



WILMOT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2024 Annual Newsletter

Message from the President

This year the Wilmot Historical Society board of directors has taken positive steps toward establishing a permanent home for our collections. We have long since outgrown the small room in the Wilmot Town Office, and there are no plans for the town offices to leave the historic schoolhouse. Since no other properties in the Wilmot Center and Wilmot Flat villages have presented themselves, I guess we have to build. The WHS board feels that the vacant town property at 14 North Wilmot Road across from the town hall would be an excellent location. The land, currently used as a parking area, is in Wilmot Center Village surrounded by historic buildings. We encourage all Wilmot citizens to come out to vote at Town Meeting on March 14 to pass a warrant needed for permission to build.



Yours for preserving Wilmot's history, *Liz Kirby*

Bequest for New Home



Patricia (Pat/Tish) Gross Decato Baker, a longtime member of the Wilmot Historical Society, died in December of 2022. She made a very generous bequest to the historical society that was specifically designated to fund a new home for the WHS. Pat's mother, Lida Gross, was one of 74 founding members of the Society, and Pat

and her husband Frank Baker were staunch supporters. Sadly, Frank died in 2020.

Pat's legacy has renewed interest in our quest for more space that was started several years ago when some initial groundwork was laid.



Pat & Frank Baker

We are petitioning the town by warrant article to lease us space in the historic village of Wilmot Center.

Walter Willis Walker

This past July, we lost another dear friend and charter member of the Wilmot Historical Society. Walter was our current holder of the Boston Post Cane. There are a few folks who can compare, but no one has been a greater champion for preserving Wilmot's history than Walter Walker. Walter was a member of both the Wilmot Historical Society and the Town History Committee on which he served as chairman for decades. His passing is another great loss to us.

Thanks to Walter's great passion for history, he left us many items from both his personal collection and the Town History Committee, which was the repository of Wilmot's history before the Historical Society was formed. It's a collection that had been lovingly cared for and protected by Walter for years.

Acquisitions Report – Catherine Stearns

The Acquisitions Committee would like to thank all of those keepers of Wilmot history for the objects and documents that each one of you have carefully saved and protected. Every piece of history enriches our understanding of what life was like in Wilmot's past. A few items donated were The Gove Book of History and Genealogy; Howard Nowell's police badge and photo of him wearing it; dozens of handwritten town records; and many old photos carefully labeled.

The History Room in the Town Office was open to the public every Saturday morning in 2023 from July through September when the Farmers Market was open (9 am to noon). On an average, between 15 and 22 people visited and enjoyed the displays. Genealogy assistance was also provided. With the increase in Wilmot's collection comes the need for more space. We are currently renting storage space to hold the overflow and protect the wonderful artifacts that deserve to be available to the public.

Memories of Wilmot

Funded by grants from the Barnard Foundation, we have compiled many oral and video histories that may be found on the Memories of Wilmot tab on the WHS website <wilmothistoricalociety.org>.

Genealogy Committee – Carolyn Rayno

The Genealogy Committee gathers each month in the History Room. Anyone interested in genealogy is welcome to attend. We especially enjoy personal genealogical challenges. At a monthly senior luncheon last spring, we spoke to attendees about local and personal genealogy. People were most attentive and were pleased to receive our genealogy handouts. Throughout the year we are available through the website to assist with questions about family trees.

LeVarn Book Republished

A big accomplishment this year is the republishing of *The Early History of Wilmot, New Hampshire* by Casper LeVarn. It now has an index! When Mr. LeVarn published in 1956, he had a time deadline preventing him from adding an index. Underwriting by Mascoma Bank gave us a grant to cover the expense of the project. This book is now available both in the History Room and from Amazon. Bill Chaisson served as our editor and publisher.

Current Wilmot Historical Society Board: Liz Kirby, president; Catherine Stearns, vice president; Mary Fanelli, secretary; Bruce Sanborn, treasurer; Nola Aldrich, Marc Davis, Judy Hauck, Julie Morse, Carolyn Rayno, and Sara Timberlake.

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Vote for Article #27 at Town Meeting

WILMOT HISTORICAL SOCIETY – 2024 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

E-Mail Address: _____ Phone: _____

Annual membership is \$5 per person

Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ membership(s)

I am also including a tax-deductible donation of \$ _____ for a total of \$ _____.

Please make check payable to: Wilmot Historical Society, P.O. Box 97, Wilmot, NH 03287

Thank you!