

PlymouthNHhistory.org

2023–2024

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**Museum & Memory House**

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

**Contact**

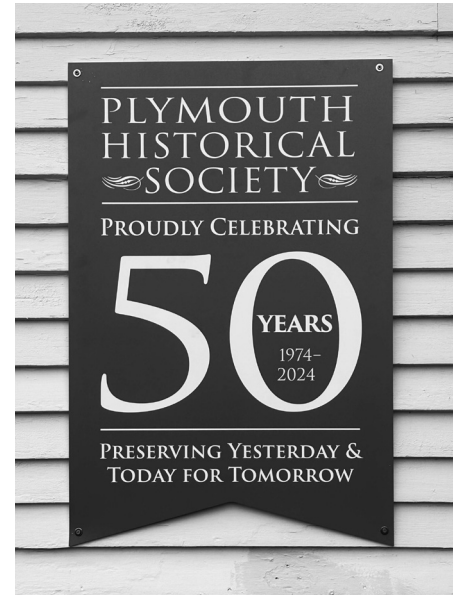
603-536-2337  
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PO Box 603, Plymouth, NH 03264

**A Message from  
the President**

You may have noticed the tagline on our website: “Saving Yesterday and Today for Tomorrow.” This year we have celebrated a host of “yesterdays” in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Plymouth Historical Society and the 250th anniversary of the Old Webster Courthouse. In June we hosted a celebration at both the Courthouse and on the Plymouth Common with a new exhibit in the OWC (a.k.a. Plymouth Historical Museum and Memory House) to celebrate 50 years of efforts and accomplishment. On the Common there were period costumes, old time games for children, and a barbecue thanks to the Plymouth Rotary Club. Beyond our own celebrations of our 50th and 250th one of our partners, New Hampshire Humanities, celebrated its 50th Anniversary as well. We congratulate our partner and appreciate their support to sharing the history of our state with communities.

We’ve assisted multiple research requests from families looking for ancestral information and collaborated with Museum of the White Mountains by offering our resource materials about Plymouth floods for the current exhibit at Silver Center for the Arts to raise awareness of natural disasters. During one of our programs we even had a visit from a reincarnated Daniel Webster!

Over the years you may have been one of the many who contributed to our collection of artifacts, photos, and documents. But what we often forget is that we are making history now, every day. Do you have pictures, memories, or stories of current



happenings? Of concerts on the Common, the Christmas parade, the recent fire next to The Flying Monkey? Take a look at our website to see how you can submit a story of your own. See the article on Memories of Plymouth describing a video project led by Louise Samaha McCormack, with interviews of many of our elders and leaders.

In 2026 a time capsule, buried in 1976 as part of the town’s US Bicentennial Celebration, will be unearthed by decree. What will we find and what should we place in the next one from our current time, to save today for tomorrow?

On a personal level this year I’ve greatly enjoyed working with such an enthusiastic and congenial board. Additionally, it has been a pleasure to meet many of you at both monthly events and Saturdays during my docent duties at the Museum. Many thanks to Mary Baldwin, our current treasurer, who is pursuing other interests after serving on the board for seven years. I’ve appreciated her dedication and willingness to jump in whenever a task needed to be done.

She will continue on by helping with flowers and grounds. So grateful!

In October I will be passing the presidential baton to Terry Fifield, current Vice President. He has been much more of a co-president than a VP, acting as collaborator, facilitator and advisor throughout my tenure. I will continue on the board to fill the vacant treasurer role. A huge thank you to our dedicated volunteers and members for their continued support and passion.

If any of you would like to be more involved as volunteers, as docents, even as potential board members, check out the Volunteer page on our website, drop by and chat on a Saturday morning, or sign up for docent training.

Very sincerely,

**Katharina Kelsey**  
*PHS President*

## Our Annual Public Meeting October 23 — A Little News, a Little Cake!

Please join us on **Wednesday, October 23 at 7 PM** for the annual meeting of the Plymouth Historical Society. In addition to a brief business meeting, we will gratefully honor all who have volunteered in various capacities this year — YLAA, Paul Turley, Joyce Bruce, Robin Dorff and Joe Casey (aka Daniel Webster!), Plymouth Rotary Club, Alex Ray and Lisa Mure, Docent Volunteers (Michael Barlick, Dick Flanders, Judy Faran and Mike MacNeil), Program Committee (Marcia Schmidt Blaine and Mary Anne Hyde Saul), photographer Abby Batchelder, musicians David Lockwood and Nick Lapitino, PBTv, and the Plymouth Police.

Henry Ahern will present a 10-minute overview of the events that led to the creation of the Old Smith Bridge replica by Bryan Alan. The replica will soon be housed at Pease Public Library. (See page 8).

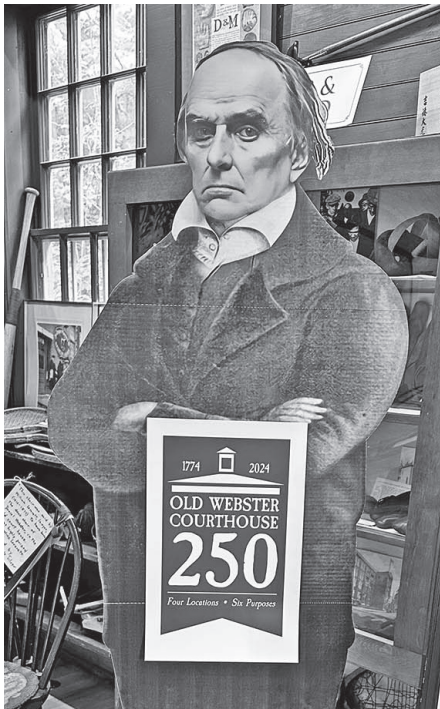
There will also be cake and refreshments in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Plymouth Historical Society and the 250th Anniversary of the Old Webster Courthouse, and in gratitude to our many partners and wonderful volunteers.

Of course, all of our monthly meetings throughout the year are open to the public. But this meeting is a thank you and an invitation to the community to join us in our rich, shared history that has led to the town we value today. Thank you for joining us!



**A Day of Celebration** — Left to Right: Board Members Mary Baldwin, Mary Kietzman, Steve Rand, Becky White, Katharina Kelsey, special guest Daniel Webster, Lisa Lundari, Louise Samaha McCormack, Terence Fifield, and John Christ.

# PHS 50TH CELEBRATION



PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
PROUDLY CELEBRATING

# 50 YEARS

1974-2024

PRESERVING YESTERDAY & TODAY FOR TOMORROW

—JOIN US—  
**SAT • MAY 18 • 10-2**  
to begin our year-long celebration!

*In case of rain, music and games on the Common will be canceled.*

**NEW Commemorative Puzzle Available!**

**FOOD**  
12-3 — Cookout on the Common  
Grilled up by Alex Ray and Plymouth Rotarians  
Proceeds benefit the PHS!

**OLD-TIME KIDS' GAMES**  
11:30-1 — On the Common

**MUSIC**  
10:30-11:30 @ CWC  
The Capital Four  
Barber Shop Quartet  
12-1 On the Common  
David Lockwood and the Rollin' 88s

**DANIEL WEBSTER EXHIBIT**  
PHS History & Plymouth Artifacts

**VISIT OUR MUSEUM**  
Step inside the oldest building in Plymouth!  
It has been located on four sites and served six purposes—learn about its rich history!

**OLD WEBSTER COURTHOUSE 250th ANNIVERSARY**  
1774-2024

Plymouth Historical Museum & Memory House in the Old Webster Courthouse, on Court Street, tucked behind Town Hall  
**FREE and Open to the Public SATURDAYS 10:00-1:00**



# PHS MILESTONES

## 1974

### PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS FORMED

In the summer of 1973, neighbors Audrey O'Neil, Rachel Keniston, and Judy Floyd decided to form an historical society for Plymouth. They met to create a plan to get the word out to everyone and invite them to a meeting — with speakers and refreshments, of course.

On October 3, 1973 the soon-to-be PHS had its first organizational meeting. After positive discussion, a motion was passed to take a vote to create the Plymouth Historical Society and the charter members present voted unanimously to proceed. (See list of charter members.) It became official in early 1974, and the rest — as the say — is history! (Pun intended)

## 1976

### US BICENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION

The newly formed Historical Society was pressed into service by the Town to organize the projects necessary for Plymouth to be accepted as an official Bicentennial Community. Projects included the re-enactment of the Battle of Lexington on Main Street (quite impressive!), the publication of a community cookbook which included stories and illustrations of historical note, the beautification of the area in front of the courthouse (now Town Hall) and the burying of a time capsule (to be dug up in 2026). A very successful project, indeed.



## 1981/1986

### PLYMOUTH HISTORIC DISTRICT

#### 1981—Formulation of the Historic District

Julia Rand along with her co-chair Rachel Keniston began the necessary paperwork to establish an historical district for our town. The pages of historical evidence, photos, and applications required were proof of the dedication of the Plymouth Historical Society members. The five buildings that were included, along with the Town Common were:

1. The U.S. Post Office (site of the “Old Brick”)
2. The Old Pemigewasset National Bank building (now Wolfson’s Jewelers et al)
3. The Congregational Church (though the original building had burned, it represented a continuous religious presence on the Common since the beginning of the town)
4. The Plymouth Town Hall (formerly the Courthouse)
5. The Old Webster Courthouse (then the Town Library for over 100 years)

Buildings in the District represented the political, religious, cultural, and commercial history of the town.

#### 1986 — Historic District Established by the National Register of Historic Places



The acceptance of the Plymouth Historic District by the National Register of Historic Places was met with great celebration, which included an historical exhibit of Plymouth as it was and an opportunity to sit in Daniel Webster’s Chair at the library in the OWC.

*This was a celebration filled with pride and a feeling by all that the Plymouth Historical Society needed a home.*

# 1991 PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL MUSEUM OPENS



With the new 6,000 sf Pease Public Library now in operation, the Young Ladies Library Association offered the Old Webster Courthouse to the Plymouth Historical Society to house their historic artifacts and collections. This generous offer honored Senator Henry Blair’s wish for the use of this historic building.

After nearly 20 years the Society finally had a central location to not only house the collection, but to exhibit it and to make its resources available to the public. It provided a presence for the Society, a known location for the community to donate items and information regarding Plymouth’s history, and a place for people to gather and share memories.

**“Today, this eye witness to Plymouth’s history continues to welcome visitors, sharing Plymouth’s proud past.”**

— Rachel Keniston, PHS President  
(pictured to the right of Betty Batchelder)



# 1998 PLYMOUTH HERITAGE TRAIL MAP



The New Hampshire Heritage Trail is a 230-mile, walking trail that stretches across New Hampshire, from its border with Massachusetts to its border with Canada. The Heritage Trail was established and is maintained by the communities that use it. Following the main branches of the Merrimack, Pemigewasset, and Connecticut Rivers, the trail showcases the historic and scenic communities along their banks and links those communities together.

Plymouth’s portion of the Heritage Trail, a 5.6-mile long walking loop with fourteen points of interest. It was completed through a coordinated effort between the Plymouth Chamber of Commerce, the Plymouth Regional Senior Center, Plymouth State College, the Town of Plymouth, the Plymouth Parks & Recreation Department, Main Street Plymouth, Inc. and the Plymouth Historical Society.

Plymouth Historical Society members provided historical information that was offered on the trail and in the pamphlet. The Trail was opened to the public in September of 1998. Bob and Julie Rand cut the ribbon.

PHS later updated and expanded the pamphlet to include photos of the landmarks lost to time.

*We are hoping to update the map once again to move it online and update the signage to include QR codes so interested visitors may use their mobile devices to discover and travel the Heritage Trail.*

# 1998 PUBLICATION OF IMAGES OF AMERICA PLYMOUTH, NH

Under the presidency of Elsa Turmelle, PHS prepared the photos and content to create a book about Plymouth as part of the Arcadia Press series *Images of America*.

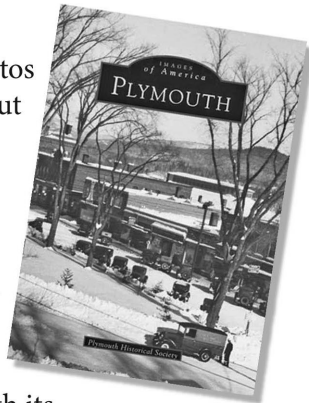
As described on Amazon:

A town considered a gateway to the White Mountains, Plymouth, New Hampshire, also shares a colorful past with its waterways and a history as an important railroad center. Both the natural beauty and modern development of Plymouth are celebrated in this unique and unprecedented collection of images. Plymouth includes images from the archives of the Plymouth Historical Society as well as contributions from private collections.

With coverage of the 1840s through the 1960s, this engaging pictorial history explores the people, places, and events that have shaped Plymouth. Old timers will recall the ski trains that welcomed thousands of weekend visitors and the serenity and beauty of life in the Lakes Region. They will remember a college that progressed from a State Normal School to a Teacher's College to its current presence as part of the New Hampshire University System. Combined with these images is a thoroughly researched and informative text, inviting the reader to become a part of Plymouth's history.

It is the perfect primer for Plymouth history, replete with plenty of photos and brief snippets of information that pique your interest.

*Might it be time for the next volume?*



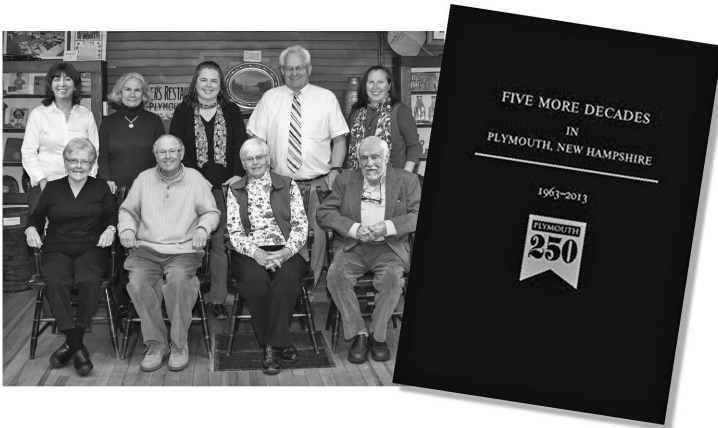
# 2013 PLYMOUTH'S SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL CELEBRATION



As you can imagine, when a town celebrates its past, it calls on its historical society to do some heavy lifting. We joined the vast amount of individuals, organizations, businesses, and the Town to pull it all off. The Plymouth Historical Society organized many activities of its own and lent support to many more during the year-long Celebration. Our efforts included:

- Addressing the Select Board and providing a proposal with suggestions based on past celebrations of the 150th and 200th Anniversaries.
- Promoting the celebration with a traveling slideshow of vintage photos and marketing materials to pique interest and solicit engagement at Town Meeting and elections as well as at other locations and events.
- Encouraging the production of ETC's original musical *Marking the Moment* based on Plymouth's history and providing digital images for projections and loaning artifacts for a lobby exhibit.
- Organizing five Reminiscing Nights, which were recorded for viewing on PBTv and DVD.
- Writing and publishing the book *Five More Decades in Plymouth, NH: 1963–2013*.
- Obtaining the rights and producing DVDs of PBTv's video coverage of the entire three-day celebration as well as ETC's *Marking the Moment*.
- Providing our high school yearbook collection for perusal at Reunion Night.
- Providing images for the Historic House Tour booklet.
- Producing a brochure on the history of the bandstand and the Keniston-Freeman concert series.
- Hosting a guided historic walking tour.
- Hosting an open house at the museum.

## 2013 PUBLICATION OF FIVE MORE DECADES IN PLYMOUTH, NH



The publication of the book, *Five More Decades in Plymouth, NH 1963–2013* was the Historical Society’s major contribution to the commemoration of Plymouth’s 250th Anniversary. It was written as a companion to Eva Speare’s book, *Twenty Decades in Plymouth, NH 1763–1963*, on the occasion of the town’s 200th Anniversary.

Each chapter of the book comprises one of the five decades, written by a different author or authors. Determination of the content was left to the authors’ discrepancy. This approach allowed for varying points of view, like the community itself. A new feature, straying from the style of *20 Decades*, was including notes at the beginning of each chapter to remind the reader of the context of the decade from a national perspective — government officials, big news of the day, and cultural trends. While the book’s publication occurred later than planned, it had the unforeseen benefit of being able to include a recap of the 250th Celebration, including photographs.

A copy of the book was included in the time capsule which was buried as the final event of the semiquincentennial festivities.

*We hope those at the helm of the Plymouth Historical Society at the time of the 300th Anniversary of Plymouth will follow suit and publish a book recounting the next 50 years.*

## 2013 CEILING COLLAPSE AT THE OLD WEBSTER COURTHOUSE



Our 250th Celebration ended with a BANG! On December 31, 2013 half of the ceiling at the Old Webster Courthouse collapsed. There was no particular event at fault, simply shifting from over the years. Luckily, no one was in the building at the time and surprisingly little damage was done to the collection.

The Young Ladies Library Association and the Plymouth Historical Society worked together to raise funds to qualify for a matching grant from the NH Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP). These funds resulted in the careful repair and improvement of this community landmark. (And an opportunity to reorganize the collection as it was returned to the Old Webster Courthouse.)

A year and a half later there was a grand re-opening which was well attended by the community who were anxious to see that their beloved “library” was safe and sound.



## 2024 Program Season

The 2024 Plymouth Historical Society programs highlighted the 50th Anniversary of PHS and the 250th Anniversary of the Old Webster Courthouse, along with histories of a very patriotic founding Plymouth family, a history of the Plymouth Fire Department and fires in town, and a renowned summer camp with Plymouth roots. We also reached far out of Plymouth with a visit from Galileo, a look at our area 12,000 years ago, and a bit closer to home, the history of the Kancamagus Highway, and loggers' songs and stories in New Hampshire and elsewhere.

### FEBRUARY

#### Galileo Galilei, *The Starry Messenger* (NHH\*)

In February Galileo Galilei, striking in his 17th century garb, showed how he was the “starry messenger” through his invention of a new spyglass that allowed astronomers to see heavenly bodies in much more detail than ever before. Michael Francis, as Galileo, stayed true to the time, predicting that he would not be contradicted by the Pope, a supporter and friend at the beginning of Galileo's research. Co-sponsored with Pease Public Library, who also hosted.



### MARCH

#### Range the Wild Woods Over: Loggers' Songs and Stories (NHH\*)

In March we were back in the Old Webster Courthouse with a music centered program of loggers' songs and stories. Acclaimed musician Jeff Warner explored the challenges faced by early 20th century loggers in the woods, rivers, and roadways of New Hampshire and beyond. He accompanied himself with historic instruments such as a concertina and spoons, and he got us all singing along enthusiastically.



### APRIL

#### Hobart: Plymouth Founder and Revolutionary Heroes



We discovered in April that one of Plymouth's earliest founders played a crucial part in the Battle of Bennington and also shaped much of Plymouth as we know it today. David Hobart, likely the town's first actual settler, laid out the original plots and helped make the original laws that underlay the town's legal structure today. Our presenter was William Hobart Lyons, a New Hampshire jurist, and a descendant of the Hobart family through Samuel Hobart, also a patriot and brother to David.

### MAY

#### Why? The Origin of the Plymouth Historical Society and Why It Is Still Relevant Today

Participants discussed the history of the Plymouth Historical Society itself at the May program, given by a panel of past Presidents and other officers. Judy Floyd, Lisa Lundari, Louise McCormack, with Becky White explored the formation of PHS fifty years ago, its evolution, accomplishments, and challenges since.

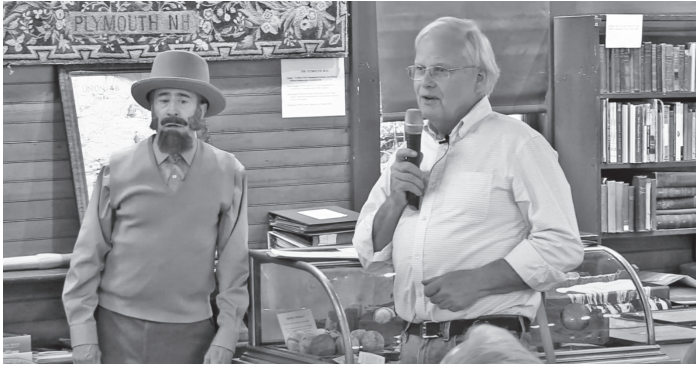
### JUNE

#### The Little Courthouse That Could A History of the Old Webster Courthouse

The Old Webster Courthouse captured our attention in June during the celebration of its 250th Anniversary. Steve Rand highlighted the many roles the courthouse has played, always managing to evade destruction and eventually to thrive. Old photos showed the building's intriguing journey from a courthouse (where Daniel Webster lost a murder case), through school, paint shop and wheelwright shop, to town library and now historical museum and memory house. The building was physically moved around town until it settled on its present — and hopefully final — location and use. Audience members shared anecdotes about its life as the town library when they were young. Rand and other speakers highlighted the role played by the Young Ladies Library Association in

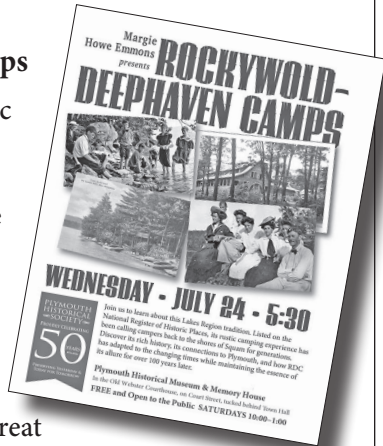


preserving the building, aided by Senator Henry Blair, who magically appeared at the back door (previously the front door) as his name was spoken. Many thanks to Robin Dorff for channeling Senator Blair, a dapper fellow.

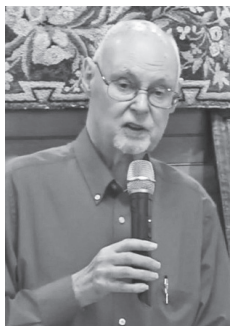


**JULY**  
**Rockywold-Deephaven Camps**

One of the country’s most iconic camps, Rockywold-Deephaven on Squam Lake, was the focus of July’s program. Margie Howe Emmons, great-granddaughter of one of the family camp’s founders, guided us through its history and evolution as a unique, nature-based and culturally lively place to retreat and recharge for generations of its loyal families up through today. Margie’s great-grandmother, Mary Alice Armstrong, a farm girl from Lisbon, was a graduate of Plymouth Normal School, and taught at the Hampton Institute. With another Hampton teacher, she founded the summer camp on Squam in the 1880s.



**SEPTEMBER**  
**Ready! Day or Night**  
**A History of the Plymouth Fire Department**



September’s program highlighted the dramatic history of the Plymouth Fire Department. Gerry Bourgeois, once a fire dispatcher in Plymouth, as well as for a time Plymouth’s Superintendent of Schools, presented, based on his research for his recently published book, *Ready! Day or Night: A History of the Plymouth, NH Fire Department*. Bourgeois has been a firefighter and officer in Westerly, RI, as well as a

fire commissioner in Attleboro, Mass. He has published extensively on the history of firefighting.

**STILL TO COME —**  
**OCTOBER**

**12,000 Years ago in the Granite State (NHH\*)**

October’s program will go deep into New Hampshire’s past, long before there was a New Hampshire. “12,000 Years Ago in the Granite State,” presented by archaeologist Robert Goodby, explores the evidence found at the Keene Middle School for a 12,000-year-old settlement, part of an extensive social network that reached across much of northeastern North America in the millennia after the last Ice Age. This is one of the oldest Native American sites in New England and is remarkably intact. It has pushed back estimates of human occupation of the area. Dr. Goodby has also talked about digs all over



**NOVEMBER**  
**The History of the Kancamagus Highway (NHH\*)**

We close out the 2024 programs with History of the Kancamagus Highway, which was officially opened in 1967, but whose actual history reaches back over 120 years. Historian and author Glenn Knoblock will trace the development of the highway, which is the gateway to the Southern White Mountains and beloved for its celebrated natural sites and views. Today it is considered to be one of the most scenic roads in America. Though especially busy in the fall, the “Kanc” offers much to visitors all year round.



\*NHH =  
Program sponsored by



## Eight Years of *Memories of Plymouth*

*Memories of Plymouth* has nearly completed its EIGHTH year. Spearheaded by Louise McCormack, the goal continues to showcase and honor the stories of local people over the past several decades, allowing the Plymouth Historical Society (PHS) to capture and preserve the growth, culture, and events that make up the history of Plymouth. We view this project as a video time capsule to preserve first-person accounts of individual stories as well as participants' memories of Plymouth. Members of the town and surrounding communities are invited to assist PHS with this on-going project. Questions are provided, in advance, to each participant. The length of each interview continues to be around 60 minutes. Each interview is conducted at the PemiBaker TV station, located on the lower level (elevator accessible) of Pease Public Library in Plymouth whenever possible. All interviews become a part of the historical society archives located at the Old Webster Courthouse.

Interviews for 2024 began in late spring 2024 with Rumney resident, **Roger Daniels**. While documenting his life in Rumney, it became obvious that he had a passion for vinyl records, phonograph equipment and quality of music. So we visited once again to document the history of his equipment while sharing how music has changed over the years. Next, cousins **Paul and Jeffrey Richelson**, who worked and eventually owned Richelson's Department Store at North Main Street (Plymouth,) shared how the store eventually made its way to Plymouth as well as their memories of living, working and eventually selling this iconic Plymouth store. **The Gibbs sisters (Susan, Mary Ellen, Judy and Celia)** traveled to Plymouth to share their memories. One sister traveled from as far away as Idaho to bring her memories to the screen. Memories were also contributed by **Linda, Barbara, and Paul Hogan, Betty Coursey, and James Desmarais**. At this writing, our eighth season is not yet complete with 3-4 more folks yet to be interviewed.

If you are interested in being interviewed or have a suggestion for an interviewee, please contact Louise Samaha McCormack at [louisem@usnh.edu](mailto:louisem@usnh.edu), or leave a message on the phone at **PHS 603-536-2337**. Your family, friends, and community will appreciate you sharing these memories, as will future generations.

*Memories of Plymouth* interviews may also be viewed—and shared—via a playlist on the Plymouth Historical Society YouTube channel, most easily accessed via a link on the PHS website [PlymouthNHhistory.org](http://PlymouthNHhistory.org). We hope you will watch, enjoy and share with family and friends.



### *Memories of Plymouth* Season 8 Interviewees (Top to Bottom)

Linda, Barbara, and Paul Hogan  
David and Betty Coursey  
James Desmarais  
Paul and Jeff Richelson  
Roger Daniels

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT — Marcia Schmidt Blaine



We are so fortunate to have Marcia Schmidt Blaine on our Program Committee. We caught up with her to learn a little bit about all her endeavors, specifically the ones that integrate so well with the Plymouth Historical Society.

She currently serves on two boards: New Hampshire Humanities (NHH) since the fall of 2020 and the New Hampshire Historical Society (NHHS) since June of 2024.

In prior years, Marcia was a speaker for NH Humanities to Go's statewide speakers' bureau through which non-profit organizations and community groups may offer high-quality cultural programming to the public at minimal cost to the hosting organizations. She was so impressed with the organization that she became a member of the board and has recently recently become the chair. PHS has benefited from Humanities to Go/NH Humanities programming for many years. NHH also offers grants to New Hampshire cultural institutions and special programming such as last fall's **Big Read** and the upcoming **Crossroads**. (See **Crossroads** article.) at the Museum of the White Mountains. For more information about NH Humanities: [www.nhhumanities.org](http://www.nhhumanities.org).

Marcia says her work with **NH Historical Society** is a good overlap with PHS. They have wonderful collections and presentations. Of particular interest is their work with youth. NHHS offers an online curriculum, "**Moose on the Loose: Social Studies for Granite State Kids**" for which they received a Leadership in History Award of Excellence from the American Association of State and Local History. They have also been consulted by the State of New Hampshire as subject matter experts for K-12 civics programs. Go to [www.nhhumanities.org](http://www.nhhumanities.org) to see their many programs and events both on-line and live. The mission statement of each organization speaks to their shared goals.

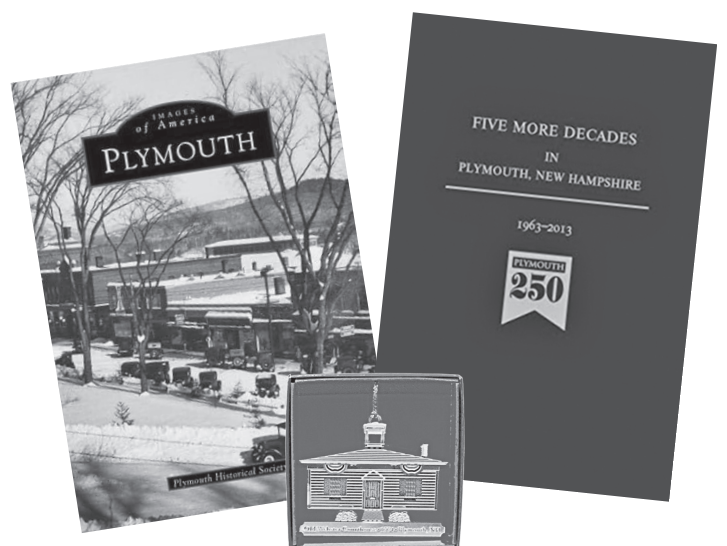
- **NH Humanities:** New Hampshire Humanities connects people and ideas by funding and supporting statewide programs that inspire curiosity, foster civil dialogue, and explore big questions.
- **NH Historical Society:** Foster the preservation and the study of history.
- **Plymouth Historical Society:** Plymouth Historical Society works together with our community to collect, preserve, and share our history yesterday and today for tomorrow.

## Welcome Back, Lisa!

After a hiatus of several years, past PHS President **Lisa Lundari** returned to our board this year. Drawing on her vast body of experience with the organization and the Museum collections and bringing into play her considerable skills as a graphic designer, Lisa was instrumental in developing our 50th Anniversary Exhibit and in planning the Anniversary celebration. *Thanks Lisa, we're glad you're back!*

## PHS Partners with Dressers Unlimited to Sell Our Books, Puzzles, and Ornaments!

Looking for Christmas Gifts? You can now purchase our Plymouth-themed products not only at the Museum but also at Dressers Unlimited on Main Street. Thank you to Carol Dunn who has offered to sell our retail items. To celebrate the 250th of the Old Webster Courthouse, our newest puzzle depicts the building in the 1800s and on the occasion of Plymouth's own 250th Anniversary. In addition, we are also offering a brass ornament of the OWC which would look lovely hanging on your Christmas tree. If books are more to your liking, we have several — Ezra Stearns' comprehensive early *History of Plymouth, NH (1763–1906)* in two volumes — a narrative and genealogy of the founding families. If that seems a bit overwhelming, Eva Speare's interesting yet quick read *Twenty Decades in Plymouth, NH 1763–1963* might be more up your alley. If you are a late boomer or Gen Xer on and prefer to reminisce about history you actually lived through, PHS's self-published *Five More Decades in Plymouth, NH 1963–2013*, covers more recent history and includes information at the beginning of each chapter/decade and *Images of America: Plymouth, NH*, an overview of Plymouth history through photographs with informative captions. There are a few other books as well as postcards and puzzles of Plymouth.



## PHS Benefits from Gaming Grant

In 2006, the NH State legislature enacted a house bill which allowed casinos in New Hampshire to operate, with the obligation that 35% of their gross gaming revenue be donated to charity. New Hampshire is the only state whose casino industry employs a charitable gaming business model. Last fall PHS applied for and received over \$4000 from this program. Thank you casinos!

## Why — and How — to Become a Member

Becoming a member of the Plymouth Historical Society demonstrates your interest and support of efforts to share and appreciate the history of our community. Membership connects you to other like-minded individuals who share an interest in Plymouth's past and building community.

### Membership fees and donations are used for:

- Maintaining and upgrading the secure environment of the museum for the storage and conservation of our collections
- Purchasing supplies for preservation and display
- Mounting exhibits featuring our archives and artifacts
- Helping to cover the costs associated with the speaker programs
- Planning for a future in which we can continue to celebrate our collective past.

### THREE WAYS TO BECOME A MEMBER

#### Online by Credit Card

To join or support the Plymouth Historical Society by credit card, go to our website at [PlymouthNHhistory.org](http://PlymouthNHhistory.org), go to the SUPPORT tab, and follow the prompts.

#### In Person by Cash or Check

Drop by the Museum any Saturday (10:00–1:00, March to mid-December) and fill out a membership form and present your cash or check donation.

#### By Mail with a Check

Use the membership form at the end of this newsletter and return it by mail with your check.

We encourage your interest and appreciate your support.

“...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  
*Documentary Folklorist*

## JOIN OUR TEAM!

### Docent Training — Saturday, October 26

Are you passionate about our community and interested in its history? Do you enjoy meeting new people?

A docent is a person who acts as a guide, typically on a voluntary basis, at a museum, art gallery or other such place. A training for new PHS docents will be held **Saturday, October 26** at 10:30 AM at the Plymouth Historical Museum and Memory House (aka Old Webster Courthouse) on Court Street in Plymouth.

Docents are needed to open the museum to the public each year between March and mid-December, on Saturdays from 10:00–1:00. Duties include welcoming visitors, determining if they are just browsing or have a particular interest or research question and assist with use of the records and collections housed in the Museum. Tasks may include cleaning and organizing collections, doing research, and data entry. On occasion you may also be asked to help with some light housekeeping.

If you enjoy the work you may choose to join one of our more focused committees — Archives, Exhibits, or Programs.

Our current docents tell us how much they have enjoyed hearing and sharing stories. Docent volunteers typically are on duty just a handful of Saturdays and are always paired with an experienced member. Email [info@PlymouthNHhistory.org](mailto:info@PlymouthNHhistory.org) to let us know you are interested and plan on attending.

## Museum of the White Mountains — NHH Crossroads Grant Recipients

The Museum of the White Mountains is a current grant recipient of **Crossroads: Change in Rural America**, a collaborative effort with New Hampshire Humanities, Vermont Humanities and the Smithsonian's Museum on Main Street. This traveling exhibit will come to Plymouth the summer of 2025 for six weeks. Partnering with the Plymouth Historical Society and Pease Public Library, Plymouth's past, present, and future will also be highlighted in the exhibit.

***Crossroads: Change in Rural America* offers small towns a chance to look at their own paths to highlight the changes that affected their fortunes over the past century. The exhibition will prompt discussions about what happened when America's rural population became a minority of the country's population and the ripple effects that occurred.**

—*Smithsonian.com*

## Scale Model of Smith Covered Bridge Finds a New Home



The first bridge crossing the Baker River at the site of what is now the Smith Millenium Bridge in Plymouth was completed in 1786 and named for a local farmer, Jacob Smith. In 1850, contractor Harmon Marcy of Littleton, NH built a new covered bridge using a pre-stressed wooden truss. After that 143-year-old span was destroyed by arson in 1993, the State constructed the current two-lane bridge dedicated in 2001.



A committee of local citizens had raised funds for the restoration of the Smith Bridge in the late 1980s and early '90s before the state took over the job of reconstruction. With the destruction of the old bridge the committee commissioned Bryan Alan to create an accurate, to scale, model of the Smith Covered Bridge. That model incorporates wood from the old bridge and contains a compartment which holds nails and hardware from the original. Upon completion of the replica, Henry Ahern, a committee leader deeded it and a protective showcase to the Plymouth Historical Society. PHS contacted the Pemigewasset Bank, which housed the replica in their branch at the corner of Highland and Main Streets for many years. In 2024 that office, now a branch of Northway Bank, has closed, and the replica of the miniature Smith Bridge will soon be moved to its new home at Pease Public Library.

PHS would like to thank the Millenium Bridge Committee, Northway Bank, and Pease Public Library for their generous attention to preserving and sharing this important piece of Plymouth's history for future generations.

# Page in History PROJECT

Page in History Project is an invitation to YOU to share your chapter in the story of Plymouth. It is our attempt to proactively collect and preserve recent and current history (1960s–today) for future generations, but there are no date limitations.

You decide what you would like to share. Some examples are:

- Memories of growing up and/or living in Plymouth.
- The story of the house you live in.
- Why you started a business and how it grew.
- An organization or event you helped to create.
- An event or person that impacted you (i.e. flood, fire, Covid, business closing, participating in a play or parade, a friend, a teacher, a person who worked in a local business, etc.)

Your “page” can be as brief or as detailed as you like. We hope that you will include photos, maybe even artifacts (i.e. business card, menu, an envelope with the address of your home, program booklet from an event, etc.). We would like a hard copy to file in the archives and a PDF for our future digital archives.

We will soon be adding some guidelines to this page to assist you in composing your story. Many folks will be able to prepare their “page” themselves, but if you need help, we are willing to assist you with your submission.

We also welcome submissions of newspaper clippings, photographs, and other items that capture a piece of Plymouth history you feel should be remembered.

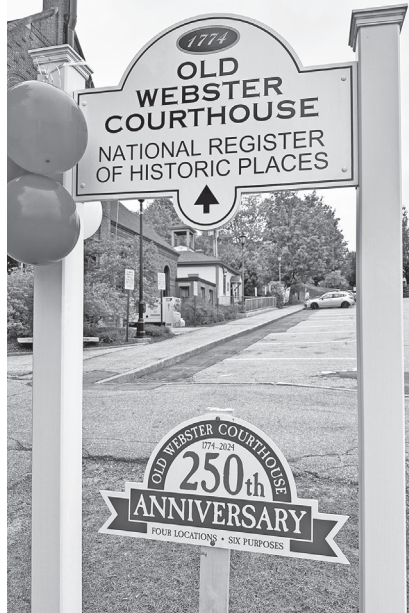
### If you have questions please contact:

Lisa Lundari, Curator

603-481-1236

[lisalundari@gmail.com](mailto:lisalundari@gmail.com)

# PHS 50TH CELEBRATION



## FINANCIAL REPORT 2023-2024

### INCOME

Membership Dues and Donations	\$ 6,000
Gifts and Grants	\$ 5,561
Retail Sales	\$ 504
Fundraising	\$ 486
Other (Money Mkt Closure)	\$ 4,409

**TOTAL** \$ 16,960

### EXPENDITURES

Programs/Publicity	\$ 1,911
Operating Expenses	\$ 3,055
Utilities	\$ 3,079
Dues & Fees	\$ 237
50 <sup>th</sup> /250 <sup>th</sup> Celebration	\$ 2,676

**TOTAL** \$ 10,958

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



*Many thanks to the following 2023–2024 donors:*

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**Batchelder Circle**

Fletcher Adams  
 Mary and Gunnar Baldwin  
 Joe Kelaghan  
 and Thad DeFauw  
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 Chris Woods and Clare Eckert

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

**Please consider  
supporting our efforts.**

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# PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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PO Box 603 | Plymouth, NH 03264



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## PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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[PlymouthNHhistory.org](http://PlymouthNHhistory.org)

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— 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)
- Business/Organization (\$100)
- Additional Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### SPONSORSHIP CIRCLES

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

To donate by CC  
scan the QR code  
or visit our website.



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