FREEDOM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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October 2026 Newsletter

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Spooky Halloween night sky over FHS

Join us on
October 21 at 7 PM at the Freedom Town Hall



Step back in time with local historian Noel Quinton, a Lifetime Member of the Freedom Historical Society and a longtime collector of historic postcards and images, on Wednesday, October 21, at 7:00 PM at the Freedom Town Hall. Noel will present a newly created nostalgic tour of Southern Carroll County, using historic photographs, postcards, and other visual sources to reveal how the area looked during the early years of the 1900s.

The presentation offers a fascinating glimpse of the buildings, businesses, streets, and places that mattered to earlier generations. They also invite us to consider how and why the landscape around us changes over time.

If you enjoyed Noel's book, "A Sense of Freedom", you won't want to miss this new presentation. Join us for a journey into the past through scenes from Effingham, Wakefield, Brookfield, Wolfeboro, Tuftonboro, Moultonborough, Sandwich, Tamworth, Madison, Eaton, and Ossipee.

Come see Southern Carroll County as it once was—and perhaps recognize a few places you never knew were there.

Join us on Wednesday, October 21 at 7 PM at the Freedom Town Hall. The program is free and refreshments are served.

Freedom's Revolutionary History with Moses Harmon - Patriot, Pioneer, and Patriarch

The story of the American Revolution is often told through the grand actions of generals and statesmen, but in this case it was carried on the shoulders of a teenager from a small New England town. Moses Harmon's life is a remarkable testament to the endurance required to birth a new nation.

Moses was born on May 9, 1759 in the coastal community of Scarborough, Maine—a region that was then a rugged, heavily forested eastern frontier of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He was born to James Harmon and Elizabeth Small, growing up in an era when daily life revolved around the grueling physical labor of carving farms out of the wilderness and navigating the political tensions.

By the time the colonies erupted into open war in 1775, Scarborough was a hotbed of Patriot sentiment. Young Moses watched as older neighbors and relatives answered the call to arms. On February 15, 1777, at the age of seventeen, Moses signed his name to the Patriot cause.

Before he could even march, Moses spent over two months waiting for the harsh New England winter to break. Military logs show he was allotted exactly 71 rations to sustain him through those lean weeks of winter. Finally, on April 26, 1777, his regiment and Moses was assigned to the 15th Massachusetts Regiment (also serving time in the 3rd Cumberland County Regiment), marching under Captains John Skilling, Clark, and Samuel Thomes.

Moses's introduction to combat was in the wilderness of upstate New York. His first major assignment took him to Fort Ticonderoga, the strategic gateway of the north. In July 1777, British General John Burgoyne launched a massive invasion from Canada designed to cut New England off from the rest of the colonies. Moses was thrust directly into the desperate American defense and the chaotic, muddy retreat into the woods as the British captured the fort. This exhausting northern campaign directly set the stage for the resounding American victory at Saratoga later that autumn, forcing Burgoyne's entire army to surrender.

When Moses arrived at Valley Forge on December 19, 1777, there was no city—only snow and bare hills. Alongside 12,000 other soldiers, Moses had to build his own shelter from scratch. He lived in a cramped, 14-by-16-foot log cabin shared with nearly a dozen others. Because of severe supply chain failures, the men went days without meat, surviving on "firecakes"—a tasteless paste of flour and water baked over stones.

Typhoid, jaundice, and dysentery ravaged the huts, and nearly 2,000 of Moses's campmates died of disease before spring. Moses watched his friends perish. Under the relentless drilling of Prussian Baron von Steuben, Moses and his fellow survivors learned to march, bayonet, and maneuver.

The newly professional Continental Army emerged from Valley Forge in pursuit of the British across New Jersey. On June 28, 1778, Moses was thrust into the Battle of Monmouth. If Valley Forge was freezing, Monmouth was a living furnace. The battle was fought in suffocating, record-breaking heat that soared past 100°F. Dozens of soldiers on both sides dropped dead of heatstroke without ever receiving a wound. Thanks to the training they received at Valley Forge, Moses's line held firm against British regulars, proving to the world that the Americans could stand toe-to-toe with the finest army on earth.

By March 1779, Moses's steadfastness earned him a crucial assignment. Official military muster rolls report him as being "on command at the lines" at West Point, New York. West Point was the most critical defensive position in America—a heavily fortified cliffside overlooking an S-curve in the Hudson River. Moses was tasked with guarding this vital bottleneck against British warships and terrestrial spies.

Moses's military account was credited through December 31, 1779. Having given nearly three years of his youth to the birth of a free republic, the twenty-year-old veteran walked back home to Scarborough and traded his musket for a plow.

On December 27, 1781, just a few months after the British surrender at Yorktown, Moses married Sarah McKenney in Scarborough. Together they set out to build a family. Over the next two decades, their home filled with the laughter and energy of seven children:

- **Daniel Harmon (Born August 11, 1786) – A twin**
- **Sarah Harmon (Born August 11, 1786) – A twin**
- **Benjamin Harmon (Born 1785)**
- **Phineas Harmon (Born 1788)**
- **Betsey Harmon (Born 1791)**
- **Jane Harmon (Birth date unrecorded)**
- **Hannah Harmon (Birth date unrecorded)**

For thirty years, Moses and Sarah raised their children and farmed the rocky coastal soil of Scarborough. However, the pioneer spirit remained strong in Moses. In 1811, with his children largely grown and a new chapter beckoning, Moses moved his family inland across the state border to the quiet, rolling hills of Freedom, New Hampshire.

In Freedom he lived a remarkably long life, surviving to see his children grow, grandchildren born, and the tiny confederation of thirteen colonies expand into a sweeping, transcontinental nation.

Moses passed away on May 27, 1841, at the age of 82. He is believed to have been laid to rest in Durgin Cemetery in Freedom.

Shawtown - Freedom's Ghost Town - written by Dick and Nancy Pascoe

Two hundred years ago, SHAWTOWN was a thriving town of some 100 inhabitants. These early settlers were largely of English descent and emigrated here to the wilderness from the coastal towns.

The first recorded opening and permanent settlement was by Amos Towle. This was known as Shaw Town, and at one time 12 families resided here requiring their own district school for 70 students .. Because of the abundance of white oak, these early people were able to manufacture barrel shook. As the land was cleared, sizeable farms replaced the once dense woodland. Modern methods of manufacture brought a decrease in the demand for wooden barrels, hence industry drew the young people of the community to the cities.

The first road conducted through freedom was the one known as the Old Eaton Road, leading through Ossipee Pocket, at the lower end of Ossipee Lake through SHAWTOWN and Madison -to Pequaket· (now Conway).

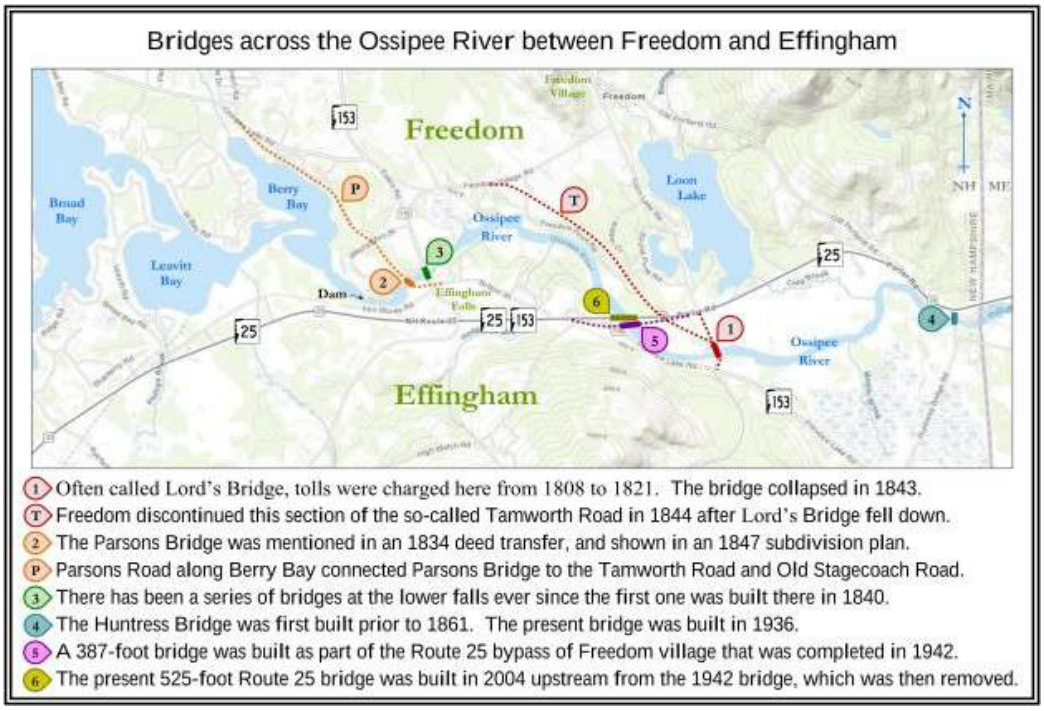
Great grandfather Pascoe came to this area to work in the lead mine. He married a French Canadian and settled at the head of Ossipee Lake in 1871. In 1904, he installed the first electricity known around here. The old leadmine road, known also as the Eaton Road, or Pequoket Trail, is the chaned roadway next to the SHAWTOWN sign opposite the Camp Huckins Road. It was on this old road that Grandfather Pascoe saw, and killed with an axe, one of the first deer to be seen in this area after many, many years. He was fourteen years old at the time and driving a team of oxen.

As the younger people moved away, the old people remained, slowly decreasing in number through sickness and age. As their owners became fewer, the once proud farms could no longer hold beck the creeping growth of the forests. The homes disappeared either through fire or rotting from neglect, until at this time the only evidence of the once thriving settlement are a few stone walls, stone bridges, cellar holes, and trails. The apple trees, grape vines, roses and lilacs are now growing wild.

Among the early names found in this area were Durgin, Hurd, Harmon, Lord, Thurston, Stokes, Eldridge, Stacy, Towle, Kennett, and Shaw. Hence, the name SHAWTOWN comes from one of the first family settler.

For more about Shawtown, log onto our website at www.freedomhistoricalsociety.org. On the right side of the home page, click on "History", then "Freedom History Videos" to see Carol Foord's informative walk through Shawtown. Families with the name of Shaw, Huckins, Durgin, Stokes, Ward, Eldridge, Stacy, Tyler and Harmon settled in Shawtown, the former town of Ossipee Gore in the early 1800's, which became North Effingham and later Freedom.

Bridges Across the Ossipee River



Timeline of bridges over the Ossipee River

1790 - John Costelloe, owner of the iron works on the Effingham bank of the Ossipee River, starts building a bridge at a site between the present Route 25 bridge and the Huntress bridge. The location is chosen because the northeast spur of Green Mountain runs to the river's edge and is considered too much of an obstacle to be traversed by a road. (Blasting in the 1800s creates room for the present Route 153 to go past the spur.) Costelloe probably uses iron from his foundry to strengthen the timber bridge.

1795 - Costelloe dies, leaving the bridge unfinished. His stepson Isaac Lord leads the effort to complete it, so it becomes known by his name.
1808 - The New Hampshire legislature incorporates Isaac Lord and five others as proprietors of the Ossipee Bridge and grants them the right to charge tolls to the people, conveyances and animals that cross it.
1821 - The town of Effingham purchases Lord's bridge, after which tolls are no longer charged.
1834 - A deed transfer refers to the Parsons bridge, located upstream from the present Route 153 bridge.
1839 - Freedom voters approve the building of a new bridge halfway across the Ossipee River at Iron Works Falls and raise the sum of $250 to do so. Construction will occur below the mills, at a site previously chosen by a committee consisting of Amos Towle, Jr., Joseph Bennett and Ezekiel Andrews.
1840 - The first wooden bridge at the lower falls is completed, at a location close to the present Route 153 bridge. The state repeals the charter of the proprietors of Lord's bridge (the former toll bridge).
1843 - Lord's bridge collapses.
1847 - A subdivision plan for the Locke property on the Freedom bank of the Ossipee River shows the "new bridge" near the location of the present Route 153 bridge, as well as the "old bridge" upstream toward the iron works site.
1861 - H. F. Walling's map of Carroll County shows just one bridge at Iron Works Falls, as well as one at Huntress Falls just west of the New Hampshire-Maine state boundary. In the following years, Iron Works Falls becomes known as Effingham Falls.
1910 - The wooden bridge at Effingham Falls is replaced by a new two-span steel Warren pony truss bridge built by the United Construction Company of Albany, NY. Freedom and Effingham split the costs of material, labor and hauling for the spans and center pier.
1920 - The Huntress bridge is rebuilt.
1936 - Historic floods in March threaten bridges across New England. The Effingham Falls bridge withstands the challenge, but the Huntress bridge does not. Later that year it is replaced by a new 136-foot single-span steel through truss bridge constructed by the American Bridge Company.
1942 - Vehicles traveling on Route 25 begin using a new bypass of Freedom village completed by New Hampshire's Highway Department. The new road crosses the Ossipee River on a 387-foot five-span steel bridge.
1955 - The bridge at Effingham Falls is replaced with the present 242-foot three-span structure. 1994 - The Huntress bridge is rehabilitated.
2001 - The Route 153 bridge at Effingham Falls is rehabilitated.
2004 - The Route 25 bridge is replaced with the present 525-foot three-span structure just upstream from the 1942 bridge.

Check out our latest Acquisition!

A collection of Freedom Fire Department items belonging to resident Cubby Brooks, former Fire Chief for the Town of Freedom. Thank You Cubby!!













Don't forget our yard sale on October 10 & 11

Freedom Historical Society's annual yard sale will be held this year on Saturday, October 10th from 9am - 3pm, and Sunday October 11th from 9am - 1pm. Members and community volunteers are organizing this event to help raise funds for the Freedom Historical Society. Items for sale will include furniture, kitchenware, glassware, pottery, household items, tools, artwork, and books. There will be lots of treasures, household goods, and good cheer! The last day the Museum is open to the public in 2026 will be Saturday, October 11. Prior to the official yard sale event, the FHS will be open for drop-off donations on Wednesday afternoon, October 7th from 1-4 pm Please no electronics, large appliances, microwaves, or bed frames and mattresses.

Trick-or-Treat at FHS

Stop by and see us on Halloween night for a treat!









You're Invited! Celebrate 61 Years of Freedom History at the FHS Annual Meeting on November 5

Save this date and join friends, neighbors, and history enthusiasts for the **Freedom Historical Society Annual Meeting**!

When: Wednesday, November 5th at 6:00 PM
Where: Freedom Town Hall

Whether you've been a member for decades or are simply curious about our town's rich past, we'd love to have you with us as we celebrate 61 years of preserving Freedom's stories—and look ahead to shaping our next decade together.

Evening Highlights

- **6:00 PM – Community Potluck Supper:** Bring your favorite main dish, side, or salad to share as we catch up over a warm meal.
- **7:00 PM – Annual Meeting & Presentation:** Hear exciting updates on recent projects, vote in our officer elections, and enjoy a brief presentation from our Co-Presidents.

Come connect with your community, share your ideas for our 2027 plans, and celebrate the local history that brings us all together. Everyone is welcome—we can't wait to see you there!

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!! We are always looking for photos of Freedom people and events like Halloween events from the past. You can email photos to us a fhsociety@gmail.com. It is helpful if you can identify who is in the photo.

This Month Become a New Member or Renew Your Membership

The Freedom Historical Society's mission to save, preserve, and share Freedom's history depends on membership dues and donations from people like you. To our members, we say thank you for your commitment. And to all our other friends who share our love of Freedom, we invite you to join the FHS today by sending your payment to FHS PO Box 548, Freedom, NH 03836.

Thank you to these members who have joined, renewed and donated in 2026

Timothy Allison, Margie Amico, Edward Barosky, Karen Beatty, Jill Bockman, Kareen Briggs, Jayne Britton, G. W. Brooks, Pauline Brooks, Brandy Buttrick, Karrie Buttrick, Dianne Cahill, William Carney, Nadine Chapman, Eugene Corbett, Martine Culbertson, Anne Cunningham, Alice Custard, Maureen Elliot, Beth Earle, Peter Earle, Lauie Eisener, Kevin Eisener, Moira Epps, Nancy Essex, Bill Essex, Anne Furtado, Norman Furtado, Michael Gaudette, Anne Gaudette, William Grimm, Patricia Goos, Robert Goos, Michael Gormick, John Habif, Mary Habif, Linda Habif, Karen Hatch, Rob Hatch, Pat Hatfield, Holly Haynes, Bruce Howlett, June Howlett, Don Johnson, Janet Johnson, Gale Johnsen, Jane Johnson, Pam Keith, David Kemper, Lucy Kendall, Heather Kiley, Michael Kowal, Melissa Labonte, Kathie Lange, Felicia Ledgard, Dann Lewis, Jane Luke, Roberta MacCarthy, Linda Mailhot, Ellen Many, Richard Many, Sylvia Manley, John Manley, Susan Marks, Ramon Marks, Hope McGowan, Caroline Marston, Greg Marston, Maureen McCracken, Barbara McEvoy, Karen Merriam, Sharon Meyer, Nettie Nason, Nils Nordberg, CMS R.A. Oram, Jane Nylander, Richard Nylander, Anne Packard, Emily Phillips. Nancy Phinney, Robert Phinney, Arthur Poor, Anne Quinton, Noel Quinton, Laura Robinson, Marcia Santner, Nancy Seabury, Jody Shallene, Deborah Shadd, John Shipman, Jan Smith, Carol Stokes, Lauren Stoddard, Caroline Stone, Kerri St.Jean, Sarah Tabor, Carole Taylor, Brian Taylor, Kyle Thomas, Diana Thurston, Steve Thurston, Laura Thomson, Maynard Thomson, Marcia Trook, David Trook, Paul Wheeler, Lisa Wheeler, David Smith, Jan Smith, Joanne Vienneau, Gary Ward, Rachel Ward, Charles Watts, Katherine Watts, Laurie Wells, Lucy Works, Marjorie Works, Janice Zecher