



# What's Happening?

## at the Kingston Historical Museum

November 2022

Vol 1 Issue 2

### ***This Month!***

**Y**ou never know what a phone call will bring! The museum recently received a call from the staff at Kingston Dental Arts on Chase Street in town. They found a gravestone in their backyard and wanted to let us know about there being a potential cemetery by the parking lot! Two museum staff members visited the site and after some records searching they turned up an interesting story about a previous owner of the property. Read about it in this newsletter.

Just what does a museum curator do? The museum's collection needs lots of care and attention and it's the job of a curator to make sure that the various items in the museum are properly cared for. Read the 'job description' of a museum's curator in this issue.

The museum's 'staff' is made up entirely by volunteers who want to preserve the buildings, artifacts, and stories of the people and events that have taken place in our town. There are many opportunities for you to share your talents with us. Take a look at the newsletter's "*Volunteers*" section.

We include the regular "*From Our Collections*" and "*What Is It?*" sections this month. Perhaps you have an item to share that we might include in a future issue of the newsletter?

The museum has begun its winter schedule. The Firehouse, Cobbler Shop, and the Grace Daley barn will be closed during the cold weather. But the Nichols' Memorial Library will still be open for visiting. Check out our hours!

### **The Mystery of the Chase Street Gravestone**

**I**t's not everyday that you think you've found a cemetery in your backyard! That's what the staff at Kingston Dental Arts on Chase Street thought. They called the museum asking for help to determine if there was a private cemetery located on their property.



The photo at left is what brought members of the museum's staff to the site. If you look carefully, you can see the darker section of the stone that was visible to the visitor. The lighter lower section was revealed when the dirt and leaves were brushed aside, indicating that the marker was for the wife of Samuel Caleb Chase. At first glance, it seemed that the marker's "Peace" at the top was a perpetual prayer for the death of his wife. Perhaps if more of the brush were cleared away, we would discover

Simon's wife's name and the dates of her birth and passing. However, just below Samuel's name, the stone was broken and nothing else was found. Careful search around that section of the property didn't turn up the missing piece and no other markers were located. It was back to the museum to do some sleuthing.

Samuel Calef Chase was born on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November in 1796 and died on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November in 1862. These dates came from a quick search of the *Ancestry.com* website along with *Find a Grave.com*. You can imagine our surprise to find that "Peace" was Samuel's wife's name! She was born on the 26<sup>th</sup> of November in 1797 and passed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November in 1836. Peace Ann Chase was the daughter of Nathaniel and Mary (*Brown*) Chase. It's interesting that Peace's maiden name was also Chase! She married Samuel in 1828.

Samuel and Peace had no children. Peace died after 8 years of marriage to Samuel and was buried in the Plains Cemetery. So the question was, if Peace was buried at the Plains, what is her gravestone doing behind 1 Chase Street?

(continued on next page)

### Chase Street Gravestone (continued)

A search of the *Findagrave* website turned up the answer. In 1839, Samuel married Mary Ann Judkins (24 Sept 1815 - 6 Nov 1903) from Kingston. Samuel and Mary had 5 children: Peace Ann Chase (1840 - 1926), William P. Chase (1843 - 1912), Moses M. Chase (1844 - 1884), Mary Emma Chase (1849 - 1916), and Clara Ella Chase (1853 - 1928). It is interesting to note that their first daughter, Peace Ann Chase, was named after Samuel's first wife!



We think that the gravemarker found on Chase Street was removed from the Plains Cemetery, to be replaced by the larger marker seen in the photo at left. The larger monument marked the graves of not only for Samuel and Peace Ann, his first wife, but also Mary Ann (*Judkins*) Chase his second wife and one of his children from his second marriage, Moses Chase.

So, what is Peace Ann Chase's marker doing at the Chase Street address? We think that Peace's marker was kept as a *cenotaph*, a "grave" where a body is not present, but the marker was kept as a memorial to someone. You can imagine that when the new memorial was placed at the Plains Cemetery, the family didn't wish to lose Peace's gravestone, so they moved it to the family

property at Chase Street.

When this story was shared with the Kingston Dental Arts staff, they were relieved to know that there wasn't a cemetery hidden in their backyard, but they were fascinated with the story of the joy of marriage and the sorrow and remembrance of loved ones.

The story of Samuel and Peace provided an opportunity for the Kingston Historical Museum to add to the town's narrative. Without the phone call, Samuel and Peace's story would have never been retrieved and so, lost forever. Requests like this underscores one of the purposes of the Museum. We wish to record and preserve the stories of the people who made Kingston their home.

---

### From our Collections



On display at the museum, in time for the holidays, are examples of children's toys from Kingston's past. An exquisitely furnished doll house, a toy wagon, and a variety of dolls are on display for you to see.

The dolls are on loan from Cindi Bakie Lewandowski and Betty Bakie Flannagan. We want to thank them for helping us put the "Toys" on display.



The doll house, built in the 1980's, was donated to the museum by Jane Cinserulei.

## *Volunteers at the Museum*

### **What does a museum curator do?**

The word “curate”, at its core, means to care for a collection of things for educational purposes. It is often used to describe the activities of people who work with a museum collection. We have, at times in our lives, had the responsibility of “curating” objects of our hobbies such as a collection of baseball cards or coins and stamps. We are on the lookout for objects for our collection that we don’t currently have. We take care of the objects to make sure that they are usable into the future.

But, what are the “job” duties of a museum curator? Depending upon the size and scope of the museum and its collection, there are a range of tasks for which he/she are responsible. Tasks of collection management include recording descriptions of objects, maintaining donation records, and labeling the items. Storing and cataloging objects so that they could be easily located within the museum are basic tasks for a collection manager.

The curator uses objects from the collection to design and construct exhibits for public display and to prepare narratives about the stories the objects would tell. For example, at the Kingston Historical Museum, we currently have a series of displays of old-time toys. These toys provide a glimpse into the world of children’s play activities from the past.

Educational functions include giving tours in the museum along with speaking to groups outside the museum. Describing the services available from the museum and the value the museum presents to the community are important aspects of museum education. Read about a request made of the museum included earlier in this newsletter.

In a larger museum, many of these duties require specialized training and experience. In the Kingston museum, all of these tasks are carried out by volunteers who are monitored and who “learn by doing”. 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 and a sense of curiosity about the stories that can be told. **Please consider stopping by the museum to learn more about being a museum volunteer!**

## *What is it?*

One of the benefits of volunteering at the Museum is having the opportunity to see some of the interesting objects in the collection.

This month’s mystery object is shown at right. While it may look like a bell, it is not. The item is made of wood. The height is about 5 ½ inches and about 3 ¼ inches wide at the base. The handle is movable and can go upwards by about an inch. Some of you may find the object easy to identify, some may not. Next month we will post the answer.



---

### **We need your Help!**

The museum received a request from Michael Cody. He has found in the woods on his property, a number of upright water faucets. He has no idea why they are there and we have no records to answer his question. Perhaps there had once been a campground located there? The faucets are located at 53 Mill Road in town. Any help with solving this mystery would be greatly appreciated.

### **Volunteer Hours Contributed**

For the month of October, our wonderful volunteers have donated 139 hours helping the museum carry out its mission. So far this year, over 1,080 hours of volunteer time has been given. 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. Tours can be  
arranged on another date.**

**For more information, please call Ruth Albert at 603-  
642-5508 or email us at [museuminfo@kingstonnh.org](mailto:museuminfo@kingstonnh.org).**