

THE FRANCESTOWN HERITAGE MUSEUM

Newsletter



September 2017

Happy Labor Day

FRANCESTOWN AT WAR????



We must admit that the above question caught us a bit off guard when posed by a visitor to the museum over this past Labor Day weekend.

The visitor went on to say that an eagle looking over the left wing is a symbol of being at war, while an eagle looking over the right wing is a symbol of being at peace. Since both the original Town Hall eagle in the museum and the replica on the Town Hall are looking over the left wing, the visitor felt we must surely be at war with somebody.

In checking with various sources over the next few days it was discovered that the right/left notion is a common belief and does in fact have some basis in history.

The eagle which is our country's symbol is depicted holding an olive branch (symbolizing peace) in its right talon, while in its left talon it holds arrows (symbolizing battle).

The original US eagle symbol was looking over its left wing, possibly symbolizing the revolutionary war of the time. However, in 1945, at the conclusion of the Second World War, then President Harry Truman authorized a new version of the symbol with the eagle looking over the right wing (the side holding the olive branch) and the symbol of our country has remained that way ever since.

Since the original Francetown eagle dates to the building of the Town Hall in 1846, it depicts the eagle of that time (the one looking left). So no, the Town of Francetown has not declared war. We are only being true to the history of that time.

The sharp eyed among our readers have noticed our eagle does not have an olive branch in its right talon, nor does it have arrows in the left. While the lack of same probably made securing the eagle to its lofty perch more stable, this is not the US eagle – it is that of Francetown.

This all leads to the question for readers: how many arrows does the US eagle hold in its left talon and how many leaves are on the olive branch? See page #2 for the answer.

LABOR DAY 2017 VISITORS SET RECORD

Our method of counting is at best less than totally accurate; (It consists of manually counting folks as they walk through the door and we are not always at the door). This Labor Day saw over 400 visitors, far exceeding our count on previous occasions.

THE FRANCESTOWN HERITAGE MUSEUM VISITORS GUIDE

FRANCESTOWN HERITAGE MUSEUM



VISITORS GUIDE

Several visitors expressed an interest in obtaining a copy of the museum's Visitors Guide which contains a photograph of each exhibit as well as a brief description of each item. Below is a typical page.

FRANCESTOWN HERITAGE MUSEUM ITEM # 176

THE FANNING MILL



Fanning mills removed straw, chaff, stones, dirt and dust, weed seeds, and light immature seeds from grain. It was important to remove contaminants for better preservation during storage.

Fanning mills have shaking sieves over which the threshed grain kernels mixed with bits of straw, stone and soil were rattled. The mill has a fan operated by the crank on the side that blows air across and upward through the sieves to float off the lighter debris.

The cost to print individual copies of this 146 page color guide makes it prohibitive for us to give visitors a copy. There are copies on stands in several areas of the museum which visitors can refer to when viewing the exhibits or ask one of the attendants.

While we cannot provide visitors with a personal copy, we can do the next best thing and e-mail you a copy on request. Please contact us at www.fracestownheritagemuseum@gmail.com.

Like most non-profit museums we are always looking for ways to secure funds for the continued success of the museum and while there is no charge for an e-mail copy of the guide, we would certainly welcome any tax deductible contribution. Checks can be made out to "Fracetown Heritage Museum Trust" and mailed to The Town of Fracetown, 27 Main Street, Fracetown, NH 03043.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

The Beehive (the new home for the Fracetown Improvement and Historical Society - FIHS) has been essentially completed and the exhibits are now on display. If you have not yet had a chance to visit the Beehive you are missing an important piece of Fracetown history. The exhibits are artfully displayed in the Beehive's individual rooms which allows the visitor to comfortably move from one area to the next. Take some time to stop in the next time you see the open sign.

The Town Hall renovations are also moving along and are ahead of schedule. The structural nature of many of the improvements prohibit visitors from taking a sneak peek but we are assured it is going well.

The Heritage Museum is still working toward completing the floor on the lower level so we will have two floors of displays. Donations are sorely needed so don't be shy. Send tax deductible donations to Fracetown Heritage Museum Trust, c/o Town of Fracetown @ 27 Main Street.

ANSWER TO THE QUESTION

The eagle holds 13 arrows in its left talon. There are also 13 leaves on the olive branch. Quite likely this was to represent the original 13 colonies.