

# THE FRANCESTOWN HERITAGE MUSEUM

## Newsletter

Vol. 10, No. 1



January 2024

## HORSE TROUGHS

### HORSE TROUGH . . . . .

The horse trough of today is in many instances a perfect example of “repurposing”.



FRANCESTOWN COMMON TROUGH

The horse trough of our ancestors served as a necessity of life. Our ancestors depended on their horses for plowing their fields, hauling their goods, transportation, and in battle, etc.

Man’s dependence on the horse did not start with our ancestors; indeed it can be traced back as far as 725 BC and no doubt further still. Pottery unearthed in Athens Greece depicts horses at a trough in 725 BC.



CONTINUED ON PAGE # 4

### THE JANUARY WHAT’Z IT . . . . .

We start this year with a what’z it that has a misleading name. Can you identify this tool?

It is said that even today craftsmen consider this to be an indispensable tool. In spite of its simple appearance mastering its use is an art form, but once mastered it is considered essential.



← 10” →

The total length is 10” and the round metal section in the middle has a round wooden handle on each end. It is 3/4” in diameter. There is a cutter blade in the slot in the center of the tool.

Let us know what you think the name of this tool is and possibly win one of our coveted lifetime passes to the Museum. Ω

### A GERMAN CHRISTMAS MARKET

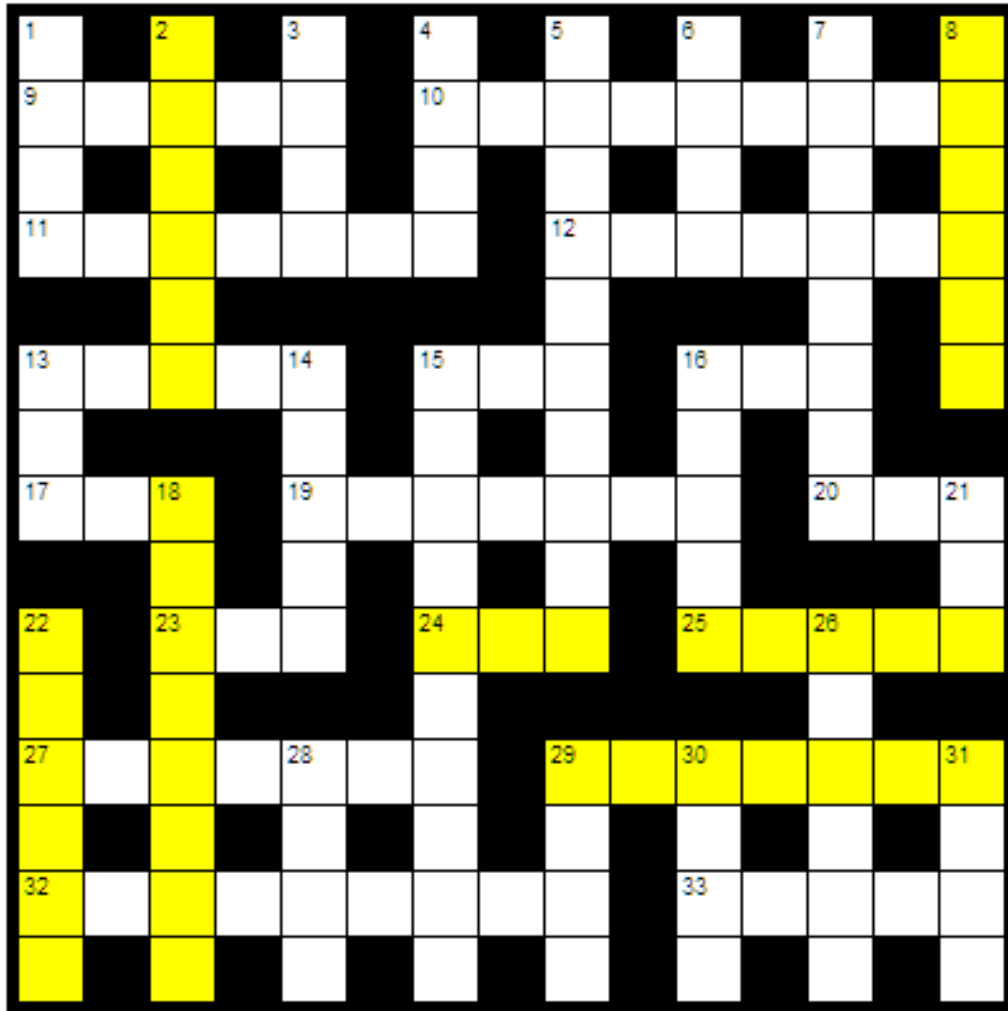
The decorations on the horse sheds were the best ever, the crowds unsurpassed and the atmosphere was festive. Our thanks go to Pam Berry who organized the event and the 21 vendors who offered folks such a wide variety of goods.



CONTINUED ON PAGE # 6

# JANUARY THEME CROSSWORD

The **yellow** blocks contain the theme words and all come from the text of this newsletter. Enjoy and best wishes for this new year.



**ACROSS**

- 9. Depth charge target
- 10. Broad flat hat covering the neck
- 11. Place where tobacco is stored
- 12. High, level ground
- 13. Kitchen gadget to lift objects
- 15. A ghostly cry
- 16. A pastry dessert
- 17. Persistently irritate a person
- 19. Turboprop plane
- 20. Polynesian flower garland
- 23. Selecting something without restriction

**24. WHAT THEY LET SOME TROUGHS DO**

**25. 11,000 OF GEN. LEE'S DIED**

- 27. Hindu Philosophy based on knowledge and liberation

**29. WHAT THEY USED SOME TROUGHS FOR**

- 32. A peep-show
- 33. In need of sleep

**DOWN**

- 1. Nonspecific reference to something

**2. WHERE WATER TROUGH IN FRANCESTOWN IS FOUND**

- 3. Upright support in a wall
- 4. Russian emperor
- 5. To be extremely happy
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_ Verde National Park
- 7. Light and delicate

**8. BELIEVED TO BE A SOURCE OF GLANDERS**

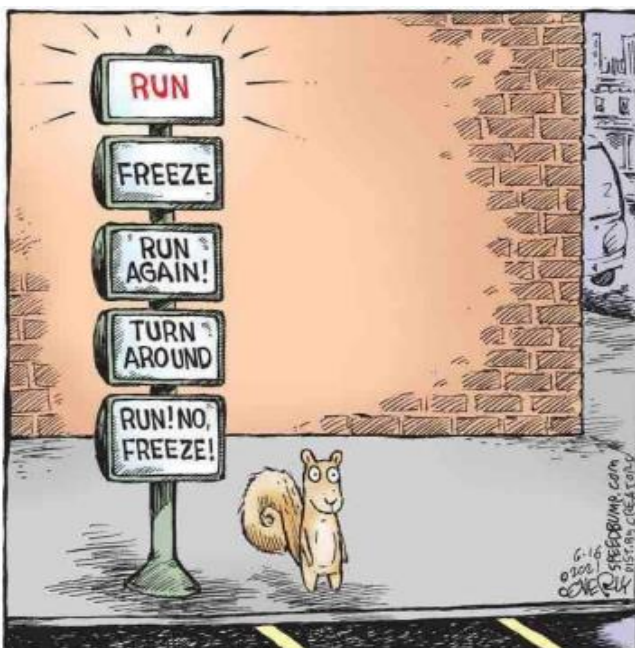
- 13. 5x2
- 14. Sentimental
- 15. Event killing many people
- 16. Ball thrown for the batter to hit

**18. HORSE DISEASE BLAMED ON DRINKING TROUGH**

- 21. Wrath

**22. PLACE THAT WILL CARE FOR YOUR HORSE**

- 26. Travel back
- 28. A Christmas carol
- 29. The smallest chess piece
- 30. Aardvark fare
- 31. Journey made on horseback



**BE DECISIVE**

Right or wrong, make a decision.

The road is paved with flat squirrels who couldn't make a decision.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE # 1

**HORSE TROUGH . . . . .**

Like many essential things, the need for a way to water all horses was needed. In no place was this more evident than in England in the 1800s. Every mews and livery stable offered water for the horses and a stable boy to fetch it for their patrons. Passing riders could stop at inns and taverns. Some would provide the water for free while some expected as much as a penny per horse. A sign outside one tavern lured travelers with:

“Water for the horse and a drink for the driver”

Another not-so-subtle message read:

“All that water their horses here must pay a penny or have some beer”

So much for not drinking and driving.

However, many horses were hauling carts and wagons and other forms of transportation were on the open road. The need for water for these horses was apparent and in many areas one could find some troughs free to the public. These “regency troughs” were made of wood and elevated off the ground.



These troughs were filled bucket by bucket by some inn servant or tavern boy who was sent out for the water and generally admonished “And mind you, don’t dawdle about it” which may well have given rise to the term ‘running water’.

The need for water for horses was generally recognized by municipalities which responded

to the need to provide public water while animal and horse lovers’ donations provided the troughs and fountains. While rudimentary, they supplied water for the horses at one end and people at the other end.



In the mid 1850s things further improved when more advanced horse troughs began to appear that were funded by philanthropic groups. One such group in London was the Metropolitan Drinking Fountain & Cattle Trough Association. Funded by contribution, their goal was to provide “FREE SUPPLIES of WATER for MAN and BEAST”.



CONTINUED ON PAGE # 5

It was the Victorian age and if anyone can do pageantry it is the Brits. Elaborate horse troughs were soon to follow.



ANGELA BURDETT-COUTTS MEMORIAL TROUGH – VICTORIA PARK

You can also imagine that the Yanks were not about to be outdone.



OLIVIA PHELPS STOKES FOUNTAIN – MANHATTAN

However, in the midst of this grandeur, equine welfare was being endangered by an epidemic of glanders - a usually fatal disease in horses.

This equine disease is characterized by the development of ulcerating growths that are most commonly found in the upper respiratory tract, lungs, and skin. Public health officials ordered all horse troughs to go dry. By 1914 this had become a national movement.

Letting the troughs go dry could be accomplished in a number of ways:

One was to just let them go dry –



Another was to transform them into a planter –



But the ultimate was . . .



CONTINUED ON PAGE # 7

CONTINUED FROM PAGE # 1

**GERMAN MARKET -**

The museum was crowded on both floors for the entire day and we thank all who attended and hoped you enjoyed your visit.

The market boosted 21 vendors selling handcrafted/home made items. From German inspired foods to jewelry, gift ideas and more.



Artists and authors offered their works – all your Christmas gift shopping in one venue.



WHAT, you missed it? Well mark your calendar as they are already planning for next year's.



And in the spirit of the season, the Heritage Museum staff send you best wishes for the holidays.



---

**SEASONAL CLOSING . . .**

Another year has passed and on December 10<sup>th</sup> the Museum closed its doors until next spring.



This does not mean you cannot still visit us but you will need to contact me at [wfm03043@comcast.net](mailto:wfm03043@comcast.net). It is not difficult for me to walk next door and open the museum for you and/or your guests.

---

By the way - **HAPPY NEW YEAR**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE # 5

Sorry, I digressed a bit but couldn't resist the alligator photo. That said . . .

Why this rush to closure over a few horse deaths? For one thing it was not a few horse deaths. People remembered that back in 1864 glanders killed 11,000 of General Lee's Union horses. Glanders was a serious threat.

Glanders is also an infection that can be passed from horse to humans, albeit that is rare. Given the extent of medical knowledge in the 1800s, cities wanted to take no chances and public health officials ordered horse troughs closed. Closing horse fountain/troughs became a national movement and some cities (such as Boston) went so far as to dismantle the fountains and troughs and replace them with drinking hydrants. Teamsters were told to fetch water in buckets to allow their horses to drink.

This led to further controversy summed up when one group of advocates staged a revolt saying, "the closures would be harmful to horses, since lazy teamsters would not bother to get down from their wagons and water the horses with buckets".

As it turns out, all this controversy and destruction of horse troughs and ornate fountains was to no avail. This was not a disease peculiar to the United States and the controversy here was resolved when urban officials turned to London to see how they had handled their similar problem.

The President of the "Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons" reported that based on facts and figures, the blame for glanders is "the result of the movement of diseased horses", rather than on the fountains and troughs. Using these facts it was shown that infection from water troughs was rare. London had some 1,000+ public water troughs and in 90% of cases, infection was traced to other causes.

This study showed the disease was spread by the movement of diseased horses and not drinking from a common fountain. London

transported diseased horses.

Nowhere but in Britain would you find the establishment of "**London's Metropolitan Drinking Water and Cattle Trough Association**". It soon boasted 1,000 drinking fountains for horses where a half million times a day cows and horses took a drink. How could the US not follow suit and ban the movement of diseased horses?

And so this brings us to Francestown where our horse trough was installed in 1889 and still sits on our historic common next to the Second NH Turnpike which became an important north-south route for travelers, merchandise and cattle after it opened in 1801.



You notice that it has no tap for filling the trough and would thus have been one of the type that was banned in Boston and removed. We are far more rural and the problem did not reach our town and the trough survived.

Like many of these vintage troughs, Francestown too has repurposed the common fountain into a seasonal planter to add color to the common. Ω



CONTINUED FROM PAGE # 7

### TROUGH EPILOGUE

When the writer of this newsletter was a far younger lad, his parents had a horse trough on their property in upstate New York.

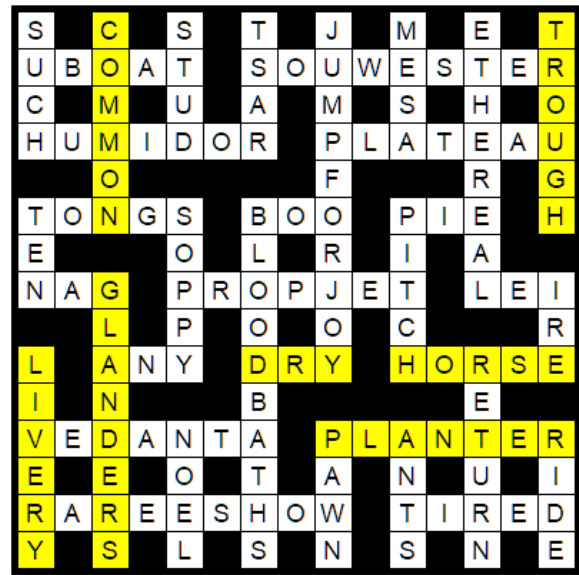


This trough dates to 1905 and you will note that it has a spigot to supply running water. The task of keeping the spring cleaned out and spigot running fell to me but I see in this recent photo that somebody has apparently fallen down on the job. The spigot ran 24/7 all year round which made for some spectacular ice displays in winter. Cazenovia is in the upstate New York snow belt and I recall the snowbanks across the road from this trough being so high they covered the wires on the power lines and we kids were always being admonished not to climb the snowbanks (but they did make for some great toboggan runs). Ω

#### For those who want a change from crosswords

		9					
	7				1		5
			5	8	6		
5		6		7			
			1		2		
1			8	2			
		3	9	1		6	7
3	8						1
						2	9

### PUZZLE SOLUTION



**THE FRANCETOWN HERITAGE MUSEUM NEWSLETTER** is distributed monthly via BCC e-mail.

Subscription – there is no subscription cost.

For any of the following contact Bill McAuley at: [wfm03043@comcast.net](mailto:wfm03043@comcast.net)

**Distribution** – if you, or someone you know, would like to be added to the distribution list and receive a copy monthly, or:

**Letter to the Editor** – If you would like to write a letter to the editor – they are always welcome and may appear in later issues (with permission of the writer), or:

**Receive a Past Issue** - they will be sent upon request. An index of past issues is also available. Ω

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- 1 – The American School of Classical Studies at Athens
- 2 – William Hunting, FRCVS, President of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons
- 3 – Thirst for Knowledge – Equis 3/1-/2017
- 4 – London Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association