



# Freedom Historical Society

“Preserving Freedom’s Past for Future Generations”

28 Old Portland Rd, PO box 548, Freedom NH 03836

www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org

November 2017

The Freedom Historical Society was formed in 1965 and incorporated in 1968 and 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.

### 2017 – 2018 Board Members

President	John Shipman
Vice President	Nadine Chapman
Treasurer	Tom Luke
Secretary	Sylvia Carney
<u>Directors</u>	
John Manley	Scott Cunningham
David Trook	Anne Furtado
Roberta McCarthy	Jean Marshall
Anne Gaudette	



[www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org)

[FHSociety28@gmail.com](mailto:FHSociety28@gmail.com)

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Mailing Address:

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

The Freedom Historical Society & Museum is located at 28 Old Portland Rd in Freedom. We are open from Memorial Day to Labor Day on Saturday & Wednesday from 10 am - 12. We are open year round on Wednesday only from 10 am - 12. Open other times by appointment.

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members and Friends:

**Culture**, n., *the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations.* Meriam-Webster dictionary, 2017

“Like most everything else, [times are] changing. Those who run the [historical] society are beginning to see themselves and their buildings as keepers of a **culture**, not simply repositories for old things” writes Claudia Rowe, of the NY Times.

We are becoming more professional, taking courses, consulting with experts, updating our technology, and spending lots of time conducting research into best practices for protecting our collection. These efforts are essential because when people donate their family photos, deeds etc. to us, they have a right to expect these things will be taken care of and displayed in a professional manner.

These days, when people come to Freedom’s Museum, they are greeted by a volunteer and led through a mid-1800 working class house and barn to get a glimpse of life, trades, and industries that met the needs of Freedom’s people. They are invited to look through thousands of historical records, interesting photos, news articles, and so much more all of which reflect the genuine spirit and nature of Freedom’s past.

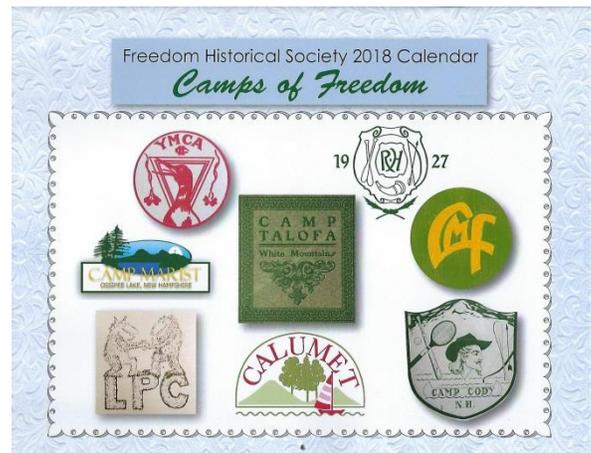
We feel that, as a historical society, it is our job to preserve and translate the sense of the culture that is Freedom to current and future generations. We hope that you appreciate and support us in this cause.

Sincerely,

John Shipman

## FHS RECENT NEWS

- Annual Meeting:** We just held our Society's annual meeting and are pleased to announce that we have three new Board members: Roberta McCarthy, Jean Marshall, Anne Furtado, and since the meeting, Anne Gaudette. We very much appreciate them stepping forward to help us out; and, we are looking forward to new perspectives. We are also fortunate that six existing Board members have agreed to continue to serve: David Trook, Director; Sylvia Carney, Secretary; Tom Luke, Treasurer; John Manley, Director; Scott Cunningham, Director; and John Shipman, President. We have a dedicated team and this author is very grateful for their dedicated service. Finally, Nadine Chapman has decided to give up her seat on the board in favor of focusing her time on collection management. While her contribution to the Board has been significant, we will benefit greatly from the effort and expertise she brings to the collection manager position. Thank you, Nadine, for your continued dedication; the Society, the museum and the Town are greatly enriched by your contribution.
- Allard House Curtains:** We will have new ones!! We are pleased to announce that the curtain replacement fund goal of \$500 has been met! The Allard House will have new curtains this spring thanks to the following generous donors: Carl Bloomquist, Sylvia Bouve, Diane and Lawrence Claveau, Bill and Maureen Elliott, Elizabeth Hentz, and Jane and Richard Nylander. Thank you all for this extra generosity!! Come to the opening on the 2018 Memorial Day weekend (Saturday) to see how great they look.
- The 2018 FHS Calendar,** featuring "The Camps of Freedom" is full of historic photos and stories of the Freedom camps. It is now available at the Freedom Village Store and the Historical Society, or order online at [www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org)



They are a major fundraiser for the Society. Remember, they make great gifts too!

- Collections Update:** Much effort has been given to learning how to create our archive of historical documents in this age of technology -- how to appropriately organize and catalogue artifacts into our PastPerfect museum software so that we have ability to cross reference, search and find information. We are defining the required information that will be essential to eventually taking the collection online. It's all bearing fruit with progress in adding new records, as well as correcting many preexisting records, in our four catalogues: Objects, Photographs, Library, and Archive. We are also nearing completion of writing data entry procedures, an essential step to utilizing volunteer help in the future.

With the flurry of the Museum's summer season over, we can now return our attention to aspects of collection management that were necessarily put aside: processing backlogged acquisitions and objects slated for storage. We hope to reengage volunteers on the map collection, on the inventory of valuable research publications in our library, and more organizing of historical records and photographs to facilitate efficient scanning and cataloguing.
- We Need Your Help!** We need the help of volunteers to enter data. A little computer experience would be helpful but we will show you what to do. And if you prefer to not work on the computer, we have many other related support tasks you can help with. We will train!

### DID YOU KNOW?

That Orren E. Drake, son of Cyrus K. Drake, was one of the heaviest operators in the making of sale clothing? He established himself as a manufacturer in Freedom in the spring of 1881. In 1888 he made up about 50,000 pairs of pantaloons and gave employment to about 400 sewers.

Among all four manufactures of sale clothing in Freedom in the 1886-1888 period, they produced up to 150,000 pairs of pantaloons a year.



Learn more about the history of manufacturing in Freedom by visiting the FHS museum, or Go to: [www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org) and learn more about this subject under "Explore on-line"

The following article from the *Boston Globe*, June, 27, 1897 is presented word for word. ....

### FROM THE ARCHIVES FREEDOM'S FIGHT IS OVER- 1897

Boston Sunday Globe, June 27, 1897

**Freedom's fight is ended –**

***Senator Platt and Gov. Black Prove Too Much for  
Congressman Sulloway –  
Consistently a Free Silver Democrat's<sup>(1)</sup> Republican  
Wife,  
Who is a Sister of Gov. Black,  
Is Postmaster of Freedom***

For some time there has been a spirited fight for the postmastership of Freedom New Hampshire. Mrs. [Lillian] B. ["Nan"] Merrow, a sister of governor Black of New York [who had a "summer" house in Freedom], announced her candidacy for the Freedom Post Office. The income from the Office is about \$300 a year (about \$8000 today) and is rated as fourth class. Mrs. Merrow is a red hot Republican and she worked her politics asking for her appointment at the expiration of the term of postmaster Philbrick a Democrat.

Freedom is one of those small Carroll County towns that lie hidden in the hills and lakes at the foot of the White Mountains. Its population of about 600 makes enough out of summer borders to keep them year- round

together with what they earn by making cheap clothing for the big stores of The Hub. Although only 125 miles from Boston, it takes about seven hours to reach it. The Boston and Maine railroad carries one as far as Center Ossipee with the stagecoach one can ask for freedom 8 1/2 miles distance.

When Mrs. Merrow sent her papers to Washington last winter, 31 of the 50 Republicans in the town had signed the petition for appointment and 86 Democrats had done likewise. There is a voting population of about 200 in the town.

For 36 years the post office in Freedom has been held by one family or its friends, always under the same roof. Administrators at Washington changed and the names of the officials at the Freedom Post Office changed but the same 2 familiar faces were visible to the patrons of the office.

For 24 years Ransellar Towle held the postmaster ship until his retirement, whereupon his son Frank became postmaster. When Mr. Cleveland first took office, the clerk in his store a Mr. Philbrick was appointed, and when President Harrison came into office Frank Towle, son of Rensselaer Towle, was appointed. Then Frank Towle and former postmaster Philbrick swapped places again under the last Cleveland administration.

It didn't seem to make any difference who was President, it was either postmaster Towle and deputy Philbrick or postmaster Philbrick and deputy Towle.

Mr. Towle was the candidate for the office this time but the people rather tired of the "Post Office Trust" and favored Mrs. Merrow.

Mr. Towle and his Republican friends then begin to object to Mrs. Merrow's appointment, finding all sorts of objections to her. Finally they were all dispose of except one, a very serious one – her husband, was a rampant Byranite, and if Mrs. Merrow was made Postmaster, Mr. Merrow would be the Deputy Postmaster and the Republicans would be obliged to receive their mail from a man who worked and voted for Brian and Sewall's election. All these complaints were lodged with Congressman Sulloway Who filed them with the post office department at Washington.

Meanwhile Mrs. Merrow was making ready to play her trump card. She just dropped a line to

Governor Black of New York, her brother. Now Governor Black may have taken the starch out of civil service, but he was considerable of that material left in himself and when a woman is at stake, his own sister too, he was apt to show fight. Fight he did.

Summoning Senator Platt to his side he related the circumstances of the contest over the Freedom NH post office and before the Sage of Tioga had left the Governor of the Empire State, he had his shirt off working for Mrs. Merrow's appointment.

The contest then began with "Boss Platt", Governor Black, Mrs. Merrow and her petitioners on one hand, and Congressman "Sy" Sulloway and the handful of Republicans in the town on the other. For several weeks the opponents were lined up in battle array. Both sides it seems were being "jollied along" by the Post Office Department. But Mr. Platt and Mr. Black wouldn't be jollied. They appealed direct to the President and Saturday last Mrs. Merrow received her appointment papers.

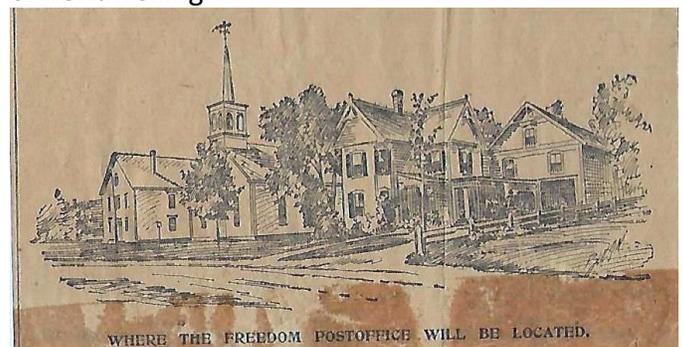
For a whole week the little town had done nothing but talk about the contest. It was probably the first time in the history of the department when the President was called upon to decide a contest over a fourth class office and it is a rare instance where a Governor and a Senator from another state have been given a post office appointment over the objection of the congressman, then to the Democrats, for Freedom is a Democratic town, and they are laughing heartily over the situation. Mr. [Arthur P.] Merrow came out of the house to meet "The Globe Press" reporter. "No, said he, I am not an issue, talk with Mrs. Merrow [as] she is the Postmaster and he led the way to the cozy neatly furnished reception room in their handsome little house on the main street in the center of the village<sup>(1)</sup>. Mrs. Merrow is the youngest living child of the Black family. She is six years younger than Mr. Black. She is an interesting talker, well read and up to date in political and economic questions.

"I will not be interviewed" said Mrs. Merrow with a gracious smile, "for when I received my appointment, my brother, the governor wrote me

that Bismarck could hold his tongue in four different languages. I hope, he added, that you will imitate his example." "It would not be proper for me to disregard my brother's instructions." Mrs. Merrow has one little girl age 6, Charlotte Black Merrow and "she is named after my mother." "We have lived in this town 13 years and I feel highly honored over my appointment."

(I asked) "Will you appoint your husband assistant Postmaster?" "I certainly shall and it will give me great pleasure to tender him the position" said Mrs. Merrow.

Mrs. Merrow will always talk about her brother Governor Black. She is very proud of him. "I will try and give the people of freedom the best service they have ever had" was Mrs. Merrow's parting words to the Globe man. Mrs. Merrow will probably erect a small building for the accommodation of the post office business in front of her dwelling.



<sup>(1)</sup> From Encyclopedia.com: SILVER DEMOCRATS was a term used at various times after 1878 to refer to those members of the Democratic party who advocated replacing the gold standard with a policy of bimetallism. The Silver Democrats believed that the free coinage of silver at a ratio of sixteen to one would inflate prices and thus relieve the burden on the nation's depressed farmers. More general use of the term "Silver Democrats" followed the 1893 inauguration of President Grover Cleveland, a Gold Democrat, and his support for repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890. Cleveland's position polarized the party into two factions: a pro-administration gold faction based in the industrial Northeast and an anti-administration silver faction based in the agrarian South and Great Plains. The rift between pro-Cleveland Gold Democrats and anti-Cleveland Silver Democrats reached a climax at the

1896 Democratic convention in Chicago, where the two sides met to nominate a presidential candidate. Silverites dominated the convention and secured the nomination of William Jennings Bryan as the party's presidential candidate. Bryan's free-silver stand also won the endorsement of the Populist party convention, but it alienated Gold Democrats so severely that many bolted the party. Some Gold Democrats supported the third-party candidacy of Gold Democrat John Palmer, but most turned to the Republican candidate William McKinley. The November election results broke down along regional lines, as Mc-Kinley captured the presidency on the strength of his support in the Midwest and Northeast. Bryan's defeat, coupled with growing inflation, led to silver's demise as a major issue in the early twentieth century.

<sup>(2)</sup> The Merrow's owned a house between 8 Elm St, now Barbara McEvoy's, and the First Christian Church. Barbara's gallery was the barn once attached to that house. It has been said that the building was disassembled and moved up on Rte 153 (but not there anymore) in 1950's or 60's (?) by Chilton Thomson; but there has been no verification of this.



The Merrow house ca 1950, before being moved. Drawing by John Holmgren.

Read more about Mrs. Merrow's story by visiting the Resource Room at our museum at 28 Old Portland Road, Freedom.

**Can you volunteer to transcribe handwritten documents into typed form?**

**How about helping to sort and organize photos and documents for scanning?**

If you are interested in volunteering, please email us at FHSociety28@gmail.com. Or, contact John Shipman at 539-5779 or Nadine Chapman at 539-6594.

### Memberships & Donations

The majority of our support comes from membership dues and donations. We are very grateful to the following individuals for their faithful support:

**Angels:** Lee Allison, Emily Phillips, Loel & Mike Poor, Charles & Holly Watts, Caroline Collins, Katherine Watts, Howsie Stewart, Anonymous donor; **Sponsors:** Brandon Buttrick, Eugene Corbett, Charles & Heloise Depew, Robert & Karen Hatch, Elizabeth Hentz, Mary Hockmeyer, Tom & Jane Luke, Richard & Ellen Many, David Meserve, Jack Middleton, Jane & Richard Nylander, Russell Petrie, Noel & Anne Quinton, Ed Reed, Peg Scully, Ruth & Bob Smart, Laura & Maynard Thomson, Marcia & David Trook, Howsie Stewart, Linda Walls, Eric & Joanne Whitehouse, George Winters, John Woodard; **Contributors:** Tim Allison, Carl Bloomquist, Charles & Terri Brooks, Barbara Buffery, Sylvia Carney, Nadine Chapman, Alice Custard, Peter & Beth Earle, Bill & Maureen Elliott Jr., Lee Fritz, Dann Lewis, Bonnie McCue, Jennifer Molin, Siobhan Murphy, Bev Reed, Art & Barbara Robinson, Josh & Maranda Sandhl, Deborah Shadd & William Grimm, John Shipman, Robert & Ruth Smart, Janet Smith, William & Sally Stoops, Brian Taylor, George & Ivernia Thompson, Steve & Diana Thurston, Gary & Diane Wagner, Larry & Nancy Wogman, Janice Zecker; **Families:** Marjorie Amico, Carl A. Bloomquist, Sylvia Bouve, James & Betsy Bradt, Jayne Britton, James W. Brown, Bonnie Burroughs, Dianne Cahill, David Cheever, George & Aila Clauson, Diane & Lawrence Claveau, Robert Cottrell, Allan Davidson, Jane & Rick Davidson, Nancy & Bill Essex, Dallas Fuller, Dick & Hazel Gauley, Elaine Gentile, Charles & Margaret Gibbs, Alan & Bev Grant, Carroll & Sandra Jacobs, Don & Janet Johnson, Jennifer Kahler-Miller, Ned & Judy Kucera, Warren & Patti Manhard, Jean Marshall, Myrtle & Don MacLeod, Gale Morris, Nettie Nason, John Perkins, Judith Smith, Ellie Stokes, Sarah Tabor, Fred & Beverly Trail, Paul & Donna Tung, Gary & Diana Wagner. **Individuals:** Ruth Allard, Gail Bizer, Ed Boyer, Dorothy

Brooks, Pauline Brooks, Ray Dahlstrom, Linda Habif, Ann Hand, Arlene Knight, Lorraine Martin, Jane McKenzie, Joanna Mera-Krinsky, Robin Sargent, Duane Schluter, Mary K Staples, William Thompson, Marilyn J Verney, Kit Williams.

If you haven't yet renewed your 2017 membership, we invite you to use the enclosed form and send it in now. Your generosity is most appreciated.

### **Additional Donations**

There are many members and donors who give additional donations to the general fund, going above and beyond. We are very grateful for this generosity and want to thank the following people for that: Peg Scully, Richard Woodster, Nancy & Bill Essex, Sylvie Essex, John & Sylvia Manley, The Freedom Community Club, Mary Hockmeyer, Chuck & Terri Brooks, John Perkins, Gary & Diane Wagner, Diane & Larry Claveau, Tim Allison, Bill & Maureen Elliott, Dick & Hazel Gauley, Rob & Karen Hatch, Bill & Sally Stoops, Sylvia Bouve, Jayne Britton, Jane & Rick Davidson, Christine Gauthier, Jennifer Kahler-Miller, Fred & Beverly Trail, Lorraine Martin, Gale Morris, and Jane McKenzie.

### **Archival Project Donations**

We are so grateful to the anonymous members and friends who went above and beyond by responding to our need to support our Archival Project campaign. Thank you!! We have met our 2017 fundraising goal of \$5,000 for this project! This means we can continue the critical process of making sure all of the Society's historical records will be preserved and stored electronically, as a security backup to the real thing.

### **Collection Donations**

We are very grateful for the following gifts during 2017: **Bill Elliott** – 3 vintage Freedom postcards; **Bonnie & Paul Elie** – postcard scrapbook from the Furbush house; **Terri Brooks** – original painting of the "Libby Homestead" used to produce the 2017 Freedom Tile; **John Woodard** – original posters painted by, and from the estate of, Ann Richardson; **Freedom Old Home Week Committee** – 2017 Freedom Tile; **Jim Hallstrom** – Thomson Doll House original drawings; **Ken & Patty Dumas** – painting of Bobby Sue's at Cozy Corner; **Alan Fall** – his video recording of Watson Hill History; **Anonymous** – 1835 Towle to Furbush land sale Deed; **Nancy Griffin** – photos of Bill Stoops & the Boston Post Cane; **Rachel Ward** -- harvest table and chair belonging to generations of Allards; **Sheila Jones** --

commemorative plates of Freedom and a 1964 Nason Grocery Store calendar.

If you have recently made a donation or given an artifact or other form of historical material, and it has not been listed here or previously noted, please contact us immediately. We appreciate your thoughtfulness.

### **The Fire of '47 Memories**

This past month marked the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fires 1947 in Freedom and Maine. Following are the reminiscence of ROBIN SARGENT, who sadly passed away this year, written in 2012.

*"This is my and my father's story. He was Raymond Chick – called "Doe"(?). I am Robin Sargent at 304 West Bay Rd.*

*The summer and fall of 1947 was hot and dry in Western Maine and Eastern New Hampshire. I was visiting my parents in Portsmouth when we heard a report on WHEB that forest fires in Fryeburg and Brownfield were out of control.*

*We were asked by the Salvation Army to help make sandwiches. Mom and I made seems like hundreds and Dad and his brothers drove them to Biddeford for the firefighters.*

*The following week Dad and his two brothers drove to Freedom to help John and Ed Stokes and Dr. Deyoe (?) if the fires came closer. The farm survived the fires and is still occupied – it is the first house on the left going north after the Lake Road.*

*When Dad etc. felt they were no longer needed in Freedom they came home. A couple days later – just after October 12<sup>th</sup> holiday they got word that Robin Hood was on fire. It was felt roofers at Robin Hood started a fire that quickly got out of control. In the next several days 42 (forty-two) cottages on the east side of Leavitt Bay burned to the ground. The only one not to burn belonged to Van Fassel (?) – probably because it was so near the water. The fire was finally stopped by a back fire set near the cemetery on 153 opposite the Village Rd.*

*The roads into the cottages were closed and it was April before I saw the remains. It was heartbreaking. With a friend we drove to Robin Hood, borrowed a canoe, and paddled to our lots – now #s 295 – 299 – 301 on West*

Bay Rd. Our loss was minor compared to those who lost their homes and farms.

Dad moaned the loss of his grandfather's powder horn. Mom lost her Depression glass dishes and I lost my favorite book for teaching swimming.

Several springs later – maybe 1949 or 1950 -- the State of New Hampshire provided us with hundreds of pine seedlings. Along with other family members I remember planting a seedling every ten or twenty paces. These are the white pines on the lots of Soul Air Country Village (?).

Now 65 years later, we still find bits of burned glass and pottery, hinges, etc. in the sand. Some large old trees still show charred remains.”

Please send information to [FHSociety28@gmail.com](mailto:FHSociety28@gmail.com) if you are able to verify the names in question.

**Support Freedom Historical Society**

**When you shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)**

**FHS has received almost \$50 so far from Amazon!**

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/02-6013998>



### **Local Businesses Support your Historical Society**

We thank our local businesses that have made a significant contribution to our operating costs by advertising their businesses in our fund-raising calendar. We encourage you to do business with them.

**Beth Day Massage Therapy**

**Camp Calumet**

**Gary Wallace Auctioneers, Inc.**

**Green Mountain Furniture**

**Hatfield's Bed & Breakfast**

**Inn at Crystal Lake & Palmer House Pub**

**James C Farinella Building & Remodeling LLC**

**Lampron Energy**

**Minuteman Press**

**Northern Tire & Alignment Inc.**

**Chuck Brooks, Carpenter**

**Constantino Real Estate, Gerard Constantino**

**Cooper Cargill Chant, Deborah A. Fauver, Esq.**

**Deb's Custom Upholstery**

**Estates at Sherwood Forest**

**Exit Realty, Grace Brooks**

**Freedom Village Store**

**G W Brooks & Son, General Contractors**

**Re/Max Presidential Realty, Paul Wheeler**

**Sacopee Valley Health Center**

**Sentinel Financial, Paul Olzerowicz CPA, CFP, ChFC**

**Terri Brooks, Watercolor & Pastel Artist**

**Waddell & Reed, Margie Amico, Financial Advisor**

**Ward's Boat Shop**

**White Mountain Survey & Engineering**

**Help us save money! Send us your email.**

**[FHSociety28@gmail.com](mailto:FHSociety28@gmail.com)**

**Your membership is critical to our survival- Please join now! Thanks!**

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP AND DONATIONS**

“Preserving Freedom’s Past for Future Generations”

**Membership:**

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

Yes I’d like to make an additional donation to boost progress:

**Additional Donation:** \$\_\_\_\_\_ Please specify, if you wish:

General Use  Museum renovation  Computer & Internet

Electric & Propane  Preservation Supplies  Programs

Memorial in honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

MailingAddress \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Winter Address: (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I’d like to know more about helping with a small project.

Yes, You may publish my name as a member.

Please submit with your check, payable to **Freedom Historical Society, and mail to Box 548, Freedom, NH 03836.**

**Thank you! Remember, your membership & donations are tax deductible.**



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