

## **Stratham Heritage Commission Presents:**

### ***Stratham Then and Now:* Revisiting The King's Great Highway**

The Stratham Heritage Commission will present “Stratham Then and Now” on Friday, February 17, at 7PM at the Stratham Fire Station, 2 Winnicutt Avenue. In the event of stormy weather the event will be rescheduled to Friday, February 24.

Over 120 years ago Richard Scammon's “Down the King's Great Highway: A Sketch of Stratham” appeared in *The Granite Monthly* – at that time the leading journal of New Hampshire history, politics, and culture. Scammon, a descendant of one of Stratham's earliest families, illustrated his article with portraits of late 19<sup>th</sup> century town leaders along with photos of homes and civic buildings around the town.

Nathan Merrill, Heritage Commission Chair and the program's presenter, was for many years “frustrated and bewildered” by the inability to identify the present location or fate of many of the featured buildings. Resolved to solve the mystery, he dug deep into town records and research materials at the Stratham Historical Society. Merrill explained that “the many tools we use to identify properties today – map and lot numbers along with street addresses – simply did not exist in Richard Scammon's day.”

Of the 42 buildings shown in the 1899 *Granite Monthly* Merrill found that 28 survive today. Some are familiar, while others are less known or recognizable. The February 17 program will show current photographs juxtaposed with those illustrating Scammon's article, with Merrill tracing his research path of discovery. Old timers as well as those newer to Stratham will enjoy the journey.

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