

## Wilmot Historical Society report for 2017

In 2017, the Wilmot Historical Society's (WHS) leadership changed. At our annual meeting in October, Elizabeth (Liz) Thompson Kirby succeeded Marc Davis as president. Liz, a Wilmot native, brings a wealth of town knowledge to the position and is well known within the community. Marc assumed the position of past president.

Also, at the annual meeting, the WHS Board presented a resolution to the town supporting the restoration and preservation of the Wilmot Town Hall located in Wilmot Center. Liz Kirby, Board president, read the resolution to the audience which in part said:

*"...resolved by the Board of Directors of the Wilmot Historical Society, that said society will support, as much as possible, all efforts of the Town of Wilmot and its governing body, to repair, restore and preserve this very significant 110-year-old building, the Wilmot Town Hall."*



Marc Davis and Ann Davenport

On March 31, the WHS acknowledged Wilmot's oldest resident, Ann Winifred Davenport, at her home in North Wilmot. As the oldest, Ann is entitled to be the honorary holder of the *Boston Post* Cane. Her daughters, Debbie Bartzak and Sandy Hurst, hosted the event where the WHS presented Ann with a certificate and the cane. The century old cane, donated by the old *Boston Post* newspaper, resides in the history room. Ann's picture with the cane is displayed in the Town Office.

The Society further enhanced its collection of community videos this year. The Society's long-range objective is to record Wilmot residents – past and present – sharing their recollections of living in the town. We engaged a professional videographer and oral historian to educate volunteers on the techniques of good interviewing. Visit our website to see the new videos. Also, on the website are transcriptions of cassette taped conversations of Wilmot residents recorded years ago.

The Society received two significant gifts to its collection in 2017. Betsy Forsham donated the sign that advertised Fred Goodhue's undertaker services. Wilmot's 19<sup>th</sup> century entrepreneur's sign now hangs beside Goodhue's Wilmot Hearse, at the New London Historical Society's village in New London.

Walter Walker, long-time historian in Wilmot, presented a sign to the Society. For decades the sign hung above over the door of the Wilmot Center Cash Store – around the corner from the Wilmot Town Hall. Now the sign hangs inside the Wilmot Town Hall.

Special thanks go to all those who browsed our Curiosity Shop at the Wilmot Farmers Market. You can support the WHS in many ways – through purchases at the Curiosity Shop or contributions of cash or artifacts. We welcome your ideas and suggestions about ways the WHS can bring history alive in our town.

The WHS sponsored three programs in 2017:

- February:** “*Band Music from the Civil War 12<sup>th</sup> NH Regimental Serenade Band*”  
**May:** “*Yankee Ingenuity*” with Jo Radner  
**October:** “*Program – A 1976 Bicentennial Retrospective*” with Fred Ogmundson

The WHS History Book Club met quarterly. Participants (open to all) select choices ranging from biography to historical fiction. In 2017 the group read:

- March:** *George Washington’s Secret Six – The Spy Ring That Saved the American Revolution* by Brian Killemeade  
**June:** *Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS* by Joby Warrick  
**September:** *Never Caught: The Washington’s Pursuit of their Runaway Slave Ona Judge* by Erica Armstrong Dunbar  
**December:** *Lion of Hollywood The Life and Legend of Louis B. Mayer* by Scott Eyman

Respectfully submitted,

**Wilmot Historical Society Board of Directors**

<http://www.wilmothistoricalociety.org/>