



Freedom Historical Society

"Preserving Freedom's Past for Future Generations"

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

www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org

50+ years as a Non-profit Corporation!

February 2019

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

Presidents	John Shipman- Roberta MacCarthy
Vice President	Scott Cunningham
Treasurer	Anne Gaudette
Secretary	Sylvia Carney
<u>Directors</u>	
John Perkins	Steve Thurston
David Trook	Anne Furtado
Jean Marshall	Barbara McEvoy
Carole Taylor	



www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org

FHSociety28@gmail.com

Like Us on Facebook:

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

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members and Friends:

Snow, sleet and freezing rain- oh what fun! Those of you who have left Freedom this winter for warmer climates will not be sorry for what you left behind. For those stalwart (?) enough to stay put, well, all I can say is wear ice cleats until April☺. And stay safe!

Speaking of warmth, we just completed our February Board meeting at the Freedom Public Library and it is sure nice to have that facility. At the meeting we discussed and approved the final 2019 educational program schedule (see below) and are excited to bring you both new and returning speakers for your enjoyment. We also looked ahead to the maintenance and repair project that lay ahead and set priorities. As you can imagine, there is always upkeep, and the support we get from our Lifetime members goes right to making sure our museum remains whole. We are grateful to the 11 members who joined as lifetime members in 2018 and hope that you will consider joining at that level in 2019. This newsletter is our annual membership appeal and an envelope is conveniently attached for your renewal. Thank you and it will be a great 2019 season- make sure to visit us!!

Sincerely,
Co-Presidents
John Shipman

Roberta MacCarthy

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; open year round on Wednesday only from 10 am - 12. Open other times by appointment.

FHS RECENT NEWS

- **The FHS 2020 Calendar.** We are pleased to announce that the 2020 FHS calendar will follow the same theme as 2019: "Remarkable People of Freedom's Past". These have been a popular item and only a very few are left at the FVS. This Freedom "collectable" is an interesting and educational product. Thanks to Roberta MacCarthy and Anne Gaudette who are working on this major fundraiser again this year.☺
- **2019 Fundraising efforts:** Fundraising is always a focus of the FHS board- not only to keep the doors open, but to improve collection offerings, security and access to the public. We hope you will be supportive (as you always have been!) of our efforts in 2019, which include:
 - Membership (renewal envelop enclosed!)
 - Lifetime membership
 - Archival Project donations
 - Annual Freedom calendar
 - Educational program attendance/donations
 - Museum tour and wine tasting event -OHW
 - Museum donations
 - Henney Historical Fund grants

We are pleased to announce that the Henney grant we submitted in November 2018 was funded at the 50% level. We are grateful to have \$1,300 with which to purchase shelving and filing cabinets for our archival materials.

- **Collections Update:** We are pleased to announce that Pam Keith is starting in February as our new collections assistant at the museum. Pam was a past president of the Society (1990-1997) and loves Freedom history; she will be a great asset to us. She is taking over work previously done by Nadine Chapman who will still be involved with the Society but only on the fun things she enjoys. We are so thankful for the incredible time and energy that Nadine has contributed to our Society and the Town as she has organized our records and laid out procedures to set the path for the future. Many, many thanks, Nadine!
- **Educational Programs, 2019!** We are excited to announce the 2019 Educational Programs (please stay tuned for details on each program):

- MAY 15- MICHAEL BRUNO: "CRUISING NH HISTORY"
- JUNE 19- GORDON DUBOIS: "HIKING HISTORICAL NH; 5 DESTINATIONS THAT DEFINE NH'S PAST"
- JULY 17- JEFF WARNER: "BANJOS, BONES, BALLADS"
- AUG 21- JO RADNER: "FAMILY STORIES: HOW & WHY TO REMEMBER & TELL THEM"
- SEP 18- ROBERTA MACCARTHY & ANNE GAUDETTE: "REMARKABLE PEOPLE OF FREEDOM"
- OCT 16- FHS ANNUAL MTG/POT LUCK DINNER; PROGRAM TBD.

DID YOU KNOW?



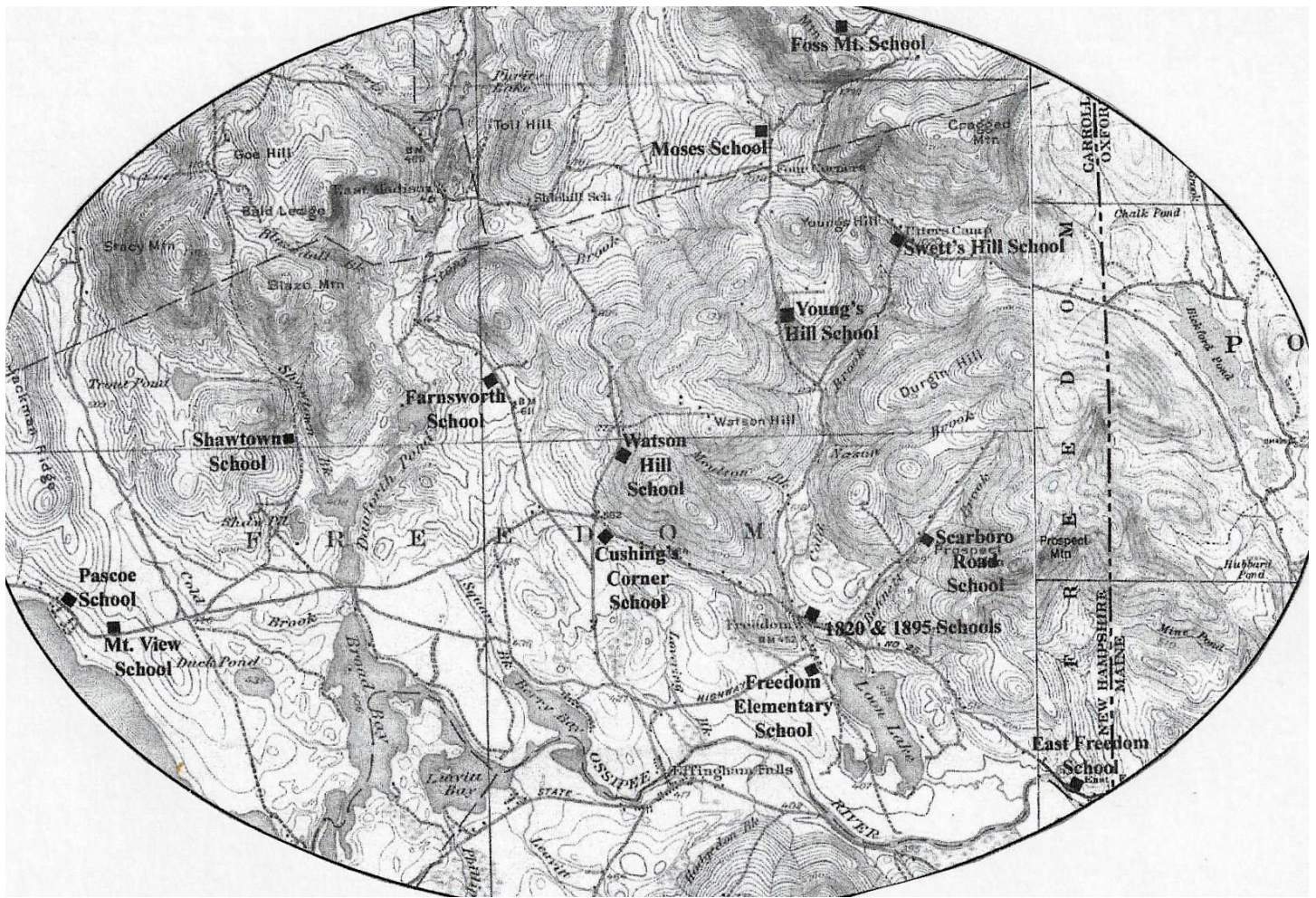
That The Freedom Historical Society is now the proud owner of a full-sized snow roller? Thanks to the efforts of Bill Elliott, Scott Cunningham and Alan Fall, a snow roller has been donated by the Smiling Cow Farm in Westbrook, Maine. This historical item will need to be transported, repaired and displayed here in Freedom, so stay tuned for more information on this topic! We have some nice photos of Freedom's snow roller from the early days which we will put on our website as well as this story as it unfolds.

See: www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org and learn more interesting Freedom tidbits under the "Explore" tab.

Freedom's Old Schoolhouses

The old neighborhood schools continue to be of interest to our residents and visitors. We are fortunate to have the Freedom Heritage Commission which has been cataloging their locations and working on getting signs placed at all of these sites. In 2012 these schoolhouses were a feature of that year's FHS calendar and that information is now on our website as a good reference source. We are fortunate to have the recorded memories of Blanche Eastman Watson who not only experienced Freedom schooling as a child, but who grew up to teach in several of our schools. And, we are grateful to her grandson, Alan Fall, for identifying the locations of all the schools.

We felt it would be good at this time to bring some of that information back to you and help our newer residents and members realize that we did not have just one elementary school as we do now.



Freedom Schoolhouse locations

(Credit: Alan Fall)

Where were they?

The enclosed map shows the various neighbors that had schools. Not all the schools were operational at the same time. Old maps do show the locations of many of these schools, which were:

- Cushing's Corner school
- East Freedom School
- Farnsworth School
- Mt. View School
- Pascoe School
- Scarboro Road School
- Shawtown School
- Swett's Hill School (aka Godfrey)
- Village School (1820)
- Village Grammar School (1895)
- Watson Hill School (aka Chase)
- Young's Hill School

Why so many? Transportation! In those days kids walked to school (or rode a horse!) so it was most practical to have a school in the area where the families were located (more about this, below).

In 1832 the Town established five school districts but by 1842 that had been expanded to ten districts.

Who taught at these schools?

Blanche Eastman Watson, in her notes on Freedom's schoolhouses, lists the names of 27 teachers spread across seven of the schools that she remembered. Not all at the same time, of course. Some of these teachers taught at multiple schools; e.g., Arthur Bennett; Florence Chase; Blanche Watson, Grace Godfrey, Bertha Godfrey, Lizzie Godfrey, Mabel Rounds, Lucy Sanborn, Perley Towle, Peter Towle, Lettie Thurston, and Eva Mae Young. Some of the teachers were trained at Parsonsfield Seminary where many Freedom students went for a secondary education.

Like today, not all the teachers lived in Freedom but some came from Ossipee, Effingham, Madison, Parsonsfield, Brownfield, Kesar Falls and even Cornish, ME. Unlike today, this must have been a real challenge because of the modes of transportation available to them at that time, to say nothing of the road conditions.

Anecdotes. Since you can view details of the Freedom schoolhouses on-line (see www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org/explore-online) it seemed most entertaining to relate various stories as written in our archives.

- **The First Village School (ca 1820-1895)**



This first village school is still standing, and is now a private residence to the left of the Mason's Hall, where it was moved just before the "new" (1895) village school was built. The Godfrey, Bennett and Watson families produced several teachers for Freedom; they grew up from pupils on one side of the desk to be educators on the other side.

- **The second village school (1895-1983).**



Blanche Watson remembered that "there was a big rope that hung back of the door upstairs that rang the bell in the belfry. This bell was rung at 9:00, 10:30 (recess), noon (lunch) and 2:30 (recess). The

school closed at 4 pm. The children took turns ringing the bell. After the fire in May, in the early 1930's, the bell was taken down and never used again". The bell is now kept and displayed at the Historical Society museum.

Ken Libby remembers getting to school in the old days (parenthetical questions were by Joannie Grossman, interviewer): *"We were transported by horse and wagon or a horse and sleigh in the winter time. That was the school bus; it was a horse. (It would make the rounds of the children?) That's right; yup. (And how long did it take you to get to school?) Depended on the weather and depended on the traveling for the horse. Sometimes it was an hour and sometimes it was an hour and a half. My father carried the school children, the horse's sleigh, the horse's wagon for years (he was the bus driver). I was the first person to be picked up and the last person to be dropped off at night. (What did you do on the "school sleigh"?) This was open, it wasn't covered over; we used to have to bundle up in heavy clothes and we just sets there---was half froze anyways; we didn't move around too much. Just blankets, that's all we had. (How many children would fit in a carriage?) About six; six to eight children. (Did your father have to go up any hills to get children?) Oh yes, well, at one time he went up to Blanche Watson's; Linnie Watson's father and mother lived up on the hillside of Chase Hill; he had to go up there to get those. And he had two at Ansel Husten's gate, the other side of the Freddie Weed place; and then he come down 153 to Cushing Corner Four Corners and picked up several children there. Also went round to where Wendell Brooks' store is now and picked up Ed Stokes and over to the Freedom Village School. Then on his way back Ed Stokes was the last one to be picked up the first one to be left off. (Was this a volunteer job?) He was paid. They used to in bids years ago for the school room; and I think the most my Dad ever got for carrying school children was about \$45 a month. He furnished his own conveyance.*

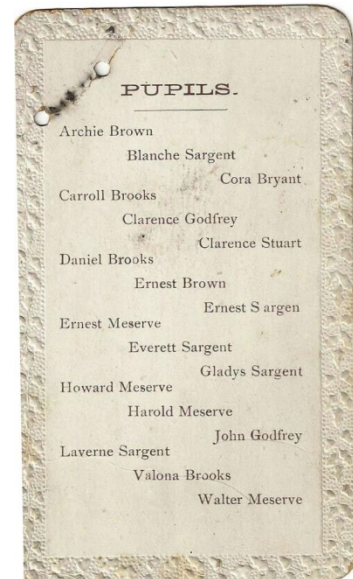
Phyllis Mayhew remembered the bus when she was in Freedom: *"But at that time when we moved in to Freedom, you had your choice. You could go to Brewster Academy, you could go to Fryeburg Academy, you could go anywhere you wanted to and the town would pay for it. You had a school bus driver, Ed Stokes. It did not belong to the town. He bought the bus and then...it was a job. I don't know*

whether he had a contract or not. I don't think so. I think it was just word of mouth back then. And he drove the buses. And I get such a kick out of listening to how the kids grumble now. I can remember losing my shoe right through the floor once. A little rusty hole in it. It was in the spring, very high water."

- **Scarboro Road School.** **Blanche Watson** remembered: *"Doris Youlden said her mother, as a little girl, lived in what is the Watt's home (former Governor Black's residence). She used to slide down the hill to get to this school"*.
- **Watson Hill School.** **Blanche Watson** remembered that *"This school was on what is now Watson Hill road about ¼ mile before you get the corner where the road goes up Watson Hill; it is now a private home. Interestingly, the Town built a new school next to this old one but then stopped sending children there. Melvin Watson bought the building and moved it up the hill to his place. Later it was sold back to the Town and moved to the dump near Look Lake and used as a shelter. {Buildings did get around in those days.} Blanche also remembers what it took for teachers to get to school: "a teacher who lived on Bennett Road walked to the Mt. View School as well as the Farnsworth School to teach, and home again"*.
- **Swett's Hill School.** This school was very old and was on the left near the top of the hill. It was discontinued about 1919 or 1920. The families in the neighborhood that it served included the Sargent's and the Godfrey's. Below is a photo of Merton Sargent heading to school on his horse [He must have had help getting up there!]



One of the nice pieces of memorabilia in our museum is a "souvenir" booklet for teacher Eva Mae Young's class of 1909-1910 (see below).



As you would expect in a one room neighborhood schoolhouse there were a number from the same family (5 Sargent's, 3 Meserve's, 3 Brook's, 2 Godfrey's).

Phil Bennet was a teacher at this school and well loved. John Rasquin, who became in charge of the Stennis Space Center in Alabama and had 21 patents for his inventions, wrote that *"Phil Bennet was one of the most important influences in my life, both professionally and otherwise. [My accomplishments are] small potatoes compared with Phil's accomplishments...I only hope the present Freedom School can meet the standards of excellence exemplified by Phil Bennett."*

- **East Freedom School.** The story has been told that some boys by the name of Libby, who lived somewhere in back of the school, walked to school and had hot baked potatoes in their pockets to keep their hands warm.
- **Young's Hill School.** Blanche Watson remembered: "This schoolhouse was moved up on Young's Hill from Freedom village. It was the Freedom Post Office before it was moved - owned and operated by Mrs. Lillian Merrow (Arthur Merrow's wife)It was across the road from what was once the Ralph Foster Store [now the Freedom Village Store] - in front of Lillian Merrow's house near the road [attached to what is now the Federal House].



She had a short walk-way between her house and Post Office. I have been in this Post Office many times. The Town got it and moved it up on the hill. When it was discontinued as a school, it was moved down to the Herbert Weeks' place and used as a cabin for a while. Week's woke up in the night and found it on fire in the early 1930's."

- **Pasco and Mt. View Schools.** There was a schoolhouse across the way from Pamper Inn, going to West Ossipee. It was built by Henry Pascoe (Maude Pascoe Burke's father). Before that was built he conveyed the children to West Ossipee with a horse and wagon or sleigh (maybe a punt which was a "box-like body" sleigh). Melvin Watson had one that he conveyed the children in. It would carry more children than a sleigh. It was more like a two-seated wagon, only boxed in). They went to school there about 27 weeks a year.



The Pamper Inn on Ossipee Lake Rd.

Before the school near Pamper Inn, there was a schoolhouse about 1/4 mile beyond Mount View on the right hand side of the road from Freedom to West Ossipee. It has all grown up there where the schoolhouse stood. One could probably find the foundation. I don't know what happened to that schoolhouse. The one across from Pamper Inn burned.

Memberships

Many, many thanks go to our members from 2018 and we hope that you will use the attached envelope to renew for 2019. We always love to have to first-time members, so please spread the word. We could not do this without YOU!

We will provide an updated membership list in the ensuing quarterly newsletters of 2019.

Donations

We are grateful and say thank you for the following people for their donations in the second half of 2018: Kevin Connerton (Indian backpack fire extinguisher from Freedom), Marie Knox (Freedom Fire hat), Dotty Brooks (Freedom vital statistics, 1896-1990), Mary Hockmeyer (John Holmgren framed pencil drawing of the Federal house, ca. 1948), Cohasset Historical Society (documents of John Stitson), Suzanne Poll (FES Festival of Trees project 2016), Karen Briggs (FES report on Freedom veterans project, 2012) and Smiling Hill Farm, Westbrook, ME (Snow roller).

Volunteers!!

We would be nowhere without our wonderful volunteers. A big thank you to Nadine Chapman for undertaking a Facebook fundraising campaign and exceeding her \$500 goal by \$40; and to the donors who made that happen! Thank you to our project volunteer, Judy Smith, who religiously comes in on Wednesdays to help. She is currently assembling all the Town's obituaries, starting from 1929!

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

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

*Support Freedom Historical Society
When you shop at smile.amazon.com*



Local Businesses Support your Historical Society

We thank our local businesses that have made a significant contribution to our operating costs in 2017 by advertising their businesses in our fund-raising calendar. We encourage you to do business with them. If you would like to be, or know someone who would like to be a sponsor, please call 539-5799. It helps everyone to “shop local”!

Beth Day Massage Therapy

Camp Calumet

Costantino Real Estate, Gerard Costantino

Cooper Cargill Chant, Deborah A. Fauver, Esq.

Deb’s Custom Upholstery

Exit Realty, Grace Brooks

Freedom House Antiques

Freedom Village Store

G W Brooks & Son, General Contractors

Gary Wallace Auctioneers, Inc.

Green Mountain Furniture

Hatfield’s Bed & Breakfast

Jake’s Seafood

James C Farinella Building & Remodeling LLC

Freedom Gallery, Barbara McEvoy, Artist

Minuteman Press

McConkey & Associates

Re/Max Presidential Realty, Paul Wheeler

Sentinel Financial, Paul Olzerowicz CPA, CFP, ChFC

Watercolor & Pastel Artist, Terri Brooks, Artist

Thrivent Financial, Sarah Groleau

Waddell & Reed, Margie Amico, Financial Advisor

Ward’s Boat Shop

White Mountain Survey & Engineering

Help us save money! Send us your email. Ours is FHSociety28@gmail.com

HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP AND DONATIONS

"Preserving Freedom's Past for Future Generations"

Membership Level: ☐ Lifetime \$500 **(NEW!)**

☐ 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 ☐ Archival Project ☐ 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.



Freedom Historical Society and Museum

P.O. Box 548

Freedom NH 03836

Do we have an image with both barn and house and sign?