recent years. A significant contributor to increasing attendance had to be the two new exhibits, the History of the Telephone in America and Freedom, and the Janet French Thomson doll house. Because these exhibits have had such an impact on our museum this year, we have chosen to highlight them in this newsletter, to benefit those who have not been in to see them, and to thank the families responsible for their generous contribution.

Finally, it is with sadness but heartfelt gratitude that we announce that Dotty Brooks has retired from our board of directors. We, and the many boards before this current board, will miss her. Thank you, Dotty, from all of us in Freedom!! The new board member is John Manley, who has been coming to his family’s house on Loon Lake Road since he was a boy. Welcome to our board, John!

Thanks,
John Shipman

The Freedom Historical Society was incorporated in 1968. The Society has sought to secure Freedom’s legacy. We continue this effort because of the value we all receive in preserving Freedom’s past.

Freedom Historical Society 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.

2016 – 2017 Board Members

President	John Shipman
Vice President	Nadine Chapman
Treasurer	Tom Luke
Secretary	Sylvia Carney

Directors

John Manley	Barbara Buffery
Scott Cunningham	David Trook



Website:

www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org

Email:

FHSociety28@gmail.com

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

Mailing Address:

**The Freedom Historical Society
P.O. Box 548
Freedom NH 03836**

Location and Hours:

The Allard House/Works Barn location: 28 Old Portland Road, Freedom NH 03836. **The hours are: Memorial Day to Labor Day, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. or by appointment.**

FHS RECENT NEWS

- We are pleased to announce that Joann Burns was the lucky winner of the Freedom Old Home Week memorial quilt. Joann was overwhelmed and excited; she wants to share the quilt with Freedom by displaying it during Old Home Weeks in the future. Congratulations, Joann!!
Proceeds from the raffle will be used to construct stair access to the unique antique carriage and wagon display in the lower shed at the FHS Museum, which has no safe access at present.
- An updated “Collections Management Policy” has been drafted by Nadine Chapman, as a result of the 8 week course she completed this summer on collection management. It is now under board review and being prepared for 2017 board approval.
- While the 2017 calendars are still for sale, we are turning our attention to the 2018 design. A committee will be meeting this winter to decide what the theme and content will be. Suggestions? Email them to fhsociety28@gmail.com.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Society has a photo of a crew of the Water Precinct digging up a piece of pipe near the center of Freedom Village. In those days (about 1913) the pipes were made of wood, and the way leaks were discovered was finding a rivulet of water somewhere on the road. Records of the location of the new, metal pipes used to replace the rotting wood were incomplete so no map could let the commissioners know just how much old pipe was left.

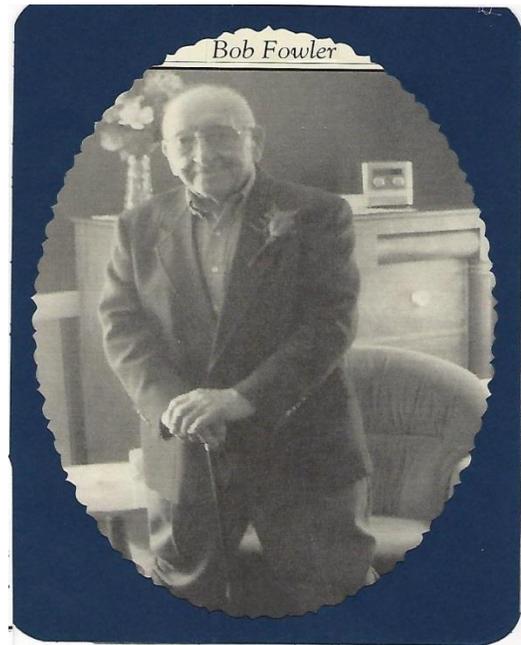
Sometimes tadpoles came out of the faucets, even in the 1950s. In 1996, after pressure from the federal government, new wells were installed. *A section of wood pipe is on display at the FHS Museum.*



Go to: www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org and see the above mentioned photo under “Explore on-line”

FROM A FREEDOM ORAL HISTORY Bob Fowler

Robert “Bob” Fowler was born was born in Freedom Village on June 22, 1910. The “Fowler” house, as some still call it, was owned by his grandfather, Alonzo Fowler (1845-1925) and then by Bob’s father, and then Bob. It is the white house just over the bridge on the right, now owned by the Beadles.



Here is Bob talking to Betti Bossi back in July 2012 about Old home week activities: “ I’ll go back to the old, old days. When they had the parade on Saturday, church on Sunday and then several days we would have all games...baseball games, playing Madison or Kezar Falls and one year they had a group of boys come up from Maine from a Jewish camp and they played ball. I don’t recall who won. Way back they would hire ball players from the Red Sox to come up and pitch and also catch. (Interviewer: How did you get Red Sox pitchers and catchers to come up?). Well it was because we had Dr. Harmon living down there and a man by the name of Elmer Smart who was an attorney in Rochester. He was a great uncle of mine. And Albion Danfuss. He was born in Freedom but he was also President of the Cadillac Company down on Commonwealth Avenue in Boston. And Arthur Black, an attorney in Boston...his father was at one time Governor of New York...he had a home in town. So with those kinds of people....they wanted to have the best kind of game they could have. (Interviewer: So they actually contributed money to bring...). Oh sure they did, yes, that’s what I’ve been told.

Read more about Bob’s memories courtesy of the Freedom Public Library’s oral history project by visiting www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org/oral-histories/

The Janet French Thomson's Doll House

Excerpted from "A Memory in Miniature: Freedom as refuge", Courtesy of Maynard Thompson

(Read the full story and see photos at www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org Explore on-line)

Janet French came to Freedom as a teenager; in the 1930s. After WW II, Janet and her husband, Chilton, moved to Houston, where he began teaching. Summers were brutal, so they wanted a cooler, northern retreat when school was out. Janet suggested Freedom. In 1951 they bought the 1851 cape on the corner of Loon Lake and Village Roads from Mary Blinn. The deal was struck over the phone--Chilton had never seen Freedom at the time.



Janet and Chilton Thomson refurbished their house with the help of George Nichols and Spike Mayhew. They also began putting money into other buildings around Freedom. Janet and Chilton departed Freedom in the late '70s, never to return. They retreated to a fortress-like house on the edge of Cleveland, where Janet became increasingly reclusive. For the last decades of her life, she rarely went outside.

The doll house was born a few years after Janet left Freedom. She flew an architect to the village to make scale drawings of the house, then hired craftsmen to build the model and reproduce the furnishings, down to miniature copies of the actual furnishings and paintings. Glad Works, whose husband Skrow started the Historical Society's

museum, wove tiny rugs, matching those in the original house.

The doll house sat in Janet's "Freedom Room" in Cleveland for several years before being donated to the New Hampshire Historical Society, from which the family eventually recovered it. Today, through the efforts of Laura Thomson, Janet's daughter-in-law, and Ken Brogren, a master of miniature building, the doll house is fully refurbished and on display at the Freedom Historical Society museum.

Tellingly, Janet's doll house captures the actual house as it was in the early 1950s, and not as it had evolved by the time the model was built. Freedom had changed, but what it had meant to Janet never did: a world where, all too briefly, her demons were at bay, and she was at home.

Though "her" Freedom is long gone, it would please Janet to know her symbolic memorialization of it has come to rest with the Freedom Historical Society. Perhaps it will inspire others to think about what Freedom means to them, since no two people will experience it in exactly the same way, and what it was yesterday will never be what it is today, or what it will become tomorrow.



The Society is grateful to Ken Brogren for assembling the doll house and to Laura and Maynard Thomson for generously donating this piece of Freedom history to our museum. We thank them for their generosity!

Yes, we have easy and short-term projects you can help us with at the Society's museum. No experience necessary. Your time is important to us. Call 539-5799 or send an e-mail to FHSociety28@gmail.com. Don't be afraid ☺. We will love you for it!

HAPPENINGS FROM THE PAST
The telephone

**History of the Telephone in America and
its connection to Freedom**

Telephones were invented in the United States in the 1870s. A race to patent the telephone was won by Alexander Graham Bell and his backers in 1876.



Bell and his associate, Thomas Watson, conducted their research in an electrical workshop at 109 Court Street in Boston, where the proprietor was Charles Williams Jr. When it came time to test the first residential telephone, Charles and his wife, Caroline, agreed to put the telephone in their home in Somerville, Massachusetts.

Charles Williams Jr., the man who installed the first residential telephone in his home, had a daughter named Mary. Mary Williams and her husband, Arthur Kidder, discovered Freedom in the 1920s, and they liked it so much they bought property on Scarboro Road. Charles Williams's widow, Caroline, came to Freedom to visit her daughter on Scarboro Road, and she had a house built as well

So the woman who spoke on the first telephone—Caroline Williams—and her daughter, Mary Williams Kidder, both summered here in Freedom. Caroline Williams's house is no longer there, but Mary Kidder's home remains in the family.

Nana Kidder, as Mary was known to her many grandchildren, instilled a love of Freedom into her family. Numerous Kidder descendants maintain summer homes here. Two of them, Sally Stoops and Mary Hockmeyer, loved it so much that they became year-round residents in the 1980s. They are

both great-grandchildren of Charles and Caroline Williams, and thus connected to the very first residential telephone.

The Society is most grateful to Mike and Loel Poor for donating this exhibit on behalf of the Williams family descendants. We thank them profusely for their generosity.



Some William's family descendants. Mike and Loel Poor are in the center, white and pink shirts.

See the full display and use the two 1914 WESCO magneto telephones, donated by Ted Acton, by visiting the Museum

Thank you Volunteers!!

FHS recognizes and thanks the following dedicated volunteers for their assistance:

- We made our fundraising budget to install stairs to the lower shed at the museum. We again thank **Nancy Ferry, Nadine Chapman, Mary Hockmeyer** and **Peg Scully** for their very valuable contributions to make this quilt project a success!
- The post cards of Freedom exhibit has been a great success and thanks to **Noel Quentin** and **Nadine Chapman**.
- We want to profusely thank **Nancy Essex** who writes and distributes all the program publicity pieces- it makes a huge difference!
- The Society's 1860's Map of Carroll County is now nicely displayed prominently in the Town Hall, with a new frame and uv protection Plexiglas. We are very grateful to the **Seabury family** for use of the Frank Seabury memorial donations for the preservation framing. Check it out!

Thank you Dotty Brooks!!



After years of service (no one is sure how many, but they are measured in decades!) Dotty Brooks has finally ‘retired’ from the FHS board of directors. If anyone has been the primary “unifier” that has kept things together at the historical society, it has been Dotty. Not just as an organizer of records, but as an author (the Cemetery book being a prime example), historian and all around contributor to recording and preserving Freedom’s history. I hope everyone in Freedom, Society members and the general public will thank her for her years of service- she deserves it more than anyone!! Thank you Dotty!!

PLEASE NOTE: Membership and fundraising efforts help the Freedom Historical Society maintain the Museum and plan and budget for future and current projects. Your support is crucial and we are very grateful for it.

Thank You! from the FHS Board of Directors.

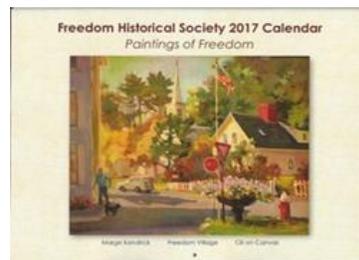


A holiday gift for under \$15!

2017 FREEDOM CALENDARS

The 2017 FHS Calendars are still available. The calendars have beautiful and interesting art work for each month.

This is an annual fundraising endeavor by the FHS.
The calendar presents thirteen original art pieces submitted by local area artists.



The proceeds from calendar sales are an important part of the annual operating budget. The Freedom Village Store and the FHS Museum both have calendars available for a quick pick-up.....holiday shopping at its best!

Calendars are also available via the FHS website and PayPal at www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org

In case you missed it

The Society’s membership voted at the annual meeting to elect a new board member, John Manley. Thank you John for agreeing to help! Other board members who were voted on to continue to serve are John Shipman, Nadine Chapman and Scott Cunningham. The board’s continuity is assured, with Sylvia Carney, Tom Luke, David Trook and Barbara Buffery continuing their terms. Thank you all!!

Please remember to visit the Freedom Historical Society, 28 Old Portland Road. Interesting and informative displays and exhibits are available as well as a resource room for delving into Freedom’s history. It’s more than worth a visit, it is a sensory experience! Whether you are a history buff or just curious, please join us at times of operation.

We remain open on Wednesdays 10-12 throughout the winter, as weather permits, or by appointment. Please stop by!

Not too late to you renew your 2016 membership!! If you are not sure, just call 539-5799 to find out. Your membership is very important to us!!

FHS MEMBERSHIP FORM
“Preserving Freedom’s Past for Future Generations”

YES! I/we would like to support the Freedom Historical Society by starting/renewing my membership.

Enclosed is a check in the amount of:

Sponsoring Member \$100 **Contributing Member \$50** **Family \$25** **Individual \$10**

Additional Donation \$_____

Name (as you would like it listed in the program):

Mailing Address: _____ Zip Code _____

Winter Address (if applicable): _____ Zip Code _____

Email Address: _____

Please check here if you would like the newsletter emailed.

Yes, you may publish my name as a member

Please contact the FHS about volunteering: John Shipman, jshipman120@gmail.com

Kindly return this form with check to:

Freedom Historical Society

P.O. Box 548

Freedom NH 03836



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