

PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

www.PlymouthNHhistory.org

2024–2025

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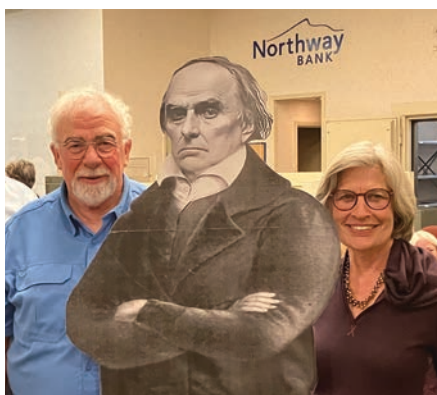
PO Box 603, Plymouth, NH 03264

Plymouth Historical Museum & Memory House

In the Old Webster Courthouse
Tucked behind Town Hall
Court Street, Plymouth
Open Saturdays 10:00–1:00
Mid-May–Mid-December
and by chance or appointment

SCRAPBOOK

An Annual Review of the Plymouth Historical Society — Autumn 2025



*Terry Fifield, Daniel Webster, and
Kathy Kelsey visit Northway Bank.*

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT —

Reflecting on the past year and anticipating the year ahead, I take great pride in the many efforts and accomplishments of the Plymouth Historical Society (PHS), while holding both concern and optimism for the path before us.

We started the year considering the very generous offer of a building, Northway Bank, as a larger home (we are short on space for our ever-growing archives).

After much research and thoughtful deliberation, we decided to remain in our current home, maintaining our modest identity, staying focused on our mission at hand.

PHS benefits from a great Board and a broad network of partners, associates, and friends, many with deep roots in Plymouth.

Kathy Kelsey, Lisa Lundari, and Mary Baldwin (now a past board member) stand out as dynamos and productive board members. With Lisa's design and the help of Mary and Judy Faran (PHS docent and member of the Bridgewater Historical Society), this trio created a marvelous model of the Old Webster Courthouse as an entry in last year's Christmas Parade.

Louise McCormack's efforts through her interview series, *Memories of Plymouth*, continued this year. The number of individuals interviewed now exceeds 100. A highlight of this season was an interview with Judy and Paul Floyd. (Judy helped spark the founding of PHS with Rachel Keniston and Audrey O'Neill back in 1973.)

Louise and outgoing Board member John Christ have offered historic walking tours throughout the summer, integrating with Granite State Railway's scenic trips to Plymouth in July and August.

Two new board members have joined us this year, Abby Batchelder, who is organizing our retail sales, and Fran Smith, who has taken on the role of PHS Treasurer.

Partnerships are integral to PHS's work. This year we worked with a variety of local and regional partners.

- At the heart of PHS is our relationship with the **Young Ladies Library Association (YLLA)**, the owners and stewards of the Old Webster Courthouse, home to the Plymouth Historical Museum and Memory House.
- We worked with the **Town of Plymouth, Plymouth Rotary Club**, and the **Newmont Military Band** in the production of the Keniston Band Concert on the Common in June.
- We cross promote our events with **Pease Public Library** as our audiences overlap in their interests. Pease also stepped up in providing a new home for the scale model of the historic Smith Covered Bridge, formerly housed at Northway Bank.
- **Dressers Unlimited** featured our retail items during the holidays, expanding access beyond our limited museum hours.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Continued

- We worked collaboratively with The Museum of the White Mountains (MWM) in creating our exhibit, *Plymouth at the Crossroads*, which dovetailed with their exhibit, *The White Mountains: A Crossroads*, as well as the hosted Smithsonian exhibit, *Crossroads: Change in Rural America*.

I offer a special note of gratitude to **Meghan Doherty, MWM Director**, who has recently moved on to new opportunities in her career. She will be missed.

- We look forward to working with the **Town of Plymouth, NH Humanities**, and other community partners yet to be determined as we collectively commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the founding of our country.

The mutual support and sharing of resources and expertise adds value to all those involved and benefit our community.

As we plan our activities and events for 2026, we invite and encourage you to support PHS with your interest, participation, and donations. As an organization that values accurate historical information, PHS is threatened by recent trends away from the humanities and an empirically based understanding of our history. We are committed to objectivity and fact-based storytelling as we preserve and share our history. This year we have seen funds stripped from the National Endowment for the Humanities. (NEH). NEH, through its support of NH Humanities, has for years supported our speaker series. We will feel the reduction in funding in 2026 and the years ahead.

Looking forward, it is our hope that we continue to act as a hub for people interested in learning about Plymouth's history and how it informs and underpins the community we are today and the community we wish to be in the future. We know that you share our passion for Plymouth and New Hampshire's rich traditions of freedom and independent thought. We hope you will support the work of The Plymouth Historical Society through your donations and service. We encourage you to join our efforts.

Terry Fifield, President
Plymouth Historical Society

YOU'RE INVITED —

PHS Annual Meeting Wednesday, Oct. 22 Hauntings, NEW Old History, and Apple Crisp!

Start the evening with some seasonal fun! Prior to our Annual Meeting, Pease Public Library and Lamson Library and Learning Commons invite you to join them at 5:00 PM for a **Campus Haunts Walking Tour**. Led by the PSU Paranormal Research Club, the tour will begin at the Silver Center and last about an hour, making stops at various buildings purported to be the site of paranormal activities.

After the tour, stroll down to the Old Webster Courthouse and attend our **Annual Meeting** at 6:00 PM. Kicking off the evening will be Judy Faran (a descendant of Plymouth founding father, Col. David Webster) who will share with us some information which recently came to light, shifting our knowledge about one of the tenets of Plymouth's town history. This will be followed by a brief business meeting, including voting for new board members.

We hope you will stay after the meeting to enjoy apple crisp, visit with old friends, and ask questions, share ideas and make suggestions about our work, activities, projects and presentations.

This is also a great opportunity to talk to a Board member if you have any interest in donating items to the archives, volunteering as a docent, joining a committee, or becoming a board member. While knowledge of Plymouth is appreciated, it is not necessary to join our efforts.

LAST EVENT OF PHS's 50TH — OWC Travels Down Main Street — Again



The last event of our 50th Anniversary was an entry in the 2024 Hometown Holiday Celebration Parade. Led by a contingent on foot, the "Old Webster Courthouse," illuminated and decked out for the holidays, made its way down Main Street, much like the real building did when it was moved from south Main Street to its current site.

BRINGING HISTORY TO YOU — Our 2025 Program Season

Our Program Committee works diligently to plan a varied selection of presentations throughout the year, including topics of local interest as well as a broader historical view.

The committee reaches out to the community at large, requesting individuals to share their knowledge and expertise with our audiences. In addition, we also rely on New Hampshire Humanities (NHH) as a source for some of our presentations. They not only gather a body of wonderful speakers, they have also provided generous grants to offset the cost of these programs, with organizations only having to cover the speaker's mileage expenses. As Terry mentioned, recent cuts to the National Endowment for the Humanities have trickled down, impacting NHH, and forcing them to reduce funding for their programs. This means that PHS will now have to meet revised hosting qualifications as well as bear additional expenses to continue bringing these programs to the community. We plan on doing our best to support NHH and to continue bringing these presentations to you.

2025 Presentations included:

APRIL — The Village at Livermore Falls

Nadine Miller, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
NH Division of Historical Resources

MAY — Farming, the Fair, and 4H — Dick Flanders

JUNE — Echoes of Plymouth Concerts Past — Keniston Band Tribute Concert on the Common Jim Cheseborough & Newmont Military Band

JULY — Fun at the Crossroads —

Recreation in and around Plymouth

Panel Discussion with Mary Anne Hyde Saul,
Steve Rand, Louise Samaha McCormack, and Arline Bownes,
moderated by Marcia Schmidt Blaine

AUGUST — No Presentation

SEPTEMBER — Putting Human Faces to the Textile Industry: The Workers of Amoskeag Mills, Manchester, NH (NHH) — Robert Perreault

OCTOBER — The Evolution of Jazz: Seacoast NH's Contribution (NHH) — Charles Jennison

STILL TO COME —

Our November presentation will be an early kick-off to our 2026 year-long commemoration of the 250th Anniversary of our country's founding:

NOV. 19, 5:30 — What the Declaration of Independence Offers U.S. Social Movements (NHH) — Meg Mott

*NHH =

Program sponsored by  This presentation is made possible by
NEW HAMPSHIRE
humanities

APRIL is NH ARCHAEOLOGY MONTH!

Where Lilacs Once Bloomed

THE VILLAGE AT LIVERMORE FALLS

Presented by Nadine Miller
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, NH Division of Historical Resources

WEDNESDAY • APRIL 16 • 5:30

Discover the history and cultural landscape of the "Hollow" as the community at the river bottom was known. Mill activity at Livermore Falls in the late 1700s spawned a village, including various businesses, stores, homes, a school, and other amenities. What led to the decline and eventual demise of this once thriving village, now known only as a favorite swimming hole. Oral histories will be part of the presentation, bringing stories of the village to life!

**ECHOES OF PLYMOUTH
CONCERTS PAST**

Performed by
KENISTON BAND

WEDNESDAY • JUNE 25 • 7:00

Join us on the Plymouth Town Common for a trip back in time! John Keniston (1875-1913) was a prominent citizen of Plymouth. He was a musician, public servant, farmer, and a highly trained musician. In 1902 he established the Keniston Band, a group of talented performers who performed and served Plymouth's (and other local communities) for many years. In this concert, the Keniston Military Band, playing original period instruments, will recreate music heard over a century ago, on this very bandstand! Come and enjoy the "echoes" of Plymouth's musical past. #VYOB — Bring Your Own Blankets (or chairs)! — NHH.ORG

**Putting Human Faces
on the Textile Industry:**

The Workers of the Amoskeag
Manufacturing Company

WEDNESDAY • SEPTEMBER 24 • 5:30

This presentation is made possible by a grant from **NEW HAMPSHIRE HUMANITIES** presented by Robert Perreault

Daily life for the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company's textile worker was not easy. Robert Perreault sheds light on how people from a variety of European countries as well as from French Canada made the transition from an agrarian to an industrial society and how that change affected families, cultures, the nature of work, and relationships among workers themselves.

**What the Declaration of Independence
Offers U.S. Social Movements**

Presented by
Meg Mott

WEDNESDAY • NOVEMBER 19, 2025 • 5:30 PM

The Declaration of Independence acknowledges a most delicate right: the people's right to rebel. If the people are not happy with their government, then it is within their valuable right to "dissolve and establish" it. In 1776, that right was exercised through armed rebellion. But is that the only way to exercise that right?

In 1963, John Lewis conceived a different sort of revolution, one that would achieve the ends of freedom and liberty through non-violent means. In this "enriched revolution," he argued, current events are seen as future friends. We'll consider how the language of the Declaration guides social movements, across the political spectrum, to instigate a government that serves most fully to protect each other's valuable rights.

NEW HAMPSHIRE HUMANITIES

**FARMING,
THE FAIR,
AND 4H**

presented by Dick Flanders

WEDNESDAY • MAY 21 • 5:30

A look back at Plymouth agriculture over the years.

Early settlers of Plymouth were subsistence farmers — a few cows, pigs, or chickens and a vegetable garden for their own use. As Plymouth grew, farms expanded, granges became popular, and kids engaged in 4-H. The annual Plymouth Fair was the venue for farm folks to gather, show off their animals, and enjoy a break from the daily drudgery of farm life. Learn about the changes in local agriculture over the past 260 years and the eventual demise of the Plymouth Fair.

FUN at the CROSSROADS

RECREATION in and AROUND PLYMOUTH (1920s-1970s)

WEDNESDAY • JULY 23 • 5:30

A Panel Discussion Welcoming Audience Participation

Reminiscence about recreation and relaxation in the region from the 1920s through the 1970s. How did recreation change from the era of trains through the building of I-93? What used to happen every weekend in the gym of the old Square Elementary School? Why did Babe Ruth come to Squam? What were the thirteen nearby ski areas? When did Cannon Mountain get the Tramway? Why did kids like the manager of the old Plymouth Theater? What cabins and motels used to line Routes 3 and 25? What were the most popular "summer jobs"? These and other questions will be answered by panel members Arline Bownes, Mary Anne Hyde Saul, Steve Rand, and Louise Samaha McCormack who will also open the floor to additional comments and memories from VYU, the audience.

This is sure to be a fun event you won't want to miss.
Don't forget to bring your stories and memories as well as photos and souvenirs if you have 'em.

THE EVOLUTION OF JAZZ

WED 10/15 @ 5:30 PM

SEACOAST NH'S CONTRIBUTION

Charles Jennison

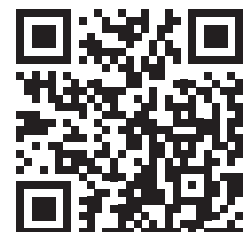
This presentation is made possible by a grant from **NEW HAMPSHIRE HUMANITIES**

In this multi-media presentation, jazz educator and performer Charles Jennison presents some of the influential players, venues and organizations that contributed to the rich and diverse jazz scene in the Seacoast area. Through photographs, recordings, and personal narratives, Charlie, an early member of the Seacoast Jazz Society, paints a colorful picture of the growth and development of this significant American art form in New Hampshire from the 1950s to the present day.

**VISIT OUR
WEBSITE IN
THE SPRING**

**For our
2026 Schedule
of Programs.**

STAY UP TO DATE
PlymouthNHhistory.org
join our email list, or
follow us on **Facebook**
for upcoming presentations,
projects, and activities.



ECHOES OF CONCERTS PAST — Newmont Military Band Performed Keniston Band Concert on the Common

The Newmont Military Band (NMB), playing original period instruments, recreated music heard over a century ago, on Plymouth's very own bandstand!

NMB Music Director, Jim Chesebrough, meticulously researched the Keniston Band, the music they performed, and the band's director, John Keniston. He selected the many of musical pieces from actual printed programs of the day.

John Keniston (1859-1931) was a prominent citizen of Plymouth. He was a surveyor, public servant, farmer, and a highly trained musician. In 1902 he established the Keniston Band, a group of talented performers who entertained and served Plymouth (and other local communities) for many years. By 1904, Keniston had arranged the construction of the now iconic bandstand on the town's Common, providing a proper venue for the band's performances.

The evening of our current day concert the weather was sheer perfection — balmy and breezy. A good sized crowd assembled their chairs and blankets on the lawn. The concert of bright marches commenced, punctuated by interesting introductions by Chesebrough, and the laughter of children weaving through the crowd. Some descendants of John Keniston were also in attendance. The music wafting from the bandstand had to compete with much more traffic noise than concerts of the day, but it was enjoyed by all, nonetheless.



GOING BACK IN TIME— Historical Walking Tours

Louise Samaha McCormack

We have been conducting walking tours for several years now. A few were conducted on The Common, for those who didn't feel up to all the walking; but most have begun and concluded at the Old Webster Courthouse, located on Court Street, tucked behind Town Hall. These tours are an hour in length, stopping at various spots along the route where history may be shared about a building, an event, or a connection to a person with import to Plymouth. Occasionally we may even visit a shop or an institution (i.e. post office), to share a bit of history. Both tourists and town folk have taken these tours and seemed to appreciate the brief overview of the town and its interesting past. Although a lot of history is provided by the guide, contributions are also welcomed from the participants, gleaned even more history to be shared.

Points of interest revealed during a tour? What is the oldest store in town? What buildings were razed in the early Sixties? What buildings comprise Plymouth's Historic District? When and why was the post office built on that site? What innovations of education developed due to the partnership between Plymouth State and the town schools? And so much MORE! Want to know the answers? Consider joining us for our walking tours next summer!

Historical Walking Tours are free and open to the public. We suggest participants wear comfortable walking shoes and bring a bottle of water and a bit of curiosity.

TODAY'S TECHNOLOGY WALKS YOU THROUGH HISTORY — PSU Intern Creates Digital Walking Tour

This year we were fortunate to work with PSU student **Ethan Savage** on his intern project to create a digital audio walking tour, similar to our in-person tours, to be accessed at any time from any place. While the tour is guided by audio prompts, it also includes a map, some old photos, and brief write ups for each stop. The tour includes nine stops of historical interest in the downtown/campus area. It begins at the Boy Scout fountain on the Common and ends at the Old Webster Courthouse, home to the Plymouth Historical Museum & Memory House. It is a fun activity to do with tween-aged children or grandchildren, or to entertain out-of-town guests.

The tour may be accessed by downloading the **izi.travel** app to your smart phone and searching for **Plymouth Historical Sites** or by visiting the link below or scanning the QR code:



<https://izi.travel/en/browse/7726ab04-c27b-4bb0-845a-1ff1ec5d2324/en>

ORAL HISTORIES — Nine Seasons of Shared Memories of Plymouth

Louise Samaha McCormack

Greetings all! We continue to invite folks from Plymouth and the surrounding communities to contribute to our Memories program. Close to a decade ago, we started to touch base with individuals who were born in Plymouth, attended local schools, and worked and/or socialized in the area. Fortunately, we have had over 100 people who were willing to share their memories with us. The videos may be watched on television via our local Pemi-Baker TV (PB-TV) station and online on YouTube.

The questions are provided to participants in advance, I review their answers with them prior to taping, and a mutually convenient date is agreed upon between the interviewee(s), me, and the videographer. Most interviews are conducted in the PB-TV studio which is located on the lower level of Pease Public Library on the corner of Russell and Highland Streets in Plymouth. Notes may be used during the interview, and pictures are encouraged to be shown during the conversation. The age range of the interviewees has been folks 70–90. Many live right in town, but some travel from quite a distance — like California!!

Participants during the ninth season

(Pictured at left, top to bottom):

- Bonnie Sleeper Sears
- John 'Jack' Nelson
- Richard 'Dick' Flanders
- Judy & Paul Floyd
- Arthur Pease
- Doug McLane.

From the beginning, the goal of this program has been to save the memories of our times in the Plymouth area. Our THANKS go out to all who have reminisced with us and to PB-TV for recording the interviews and making it possible to share with viewers who share those memories as well as younger viewers who wonder what Plymouth was like in the past..

If you, or someone you know, are interested in being interviewed, or if you would like more information before making a decision, please contact me by email or phone:

Louise Samaha McCormack
louisem@usnh.edu • 603-536-2483

WATCH

Locally: Spectrum Channel 1302

Online: YouTube "Pemi Baker TV" or scan
the QR code with your smartphone



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT — Mary Batchelder Baldwin



While Mary stepped down from our Board a year ago, she continues to support the work and activities of the Plymouth Historical Society as a volunteer, though often behind the scenes.

She is one of three members of the Exhibit Committee, aiding in research, gathering artifacts, and sewing backdrops to create displays that showcase history for our visitors.

She also uses her first-hand knowledge of Plymouth history and natural curiosity to assist in answering the requests for information that PHS receives (see RESEARCH article).

Mary was instrumental in constructing our parade float, doing most of the hard work in building the miniature Old Webster Courthouse and then driving it down the parade route. Her quiet and steadfast labor got the job done AND kept Lisa from having a nervous breakdown while trying to bring her “bright idea” to life.

Mary also helps to maintain the premises — cleaning filters, raking out garden beds (with Louise), mowing the lawn and hanging the patriotic bunting. She also carries on a Batchelder tradition, providing home-baked goodies for our presentations (taking over where her mother, Betty, left off).

The Board, in general, is most grateful for her continued support of and participation in the Plymouth Historical Society. But Lisa, in particular, has no problem admitting she couldn't — and wouldn't want to — do it without her. Thank you, thank you, thank you, Mary!

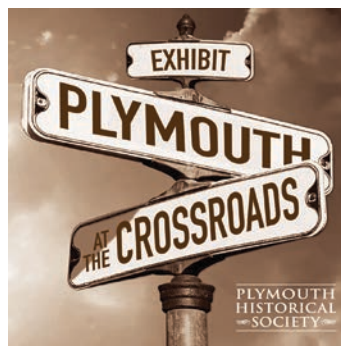


EXHIBIT Crossroads —Where Three Exhibits Met

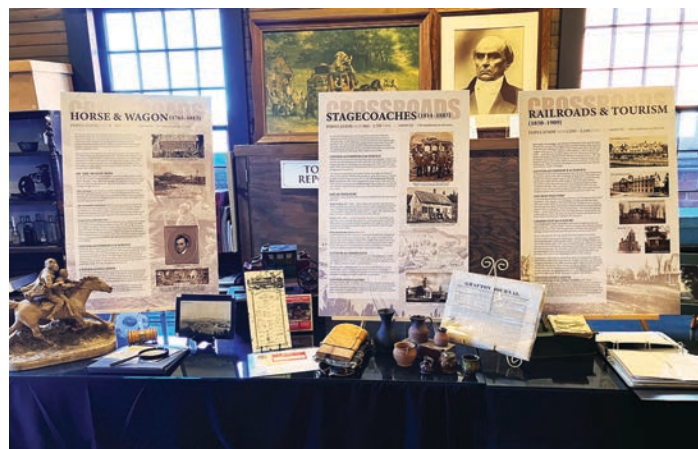
Lisa Lundari

The Museum of the White Mountains (MWM) at Plymouth State University was selected by NH Humanities as one of three host sites in the

state for the Smithsonian's Museum on Main Street traveling exhibition, *Crossroads: Change in Rural America*.

To make this national exhibition more relevant to the local community, MWM developed a companion exhibition, *The White Mountains: A Crossroads* that explored the same themes of land, community, identity, persistence, and managing change in the context of the western White Mountains. They presented this in partnership with the historical societies and public libraries in Plymouth, Franconia, Lincoln, Woodstock, and Bethlehem.

The PHS exhibit, *Plymouth: At the Crossroads* focused on the town's evolution over some 260 years and the events and decisions that drove it. Our Exhibit Committee chose to use the modes of transportation to and through Plymouth to delineate the changes the town faced. These improvements in conveyance influenced the number and demographics of the people visiting the town.



The writer Susan Cheever once said that Plymouth, “is a nice enough town but... it's a town in the middle of nowhere, a town for people on their way to somewhere else.” This may be exactly how Plymouth staved off many of the pitfalls that befell other rural towns. Being less of a destination and more a hub of service, the town was ever changing, growing and accommodating not only the needs of its citizens, but also the varied travelers and tourists who passed through and the students who stayed a bit longer.

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT! Newspapers Take Center Stage in Recent Acquisitions

Lisa Lundari

One of my favorite parts of working with the historical society is the great unknown of what pieces of Plymouth's past might find their way to our door. We never know what will be found in an attic or at the back of a desk drawer, or what treasure someone may be ready to find a new home for.

This year, in addition to welcoming donations, I also went in search of a few items. In connection with the Crossroads exhibit, I went hunting online in search of two newspapers.

The Grafton Journal (1825)

The first was an edition of the first newspaper printed in Plymouth, *The Grafton Journal*. (A later newspaper published in Plymouth was called *The Grafton County Journal*.) The publication was short lived, lasting roughly a year, but an online search found an original of the third edition printed.



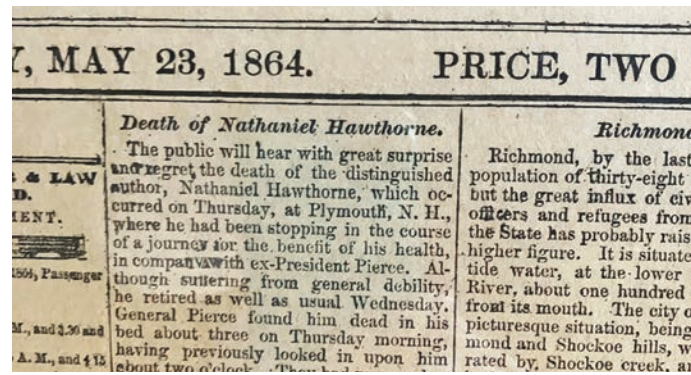
Herald of Freedom (1845)

The second newspaper, while not printed in Plymouth, has ties to one of the town's most renowned native sons. Nathaniel Peabody Rogers (1794–1846) was born and raised in Plymouth. (His father was the town's first physician and postmaster.) He became a lawyer and activist, an early advocate for the abolition of slavery. His home, which stood where the Silver Center now stands, was believed to be a stop on the Underground Railroad. He eventually left Plymouth and moved to Concord to become the editor of the *Herald of Freedom*, the journal of the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society. The copy purchased by PHS is among the last under his editorship, before his passing.



The Concord Monitor (1846)

Coincidentally, a *third* newspaper, the first edition of *The Concord [Daily] Monitor*, was donated to PHS by Kathy Sobetzer. Again, though not printed in Plymouth, it does have a direct connection to the town. One of the stories on the front page reports the death of noted author Nathaniel Hawthorne, who passed away during an overnight stay in Plymouth while traveling with his schoolhood friend, and former US president, Franklin Pierce.



Additional Acquisitions of Note

We have been fortunate to receive a variety of donations to the archives. A sampling of these is listed below:

- A framed town seal of Poland, NH from the “brilliant but cancelled” television show *The Brotherhood of Poland, NH*, donated by Ross Deachman.
- A plethora of Draper and Maynard items arrived from New York state, delivered by donor Shirley Burns (granddaughter of Doris and Joe Yeaton).
- Keniston family items from Whispering Pines, the homestead of Plymouth renaissance man, John Keniston. Donated by Rodger Ellsworth (great grandson of John Keniston) and Eva Nagorka.
- Plymouth Fair newspaper, trophies and ribbons donated by Baker River Grange in Rumney.
- Miscellaneous items from local banks, insurance companies, and other businesses donated by Gregor Anderson

Do you have a piece of Plymouth's history that should be shared or needs a new home? Let us know.

MEETING THE TRAIN — PHS Welcomes Visitors to Town

Katharina Kelsey

In July and August, Historical Society docents met passengers from the *Alouette*, a round-trip excursion train running from Meredith to Plymouth hosted by Granite State Railway. PHS docents welcomed passengers to Plymouth and led them to the Common for their two-hour visit, relaying some Plymouth history and pointing out our local shops and lunch spots. The Plymouth Historical Museum & Memory House was opened up especially for them, should they want to visit. (We printed special Heritage Trail Maps for the occasion, to share Plymouth history during their ride and to let them know the museum was open.)

L-R: PHS docents Louise (in period costume) John, and Kathy (with accordion), welcomed passengers to Plymouth.



OPEN BY APPOINTMENT — Accommodating Special Requests

Lisa Lundari

As our Museum & Memory House is fully staffed by volunteer docents, our regular schedule has the building open only three hours a week, nine months a year. We know this is very limited access, so we do our best to accommodate special requests to open the museum.

This summer we responded to two such requests. In June, the Starr King Unitarian Universalist Fellowship's Breakfast Club made a visit, spending a very engaging hour discussing the early panels of the Crossroads exhibit. In July, a half dozen social studies teachers, hailing from various towns around the state, stopped in after a day of workshops at PSU. A few of them had attended PSU, but this was their first time in the building. We discussed D&M and how to engage people in the stories of history.

For those who are curious enough to make the request we are always happy to open our door to share what we may know and what the archives may hold, after all, that is the whole reason for having an historical society.

ON THE MOVE — Smith Bridge Moves Next Door (and Up the Hill)



The scale model of the Smith Covered Bridge, formerly housed in the lobby of Northway Bank, was moved to its new home. The model incorporates wood from the old bridge (destroyed by arson) and contains a compartment which holds nails and hardware from the original span.

A group of volunteer movers — but not shakers — gathered to carefully move the scale replica from the former bank building up the hill to its new home at Pease Public Library. This location will allow it to be seen by more people so the story of the 143-year-old covered bridge may continue to be shared with future generations.

Special thanks to the Plymouth Police Department who helped direct traffic during the move.

GIVE THE GIFT OF HISTORY — The Past Makes a Great Present!

Below is the 2024 holiday display we created at Dressers Unlimited to market some of our retail items. We hope to partner with them again this year. Books, postcards, puzzles, ornaments — take your pick! Of course, all items are also available at the Museum, Saturdays from 10–1 through December 13.



RESEARCH SERVICES —
Bringing Context to a Life’s Story

Research is one of the services PHS is happy to provide. People come looking for all sorts of things — information on a topic for a school paper, a photo of an old home they just purchased, or tracking down family connections.

One such project started with a phone call back in December 2023. California resident, Barb Wallis, left a message on the museum’s answering machine inquiring about information relating to an uncle of hers who had grown up in Plymouth. That uncle, **Henry Hilton Packard** (b. 1908), had died in the Philippines during WWII in a prison camp. She had recently been contacted by the US Army informing her that remains of soldiers, buried in mass graves then reinterred in a Manila military cemetery, had been exhumed and were being identified through DNA analysis. Her Uncle Henry was one of the soldiers identified.

Mary Baldwin was able to do some research about Henry’s upbringing in Plymouth and shared that information with Barb. Over the next year, Barb and Mary corresponded via email and an occasional phone call as Barb planned her uncle’s burial in Plymouth. In September 2025 a family member met the transport at Pease Air Force Base to receive Henry’s remains. With family and a few friends in attendance (from California, Wisconsin and New Hampshire’s seacoast), Henry’s remains were laid to rest next to his father, **Fred W. Packard**, in Plymouth’s Riverside Cemetery, offering peace and comfort to his family.

Prior to the ceremony, Mary joined the family for a brief ride around town, visiting the home where Henry and his family had lived, while also noting his grandparents’ farm across the road. Mary was also able to point out the building (now a private home) which used to be the schoolhouse Henry and his siblings had attended. Mary hopes to send an earlier photo of one of the homes to Barb in the near future.

Plymouth is happy to finally welcome Henry home and we are thankful for his service. And thank you, Mary, for helping to bring context to Henry’s story.

CATALOGING THE COLLECTION —
Upgraded Laptop, New CMS Software

We recently upgraded our laptop and are now considering an update to our software, converting to the new top-rated collection management system (CMS), **CatalogIt!** This is the CMS system the Museum of the White Mountains uses. They have graciously offered to host a short demo and Q&A for interested Board members. Once in place, we will need volunteers. If you are a story nerd or a data entry geek and would like to join the ranks of our Archives Committee, let us know. It is a big job and we can use all the help we can get!

HELP US COLLECT TOMORROW’S
HISTORY TODAY —
Contribute Your Page in History

As mentioned last year, our **Page In History** project is a proactive effort to collect more recent history (1950s–Present). This initiative is becoming more time sensitive as we see iconic businesses like Rands Hardware, Biederman’s Deli and Café Monte Alto change ownership and landmarks like Richelson’s Department Store, The Peppercorn, and PHOP (formerly Fausty’s) disappear from our downtown landscape, whether by demolition or fire. Let’s grab that history NOW, when there are still folks who can share their first-hand stories. Please consider sharing *your* page in Plymouth’s history. If you would like more information or some direction or assistance, please email lisalundari@gmail.com (Subject Line: Page In History) or call 603-481-1236.

HISTORY BY THE NUMBERS —
Financial Report 2024–2025

INCOME	
Membership Dues/Donations	7,219
Grants — Gaming/NHH/Town	6,603
Retail Sales	359
Total Income	\$14,181

EXPENSES	
Publicity/Exhibits	1,756
Programs	927
Operations/Utilities	8,851
Total Expense	\$11,534

THE YEAR IN PREVIEW — 2026

Like many across the country, the Plymouth Historical Society will be commemorating the 250th Anniversary of the founding of our country. Following are some of our ideas and plans that are in the works for this historic year. If you have ideas or suggestions, or would like to join our efforts please contact us.

TIME CAPSULE — 1976 and 2026

Many may remember that during the US Bicentennial in 1976 a time capsule was buried on the courthouse (now Town Hall) lawn, behind the war memorial. It was set forth that in 50 years it was to be exhumed, with the hope that the four young representatives selected — **Jill LaFontaine, Cathy Clark, Stephen Ray, and Terri Sencabaugh** — would return as adults to bear witness and share their memories of the experience. Jill, now residing in Pennsylvania, has shown interest in returning for the event. We have yet to make contact with the other three “children”. (If anyone knows how to reach them and would like to let them know we would love them to be present or share their thoughts in a letter to be read, we would be grateful.) We will be partnering with the Town on the logistics of this event. Tentative timing is May 2026.

We have no idea how the time capsule or its contents have fared these 50 years, but it is our hope that we are pleasantly surprised and are able to exhibit the surviving items in the museum for viewing by all interested.

We are also working with the schools in hopes of preparing a new time capsule to be buried, choosing new representatives who will also be asked to return in 50 years to replicate the event and to continue the tradition.



Burying the Time Capsule — November 11, 1976.

EXHIBIT — 1976 and 1776

As we are uncertain of what may be available from the time capsule, we will also be preparing additional exhibit materials.

The Bicentennial — 1976

For all of us old enough to remember, the US Bicentennial was celebrated in grand style, and Plymouth was no exception. In fact the Town delegated the planning of events to the newly founded Plymouth Historical Society (1974).

A portion of the display will recall the events of 1976. To that end, if any of our readers, or your friends or family, took part in the festivities, we would be most appreciative if you, or they, would contact us to share your memories and photos, both for the exhibit and as additions to our archives.

The Revolutionary War — 1776

While there are very few primary sources for that period, we will cull what information we can and honor those who fought in the Revolution, as well as their contributions to our town after their return. We have called on descendants of two of those men to prepare information, and our Exhibit Committee will research local participation in a broader sense.

PRESENTATIONS — Local and Broader View

Our 2026 Program Schedule is currently in the planning stages, but we are attempting to connect as many presentations as possible to the US Semiquincentennial. Some may grow out of our local plans and exhibits while others may be arranged through NH Humanities (NHH), based on availability. We have already retained Meg Mott, through NHH, to present “What the Declaration of Independence Offers U.S. Social Movements” at the Old Webster Courthouse on Wednesday, November 19, 2025 at 5:30.

We are also considering some viewing/discussion nights of select episodes of Ken Burn’s forthcoming film *The American Revolution*, premiering November 16 on PBS. These viewings would be made possible through NH Humanities.

CANNON — Telling the Story, Honoring the History

A true relic of the Revolutionary War, 2026 would be the year to highlight this often overlooked Main Street landmark. We are considering a proposal to the Town about creating a more comprehensive story about the cannon in front of Town Hall and some upgrades to its lighting and display.

TAKE PART — We Want YOU!

Contact us at info@PlymouthNHhistory if you are interested in volunteering your time, sponsoring a project or event, or want to join our email list to stay in the loop. If you or your business or organization will be hosting a commemoration event, please share a flyer or write up to be added to the archives.

Your annual membership contributions to the Plymouth Historical Society are key to our success!



Many thanks to the following 2024–2025 donors:

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**We would love to add
your name to this list!**

**Please consider
supporting our efforts.**

WE RELY ON YOUR SUPPORT

Why — and How — to Become a PHS Member

We are living in times when the importance of the humanities is being undervalued and history itself may be in danger of being rewritten or erased. It is important to safeguard the records of our past as well as the curiosity to learn about history and the ability to interpret and learn from it, even on a local level. Your support matters.

Membership fees and donations are used for:

- Maintaining and upgrading the secure environment of the museum.
- Purchasing supplies for preservation and display.
- Acquiring items that enhance the collection.
- Investing in technology to organize, catalog, and share the archives.
- Mounting exhibits to tell the stories of Plymouth's past.
- Helping to make our speaker programs possible.
- Planning for a future in which we continue to celebrate our collective past.

THREE WAYS TO BECOME A MEMBER

Online by Credit Card

Visit PlymouthNHhistory.org, click SUPPORT, and follow the prompts.

In Person by Cash or Check at the Museum

Drop by Saturdays (10:00–1:00, mid-May–mid-December).

By Mail by Check

Use the membership form below and return it by mail with your check.

We encourage your interest and appreciate your support.

BECOME A MEMBER... And Get a Chance to Win!

All memberships — new or renewing — received between October 1–22 will be entered in a special drawing!

Two lucky winners will receive a beautiful watercolor landscape, framed and ready for hanging. Some may remember the artist, **Vivian Fanton**, who is very talented and previously lived in the area. (Thanks to Northway Bank for donating the paintings.)



**PLYMOUTH
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

PlymouthNHhistory.org

“Out of shared telling and remembering grow identity, connection and pride, binding people to a place and to one another. These ties form the basis of community life.”

— Thomas Rankin

Please join our community...

Name(s) _____ Date _____

Business/Organization (if applicable) _____

Mailing Address _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Tel _____ Email _____

MEMBERSHIPS

- ☐ Individual (\$25)
- ☐ Family (\$50)
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SPONSORSHIP CIRCLES

- ☐ Emily Balch (\$100)
- ☐ Bill & Betty Batchelder (\$250)
- ☐ Nathaniel Peabody Rogers (\$500)
- ☐ Daniel Webster (\$1000)

☐ Please save PHS resources and send **Scrapbook** electronically.

To donate by CC scan
the QR code or visit
PlymouthNHhistory.org



\$ _____ ☐ Cash ☐ Check # _____ (Payable to PHS) MAIL: PO Box 603, Plymouth, NH 03264 INFO: 603-536-2337