

Conway Historical Society

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The President's Corner

Looking out our dining room window the grass is becoming exposed to bright sunshine. And then, three days later, there were 4 inches of "partly cloudy" on the ground covering every blade of grass. Not to worry though as temperatures will rise (albeit slowly) and March will give way to a flowery April.

Over the winter months when snow did indeed cover everything, the inner workings of your Society have been diligently working. The most obvious efforts have been the construction of our northwesterly corner of the Eastman Lord House outside deck (nee fire escape). We've followed the construction from the concrete pillars being delivered to a concrete landing being poured, to the deck being installed. When it is warm enough Bergeron Construction and Landscaping will break through the old doorway, re-frame the opening, and install a proper fire door. Inside work has also been on their list which includes a fire break between the older portion of the house and the 'barn' section. Also included are two staircase enclosures being constructed but you can't see that work from the outside. The new attic floor is last, and when completed will provide CHS with about 500 square feet of dry storage for artifacts and the like.

Our Curator, Bob Cottrell, has continued his work bringing programs to various organizations in concert with his position at the Library's Henney History Room. Bob's report can be found later in this newsletter.

Your board has been active doing the normal and not so exciting work: paying bills, supporting our renters, keeping the heat on, etc. We've also discussed funding improvements to the Old Firehouse meeting room by adding a new projector mount and screen system to improve the quality of our presentations. We will share expenses for this project with the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust, as we will both benefit by the improvements.

April Program

The program for April 12th will be a presentation by Ken Rancourt and Brian Wiggin showing some of the photographs in our collection. These include some by Bruce Bedford, Dick Smith, and Harvey and Patty Blake, as well as others.

We are in the process of digitizing these pictures to make them accessible on the web. Members will recognize many of the places and people that will be shown.

Upcoming:

- April 12** **Photographs in the Collections of Conway Historical Society** by Ken Rancourt and Brian Wiggin
- **May 3** **Sterling and Stark Families of Conway** by Deb and Jeff Sterling
- June 14** **Raised Relief: Three Dimensional Maps of the White Mountains** by Dave Govatski

Save the dates

Conway Historical Society monthly program is the second Tuesday of each month. Meetings and presentations will be held at the Old Firehouse in Conway village, beginning at 7:00 P.M., and are open to the public.

If anyone has an idea for an upcoming program that would be of interest to you, please contact Ken Rancourt. If you know of someone who would be willing to present a program, also please contact Ken Rancourt.

****Note change of date due to travel constraints of the presenters.**

The President's Corner (From Page 1)

We've also made the jump to the 21st century and purchased a high quality digital scanning system to help catalogue and display our many historical slides, negatives, and documents. More details on this project will be presented at our first members' meeting in April, and below later in this newsletter.

As winter wears away we are all looking forward to a busy summer schedule of presentations honoring the history of the local area and having some time together. Some of the programs we've lined up so far include a look at the Sterling and Stark families of Conway and their contribution to the early history of Conway back in Revolutionary War times. We'll also look at some early maps of the area and see what early settlers 'thought' was the lay of the land – not exactly so. We'll also take a look at the area around Conway Lake (also known as Walkers Pond if you are so inclined) to see how that area developed and what enterprises took place there. The development of the Eastern Slope Inn over the years, from what was once called the Randall House, will be discussed later this year. Many local residents have worked at the Inn over the years, and it has played, and continues to play, an important role in our community, especially as it goes on the Historic Register.

Don't forget our August Annual Picnic which, for the first time, will be held at the Old Firehouse! With Pequawket Pond in the background, and some lawn activities planned, it should be a great time--more on that as time gets closer. So, as snow melts away we can open our doors and windows and let the winter air out, and the spring air in!

Again at my window I can see the squirrels beginning to emerge from their winter hiding places. They are climbing up and down the trees, chasing each other, and sometimes 'catching' each other. It doesn't take too much imagination to understand that there may be more young squirrels attacking our bird feeders in future months! And so it goes....

Curator's Report

While work on the Eastman Lord House continues, we have also been working inside on the collection. In previous curator reports I have outlined the work done on artworks, photos, papers and textiles which we have done in that order due to the principle of "inherent vice."

Now that those items have been addressed, we have been working on items based on "interpretive themes" as requested by our patrons or planned for our outreach programs with schools and community groups.

With the support and coordination of the Conway Public Library we have been sharing our collection through hands-on educational programs for both students and seniors. We also have been sharing our collections virtually and continue to develop blogs, cell phone history tours and "reel history" with the support of Valley Vision.

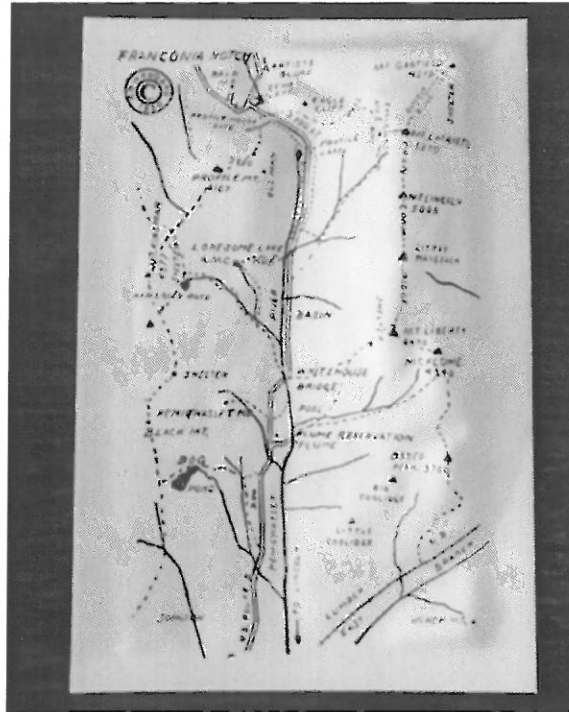
When we can, we select items that help us explore a theme. We have done programs on comparing the Abenaki and early European settler cultures as well as the use of natural resources, and technological change over time. Around Thanksgiving we did a program on celebrating the end of autumn and preparing for winter. Our current program explores how our ancestors survived the winter.

We have also been working with the Conway Historical District Commission, NHDHR Conway survey and other historic building information now available online. Contact us to research your house or business building.

We always welcome our members and friends to share their memories and mementos with the community and to share your stories and help us preserve them for future generations.

Upcoming Programs

PLEASE NOTE: The program for May will be on May 3rd due to travel constraints of the presenters. This program will include information about the Sterling and Stark families of Conway. After 5 years of research, with help from The Sons of the American Revolution, The Daughters of the American Revolution and other local historians, the family was able to earn several memorial plaques for Hugh Sterling. The ceremony was held at the cemetery on Gulf Road last October.



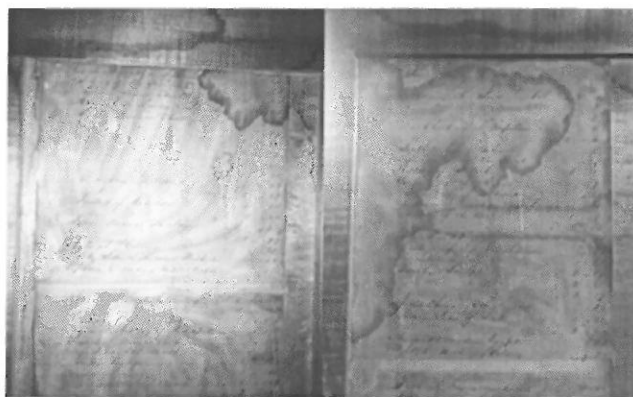
The June program will be **Raised Relief: Three Dimensional Maps of the White Mountains**, by Dave Govatski. This program features the story of Raised Relief maps, which are three-dimensional representations of a portion of the Earth's surface. These maps have a long history of use, dating back over 2,000-years to China's Qin and Han dynasties. We will review the history of relief maps in our region, starting with the 1872 George Snow Relief Map of the White Mountains. Several years later, following that commercial success, came the Relief Map of the White Mountains by Joseph Schedler. We will focus on the work of Rodney Woodard, who lived in the Conway area for many years. In 1931, Rodney Woodard working at Pinkham Notch Camp for the A. M. C., developed a unique relief map. I will display Woodard's maps and the original molds used to make these maps. Also, in the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps produced several raised relief maps of the White Mountains. A sample of their work is on permanent display at the Saco Ranger Station. We will also look at more current raised relief maps on display around the White Mountains, including the famous Rauda Map at the Pinkham Notch Camp and other examples.

The July 12th program will be about the history of Conway Lake (or Walkers Pond). August 9th will be our Annual Picnic, so save the date. September 13th will be the history of the Eastern Slope Inn. We hope you will be able to attend each of these programs.

Renovation Pictures



Addition of deck for fire escape



List of Library Books in Donated Cabinet

The Scanning Project

When the planning stage of the construction work at the ELH began we walked through the rooms that were to be disturbed. It immediately became apparent that CHS had a treasure trove of photographic items from times past. We've also been thinking of placing our accessioned items (through PastPerfect) on the web so others can share our history. Then mid-winter, we were approached by Keith Simpson who is an archivist and lives down in Wolfeboro. Keith is archiving some of the Bruce Bedford photos from the period when Bruce was the local newspaper reporter, and a great fraction of which are located in our files. Noting the size of the Bedford collection, and being aware of the other photographic documentation we have (in boxes, file cabinets, and carousels) from Smith, Blake, Pease, and others, your board decided to move ahead with a proposal from Keith to take on the project in-house. That of course means that each item must be placed in the scanner, a few buttons are pushed, and 'walah' you get a digital image of the item. You can then deal with the image appropriately, and publish it or use it as a research item, or in a presentation.

This also requires some time! We are hoping that, once we get all the equipment in place and operating correctly, we can have members of CHS volunteer to help scan our items. If we are lucky, volunteers can also help identify the content of the photo, whether it be people, the location, or the building involved. There is no 'heavy lifting' involved, and operating the scanner really is just a matter of pushing some buttons. The system will be located in The Old Firehouse CHS office where it is warm and dry. We'll move a number of the files over there later this spring and set up a nice work station. Once that is all complete we'll just need some willing volunteers!!

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Conway Historical Society

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CHS Newsletter

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CHS Membership Dues are \$20 per person per year

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