

THE FRANCESTOWN HERITAGE MUSEUM



Newsletter

July 2018

Soapstone II Issue

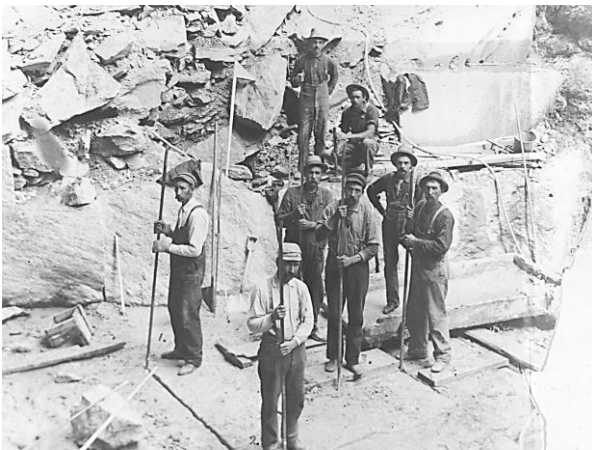
This is Part II of the Francetown Soapstone Story and describes the working of the quarry itself.



The quarry operation would be considered crude by today's standards but they got the job done excavating upward of 4,000 tons of stone per year.

Dynamite was used to open up new veins of high quality soapstone. This was what was being done in 1912 when a fire and explosion destroyed the quarry buildings and shut down the quarry operation.

Once a vein was opened, they used the saw and mortise method of cutting out blocks of soapstone. They would begin by mortising away the end or face of the block allowing them to then saw out the stone. They would then free the block by splitting it up from the base. This photo depicts the workers cutting out blocks from the quarry with their long handled tools.



The quarry operation required that they dig down ever deeper into the stone for new blocks. While gravity was a friend in this downward process, it quickly became foe when it was time to lift the blocks to the surface. The cut blocks were generally 3'x6' or 5'x7' weighing hundreds of pounds. The quarry eventually reached a depth of 134' (the equivalent of a 14-story building only down, not up). Only a derrick allowed them to reach this depth.



Originally powered by horses, a very real innovation was the arrival of a 12hp steam engine to power the derrick. This was eventually replaced by a 20hp steam engine.

The increasing depth also required that water constantly be pumped from the mine which was now below the water table. Note the hose from the pump.

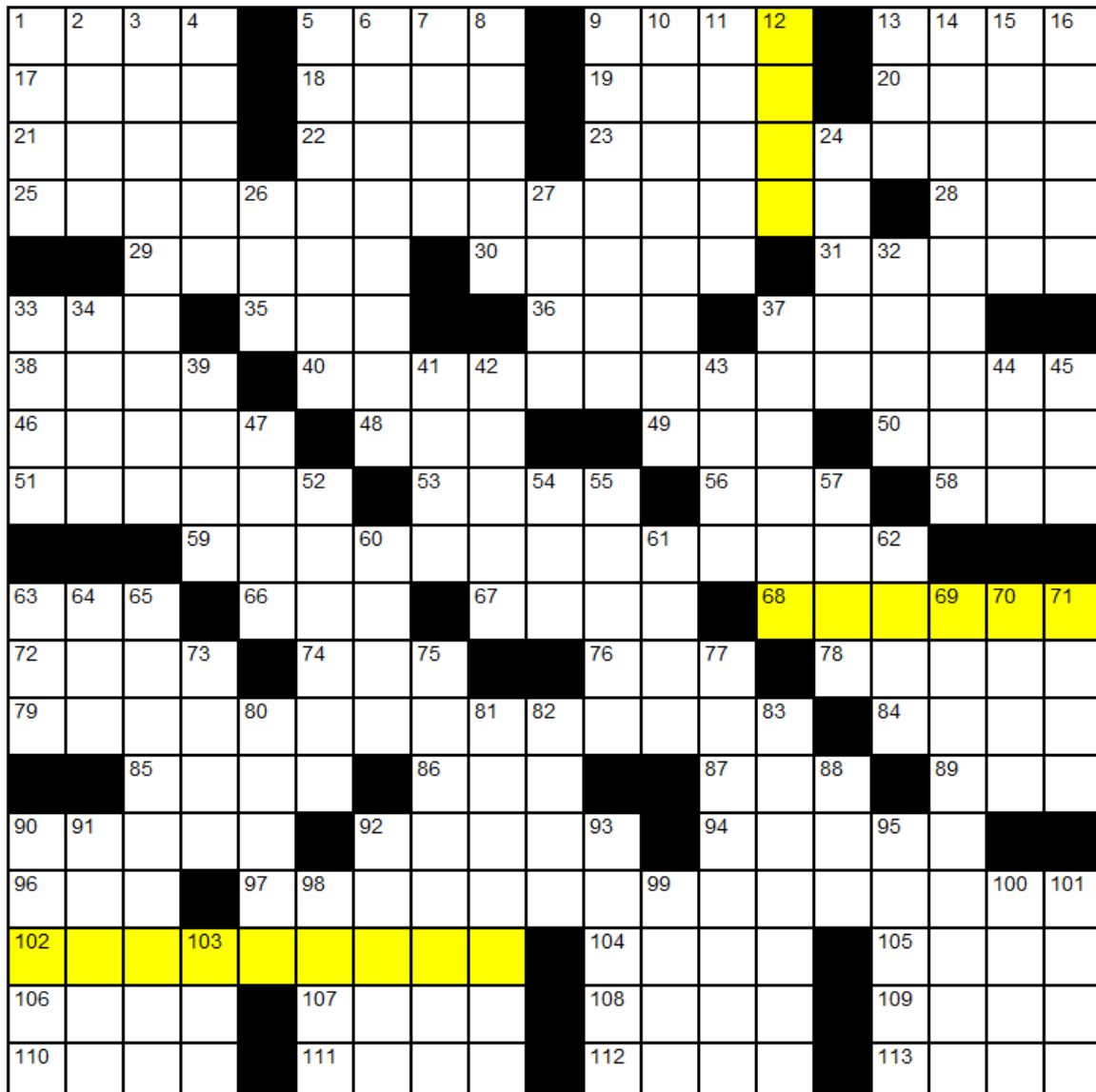


The **Francestown Heritage Museum** has virtually nothing related to the operation of the quarry. Most items were destroyed in the explosion of 1912 and the ensuing fire destroyed not only the quarry buildings but also several farmhouses and buildings on Bible Hill. If anyone has or knows of any old quarry items such as tools, ladders, clothing, etc., the Museum would be eager to obtain such items. Remember that any donations to the Museum are tax deductible.



The next issue of the Heritage Museum newsletter will conclude our review of the history of soapstone in Francestown. Next month we will cover the workings of the soapstone mill itself. The **Francestown Heritage Museum** has a number of display items pertaining to the mill including some of the old saws, pulleys and blocks as well as many more photos of the mill interior.

A SOAPSTONE THEME CROSSWORD puzzle for your enjoyment. Now that you are an expert in the field of soapstone, tackle this theme crossword. A hint has been included in this puzzle in that the theme words are highlighted in the grid. The grid has also been sized so that those of us of indeterminate age will not have to squint. The solution appears on the back page of the newsletter.



ACROSS

- 1 Crumbs
- 5 Bamboozles
- 9 Red wrapped cheese
- 13 "Hold it right there"
- 17 Links rental
- 18 Acknowledge
- 19 Kosher _____
- 20 Congers
- 21 A door is not a door when it's _____ riddle answer
- 22 Nerve network
- 23 Relating to Iceland
- 25 Sliding plates in California
- 28 Baby's first word, maybe
- 29 Go bad
- 30 Corrupt
- 31 City of Brittany
- 33 Clavell's " _____ Pan"
- 35 Ed.'s request
- 36 " _____ Lost"
- 37 Naive one
- 38 Aces, sometimes
- 40 A specialized vacuum tube
- 46 Fair-sized musical group
- 48 JFK overseer
- 49 Affairs
- 50 Carbon compound
- 51 A rich cake
- 53 Persia, now
- 56 Make sense with "up"
- 58 Beaver's work
- 59 Traveling books
- 63 Churchyard tree in Romeo and Juliet
- 66 "Help!"
- 67 _____ Verde National Park
- 68 A Bible Hill mine
- 72 _____ and aahs
- 74 Matterhorn, e.g.
- 76 Victorian, for one
- 78 Barbecue
- 79 Independent acting people
- 84 Art subject
- 85 Highland toppers

- 86 Greenfield to Frankestown direction
- 87 "For shame"
- 89 Beauty
- 90 Fragrant resin
- 92 _____ flu
- 94 Make ashamed
- 96 Boozehound
- 97 Resist buying offered goods
- 102 Subject of NH historic sign on Route 136
- 104 Doctor Who villainess, with "the"
- 105 Beach bird
- 106 _____ Minor
- 107 _____ bitten, twice shy
- 108 Competed
- 109 Decorated, as a cake
- 110 Canine cry
- 111 Deserved reward
- 112 Christian Science founder
- 113 Barley gets, with "out"

DOWN

- 1 Wood sorrels
- 2 Big Indian
- 3 Impermanent
- 4 Rein, e.g.
- 5 A type of arrest
- 6 Printing on the other side
- 7 Do, for example
- 8 Exertion
- 9 Improve
- 10 Poured from one decanter into another
- 11 Sealskin wearer, maybe
- 12 Where soapstone stoves were made
- 13 Cyst
- 14 Leveraged derivative positions
- 15 Hodgepodes
- 16 English race place
- 24 Cornered
- 26 Discouraging words
- 27 Kind of palm

- 32 Baptism for one
- 33 Chinese Dynasty
- 34 Small water buffalo
- 33 Chinese dynasty
- 34 Small water buffalo
- 37 Securities trading system
- 39 Appear
- 41 Detective, at times
- 42 Sheik's bevy
- 43 Big laugh
- 44 _____ constrictor
- 45 A Nightmare on _____ Street
- 47 New Mexico art community
- 52 Depth charge targets
- 54 A pint, maybe
- 55 Japanese-American
- 57 Clobber
- 60 "Cast Away" setting
- 61 Blocks
- 62 Ball material
- 63 " _____ " rang
- 64 Long, long time
- 65 Hunters favorite
- 69 Hard manual laborer
- 70 Carnival attraction
- 71 Primordial matter
- 73 Brickbat
- 75 Bearing
- 77 Succeeded in achieving
- 80 Awry
- 81 Liquor flavoring
- 82 "Laughable Lyrics" writer
- 83 Financial aid
- 88 Sylvester to Tweety
- 90 English exam finale, often
- 91 Baggy
- 92 "Home _____"
- 93 Audacity
- 95 French composer and pianist
- 98 Bit
- 99 Aforementioned
- 100 Algonquin Indian
- 101 Aims
- 103 Drivel

HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS

1 - Labor Day and the many festivities are drawing ever nearer. Both the Francestown Heritage Museum and the Bee Hive - Francestown Improvement and Historic Society Home and Museum will be open for the Labor Day activities on September 3, 2018 from 10 o'clock on. FIHS has done a wonderful job on the displays in the Bee Hive and the Museum hopes you find our expanded space and additional new exhibits both enjoyable and educational.

2 - The Heritage Museum would extend a thanks to the Bee Hive for several of the photos of the quarry that appear in this newsletter.

3 - No doubt it has been noted that this "July" issue is a tad late. We did want to hold it until we could give a preliminary report on the work toward opening the lower level of the Heritage Museum which started 8/4/2018. Our goal is to at least have this far enough along so it will be open to all this Labor Day.

4 - Once again Francestown Sand and Gravel has stepped up by helping the town to keep the cost of a project down. There are not enough thanks to cover their many efforts.

FRANCESTOWN HERITAGE MUSEUM LOWER LEVEL EXPANSION

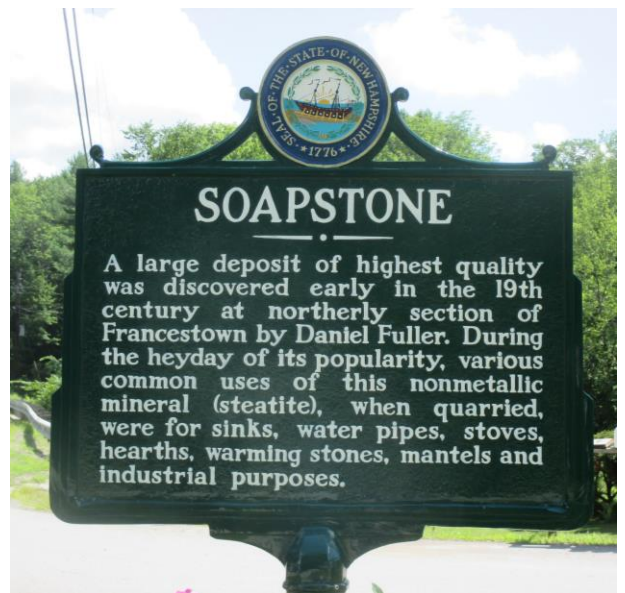
August 4

Digging out the crawl space beneath the main floor of the museum in preparation for the new floor.



IT'S BACK

No doubt you have all wondered what happened to the soapstone sign beside the road in Mill Village. Well, in a meeting of sign vs. vehicle, the vehicle won. So The New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (DHR) and the Department of Transportation (DOT) who are responsible for the state's historical highway marker program (who knew we had an official program for this?), removed the remains and ordered a replacement. Jamie Pike (our Town Administrator) and Kevin Pobst followed up with the State and the new sign was installed last month.



ANSWER TO THIS MONTHS PUZZLE

