

# THE FRANCESTOWN HERITAGE MUSEUM

Newsletter



December 2019

## Early Gifts

### SEASON'S GREETINGS

It must be official as the tree on the town common will be shining brightly following the Francestown Improvement and Historical Society tree lighting. For the museum the season came especially early this year with the donation of over 50 new exhibit items. A couple of examples here and a challenge to our readers.

For our home section we have an item that bridges the gap from the tedious task of sewing by hand to the modern day electric power driven sewing machine – A Davis Sewing Machine. The Davis Sewing Machine Company was started in 1868 in Watertown, NY. The machine was considered far superior to all others due to a new “vertical feed”. I haven’t the foggiest idea what that means but it must have been good as they soon took over the sewing industry and were shipping machines to Paris and elsewhere.

The donation is a complete machine with all the attachments and manuals in excellent condition.



The machine is a model VF (Vertical Feed) and was manufactured between 1892 and 1900.

### A READERS CHALLENGE

Another recent donation has a less obvious use so we’ll open this one to our readers. Identify this item and we will give you a free lifetime pass to the museum (a somewhat dubious gift since we don’t charge admission anyway). But these items were used by our ancestors and they were an essential part of survival. So let us know what you think these were used for.



---

### A DIVERSITY OF DONATIONS . . .

One more just to illustrate the wide range of our seasonal gifts received.



Continued on Page #5

As this month's newsletter has no specific theme or topic, this month's crossword has a more general theme, that being "Francestown". Being year-end it is also the largest puzzle of the year. But trust me we are not doing this again – it took days to put this together. So if the holiday season is not hectic enough, you can lose yourself in the crossword. An apology is in order for 47 across as it was a stretch to get a word to fit but the clue is accurate. An additional clue would be it is an Australian term. As usual, the theme words are found in the yellow squares.

## DECEMBER CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13		14	15	16	17
18					19					20						21			
22				23						24						25			
26									27						28	29			
	30							31						32					
				33				34						35			36	37	38
39	40	41				42						43	44				45		
46					47							48					49		
50				51						52	53	54				55			
56			57							58						59			
		60							61					62	63				
64	65							66					67					68	69
70						71						72					73		
74					75							76				77			
78				79						80	81	82				83			
84			85							86					87				
			88						89						90			91	92
93	94	95						96						97					98
99					100	101						102							
103					104							105					106		
107					108							109					110		

**ACROSS**

1. Light source
5. Can do
9. Gives forth
14. Fingerboard ridge
18. Hodgepodge
19. Hornswoggle
20. Ethically indifferent
21. Afflicts
22. MINED IN FRANCESTOWN
24. Got by
25. Santa \_\_\_\_\_, CA
26. Bellowing
27. Come-ons
28. Wordsmith
30. Devoid of feeling awe
31. Like some spas
32. Attention
33. Bran source
34. Colgate rival
35. Found
39. Blah statement
42. FRANCESTOWN WATERBODY
45. Bauxite
46. Barely manages, with "out"
47. Dung matted wool hanging from the hindquarters of a sheep
48. Ancient alphabetic character
49. Smack
50. Blunder
51. Secretly monitoring
55. Doltish
56. FRANCESTOWN ANNUAL EVENT
58. Auctioneer's word
59. More frequent occurrence
60. State of depression
61. Belarus's capital
62. Court figure

**DOWN**

1. Grief
2. Island greeting
3. Cat's cry – Var. spelling
4. Heavily settled
5. Whistler, e.g.
6. Godsend
7. Yearn
8. Economize
9. Come (from)
10. Runway walker
11. Furies
12. Little bit
13. One who moves slowly
14. Milled wheat
15. Run amok
16. Ultimatum ender
17. Autocrat
20. In the thick of
23. Cook, as clams
27. Legal claim
29. Regatta
31. Believe in
32. Colloquialisms
34. Evasive
36. FRANCESTOWN WOODLANDS
37. Make blank
38. Prevent
39. Dog command
40. Gumbo ingredient
41. Savory plant place
42. Forbidden
43. Imbibe
44. Respiratory organ
47. Lover of Aeneas
49. Left Bank locale
51. Penned
52. Light-footed

## ACROSS

64. Anticipate
66. Open grassland in Africa
67. Open shelf stands for bric-a-brac
70. Whittle
71. Prisoners
73. Baseball stat
74. Daily riser
75. Three-ply snack
76. Fish caught in pots
77. Horned goddess
78. Beehive State native
79. A small apartment
83. Pays to play
84. Letter exchanging friends
86. Slang: Done with
87. 20/20 Network
88. Circle parts
89. Passed on a relay race
90. Places where computer data is stored
93. Part of a gun
96. Foreshadows
97. A flaming torch
99. Diva's delivery
100. First act
102. MAKER OF FRANCESTOWN TOLL SCALE
103. Extend credit
104. Symbolic object
105. Hokkaido native
106. Small songbirds
107. Cottage site
108. Intoxicating
109. Primordial matter
110. Mideast title

## DOWN

53. 42 ACROSS IS ONE OF THEM
54. Ski trail
55. Lees
57. Oil source
61. Reminders
62. Stone marker
63. Old salts
64. Malfunction
65. One of "The Walton's"
66. Competed
67. Turn inside out
68. One of HOMES
69. Back talk
71. Rapunzel feature
72. Summer TV offering
75. A waterproof fabric
77. Aid growth development
79. Peel
80. FRANCESTOWN SCHOOL
81. Spuds
82. Data storage system
83. Atomic device
85. FRANCESTOWN ANNUAL EVENT
87. Old fashion warning
89. Removed skeleton
90. Singer Patsy \_\_\_\_\_
91. Hippie wardrobe
92. Divine energy
93. Formal dance
94. Field of study
95. Milieu for Lemieux
96. VHS alternative
97. Go bankrupt
98. Cold war inits.
101. Edgar Allen \_\_\_\_
102. Wray of "King Kong"

Continued from Page #1



No going to Amazon in those days. You wanted a book it had to be bound by hand on a book press.

This is a Pridmore #3 Book Press made by the Pridmore Automatic Screw Company in Chicago, ~1870. This heavy steel press allowed the pages and covers of a book to be pressed together and held in place while the binding was glued and/or stitched.

---

## 2019 IN REVIEW

Yet another year of getting to where we want to be (and we still have a way to go).

- We have received 73 new artifacts in the course of the year and are planning the new exhibit spaces.
- We have completed the floor for our new expansion into the lower level and started to move exhibit items to the area but have a lot of work to do.
- The Visitors Guide was rewritten and expanded.
- We have added an archive of the architectural history of the houses and barns of Frankestown that pre-date 1995. This is some 2000 pages of detail in 10 bound volumes. These contain architectural features, history of the building and other facts. Visitors are welcome to come in, sit down and review any particular building that may be of interest to them.
- We have worked to develop partnerships with other historical societies in the area.

- This included a joint newsletter with New Boston.
- We are starting work with Mont Vernon to present a winter seminar on the history of the Second NH Turnpike. The actual program will be sometime in February 2020 and will be open to the public.

---

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The following was received concerning the November Newsletter – “Wheels must have been a big investment. Wonder how the costs compared with today’s tires. . .”

As the Hollis Historical Society happens to have a member who is well versed in horse drawn equipment I sent her a note to see if she could shed some light on this. She was able to provide me with a contact at the New England Region Carriage Association who in turn put me in contact with Bart Farms in Massachusetts. Finally some searching through the Department of Commerce database. So you can see we take your letters to us seriously. At any rate, the upshot is:

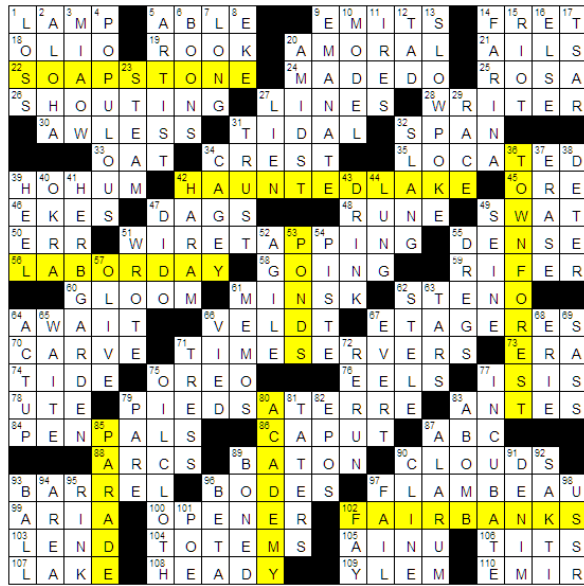
It depends a great deal on the wagon. For a small buggy in the early 1800’s a wheel would probably cost between \$25 and \$30. A larger wagon wheel such as a farmer or mill owner might have on a heavy wagon could be ten times that amount, or more. \$300 was a lot of money back then.

The Department of Commerce data for that period shows that in 1820 a farm worker was paid about \$15/month. So a broken wheel on even a small wagon would cost him 2 month’s pay.

Compare that to today when a tire for your small car may be about \$60. It is not even going to cost you one day’s pay. It seems pretty apparent that having to buy a wheel back in the 1800’s would have been a tremendous burden.

Want to bet they kept a watchful eye out for pot holes?

## DECEMBER CROSSWORD SOLUTION



## ANSWER TO READERS CHALLENGE

The “sticks” in question are “flailing sticks”. These were used in threshing grain. The longer stick served as a handle and the shorter, stouter stick is hung loose from it by a cord so as to swing freely.

To use a flail, sheaves of grain are laid on a wooden floor in two parallel lines. The threshers work in pairs and at equal intervals alternately beat the sheaves with the flails. They have to be skilled in order to keep the pace and rhythm and use the flail without hurting themselves or each other.



The advantage of flail threshing is that it produced high quality straw which was once used to thatch roofs.

On December 1<sup>st</sup> the Francetown Improvement and Historical Society will sponsor the annual tree lighting on the common. This annual tradition marks the start of the holiday season. Town hall will open at 4 PM for hot chocolate. Tree lighting at 5 PM.



*The Museum Volunteers Wish  
You All Happy Holidays*



Not sure what to do with the holiday guests and family? We will provide a private tour if available. Just call 547-8320. The caveat being, dress warmly, the museum is not heated and be prepared to excuse the disarray as we are in the process of moving things for the opening of our lower level next year.