

THE FRANCESTOWN HERITAGE MUSEUM



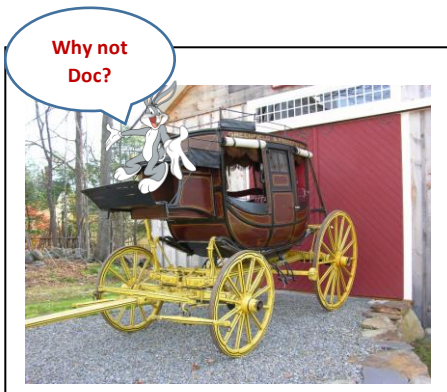
Newsletter

April 2018

The Distinguished Visitor Issue

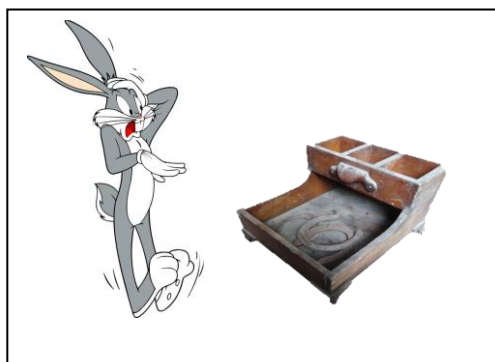
Since our opening there have been several distinguished visitors to the museum. Last year a Saudi Prince stopped by. I'm afraid we did not overly impress the prince. He opined that our vehicles such as the stage coach, fire department hand tub, hearse, et al would not be suitable for use with a camel and the sand in Saudi Arabia would make going anywhere nearly impossible for these wheeled vehicles. Point taken.

Our most recent visitor of note was one Mr. Bunny – known to those of us of a certain age simply as Bugs. It seems Bugs had volunteered to help the Easter Bunny decorate and distribute eggs to area children. As his movements tend to take on a hopping motion he thought it would be far more practical (and safer for the eggs) if we would lend him our Concord Coach. This coach is one of only 142 remaining in the world and still retains the original interior. Thus we do not let it out of the **Francestown Heritage Museum**.



While Bugs presented a strong case, we did not feel that it would be in the best interest of the coach. Shown here is the **Francestown Heritage Museum's** 1849 Concord Coach with Bugs making his animated presentation in favor of his using the coach for the egg deliveries. Since the Concord Coach was a break-through in comfort due to the use of leather springs (a/k/a thorough braces) Bugs felt it ideally suited to the transport of Easter eggs. This coach made daily trips between Francestown (which had the Turnpike) and Greenfield (which had the railroad station).

Having not succeeded in his attempt to borrow the coach, Bugs did take a complete tour of the museum. Some highlights of the tour are detailed here.



FARRIER'S TOOL BOX – this was not the highlight of Bug's day. The thought of nailing metal shoes to an animal's foot did not sit well with Mr. Bunny. The farrier's box has a lower section for shoes and shoeing tools and an upper tray for nails and small implements. The tools often included shoeing hammers for driving in the nails once the shoe is fitted, an iron working hammer for shaping the shoe to fit the horse's hoof, a hoof knife, a farrier's rasp (file) used for smoothing and evening up a hoof after trimming, hoof nippers for removing hoof growth, and pullers for removing old hoof nails.

Tools commonly found in the farrier's box included:



SHOEING HAMMER

FARRIER'S RASP



IRON WORKERS HAMMER

HOOK KNIFE

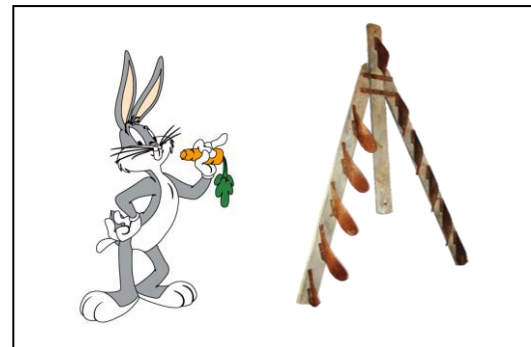


NAIL REMOVING PULLERS

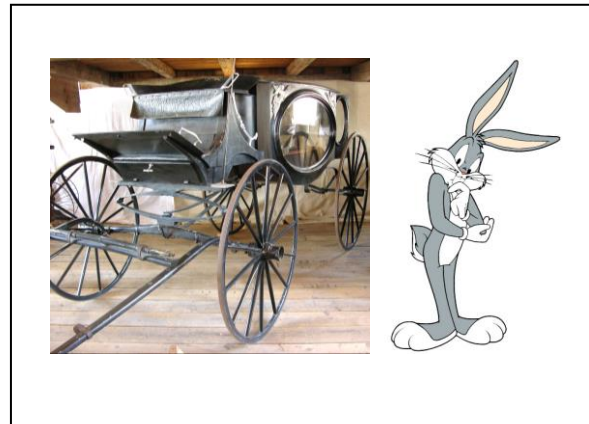
HOOF NIPPERS



However, things began looking up for Bugs when he saw the horse drawn, 11 bottom plow that is on display in the Museum. This Bugs surmised would allow for a good deal of carrot planting. Modern tractors on small farms may be seen pulling a 3 or 4 bottom plow. The effort on the part of man and beast to handle an eleven bottom plow must have been immense. Stop by the **Heritage Museum** and see this and many other exhibits in our agricultural section.



No doubt many of us will remember the running battle between Bugs and Elmer Fudd. During Mr. Bunny's visit to the **Heritage Museum** he appeared to take special note of the hearse on display. One hesitates to think what he was pondering while looking over the hearse but a good guess would be that it had something to do with a ride for Mr. Fudd. This hearse is one of the few surviving carriage hearses. Built ~1867 it has original glass lights in the sides. The floor in the hearse coffin area has rollers to facilitate placement and removal of the coffin. An early coffin is also inside.



So overall our distinguished visitor, Mr. Bugs Bunny, seemed to enjoy his visit, albeit he was somewhat disappointed that we would not lend him the stage coach. Please remember that all (you needn't be a famous person) are welcome at the **Fracestown Heritage Museum**. We are constantly adding to our exhibits and trying to improve the museum to make it as user friendly as possible. We would also remind you that we will try our best to open for private showings. So when you are hosting the family on a rainy Sunday afternoon and are at wit's end as to what to do with them, give one of the curators a call and we will try to be available. Bob Abbott – 547-6894; Bill McAuley – 547-8320 (or walk across the street to 37 2nd NH Tpke and knock on our door); Jennifer Vadney – 540-3000. See you all at the Museum!