

# THE FRANCESTOWN HERITAGE MUSEUM

Newsletter



March 2020

Enlightenment Issue

## VICTORIAN LAMPS

Well the days are getting longer but chances are you will need to turn on the lights to get through the evening. This was not a problem for our first ancestors. After getting up at dawn, doing routine chores and then spending the day moving rocks around, (all these stone walls we are so well known for didn't get there by themselves) about the time evening rolled around all they wanted to do was roll into bed.

As times got a little easier they may have wanted to stay up a short while and needed light. Candles had their short-comings not the least of which was the chance to burn down the house. What was needed was a controlled flame designed to give off a maximum amount of light.

So, this may not be our most exciting exhibit but it has to be one of the most glamorous. Look at this beauty!



This is an example of the ornamentation, detail and craftsmanship that went into some of these lamps. But a case can be made that the beauty came at the expense of an efficient light as all the colored glass difused much of the illumination.

Wouldn't you know, the Francestown Heritage Museum has had the good fortune to have come into possession of several of these thanks to a couple of generous donors.

So with that in mind let's look at the history of these lights.

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## THE 2<sup>ND</sup> NH TURNPIKE

Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Francestown Heritage Museum and Mont Vernon Historical Society sponsored a program on the 2<sup>nd</sup> NH Turnpike.

### - THE 2<sup>ND</sup> NH TURNPIKE -

The Francestown Heritage Museum and  
Mont Vernon Historical Society  
Would like to take you on a ride . . .

From 1799



To 2019



A program and slides on the history of the 2<sup>nd</sup> NH Turnpike and it's impact on the citizens and their communities through which it passed from "The Plain" in Amherst to "The Lottery Bridge" in Claremont. Join us at the Francestown Town Hall on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1:30 PM  
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - ADMISSION IS FREE

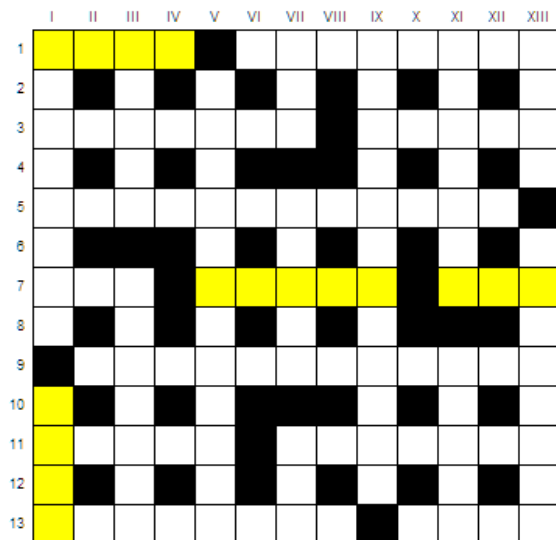
The over 100 attendees asked questions, provided additional details pertinent to the 14 towns the road passed through and from all accounts enjoyed the presentation.

While there is little doubt about the value brought by the Turnpike, its construction may be more notable. Construction was started in 1800 and completed in 1801. So our ancestors with hand saws, axes and shovels carved a 55 mile long two lane road through the wilderness in one year. Perhaps some of our modern day road contractors could take a lesson or two from them.

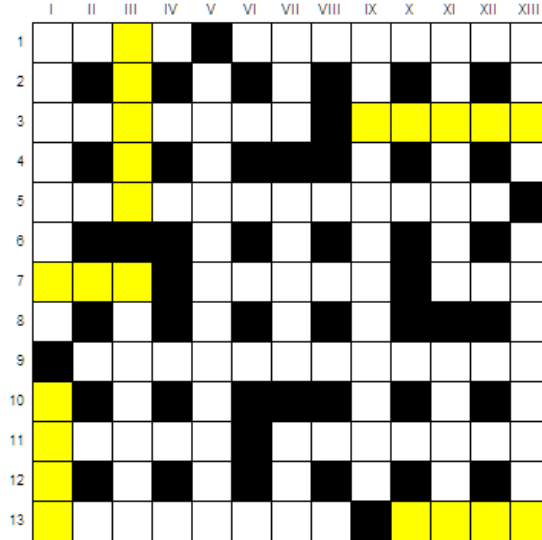
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**THEME CROSSWORDS** Yes two of them – one for Victorian Lamps and the other for the 2<sup>nd</sup> NH Turnpike – enjoy!  
 These are French grid crosswords. There are no numbers in the cubes but rather along the margins. Therefore any one line or column can have multiple words in it. For example line 6 has no three or more open adjoining spaces so there are no words in this line. However, line 1 has 4 adjoining open spaces and also has another 8 adjoining open spaces. This line has two words and in looking at the clues you see there are 2 clues for 1 Across.

### VICTORIAN LAMPS



### 2<sup>ND</sup> NH TURNPIKE



#### Across

1. Source of light  
Person used as a cover
3. It enables a batter to reach base  
Splendid displays
5. Obstinate
7. More \_\_\_\_\_ than downs  
What a long chimney creates  
Fuel used in old lamps
9. Query in formal debate
11. Place in a grave  
A harmless pill
13. Warm heartedness  
Donations to the poor

#### Down

- I. Tree with hanging yellow flowers  
Lit part of an old lamp
- III. Pleasing harmony  
Decrease in length
- V. Climbing flowering plant
- VII. Young child  
Adult insect  
Yellowish infected liquid
- IX. Strong desire to achieve a goal
- XI. A souvenir  
Reside
- XIII. A bird's home  
Having splendor

#### Across

1. Mother of a foal  
Domestic worker
3. Freightage  
Utilized Turnpike
5. Rh factor
7. \_\_\_\_\_ handle  
Glandular organ  
Silvery-white metal
9. Hard to estimate
11. Means of entry  
Pine
13. Serving of soup  
The Turnpike

#### Down

- I. Indian prince  
Problem in New Boston
- III. Specific course  
Took a risk
- V. Thermos
- VII. Storm center  
Renowned  
Not me
- IX. Second to chairman
- XI. Attendance  
C&W instrument
- XIII. Deceptive move  
Intentional

## VICTORIAN LAMPS - continued

The term Victorian lamp is attributable to the Victorian age when Queen Victoria reigned from 1837-1901. This would lead one to the conclusion that this lamp was the invention of the English. Not so. The Victorian lamp is a modification of an oil lamp which was first invented in 1782 by the Swiss.



So why such a tall glass chimney? Well, as you all may know, these lamps produce light by burning a wick in oil. What the Swiss did was redesign the wick so that it was made of cotton with hollows that improved the air flow making it burn brighter. The long chimney was added as it created an upward draft much like the chimney on your fireplace. The combination of the better burning wick and taller chimney increased the level of illumination ten fold.

Even with these improvements you still could not light an entire room. The lamp above is an example of how a handle was added and a wide base so it could be easily moved to where needed and set down without fear of tipping.

These tall chimney oil lamps are also on display at the Museum and were intended to remain in one place.



## THE TURNPIKE - continued

The Turnpikes came into existence as a result of the State legislature signing a charter granting these routes to various proprietors. They were thought necessary as the current roads (for what they were) tended to follow an irregular path from town to town rather than a straight line from one path to the next. It was felt that a crucial route from the Seacoast to Concord could be reduced from a 45 mile journey to one of only 30 miles if only the road went straight. This became the standard to which engineers were to design and build the roads. Regardless of mountains, swamps, rivers, etc. – the road had to be straight. Such is the case with our 2<sup>nd</sup> NH Turnpike which runs SE to NW in a 55 mile long straight line – well almost straight.

There was a section in New Boston, NH where the straight line took the road over a steep hill that horse drawn carts and coachmen did not want to take saying that it would be easier and safer to go around this hill. The engineers were adamant – we must go straight. Well the people in New Boston raised such a fuss that a meeting was held with the engineers. One enterprising fellow spoke to the assembled. He demonstrated by taking a piece of string and laying it over a mound of material carefully marking the length. He then took this same length of string and laid it around the pile of material. There was no difference. Laying the string from the same starting point at the pile of material and laying it to the point on the other side of the material, whether he laid it over the pile or around the pile, it covered the needed distance.

Finally convinced the engineers laid out the road around the steep hill in a configuration that somewhat resembles a “jug handle” and it remains that way today, still being referred to as the jug handle.



# THE HOUSEKEEPING PAGE

We left the February newsletter with several to be continued items:

- 1) Our "Whatzit".

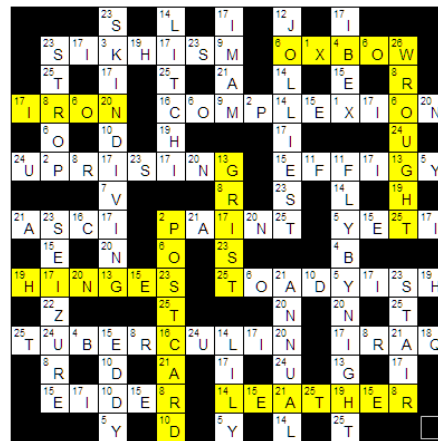


The couple that donated the item really didn't have any details about it other than they remember a long-ago relative mentioning something about doing the laundry. Well our phone call to the Colorado washing machine collector had the answer. This item is a "Vacuum Stomper" – really – you can't make this stuff up. Lee (the washing machine collector) out in Colorado described it this way:

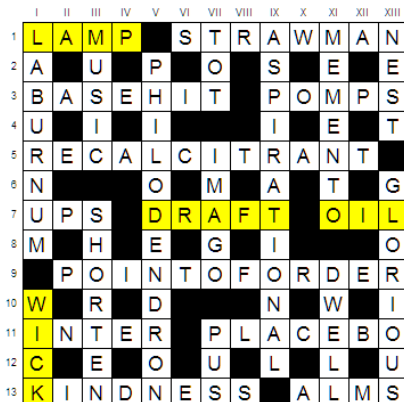
"if you go to the photo album of my web site, [oldewash.com](http://oldewash.com). Then go into the photo album and click on the top line, search by category. Then in the 3<sup>rd</sup> column click on the vacuum stomp with spring and plunge There are a couple of pages of these shown. Look at IDs 1235, 1236, 1243, and 1244. These are made by the same company as yours. Each one is a little different but essentially the same.

You put the clothes to be washed in a tub with the suds and just stomp and push down on the plunger pushing the suds through the clothing." Thanks, Lee.

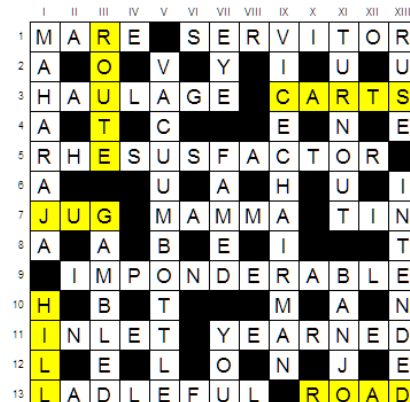
- 2) The solution for February's coded crossword:



- 3) The Solutions to this months crosswords:



VICTORIA LAMPS



2<sup>ND</sup> NH TURNPIKE