



FRANCONIA AREA HERITAGE NEWSLETTER

Council Board

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Website Developer.

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Historian, Archivist

Sara Daley
Historian, Archivist

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Shep Holcombe

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Marketing Research

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Correspondence Secretary

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Secretary, Historian, Archivist

Amy Kelley, Franconia
Consultant

Dear Supporter of the Franconia Area Heritage Council:

The Franconia Area Heritage Council/Franconia Heritage Museum (FAHC/FHM) Board is back to work at full speed in chronicling our collection, developing our new website, engaging in an active social media outreach, and offering a new exhibit at the museum.

Donations to the museum collection continue and the directors have been busy reviewing our existing collection, finding new ways to make it user-friendly for individuals doing research into the Franconia area history. Our new website (<https://www.franconiaareaheritage.org/>) has launched with plans to provide expanded on-line news & information. The FAHC has discovered the power of Facebook and undertaken a very successful social media campaign of bringing history to the internet through periodic posts detailing aspects of local history.

Our new exhibit detailing the photographic legacy of C.T. Bodwell, the first superintendent of the Flume Gorge, was launched this year and will continue next summer.

The first printing of the FAHC cookbook in celebration of Franconia's upcoming 250th anniversary was launched with gratitude to the many contributors who provided recipes.

Christmas at the Museum returned with Santa and Mrs. Claus welcoming dozens of children of all ages to the museum during the holiday season.

The Iron Furnace Interpretive Center has a new addition to the building providing protection from the weather for our iron ore cart thanks to the generous donation in memory of Barbara Holt.

Sara Daley, Mary Jo Opalinski, and Shep Holcombe have joined the Board of Directors.

We bid farewell to board member, Eileen Ball, founding member of the FAHC who devoted 30+ years to the preserving Franconia's heritage and who spearheaded the research and replacement of the World War II memorial plaque at town hall.

Looking towards the future, discussions are underway regarding the expansion of our archival space to accommodate our growing collection and make it more easily accessible to those interested in doing historical research. The FAHC continues to preserve the legacy of our forbearers and share our amazing history with a new audience today.

**If you are interested bringing history alive to a new generation, please let us know.
WE ALWAYS WELCOME VOLUNTEERS!**

Jeff Bartlett
President, FAHC Board

The history of a town is often reflected in a study of the town's post offices, mail routes, and correspondence mailed to and from a location. Never is that more evident than with the collection of postal memorabilia contained in the collection of local resident, Kevin Johnson. Johnson, a long-time postal historian has assembled postal history collections from locations throughout New Hampshire.

In Franconia, the discovery of iron ore in the late 1790's fueled the economy of the village as mining and the construction of smelting furnaces soon followed. As Franconia's population grew, in response to this industrial development, the demand for a local post office became more apparent. Prior to this time, individuals or private couriers carried mail to Littleton's post office that had been established in 1800 or arranged direct delivery by family or friends traveling to the destination where the correspondence was intended to be delivered.

On April 1, 1808 Franconia's first post office opened just north of the iron furnace in a general store owned by Osman Parker with Chester Farman serving as postmaster. The population of Franconia in 1810 was 358; up from 129 ten years earlier.

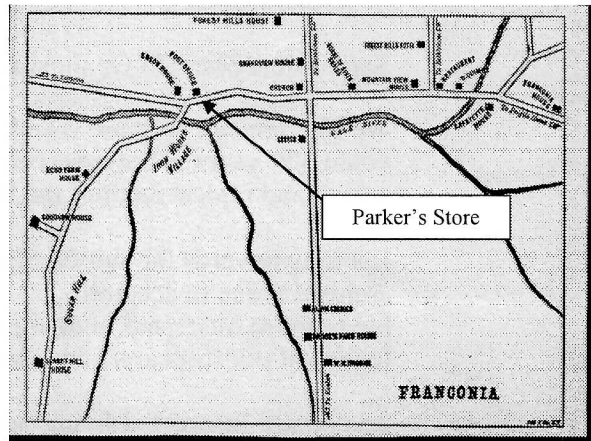
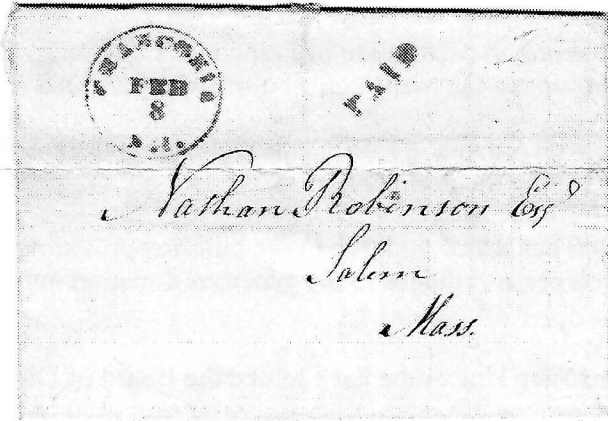


Map of Village between 1863 and 1888

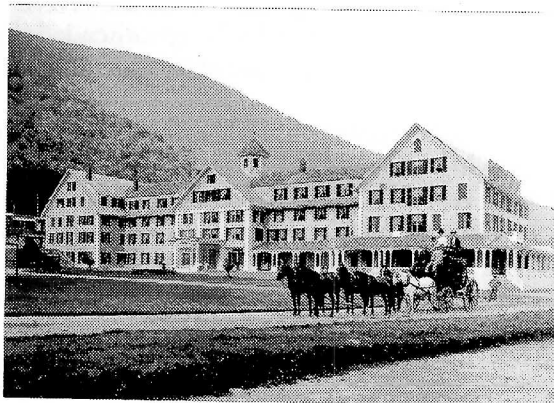
Earliest Known Correspondence From Franconia

Single Letter rate of 12½¢ for mail traveling over 80 miles & not exceeding 150 miles

February 8, 1829



With the appointment of Aleazer B. Parker in 1855, the post office moved to the site of Parker's store which is now where the AHEAD apartments are located at the entrance to Lafayette School.



Tourism and the resulting construction of the grand hotel, The Profile House, located at the current site of the Cannon Mt. Tram, created demand for postal service and the establishment of a post office, delivering to Franconia daily.

Circa 1892, the post office was re-located to the former District 1 school house located on the corner of Main Street and Wallace Hill Road at the current site of Franconia Market.

As the United States Post Office Department expanded, the trend shifted post offices out of the homes and businesses of individual postmasters to stand alone locations that could remain a more permanent location in a for the community's post office rather than one that would shift from location to location depending upon the appointment of the local postmaster.



With the construction of a new town hall completed in 1938, on May 1st Franconia's post office was re-located to the first floor of one-third of the building where the town offices are now located.

Franconia's Rural Free Delivery (R.F.D.) network was established on February 20, 1920 with Silas L. Taylor serving as the first carrier.

Prior to this time, all residents picked up mail at the post office. The nationwide expansion of the population into the country-side, in part due to the advent of automobile, provided the means and demand for the home delivery of the mail.

Up until the late 1920's mail in Franconia was hand-cancelled with the postal personnel applying a cancellation with a rubber or steel canceling device.

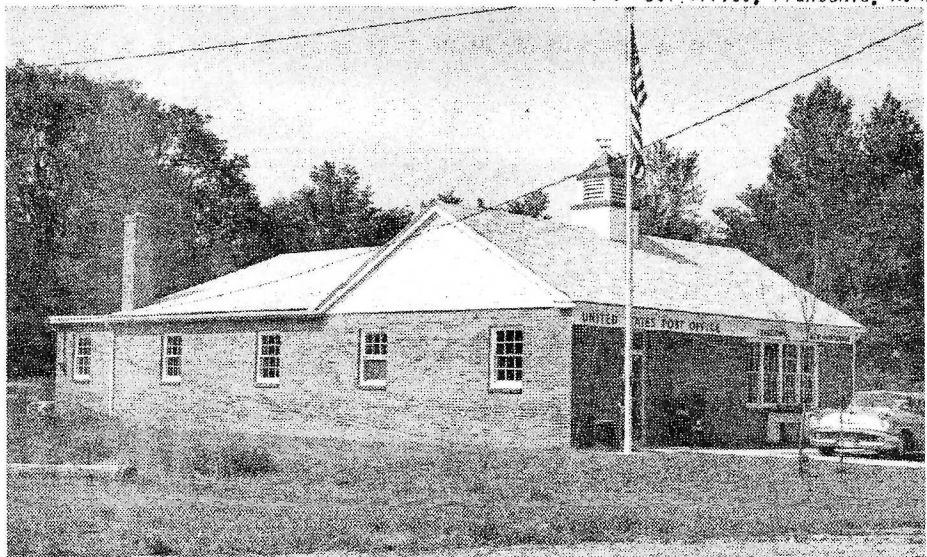
Sometime in the late 1920's, Franconia received it's first mechanical canceling machine, hand-powered the Model K Universal Canceling Machine could process hundreds of pieces of mail an hour .

On September 11, 1961 the town's current post office was dedicated with postmaster Willis E. Herbert leading the ceremony.

In recent years, the United States Postal Services policy of requiring all local mail to be sent to White River Junction for sorting and canceling has resulted in the practice of local "Franconia" cancels being applied to mail becoming a rarity.

Franconia will continue adding chapters to it's historical record with many of those changes chronicled in every piece of mail delivered and sent from our little village.

U.S. Post Office, Franconia, N.H.



Annual Meeting: SAVE THE DATE AND RSVP

Wednesday November 9th Lovett's Inn

5:30 Cocktails (Cash Bar) *** 6:00 Annual Meeting *** 6:30 Dinner

FAHC Members will vote to elect officers for the 2022-2023 season.

Dinner: \$48 / person (includes appetizers, entrée, dessert and coffee)

Entrée Choices: Chicken Parmesan, salad, starch and vegetable
Pork Tenderloin, salad, starch and vegetable
Baked Haddock, salad, starch, and vegetable
Vegetarian Selection Upon Request

Please RSVP by October 31st by mailing your entrée choice and check (made out to Franconia Area Heritage Council) to Franconia Heritage Museum, PO Box 169, Franconia, NH 03580.

THIS DINNER IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

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