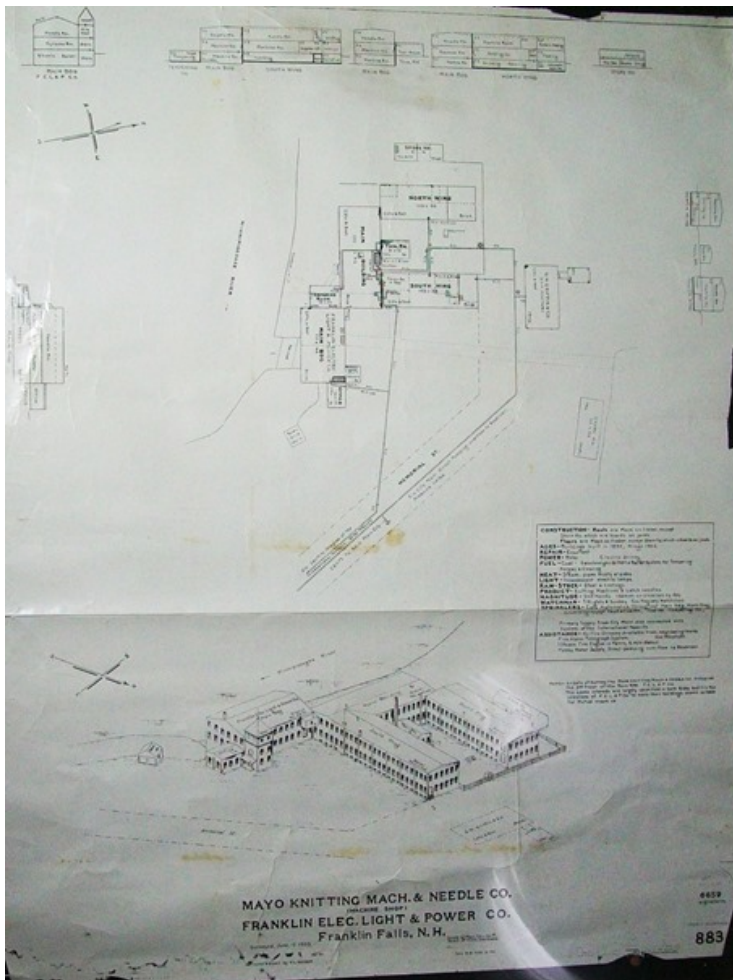


Franklin Historical Society - February 2023

The rather bizarre cycle of weather continues, as a barren start to the winter has been replaced with a significant amount of snow, but with that accumulated pack rapidly dwindling. Enough fell however (slightly over a foot), to mandate removal from the Society building's porch roofs for a measure of structural safety. Now, after some unseasonably warm temperatures, the area is facing *sub-ZERO* nights this coming week! Coupled with insufferably high natural gas, fuel oil, and electric prices, challenging days lay ahead for all. With a cold, but snowless day forecast for **Thursday, February 2nd**, the **Society Board and Directors will be meeting at 7 pm at Thompson Hall** (courtesy of Glenn Morrill), for its annual winter assessment of the coming year. Anyone interested, not just the board, is welcome to attend and share their ideas. Topics to be discussed include potential election of Directors and Officers, building projects, fundraising events, and presentation suggestions for all the monthly meetings. Every attempt will be made to keep the meeting to an hour or less.

Some interesting items have found their way to the Society, despite its being closed for the season. Stephanie Wolff, the newest coordinator for the Franklin Mayor's Drug Task Force, found a magazine in a wall of her house on Madison Street. With the prerequisite mouse nibbles and torn pages front and back, the main body of the issue of Winter Fashions of 1924 were relatively intact. Obviously a previous tenant or resident had a keen sense of what was the proper attire in the roaring twenties, but decided that

insulating the wall might be a better, more productive use of the magazine.



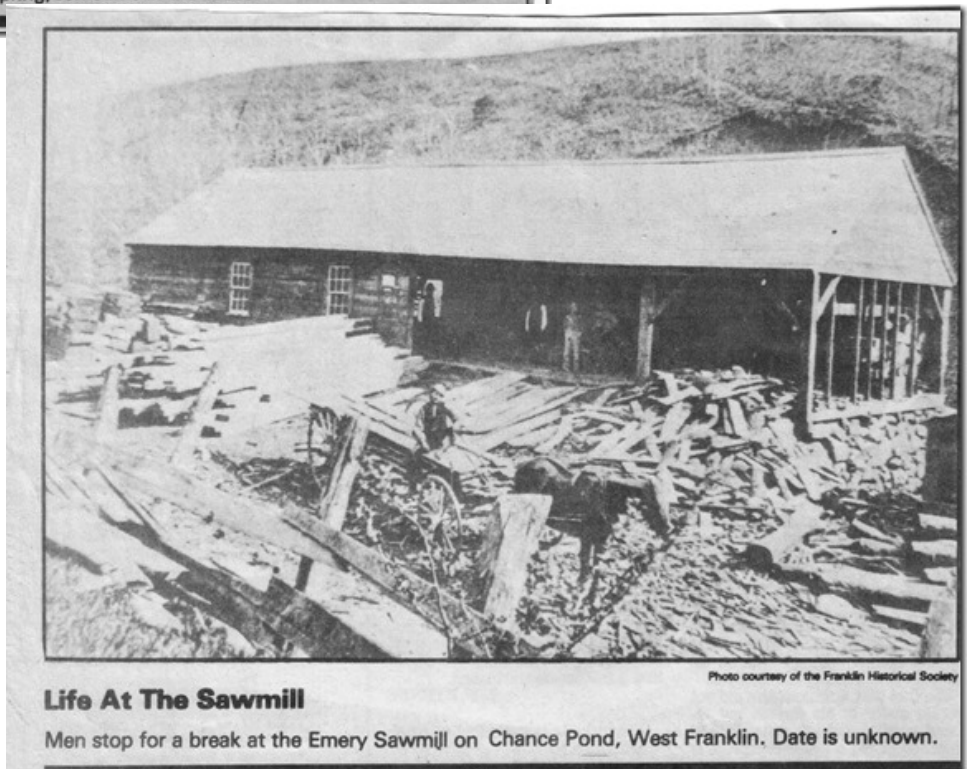
From Tina Currier, a resident of the CATCH housing development on Memorial street, donated a framed collection of drawings of four set pieces for the 2008 (assumed, through available research resources) production by the Boston Ballet of *Romeo and Juliet*. Signed by the assistant production designer, Frank (last name illegible), and unfortunately hung on a wall raked by sunlight causing considerably fading, the mystery is how this collectible came to Franklin. The donor's husband once owned the building, but Tina has no idea from whence this came. She also gave a wonderful, large copy of a 1903 insurance survey and drawing of the Mayo Knitting Machine and Needle Company (the original occupier of the facility) and Franklin Electric Light and Power (the business after which CATCH chose to name their building), detailing the uses of each building, and the machinery on each floor.

This treasure is as close to a “one-off” as something can be, and the Society is thrilled to now have it in its collections. Thank you to both Tina and Stephanie for their thoughtfulness and generosity. Last month Judith Ackerson found two photos published in (presumably) the local newspaper some years ago (see below).



The curiosity is the attribution in the lower right corner: “Photo courtesy of the Franklin Historical Society”. Even after an exhaustive search, trace of the originals to these photos could not be found in the Society’s archives. Many may have their theories as to what happened: stored in a member’s residence and lost over time, or in Paul Gagnon’s collection and sold at his estate auction, or even loaned to Albert for research on his incomplete History of Franklin Volume II.

Whatever their fate, the only real conclusion is that they now only exist to the Society in newspaper print. If anyone has original copies of these two images, the Society would love to be gifted them, or be allowed to scan them for its digital archives. Coincidentally, a likeness of the sawmill pictured is recreated on one of the Weeks Diary murals...



Lastly, one proposed idea for an early program at a monthly meeting this year is the history of the group called the “Kearsage Mountain Boys”, to be told by John Benham. Pictured below is a rather fuzzy snapshot of an unidentified quartet linked to the group. Anyone with a clue as to any or all’s identities, feel free to contact Leigh Webb at 934-8222, or if receiving this newsletter, reply to the email. The Society thanks you in advance.



Bundle up, cause baby, it’s COLD outside!

