



# What's Happening?

at the Kingston Historical Museum

JANUARY 2023

## THIS MONTH!

A treasure of photographic glass plate negatives of early 1900s Kingston is part of the museum's collection. Harry "Whiskers" Clark, a man of many talents, documented many of the sites and events of Kingston at that time. Read about him in this newsletter.

This year is a special year for the museum. It was 125 years ago this June that the Nichols Memorial Library opened for the townspeople. The museum is planning a celebration of the event scheduled for June. Set your calendars!

While this month's Mystery Object is not found in the museum, it is not too far away. It is a US Coastal and Geodetic Survey Marker. While its only about three inches in diameter, it is located in a rather prominent spot in town and most of us pass by it several times a week. See if you can find it!

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the Kingston Historical Museum. This month, in part 2 of the series *Volunteers at the Museum*, we describe some of the activities the volunteers perform for the museum.

So you don't miss an issue of the "What's Happening" newsletter, just go the town's website and select to receive it by email. See page two of the newsletter. You will find out how to sign up for it!

The museum has begun its winter schedule. The 1895 Firehouse, the 1880s Cobbler Shop, the 1907 Tramp House and the 1833 Grace Daley barn will be closed during the cold weather. The Nichols Memorial Library will still be open for visiting. Check out our hours!

## Kingston Stories

### Harry "Whiskers" Clark



Photo from Kathy Clark Chase collection

Harry "Whiskers" Clark (1870 - 1950) had many passions in his life. He was a physics teacher in Exeter. He made furniture and he also tried his hand at recreating the bows and arrows of Kingston's Native American population. One of his interests was to photographically document the events of his hometown - Kingston, NH.

Making a photograph was not an easy undertaking at that time. It involved sizing sheets of glass to fit into his camera and then flooding a photographic coating onto those glass plates. All of this needed to be done by hand and in total darkness! Once the plates were dry, he would then insert the "glass plate negative" into his camera and then take the loaded camera out to where he wanted to make a photo.

Once the glass negative was exposed to the scene, he needed to retreat to his "studio", a tent set up on the Kingston Plains, to process the negative and then later to contact print the image onto photographic paper, again all this done by hand and in the dark.



Photo by Walt Roy

"Whiskers" continued on next page

(cont. Harry "Whiskers" Clark)

The photo on the previous page is of two "Whiskers" glass plate negatives from the museum's collection. A negative of the town hall is on the left and Sanborn Seminary on the right.



Studio tent.

Photo from Arthur Reynolds collection.

During the summer months, "Whiskers" set up his studio tent and sleeping tent on The Plains as seen in the image below.

Harry Stuart "Whiskers" Clark was born on March 1, 1870, in Salisbury, Massachusetts. His parents were Daniel O. Clark and Mary E. [Webster] Clark, both Kingston natives. He was called "Whiskers" to differentiate him from his cousin Harry Sumner Clark, who lived nearby. Whiskers lived just off the Plains at 9 Rockrimmon Road.

Although Whiskers never married, he was part of the large extended Clark family. Dave Conant recalled that his mother, Christine, cooked dinner for "Whiskers" and Dave delivered it each evening.

"Whiskers" was a fixture around town. He would set up on the Plains to make his photographs and sell furniture and his recreated

bows and arrows. The museum has over 125 glass plate negatives made by "Whiskers" Clark. These were a donation to the museum by the Walter and Joan Clark family. We should remember him for his efforts to photographically document the events of Kingston during the early days of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Whiskers Clark died on March 21, 1950, while riding his bicycle past the Nichols Memorial Library.

### Receive the "What's Happening" Newsletter in your email

- (1) Go to [www.KingstonNH.org](http://www.KingstonNH.org)
- (2) At the Blue Box on the left side of the page - Click the "Subscribe to News" button
- (3) Provide your email address and then scroll down to "News and Announcement Updates"
- (4) Select - Historical Museum Committee
- (5) Make sure you select the "Subscribe Me" button at the bottom of the form after you check the "I'm not a robot" box!
- (6) The next "What's Happening" Newsletter will be emailed directly to you!

### Nichols Memorial Library Celebrates its 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



This year, the Nichols Memorial Library will be celebrating its 125 years at the center of town. Donated by J. Howard Nichols (1837-

1905) in memory of his parents, the Nichols building served the town as its library and now museum.

The museum volunteers are planning a birthday party for the Nichols building this June 10<sup>th</sup> and the town is invited!

Mark your calendar to be here and wish the building another 125 years of service to the town.

## *Volunteers at the Museum*

### **What do the volunteers at the museum do?**

#### **PART 2**

Last month we talked about bringing into the museum objects for the collection and documenting the needed information for our catalog.

The objects now need to be put into areas for storage. This requires planning and forethought. Textiles, like dresses, quilts, shirts, and other fabric items need to be boxed in acid free containers to protect the material from damage. Cotton, wool, linen, and synthetic fabrics need to be identified so that they can be appropriately stored.

Labels with catalog numbers and other information need to be sewn onto the fabrics. These labels are placed in inconspicuous places so as not to detract from the object.

Other materials, such as tools, books, or porcelain items also need to be identified with catalog numbers, but these items have the numbers written on them and then a cover layer of an impervious clear solution is painted over the number.

Once all these preparation are done, the objects are placed into the museum's storage areas, ready for a future exhibit display or perhaps research.

One last task is a continuing one. The objects need to be monitored and cleaned for dust and possible insect damage. This is a never ending responsibility.

Given the tasks involved in bringing objects into the museum's collection, the old adage "many hands make light work" is so true. The tasks are not so difficult to do. They do give the volunteers a look into the fascinating objects we receive and have in our collection. The work also gives the volunteers an opportunity to experience museum work. We also have fun together and have time to make new friends.

There are many opportunities for volunteers to contribute to the town's museum. The qualities needed by our volunteers are a desire to learn, an appreciation for the objects that come through the door, and a sense of curiosity about the stories they tell.

**Please consider stopping by the museum to learn more about being a museum volunteer!**

## *Where is it?*



At left is this month's mystery object. While it is not in the museum, it is not too far away from the museum building.

The object is a US Coastal and Geodetic Survey as well as a State Survey marker.

These markers

provide fixed points that can be used to measure a variety of data sets, such as distance markers between towns for map preparation. This month's task is to find the survey marker in town. Here's a hint: we all have passed this marker many times as we drive along Main Street. See if you can "step" up to the challenge! Next month's newsletter will reveal its location!

For further information about these markers and how they are used, consult the National Geodetic Survey at <https://geodesy.noaa.gov/datasheets/>.



### **Volunteer Hours Contributed**

For the year ending this past December, the museum volunteers contributed over 1,593 hours of their time to help the museum's mission. This is a magnificent effort for the museum and the town of Kingston. Thank you all so much.

**The Kingston Historical Museum headquartered at the Nichols Memorial Library  
169 Main Street,  
Kingston, NH 03848**

**The Museum is open each Wednesday from 9:00 AM until 12:00 noon and on the second Saturday, June through October, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm.  
Appointment to conduct research or a tour can be arranged for another date.**

**For more information, please call Ruth Albert at 603-642-5508 or email us at**

**[museuminfo@kingstonnh.org](mailto:museuminfo@kingstonnh.org)**