

FREEDOM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

28 Old Portland Road
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July 2026 Newsletter

Summer Camps of Freedom



For more than a century, summers in Freedom have meant bugle calls, the laughter of children, and the haunting sound of loons across the water while campfires glow.

Freedom's legacy as a children's summer camp destination is an important part of our present as well as our past. This summer those camps are the focus of an exhibit at the Freedom Historical Society Museum and you have to see it!!

The exhibit, "Summer Camps of Freedom: Then. Now. Always," is open every Saturday from 10 AM to 1 PM, Wednesday from 10 AM to noon, and by appointment by sending your request by email to fhsociety28@gmail.com. During FOHW the Historical Museum is open Monday through Friday through noon.

Of the 21 camps in Freedom since 1899, five are still active today. The remainder live on in memory. Visitors to this summer's exhibit new will experience the rhythm of camp life and the deep, enduring roots of a shared legacy. Five camps that are still active—Calumet, Cody, Huckins, Luethi-Peterson, and Robin Hood—will be represented, as will two legacy camps, Cragged Mountain and Camp Wakuta.

Research and presentations for the exhibit were completed by Freedom Historical Society volunteers working with teams from the seven camps.

The lake's legacy as a children's summer camp destination is an important part of our present as well as our past.

In addition to the Exhibit, FHS is also presenting programs on three camps: July 29th - The History of Camp Calumet presented by Karen Vitek; at the Freedom Town Hall. Please save this date.



Margie's Lunch on August 1

Celebrate Freedom's history and eat at Margie's Lunch on Saturday, August 1st!! Yes, again this year during Freedom Old Home Week you can go back in time 80-90 years and savor the goodies offered by Margie Allard on her porch "restaurant": Hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, pickles, brownie ice cream sundaes (made with Bobbie Sue's ice cream). Don't miss this "historical" event on August 1, 2026 under the tent at the Freedom Historical Society, 28 Old Portland Rd, Freedom. There will be three seatings, 11am, 12 noon and 1pm. Email your reservation today (seating time and number of guests) to **FHSociety28@gmail.com**. Don't wait, seating is limited!! Tickets are \$10 per reservation and it includes all of the above. Make your reservation today and pay when you get to Margie's on August 1.

This year we are honoring Margie by telling stories about life in Freedom with "Margie's Lunch". Please send in your story about the "good old days" before July 25th to FHSociety28@gmail.com
Thank you!!



Remembering the South Eaton Meeting House



The year is late 1844 and folks are headed to a Sunday service at the new Freewill Baptist Meetinghouse in Eaton, NH traveling by wagon, on horseback and even walking from all directions including Freedom, Eaton and Madison. It was a simple church with the preacher & pulpit located in front on a platform above the pews backlit by a large window that provided natural light for reading. On either side of the front pulpit were two doors through which the congregation entered in their Sunday finest pausing to speak with neighbors as to their wellbeing and the latest gossip. Those who were late were viewed by all – no slipping in anonymously. This was the place where the community could gather for socials, to talk about the latest local events & politics and of course to hear the scriptures.

The inspiration for the Meetinghouse began with discussions and meetings when William B. Towle transferred a small plot of land by deed to Stephen Allard (recorded on February 9, 1844) to establish a Freewill Baptist Meetinghouse at the southern edge of Eaton, now South Eaton, at the corner of Towle Hill and Burnham Roads. With this small plot of land came a timber lot located a short distance down Burnham Road from which trees were felled for building the Meetinghouse. These logs were taken down the hill to the Blasdell Mill (now Purity Springs) in carts driven by teams of oxen for milling into lumber. The return trip was arduous - up the steep road known as Horse Leg Hill Road to a level plot that was just right for building the meetinghouse. Stephen Allard was appointed leader and oversaw construction of the Meetinghouse that involved future members & neighbors. It was a community effort. The Freewill Baptist Church opened its doors as a member of the Freewill Baptist Society and on November 13, 1844, elected Daniel Alley as its first moderator and Josiah Thurston as clerk.

Upon completion of the Meetinghouse, Stephan Allard wrote to Josiah Thurston concerning the possibility of raising funds for upkeep and expenses by selling pews to the members of the congregation. Funding is always an issue but members were in favor and purchasing a pew gave them guaranteed seats for their family. This list of pew owners along with the original deed and other papers are part of the precious documents that provide a small window into the past as members from three towns came together in the hope of building a more convenient church & gathering place for the local community.

There are many events that transpired between 1844 and today that form an interesting history of the road to private ownership by the nonprofit South Eaton White Meetinghouse Parish Association. But, what has changed little is the building itself – it stands today much as it did in 1844 when conception and hard work made their dream come true. Note that the Meeting House was built 13 years after Freedom separated from Effingham. Built near the boundary of Freedom and Eaton, the Meeting House has long been shared by both communities, serving as a place of worship, gathering and common heritage over the years.

Please join the Eaton's Meeting House Annual Luncheon after the Old Home Week parade on 7/25/26 to enjoy food, fun & lots of community. There will also be games for the young.

Celebrating the Lives of Veterans of the American Revolutionary War Pelatiah Harmon 1762-1841

Pelatiah Harmon was born on 21 October 1762 in Scarborough, Maine, according to a family genealogy, the son of George Harmon and Mary Foss.

Pelatiah Hamon testified in his military pension request that he enlisted in May 1777 under William North in the Massachusetts Line in the Continental Army for a three-year term. He served at the following actions according to his testimony before the pension board:

1777 Boston (Bunker Hill); Poughkeepsie, Fishkill, NY; White Marsh, NJ.

The winter of 1777-1778 with General Washington at Valley Forge.

1779 Battle of Monmouth; White Plains, NY.

The winter of 1779-1780 with General Washington at Morristown, NJ

1780 August, Pelatiah was discharged in Ossing, NY.

Pelatiah Harmon married Olive Fogg (Foog) in Scarborough, Maine n 18 January 1781.

They had the following 16 children:

Elias Harmon	born 30 May 1781
William Harmon	born 11 December 1782
Ruth Harmon	born 9 November 1784
Pelatiah Harmon	born 3 August 1786
An infant	born and died April 1788
Moses Harmon	born 16 April 1789
Olive Harmon	born 3 November 1791

Ester Harmon	born 29 August 1793	
Mebitable Harmon	born 26 May 1795	
Sylvanus Harmon	born 26 February 1797	
Mary Harmon	born 27 August 1798	
An infant	born and died April 1800	
Ebenezer Harmon	born 15 June 1801	
Catherine Harmon	born 8 October 1803	
Eliza Harmon	born 6 November 1807	d. 1819
Mrs. [Olive] Harmon	died 19 November 1822	

Olivia Fogg Harmon died on 19 November 1822 in Scarborough, Maine. Two years later, Pelatiah married Sarah Crockett on 24 August 1824. Sarah Crockett was living in Gorham, Maine, at that time, while Pelatiah was living in Buxton, Maine.

It appears that Pelatiah Harmon lived most of his early and middle years in Scarborough and Buxton, Maine; he appeared in the 1830 U.S. Census living in Effingham, Strafford County, New Hampshire. He testified to the Military pension office in 1832 that he was residing in Effingham at that time. By 1840, Pelatiah Harmon's location was in Freedom, New Hampshire (the 1840 U.S. Census).. According to a Harmon Family History book, Pelatiah Harmon died in Freedom, on 29 June 1841.

His second wife, Sarah Crockett Harmon, became eligible for a widow's pension in 1853, and she filed her petition while she was a resident of Freedom, New Hampshire. Because Pelatiah and Sarah married after 1800, she was not eligible for a widow's pension until the Pension Act of 1853 allowed widows pensions for those who married American Revolutionary veterans after 1800.

Honoring our Volunteers

Since stepping down as FHS President, John Shipman has been quietly dedicating his time to researching and preserving the Stokes Family collection of indigenous artifacts found on Ossipee Lake. Following its exhibition from 2023–2025, the goal is to integrate this historic collection into the FHS Permanent Exhibit at the Allard House.

Beyond his archival work, John is also championing long-term financial security for the society continuing to build the FHS Sustainability Fund and over \$20,000 has been raised to date. The fund aims to reach a principal of \$50,000 within five years and \$100,000 within ten years.

John, thank you for your enduring leadership, vital support, and unwavering commitment to our future!



Log on to see our online collection?

You can see our collection of items, articles, and photos without leaving home! Log on to www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org, and click on the link on the front page under "What's happening?" Once you are in, be sure to click on Random Images, a trip down memory lane!!

This month, check out the online photos of the Old Home Week Parade throughout history!

Do you Remember?

Avis Goss

Avis Goss, a lifelong resident of Freedom Village, kept a small farm with horses, sheep and dogs at what is now 36 Elm Street, the Arts and Crafts House built in 1920. Her parents were Mildred and Leroy Goss, Avis took over managing the farm when her mother died in 1937. Avis often led the Freedom Old Home Week parade on one of her beautiful horses. She was a devoted librarian, beginning at a tiny library at the Freedom Town Hall. She always knew what the children liked to read, and usually had a few set aside for them when they came in which made them feel extra special! Sadly, Avis died at 64 years. Her son, Fred Goss, maintained the family farm until 1983.



Thank you to our Members and Donors!



In June, we participated in the annual NH Gives Campaign and raised \$8,155 from 51 donors wanting to be Keepers of Freedom's History. Donations to this campaign directly supported the research, development, outreach and preservation of our exhibit on Summer Camps of Freedom and the ongoing research and preservation of this history. We want to thank the following donors for providing donations and

matching donations to this campaign: Timothy Allison, Jill Bockman, Karen Briggs, Jayne Britton, Brandy Buttrick, William Carney, Martine Culbertson, Jane Davidson, Moira Epps, Anne & Michael Gaudette, John and Mary Habif, Linda Habif, Pam Keith, Heather Kiley, Melissa Labonte, Kathie Lange, Felicia Ledgard, Dann Lewis, Susan and Ramon Marks, Caroline Marston, Roberta MacCarthy, Maureen McCracken, Barbara McEvoy, Karren Merriam, Anne Packard, Emily Phillips, Laura Robinson, Marcia Santner, John Shipman, David Smith, Jan Smith, Kerri St Jean, Lauren Stoddard, Carole Stokes, Sara Owen Tabor, Carol Taylor, Kyle Thomas, Laura & Maynard Thompson, Steve & Diana Thurston, Marcia Trook, Johanna Viennea, Charles Watts, Katherine Watts, Paul Wheeler, Janice Zecher.

To these members we say thank you for renewing your participation in this annual statewide fundraising event that fosters community pride and preserves Freedom's history for "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow".

Our Upcoming Public Programs

July 29th: History of Camp Calumet - Karen Vitek

August 19th: History of Camp Huckins - Heather Kiley

September 16th: History of Camp Robin Hood - Chuck Illig

October 21st: A Time Traveller's Journey through Carroll County at 7 PM at the Freedom Town Hall