

Etna Historical Society
Meeting #7
Monday, Feb. 10, 2025
Trumbull Hall, 5:30 PM

Introductions

We went around the table and gave brief introductions. Several people offered information about the age of their houses. Gary Johnson showed the group a 20" square, mounted black and white aerial photo of the Partridge, Woodcock and Quail developments, taken in 1971. This photo, along with some plans for the development, will be taken to the library for safekeeping.

Library Updates

Several updates from the library were given.

Website: The Etna Library Website has a [history section](#). Scans of a large number of [historic documents](#) have been added. A list of these documents was circulated for people to see. There is a link to an area for the Etna Historical Society. At this point in time, the minutes of our meetings to date have been posted there.

Notebooks: Jaime McEnaney, Jeff Metzler and Liz Marshall dug through a large collection of papers that former librarian Barbara Prince had in storage. They cleared off the library table and organized the papers into piles: house histories, maps, and old census data, for example. Also included was a box of materials passed to Dick Baughman by Tom Byrne. The materials were subsequently moved into 3-ring binders, and these are now stored at the library. Three of the binders were brought to the meeting for people to see. One contains street-by-street sections of data collected in 2011 as part of the Historic Homes Project in celebration of Hanover's 250th anniversary celebration.

Materials from Howe: Jeff received a box of historic documents from the Howe Library. The box contains a number of oral histories – cassette tapes and transcripts – among other things.

Oral Histories: Jeff posted several oral history audio files (mp3 format) on the library's One Drive account. These recordings, done between 1965 and 1968, are from the following people: Mae Smith, Bessie Ward, Mary Mason, Mae Adams, Ethel Grasse, and Helene Poland.

Town & Gown Tour: Tim van Leer sent in a report that as part of his work with the Dartmouth and Hanover Working Group, he'd like to develop a biking tour of historic homes, buildings, and sites for people to visit on their own. At some point, we might be

able to develop QR codes that give tourers information about historic data, images and oral histories.

Recorded Histories

A discussion was held about what we would like to do with any oral histories we collect. The general sense was that video recordings were not important, but photos of the speakers were. Audio files and transcripts were considered most important.

Liz Marshall reported on recent recordings that have been done: two with Dick Baughman, where he talked about the history of his house, and two with Ron and Ellie Farr, where Ron told about his memories of life on the farm and his experiences working as a blacksmith.

The recordings were done using Zoom, which captures video and audio. Zoom can also generate a transcript of the session. In addition, the Voice Memos app on an iPad (also available on a cell phone) was used to record the sessions. Transcription software was then used to convert the Voice Memos audio files to transcripts. These audio files (and transcripts) have proved to be better than the ones created by Zoom. The resulting transcripts still need editing, but they are a good start to collecting stories.

Firehouse Update

Tim Bent reported that the Hanover Fire Department still wants to have the old Etna Firehouse available to them for storage of some equipment. They know we would like to make use of the building, but they are not yet ready to let us take over the space.

Future Plans

A few people will either interview others or volunteer to be interviewed. Liz offered to record and create transcripts. Anyone reading these minutes is welcome to come forward to volunteer for this effort! The many documents that have been scanned and posted on the Etna Library website need to be organized and John Stebbins and Liz Marshall volunteered to help Jeff Metzler do this.