

Home for Aged Women  
by Bruce E. Ingmire

After the turn of the century, the ministers in town (as yet unidentified) chose to support a missionary who took into his or her home an aging woman. Later there was a second and then a third case and the need for a home for aged women was established. Within a few years, the church support continued and a house became available on Deer Street. The option to buy almost expired before the minister came up with the money to purchase the building and start the Home for Aged Women on 16 or 63 Deer Street.<sup>1</sup>

From the start persons left money to the home. Later residents were required to surrender their wealth and goods to be held until their death at which time they became part of the trust fund. Later after the home became the Parrot Home for Women, the rules changed and membership required personal funds added directly to the general fund. During the 1930's, Willis Rugg, an employee of the New Hampshire National Bank managed the funds of the Home for the Aged.<sup>2</sup> It is alleged that a woman by the name of Greeley was an early matron at the establishment. Later a woman by the name of Downing served at the Deer Street

<sup>1</sup>. Mary C. Dondero ran a home possibly on Islington Street for the aged. Does Eileen know much about the Home for Aged Women?

<sup>2</sup>. The New Hampshire National became the Indian Head and more recently, the Fleet Bank. The New Hampshire National was the bank from which William Walton took funds. Bill was Muffy Walton's husband and the father of Joan Sanborn.

establishment before it moved.<sup>3</sup>

In 1936 a bequest came to the home from Susan Walker Trask the former co-owner with her husband and Charles Prescott of Trask and Company a department store in Erie, Pennsylvania. Charles Prescott had left his fortune to her husband and herself but the will was broken by the courts a suit by attorney Charles Dale on behalf of Charles's sisters Josie and Mary Prescott. Susie Walker and Charles Prescott were natives of Portsmouth. When Susie died her will left three Portsmouth's institutions money, The Home for Aged Women, the Mark H. Wentworth Home and the Portsmouth Hospital.<sup>4</sup> The stipulation was to set up permanent fund for each institution.

At the time of the bequest, Charles Dale was a trustee of the Home for Aged Women. With this bequest, plans were formulated to build a new facility. The facility was built on Marginal Road on the property formerly the location of the Rufus Wood home.<sup>5</sup> That property hugged the northern shore of the South Mill Pond.

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<sup>3</sup>. This information came from Thelma Downing Carpenter, the daughter of Downing. She says she has a book and we are awaiting its discovery.

<sup>4</sup>. Raymond W. Brighton, The Prescott Story, New Castle, NH: The Portsmouth Marine Society, 1982, 49.

<sup>5</sup>. Any relation of the family that runs the Wood Funeral Home?