FREEDOM HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT, 2024

Another successful year has passed for the Freedom Historical Society (FHS). Many hours are given by our Board of Directors to keep FHS moving forward. Most of all, the Board appreciates the support of our 220 strong membership and the Town of Freedom whose dollars make all possible. The Board works tirelessly to meet the FHS mission and to be sustainable. As a sustainable organization, the Freedom Historical Society provides as many educational services to its community as possible in the form of exhibits, programs, publications, and events. Most importantly, we get things done, carry out our mission, and continue to build sustainability through community loyalty. In 2024 we increased the number of visitors to 560, a 19% increase. We also took care of our buildings and completed two priority projects – new lighting for our exhibits installed by Board Member Michael Gaudette and a new state of the-art AeroFin septic system funded by generous Heritage Circle Members. As we approach the new year, our Climate Control Room Climate Control Room is being furnished with shelves and temperature and humidity control equipment. We start moving in our fragile collection of textiles, paintings, old documents and other sensitive artifacts in January.

When we think of the past year, there are many firsts! We introduced a docent training program, new facility projects, exhibits, events, and published a book on "a Sense of Freedom". This is demonstrated in broad community financial, in-kind, and volunteer support. Highlights of our Annual Meeting are provided in this newsletter. You can read about all of this in the following review of the Society's activities in 2024 and plans for 2025 which were presented at the 2024 Annual Meeting on November 14th.

A very special thanks you to all members whose contributions help preserve Freedom's history and connect Freedom's history to the community. For your convenience a donation envelope is included with this newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support.
Roberta and Brandy, Co-Presidents.



Freedom Historical Society, 28 Old Portland Rd, PO Box 548, Freedom NH 03836

The Freedom Historical Society: A Year in Review

The 2023 – 2024 FHS Board – the Team



Co-Presidents Roberta MacCarthy Brandy Buttrick
Vice-President Edward Barosky
Treasurer Jayne Britton
Secretary Jane Davidson
Directors:
John Shipman, Steve Thurston, Anne Gaudette, Jean Marshall. John Perkins, Carole Taylor, Michael Gaudette, Barbara McEvoy, Pam Keith, Linda Habif, Nancy Essex, Moira Epps, Pam Taylor

The Freedom Historical Society is celebrating 60 years in 2025!

The Freedom Historical Society was formed in 1965 and incorporated in 1968 and has sought to secure Freedom's legacy. The Freedom Historical Society is committed to preserving the history of Freedom and educating the public about Freedom's unique history through exhibits, programs, books, newsletters, website, and the museum collection. We continue this effort because of the value we all receive in preserving Freedom's past.

As we approach our 60th anniversary let's keep in mind the accomplishments of all the Boards over the years, as well. The vision of the original Board to get the Society started down the path of Preserving the History of Freedom in 1965; the initiative to become a non-profit organization 501(c)(3) in 1968; the bequest of the Allard House to the Freedom Historical Society in 1979; the great effort it took to build a new barn in 1980/81 to hold the "Skrow" Works collection; the initiative to start the PastPerfect database of the FHS collection in 2000; the work it took, starting in 2015 to complete a set of Policies and Procedures to set standards for all FHS activities; the great insight and teamwork it took to start annual changing exhibits that help tell the stories of Freedom, and in 2024 the printing of "A Sense of Freedom".



Board Development was a priority for 2024

This year we enhanced Board training to increase knowledge and awareness of the administration, financial resources, the collection, preservation priorities, and research for small historical society.

We updated the FHs Bylaws, and the Board approved them on September 12, 2024. The Bylaws were updated for online meetings, new coordinating groups, and simplification.



We also increased Board involvement in developing program strategies and increased Board participation in the FHS Docent Program. Brandy developed a formal docent document and program training. 25 volunteers were recruited to handle two to four hours for 47 days. Special thanks to Linda Habif for recruiting and scheduling the following volunteers: Lucy Kendall, Pam Keith, Jane Davidson, Michele Keenan, Linda Habif, Lauren Stoddard, Nadine Chapman, Nancy Essex, Steve Thurston, Bill Elliot, Sarah Tabor, Pay Taylor, Arlene Knight Brian Taylor, Carole Taylor, John Shipman, Laurie Eisener, Michael Gaudette, Anne Gaudette, Barbara Hall-Siktberb, Janice Zecher, Jayne Britton, Barbara McEvoy, Moria Epps, Karrie Buttrick.

Community Engagement continued to be a priority

The FHS partnered with the Effingham Historical Society for this year's exhibit on the history of Effingham Falls. This was the first time FHS reached out to team-up with a neighboring historical society. We shared information, research, and documentation. Both museums were opened the same days and for the same hours and we teamed up on the promotion. These interesting and informative displays reunited two towns in 2024.

This year the FHS also increased information sharing and education resources with neighboring historical organizations as the Wolfeboro Family Research Center. We were investigating ways we can bring more history to the community.

We also continue to work more with Freedom organizations: the Freedom Community Club, the Heritage Commission, the Freedom Village Store, the Freedom Library, the Freedom Elementary School and Freedom Old Home Week by participating in the Parade, increasing our hours of operation, and sponsoring Margie's Lunch Event.

FHS also continued to celebrate events with Freedom Organizations. Examples include the Halloween activities handing our candy to the "Trick or Treaters in Freedom Village, having an information and sales table at the Freedom Rings Event for the Holidays, and sponsoring an old fashioned "Bean Supper" at a monthly community club dinner and giving a program presentation.



The Freedom Historical Society building a connection with Freedom Elementary School and *"Preserving the past for future generations"*

The FHS has an ongoing relationship with the Freedom Elementary School sharing stories of Freedom's past. Thanks to Board Members, Steve Thurston and Pam Keith, FHS continues be part of the Freedom Elementary School by working with Mrs. Kareen Briggs (4th, 5th & 6th grade teacher) to bring Freedom's History to FES students. In 2024 Steve and Pam set up an exhibit at the School that exhibited some of the FHS Museum Collection, and it was entitled "Can you identify these objects?" There was a contest with a prize of free ice cream at Bobbie Sue's for every grade. Next year the exhibit will display Freedom's Historic School Houses. In addition, Brandy and Steve provided FHs Museum Tours to all the classes in May and October.







The 2024 Monthly Speaker Program, open to members and the public, is coordinated by Board Member Steve Thurston

In 2024 FHS offered the 8 programs below through ZOOM or "live audience" at the Freedom Town Hall. A range of 30 to 78 people attended these programs each month. The program list included:

Feb 21 - Early New England Ice Harvesting – Jane Hennedy, Historic NE
Mar 20 - he Old Man: His Life and Legacy – Inez McDermott*
Apr 17- NE Bean Supper with Freedom Community Club offering a "sneak peek" of our 2023 Museum Exhibit on History of Effingham Falls
May 15 - A Sense of Freedom: Historical Postcards of Freedom – by author Noel Quinton
July 17 - Saturday Morning Cartoons: Bugs Bunny, Bullwinkle, and Big Business in the 1960s – Margo Burns*
Aug 21 - Now Who Shall Judge the Indians? How 500 Years of Colonization Has Impacted the Abenaki People of NH & the Northeast – Anne Jennison*
Sep 18 - History of Purity Spring Resort – John Sexton
Oct 16 - A Sense of Freedom: Historical Postcards of Freedom – Noel Quinton.
In partnership with Friends of the Freedom Library.



The Freedom Historical Society: The Board of Directors develops plans for future exhibits.

2024 - (Year 1) History of Effingham Falls
2025 - (Year 2) History of Effingham Falls (refreshed with new information)
2026 - (Year 3) Summer Camps of Freedom
2027 - (Year 4) History of the Schools of Freedom
2028 - (Year 5) Historic Recreation and Entertainment Activities in Freedom
Other Topics Under Consideration:
History of Freedom's Old Home Week Celebrations (considering for 2029)
Historic Families and Ancestral Genealogy of Freedom

Great Volunteers, Members, and Participation

Our strategy to increase promotions and quality of our museum's exhibit helped increase museum popularity. In 2024 Museum attendance increased from 475 to 565. Membership remained stable at 225 members. There are 53 Lifetime Members giving $500 ore more. We have 25 volunteers participating in the Museum Docent Program.



In addition, we had our second Concert in October for the FHS Future Fund and participants donated over $4,000 to our Future Fund after expenses. The reception at the Freedom Gallery and the buffet Dinner and performance with "Darlin Corey" at the Town Hall was a huge success. Special thanks to Ed Barosky, the FHS VP and Concert Coordinator and Barbara McEvoy for the reception space. A huge thank you to the 2024 concert sponsors: G. W. Brooks & Son, Gerard Constantin Real Estate, Glenn Kemper, Caterer, the Freedom Gallery and Vingard Winery from New Boston, NH.

We continued to celebrate Old Home Week with expanded Museum opening hours, a float in the Old Home Week Parade, and Margie's Lunch Event with 75 attendees. Our gigantic Yard Sale on October 12th was a huge success and turned out to be a major community event raising over $4,500 which supports our annual programs at the Freedom Historical Society.

A unique collaboration was created for the 2024 FHS Exhibit on Effingham Falls

The Freedom and Effingham Historical Societies present

2024 Exhibits on The History of Effingham Falls



The Freedom and Effingham Historical Societies have joined efforts to develop two new unique and exciting exhibits that feature the industries, heritage, and events of "The Falls." Please join us as we take visitors on a stroll through museum displays that tell the stories of the historic Town of Effingham, and the dynamic events of the past that created the Town of Freedom.

Freedom Historical Society & Effingham Historical Society
Museum hours:
May 25 – October 12, 2024

Wednesdays 10 AM to 12 Noon
Saturdays 10 AM to 2 PM

See the Interesting/Informative Displays that Reunite Two Towns in 2024

Freedom Historical Society
28 Old Portland Road
Freedom, NH
Phone: (603) 662-2839
FHSociety28@gmail.com

Effingham Historical Society
1014 Province Lake Road
Effingham, NH
Phone: (603) 539-6715
effinghamnhhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Developing additional educational tools: The 2025 FHS Calendar was created to be a companion guide to this exhibit on Effingham Falls and sells for $20.

This Effingham Falls Exhibit will be refreshed in 2025 with new, updated research and photographs. The 2025 Grand Opening will be on Saturday, May 24th.

The 2024 Exhibit focusing on the History of Effingham Falls or Freedom's Lower Village includes 9 displays:

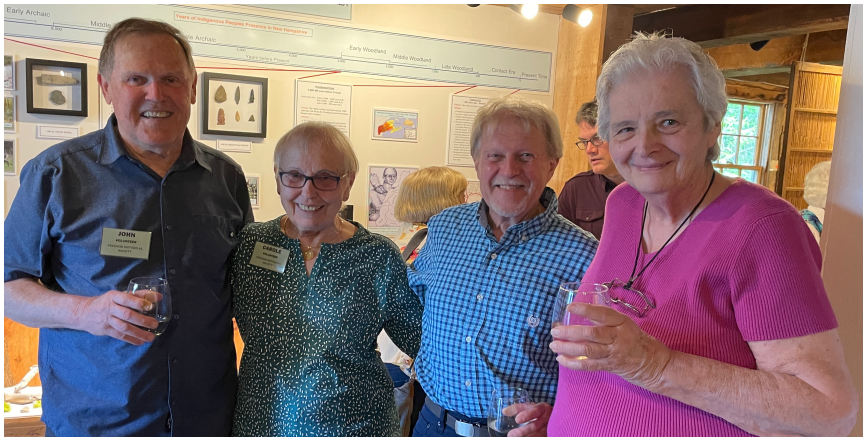
1. Native American artifacts from the Ossipee River
2. Mills on Freedom's side of the Ossipee River
3. The Ossipee Lake Dam
4. 4 Development schemes for the Ossipee River Corridor
5. Stores on the Freedom side of Effingham Falls
6. Bridges across the Ossipee River
7. Houses/families on Freedom side of Effingham Falls
8. The origins of Freedom, NH
9. A close call – the Great Fire of 1947

Exhibit on the History of Effingham Falls - *Couldn't Have Happened Without Volunteer Dedication!*

First, a special recognition to the Effingham Historical Society, including President Bill Talor and Vice President Jan Smith for their support of the idea, and especially to Jason Earle for his dedication to the joint effort and his tireless research that helped both organizations! According to The New Hampshire Historical Society, the special partnership between the Freedom and Effingham created an interesting exhibit that demonstrates the effectiveness of cooperation among State historical societies.

Many Freedom volunteers were essential to developing the displays that highlighted the exhibit on the Freedom side of Effingham Falls. Special thanks go out to: David Trook, Moira Epps, Michele Keenan, Noel Quinton, Carole and Brian Taylor, Linda Habif, Barbara Hall-Sitkberg, Roberta MacCarthy, Pam Keith, Janice Zecher, Barbara McEvoy, Michael Gaudette and John Shipman. Also, a huge thanks to the Nason, Godfrey, Hall and Stokes families; long-time residents of Effingham Falls that donated special items and memories that made the exhibit possible.

May 23rd the Museum Opening Reception for Exhibit Volunteers and Lifetime Members.



John Shipman & Carole Taylor from FHS & Bill Taylor & Jan Smith from Effingham

Continue to increase Research and Build the Museum Collection



A unique display of indigenous artifacts from the Ossipee River is exhibited at the entrance to the the FHS Museum. These artifacts collected more than 50-70 years ago along the Long Sands area of Ossipee Lake and on the Ossipee River near the Route 153 bridge in Freedom were donated to the Freedom Historical Society from the Stokes Family. These artifacts include several projectile heads, a few stone tools and some pottery shards. These artifacts were examined by the State Archeologist for quality and dating. John Shipman is the FHS Display Coordinator.

New Acquisitions continued to be a popular display in The Allard House

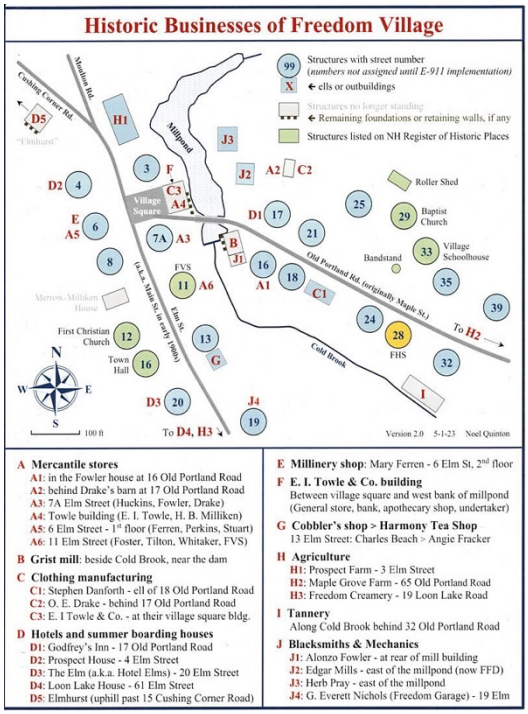
The FHS receives 10-20 new donations a year and they are researched and displayed in the Allard House. The new items are reviewed, researched, documented and added to the collection.
This year we received two large donations of archival materials: a large donation of photographs, letters, and house artifacts from from Joe Maloof/the Nason and Towle Families on Scarboro Road and books and genealogical records from the Malvesta Family of Eaton through Nadine Chapman.
Below are samples from this year's exhibit: a 2024 Signature Quilt donated by , and a painting of a farmhouse on Scarboro Road where the Nason's and Towle's lived donated by Joe Maloof.

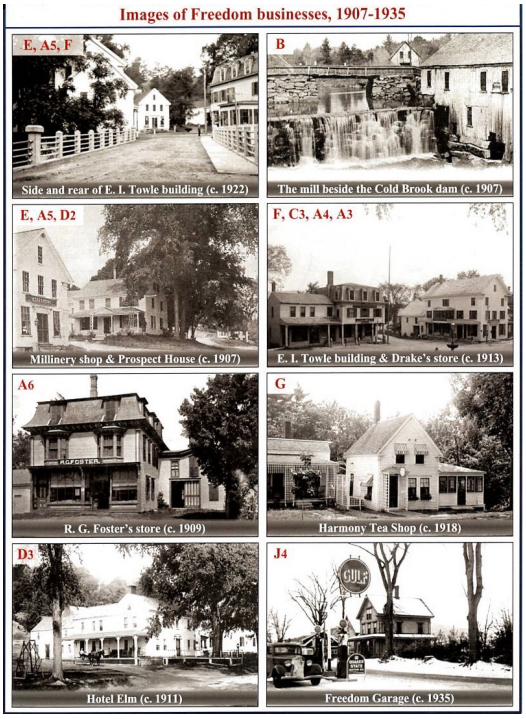




WALKING Tours of Historic Freedom Village continued to be an important service to the community.

This year we promoted the tours during Freedom special community events: Ducky Day, Old Home Week, Labor Day Weekend, and upon request.



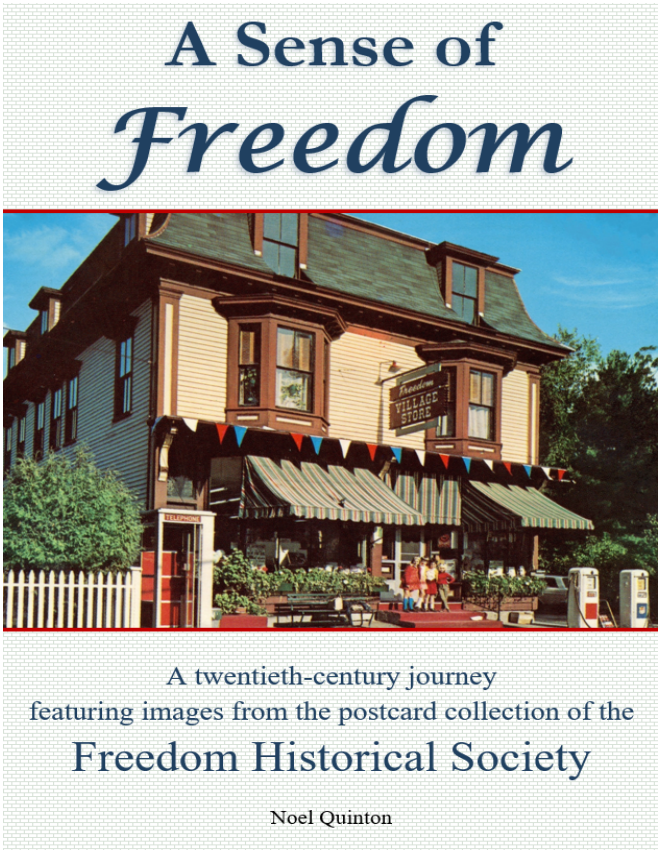




A New FHS Publication in 2024…. a huge success

Life time FHS member and avid postcard collector, Noel Quinton, wrote this book featuring images from the postcard collection of the Freedom Historical Society. It was printed by Minuteman Press. The total cost of this publication was $3,963 for 317 copies. We have sold 136 books and we have paid for the publication. There are 154 books remaining to sell. All books sold from this point forward is profit for FHS supporting our Annual Operating Budget.





Thanks to our Board Member and Facilities Coordinator, Michael Gaudette, 2024 was a very successful year for updating our facilities.

We installed a new Septic System for the Allard House and Works Barn, updated and replaced the Museum Exhibit Lighting, and are putting the finishing touches on the completion of the Climate Control Room.

We raised over $23,000 for the Septic System Project which is a new state-of-the-art AeroFin system with a passive waster water treatment system. We also renovated the bathroom for year-round use.

