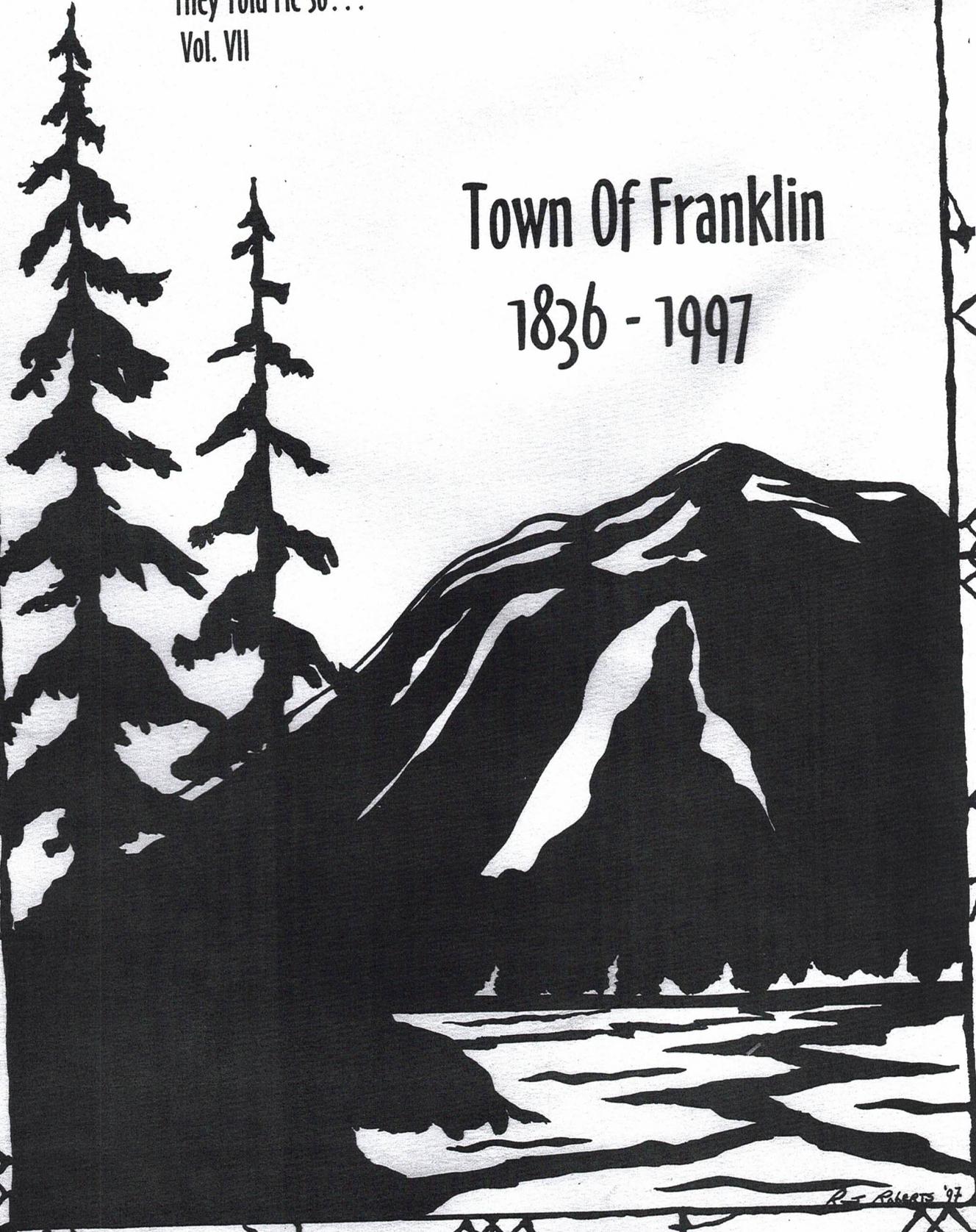


They Told Me So...
Vol. VII

Town Of Franklin

1836 - 1997



R. Roberts '97

FOREWORD

I first visited the Town of Franklin in 1956 as a guest of the family of Liz McKillip at their farm on the Bloomingdale – Saranac Lake road. A number of us were attending the wedding of Jean Timmons of Malone, a classmate of Liz and Barbara (the young lady who later became my wife). As is the case with many people, the initiation into the Adirondacks was breathtaking. The ride through the Cascades, the High Peaks and that first glimpse of Whiteface and Mount Marcy that are as cherished today as they were that first vision so many years ago. Little did I know that someday my wife and I would realize a wish-come-true and build our home of dreams just outside the Hamlet of Onchiota in the Town of Franklin. The McKillips were among the early settlers of Our Town and many of them have their final resting-place in St. Rose of Lima cemetery overlooking their beloved Adirondacks.

Over the years the Town of Franklin has been described in many different ways and all of them correct. The industries that have come and gone, the villages and hamlets that grew out of the woods and then slowly faded or withered away entirely. We hear Our Town described in the number of square miles (170), or the number of residents per square mile (6), or the number of persons per household and their average income and other statistics that are equally as accurate and yet don't really describe Our Town. What is the Town of Franklin? It is People! They set Our Town and our area above so many other places in this world of ours. Bing Tormey's sign, as you enter/leave the Hamlet of Onchiota, captures the mood of the area, "You are leaving 67 of the friendliest people in the Adirondacks' (Plus a couple of sore heads)."

The Town of Franklin is the church of the Nazarene in Vermontville, the Synagogue in Loon Lake and the surrounding churches of all denominations where people of differing ideals and backgrounds share a common belief as to who made this all possible. The Town is Gene's, Norman's and Doty's markets and the many others who silently help our community to live a better life. It is all those who give of themselves through the countless volunteer programs: the Food Pantry, the Youth Committees, the Recreation/Park and Cemetery Committees and the many who give of themselves to make life better for others.

Yes, these activities have continued on since that day of May 20th in 1836, when an "...act to divide the Town of Bellmont"...is hereby enacted into a new Town by the name of Franklin." created Our Town. How do we know all this?? Well...The Town of Franklin is blessed with a Town Historian, Teresa Eshelman, who has done an outstanding job of research and source materials to establish these historical volumes of the people and events that made Our Town what it is today. Teresa has created a means by which we can address our debt to past, present and future generations in recording the events and the people of our day, in carrying on the ideals and values of those who preceded us and a legacy for future generations to do the same. I thank Teresa for her efforts and for permitting me to be a small part of this year's journal.

Thanks to these priceless volumes, travel through Our Town takes on a new dimension. We can visualize the sawmills of Onchiota, Roakdale, Franklin Falls and others, we can ride the trains of the D&H and the New York Central as they transport people and materials in and out of Our Town and explore new experiences previously unavailable. We can visit the Chase's at the Hotel in Loon Lake and bring to life the ruins that once were Carriage Houses teeming with vacationers. We can walk the trails and travel the lakes and streams in the canoes of our Native American brothers and sisters through the Six Nations Indian Museum. Yes, today and future generations will be able to walk through the history of our changing Town by merely turning the pages of "They Told Me So". What a wonderful gift, Teresa has given to us all. Thank you ever so much, for you epitomize the caring, giving, sharing nature that sets "Our Town" a cut above.

Our Town is Teresa, Bing, Janet, Norma, Tina, Robin, Lorrie, Allen, Eunice, Dave, John, Don and countless others. It is all these people and more that participate in our community and the functions that benefit young and old alike. It is being able to go to church in a friendly, peaceful atmosphere and saying "thanks" for all of this.

I know that there are people who don't have enough and those who do, and yes, some who have enough for all of us, but as I view it, the only losers (if there are any) are those who fail to participate as givers, receivers, supporters or volunteers in our communities. I know that naming names or places can cause some to feel slighted but I do so in the vein that those mentioned represent the behavior of the many whom contribute to our community.

I do not minimize the beauty of our region. The Adirondacks defy adjectives. Each season has its own uniqueness as if challenging the other three for top spot, but for all its splendor, I believe, if it were not for the people, it would be like so many other beautiful places in this great nation of our: "A nice place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there".

Best wishes for a successful "Founders Day" on this our 161st Birthday!

Frank Karl
Supervisor
Town of Franklin

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TOWN OF FRANKLIN FOUNDERS DAY CELEBRATION - 161 YEARS

July 19, 1997

Franklin Town Hall, Vermontville, New York



Photograph by Teresa R. Eshelman

TOWN BOARD MEMBERS

(l. to r.)

Carole Snickles.....	Councilwoman
Darren Wilson.....	Councilman
Lorna H. Oliver.....	Town Clerk
Francis Karl.....	Supervisor
John Martino.....	Councilman
Mildred Brown.....	Councilwoman

OTHER TOWN OFFICIALS

John Moore.....	Highway Superintendent
Ruth Laundry.....	Tax collector
Roger Symonds.....	Justice of the Peace
John Ryan.....	Assessor
J. Allen Hogan.....	Codes Enforcement Officer
Teresa R. Eshelman.....	Town Historian

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LOGGING IN THE ADIRONDACKS

By Teresa R. Eshelman and Barbara Karl

A brief description of logging based on local histories and interviews with the contractor (The Bureau Brothers) and employee (Christopher Rock) follows:

The words logging, lumbering, and mining are synonymous with the Adirondacks, on which the economy of the region was based during the period between 1850 -1950. The former vast forests have gone into lumber, pulpwood, and charcoal or were engulfed by fire. Timber was abundant and represented cash, as potash, or charcoal to fire the iron forges. Methods used in logging in the early days were quite different from today with mechanization having taken over. Teams of horses skidded the logs from where they were felled, and often-hauled 15,000 pound loads at a time to a skidway. Logging was always begun in winter as the logs skidded more easily on snow and the heavy loads of logs would not sink into the frozen ground. When spring came, the logs were thrown into the water taking them to a mill to be sawed into lumber. The streams could be worked only in the spring and delivered their supply all at once. In order for the logs to reach their destination, river log drivers actually walked them downstream, often jumping from log to log. The journey downstream was very dangerous and many river log drivers lost their lives. River log drivers were a special breed of men, cunning, daring and dexterous. They were also paid more than the regular lumberjack. Logjams caused considerable delay. The river log drivers, to keep the logs from jamming up, used long poles.

Lumber camps were erected near the scene of the activities. For the most part, the men remained in the lumber camp all winter in complete isolation. One building served for sleeping and eating. The camp cook was supreme and usually enjoyed a good reputation as a cook. Log buildings were put up for the horses and for maintenance of whatever equipment they would have had at that time.

Concern over deforestation began to surface after 1870. By 1900, most of the wood harvested came from the Adirondacks. With the advent of logging, came the necessity of sawing the logs into lumber. New York State led the nation in production of lumber in 1860 and in paper making in 1900. The white pine was most favored at that time and in the 18th century the French cut trees for ships' masts and spars. They were floated to Montreal, then shipped to France for the royal navy. Logging and mining of ore go hand in hand. As ore was discovered, more trees were needed to run the forges. Six hundred bushels of charcoal were required to make one ton of metal from every four tons of ore.

As early as 1827, a sawmill was erected in Franklin Falls. Plank roads were built to haul the lumber to Port Kent where it was shipped to market by water or rail. After the great fire of May 1, 1852, Franklin Falls was rebuilt and in 1864 one of the most renowned and successful lumbermen, Christopher F. Norton, conducted extensive lumbering operations over a wide area for the next fourteen years.

In 1891, the Forest Commission of the State of New York, with the advice of the Attorney General, sold hundreds of acres of land for unpaid taxes, which deeds are on file in the Franklin County Clerk's office. A deed dated December 30, 1891, exists which indicated the sale of land in and around Sable Mountain, Meenahga Mountain, Loon Lake Mountain and Onchiota to Arthur G. Leonard and Frank G. Smith. These same lots exchanged hands of various lumbermen many times. The present day owner appears to be International Paper Company.

The first railroad to run through the mountains was the Adirondack and St. Lawrence Railroad in 1892, built by W. Seward Webb, son -in-law of William H. Vanderbilt. It was sold to New York Central Railroad in 1893. The Adirondack and St. Lawrence Railroad was built primarily to haul lumber to market. The great iron mine known as the Chateaugay Ore-Bed was developed in 1878, where a post-office was established under the name of Lyon Mountain. Great quantities of charcoal were needed to operate the forge, 2,325 bushels per day. The annual consumption of wood was 20,000 cords. Hundreds of charcoal kilns dot this area between Inman, Standish and Lyon Mountain. The charcoal kilns were a work of art, made of brick

and having the appearance of a huge beehive, and were loaded with four-foot wood from the top. The wood inside the beehive was set on fire, a lid was put on, and the wood was left to smolder and become charcoal. As a result of plentiful fuel in the name of charcoal, blast furnaces for smelting ore have been developed. Transportation was still a problem to get the products to market, therefore the Chateaugay Railroad Company was organized in May 1879 (Donaldson). With the development of the railroads, hardwood was in demand to be used for railroad ties. Stacks of railroad ties could be seen along the railroad tracks in many areas.

As time went on more mills were built. In approximately 1898, the Kinsley Lumber Company was organized by Arthur Leonard and Frank Smith (were connected with the New York Central Railroad) who built a mill west of Onchiota. The mill burned. A mill for cutting hardwood was put up by International Paper Company between Loon Lake and Kushaqua in 1915.

After fires occur, inferior trees such as cherry and poplar are the first to come back, then birches and beech make a come back. In 1870 lumbering methods had changed. In the early days of logging, spruce, pine and hemlock were taken,

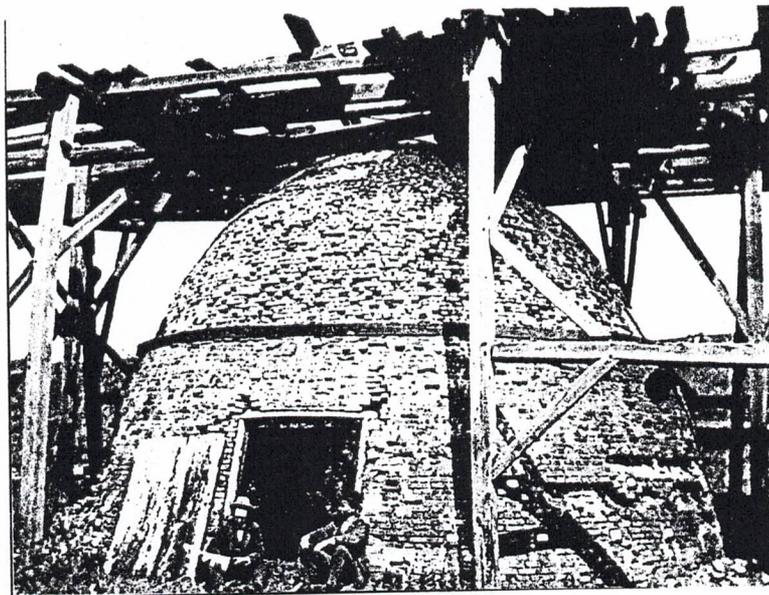
excluding the hardwoods, which were too heavy to float down the rivers. Spruce went up in price which led many lumber magnates to buy up state land, lumber it and then let it go back to the state. Instead of taking only large trees as in the past, the land was now stripped. In some cases, not even a seed tree was left. Reforestation measures were introduced. Seedling trees were grown. The first tree nursery was established in 1902. Two nurseries are now in operation at Saratoga and Lowville

After hardwood supplies began to dwindle, pulpwood demands increased as it was used in papermaking. It is not known at this time if any of the trees damaged during the blowdown of November 25, 1950 were taken to the pulp mills.

Acreage referred to above have been lumbered off and on since the 1880's and spanned part of the Towns of Franklin, Brighton and Santa Clara. It is not known how long this property was owned by The International Paper Company. Loggers (called jobbers) were under contract with the company to cut logs for various mills. In 1970, The Bureau Brothers were under contract with International Paper Company to cut pulpwood for paper mills or lumber for mills selected by International Paper Company. The Bureau Brothers paid a percentage of their profits to International Paper, while International Paper paid the taxes on the stumpage to the town in which the logs were cut.

When the Bureau Brothers started logging operations in 1970, there were no roads in the area to be logged, just trails. International Paper paid Bureau Brothers an agreed amount per mile to build roads in to the logging operations. Bureaus built a full service 40 x 60-foot garage for tractor-trailers. There were four tractor-trailers in their own fleet, as well as four Clark skidders and two Timberjack skidders. They owned Huskey loaders, which were considered state of the art. Trucking was contracted out to Ashline Trucking for the most part.

In December 1974, the Bureau Brothers hired Chris Rock whose job was running a skidder to move logs to and from various areas. As many as 25 people from the local area worked for The Bureau Brothers as it was an extensive operation, continuing for the next 13 years in the Onchiota area. In pulpwood alone, they



Charcoal Kiln, Water Over The Dam

shipped out between three and five hundred cords of wood per week. The International Paper mill at Corinth took fifteen thousand cords of pulpwood per year. On a yearly average, the Ticonderoga mill took fifty thousand cords of pulpwood. Hardwood was also taken to Ticonderoga used for both paper and lumber. There were strict rules governing the use of the logs, the better quality is used for lumber and the rest goes into pulp for paper. Chris mentions that when he first went into the logging business the cutting was more regulated and wood was more selectively cut. Logs are graded by accepted standards, Doyle or Scribner log rule. The contents of a log were computed into board measure. The age and condition of the wood was looked at and depending on the condition, either four or six out of ten would be cut. That was the accepted formula used then. The State Forest Rangers watched the cutting operations during the seventies. Harold Martin was the local ranger and well thought of. The chip mill in Burlington takes many loads of chips per day. Trees have been reclassified and much smaller and younger trees are taken for chips.

The log trucks generally used Route 3 to get on the Northway, when en route to the mills unless the highway posters were in place, which prevented log trucks from using secondary roads in the spring. This was to protect the secondary roads from damage to the surface.

The Bureau Brothers were reputed to be a very responsible logging operation, as far as the environment was concerned. There were three brothers in the business, Norman, Harvey and Rene. Their home base is in Newcomb and the company is still in business in other areas. Chris is still logging from time to time, but owns and operates an Adirondack restaurant in Onchiota called the Hook Line and Sinker.

A major logging operation, Domtar Industries, Inc., (formerly Sher-Don Associates), located in Franklin and Clinton county is a wholly owned subsidiary of Domtar, Inc. Domtar Industries manufactures a broad range of pulp and paper products. Sher-Don Associates bought Republic Steel's former property in 1963, to supply fiber to the Howard Smith pulp and paper mill in Cornwall, Canada. Later on, the Howard Smith pulp and paper mill was purchased by Domtar. Delaware and Hudson who sold to Republic Steel formerly owned this entire tract of land. Both of these companies in the early years harvested the trees for the production of charcoal for the iron ore smelters at Standish and Lyon Mountain.

In 1974, Domtar established a forestry department to oversee harvesting operations and implement sound forest management practices to be conducted in an environmentally responsible manner. Domtar is now cutting red pine in the southwest corner of Pine Camp on Studley Hill as well as on Liberty Road, Catamount, and Washburn Swamp. Domtar sells logs to the Sullivan Brothers of Keeseville for utility poles. Saw logs are trucked to Lapatrie Mill in Quebec. The pulpwood goes to International Paper Company. Domtar's local representative, Pat Kivlen, is the Operations Supervisor for Domtar Industries, Inc. property. Pat is responsible for all field operations on the property, supervises 5 logging contractors, employing 35 people. Pat and family live in Onchiota.

THE FUTURE OF KATE MOUNTAIN RECREATION PARK

By Betty Wilson

After talking with our fellow Town of Franklin community members and reviewing the results of a survey done by the previous recreation committee, the 1997 committee developed a mission statement, a vision statement and a committee philosophy to guide our decision making:

- To encourage community involvement in planning
- To develop a park to serve all ages
- To offer varied recreational components for different interests
- In planning the park, to consider the benefits to the town's economy

Mission - Our mission as a committee is to provide excellent recreation for all the people who live in and visit the Town of Franklin.

Vision - Founded in a rich heritage in the Town of Franklin, the Recreation Park will enrich the lives of the people that use the park. Through the collaborative efforts of all parties, we hope to build a recreation facility that will meet the needs and exceed expectations in both recreation and economic development.

Philosophy - Through the collaborative effort of the people of the Town of Franklin, the Town Board, the Town Planner and New York State, we are committed to develop the best park possible that will improve the overall value of our community.

Developing the park is a large project that will take several years. A basic park plan is essential so the continuing development will stay focused towards a final and cohesive design. This committee has identified a park plan based on the following items:



Hugh Tyler, leveling gravel for the new pavilion
(Enterprise photo—Lou Reuter)

1. Our current project is to construct a 36' X 48' pavilion. A choice of size was made after considering all the decision-making criteria set up by the committee.
2. Design and erect a park sign. Several options are being looked into and the committee will present the choices to the Town and the Town Board. The decision to name this site "Kate Mountain Park" was the anticipation of future town parks at different locations. Each would be distinguished by its name.
3. Erect a barrier between the parking lot and playground area and continue to identify and deal with safety issues.
4. Open a hiking path around the park perimeter. Clearing the path will be done by prison inmates.

5. The following items we hope to fund through grants and fundraising:

- Improvements on baseball field, purchase fencing, benches, etc.
- Define and prepare playground area and purchase playground equipment
- Landscaping, including planting trees both for aesthetics and windbreak
- Excavate to improve drainage on T-Ball/Soccer field
- DEC trail to Kate Mountain summit
- Storage building
- Bathrooms
- Fenced in Basketball/Tennis area
- Band Shell

The 1997 Committee members are: Betty Wilson, Chairperson; Dave Dekkers, Alan Oliver, Lorrie Rumble, Dave Vossler and John Martino, Town Board liaison. Also, Scott Mueller, town planner and Ron Trombly, towns engineer.

Accompanying this article is a sketch of the Town of Franklin Recreation Complex showing the location of various ball fields, parking lot and the proposed pavilion. In selecting these sites, the committee has also kept in mind the possibility that someday the Town Hall may be located on the property.



Drawing by Scott Muller

TASK FORCE

By Don A. Corliss and Walter Kretser

In the spring of 1996, the Supervisor and the Town Board recognized the necessity for the Town of Franklin to have a land use plan. This was initiated in part by number of land use issues which prompted considerable expression of concern by many town residents, particularly those allegedly impacted in some way by one or more of the "land uses."

The Supervisor and Town Board appointed an 8-member Land Use Task Force, chaired by Don A. Corliss. In appointing the Land Use Task Force, the Supervisor and Town Board achieved geographic diversity by appointing members from areas throughout the Town that represent a wide diversity in terms of occupation, education, etc.

The Supervisor and Town Board charged the Task Force with developing a draft Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Town of Franklin, recognizing the extensive earlier land use planning work that was done during the 1980's, the existence and impact of both the APA and DEC relative to land use planning, and to maximize public involvement and participation during the development process.

Conceptually, a Comprehensive Land Use Plan, in its simplest terms, identifies and articulates what the majority of Town residents value about their Town (what it is) and what they want it to look like in 5 to 10 years in the future. The elements of a Comprehensive Land Use Plan include, but may not be limited to a Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives, implementation strategies, control mechanisms, land use "grandfathering" considerations, funding and provision to require periodic review of the Land Use Plan.

During the past 9 months, the Land Use Task Force has reviewed the earlier land use planning work done for the Town of Franklin, has met with key officials from APA and DEC, developed a Vision Statement, as well as 6 goals and associated objectives for the draft plan.

The benefits to the Town and its residents of having a Comprehensive Land Use Plan are numerous and significant. First, and probably most important, it provides a mechanism whereby the Town residents literally determine the destiny of the Town. It is patently clear that if the Town does not take steps to shape and control its destiny through development of a Land Use Plan, then external forces outside the Town will surely shape and control its destiny. Second, State law requires that a Town have a Comprehensive Land Use Plan in effect before it can promulgate and implement any form of land use control such as zoning, subdivision regulations, site plan review, etc. Third, a Comprehensive Land Use Plan would serve as the primary basis for the Town to petition the APA for one or more revisions to the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map as it currently pertains to the Town of Franklin. For example, the current Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map does not reflect any "moderate density" land use

classification in the Town of Franklin. Fourth, a Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Town would create an incentive, as well as provide protection, for people wishing to build homes and second homes in the Town. Fifth, if the Town elects to develop a Comprehensive Land Use Plan that is approved by the APA, then the Town will have the authority to review and approve or disapprove Class B regional projects. This category of projects is currently under APA's control because the Town does not have a Land Use Plan approved by the APA. In effect, this would enable and provide more "local control."

Additional public participation/involvement meetings are planned and will be well publicized in advance. Drafting of the Plan will intensify over the next few months, with a target for submission of a preliminary draft to the Town Board by late summer or early fall. It should be noted that any Comprehensive land Use Plan adopted by the Town must comply with SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act).

THE FORMER TOWN OF FRANKLIN PLANNING BOARD

1980 - 1982

By Helen Hogan

In 1980 the Town Board of the Town of Franklin felt that the town was in need of some planning, as we were experiencing growth that needed professional direction. They appointed a seven member planning board. These volunteers were selected from each section of town, so that all areas would be fairly represented.

At that time New York State provided funding for this project. We were fortunate to have assigned to us two very knowledgeable young men from the Black River-St. Lawrence Regional Planning Board. They performed many important preliminary steps that laid the groundwork for a plan for the town's future.

They drove the entire town, listing the condition of roads and their recommendations for upgrading and improvement. They also listed all buildings (seasonal and permanent) and their condition as it appeared from the road.

They made up a Natural Resource Inventory with accompanying maps. These covered soils, slopes, critical environmental areas, watersheds and unique natural areas.

During the months of July and August 1980, a questionnaire was mailed to all property owners. We had an overall response of about 39%. Among permanent residents the response rate was 48% - which is considered an excellent return. The results indicated an extremely favorable response (75%) for developing a local land use plan. The Town thus was mandated to proceed.

At this point we were assigned a new planner, Richard Lamb, also from the Black River-St. Lawrence Regional Planning Board. Under his guidance, we began the process of putting our thoughts and ideas on paper and eventually came up with a comprehensive plan that we felt would meet the needs and desires of the people of the Town. One of our main goals was to maintain the rural character of the Town, and channel growth in and around the existing developed areas.

Revisions were made to the Plan after a Public Hearing held in October of 1981. We continued our efforts into 1982 but met with resistance. The Town Board then decided that the Plan should be tabled.

THE OFFICE OF ASSESSOR

By Teresa R. Eshelman

Owning land has been an ardent desire of men since time began and many wars have been fought over it. As early as the year 1001, Lief Erickson, an Icelandic captain, followed a discovery course taking him as far as New York harbor. Christopher Columbus followed in 1492, touched on the island of San Salvador, claiming it for Queen Isabella of Spain. European countries were watching each other with a jealous eye toward gaining possession of land in the New World. England and France had hoisted their flags over vast areas on the continent. The French and Indian War of 1754 began over conflicting claims between France and England. Under feudal land organization complete ownership of property was unknown. The king held all land. All rights to the land of the New World were held and maintained by the English King. The king granted land to large trading companies and prominent individuals whom in turn regranted land to settlers. The ownership of land set a family apart, creating a gentry type, rather than nobility aristocracy. Prior to the American Revolution, which began April 19, 1775, the English government had granted various patents(land) to lands lying along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers in July 1773. The southern boundary of Franklin and St. Lawrence Counties was formed by this land purchase. After the Revolution much of the land inhabited by the colonies reverted to the State and was regranted or sold to individuals or companies. Land offices were set up; western lands were sold to settlers for \$1.25 per acre. In 1772 the first survey of the region with compass was started.

Land surveying is one of the oldest branches of engineering known to man, the principles of which have been passed down through the ages. The boundaries of the property must be marked and measured and a legal description prepared. Land surveys are usually completed by the traverse method using transit and tape and directions recorded as bearings. Formerly the surveyor's compass and chain were used extensively and many property descriptions in older deeds are recorded in this way. The land surveyor is confronted by many legal problems, such as lost corners, and adverse possession. Most states require land surveyors to be registered. Engineering education in America was greatly influenced by the French. Property taxes began in colonial days as levies on land and houses. The taxes were levied on capital value and other arbitrary measures. Land was classified as woodland, pasture or arable land and the value per acre was the same. Houses were valued according to the number of doors, windows and chimneys. The local assessors set the valuation for tax purposes. The rate of the tax is determined annually by the different taxing authorities. Land tax in the form of real property tax usually has as its base the capital or sales value of the land.

Originally, in the early colonial days, the work of the assessor was done by justices of the peace and was later transferred to county boards of commissioners or supervisors. The duties of the assessor are to list all property and persons subject to taxation and to determine the value of property to be taxed. Statutes provide appeals for the person who feels the assessed amount is unfair.

The town of Franklin was formerly a part of the town of Belmont, having been separated May 20, 1836. Franklin includes all of township No. 10 and a portion of township No. 9. It is the third largest town in the county of Franklin as noted in Frederick J. Seaver's "Historical Sketches of Franklin County." Township No. 10 was surveyed by John Richards in 1813 and the same numbered lots which assessors work with today are shown on this map. A large part of township No. 10 was sold to Gerrit Smith, August 10, 1849.

At the first meeting in Belmont on July 7, 1833, town officers were chosen/appointed including three assessors. On July 1, 1836, likewise at the first town of Franklin meeting, three assessors were chosen. Their names were Hiram Noble, John R. Merrill and William Knowles. An abstract of the assessment roll for the year 1833 can be found in Hurd's History of Clinton and Franklin Counties. The roll shows the names of the earliest inhabitants of the town, the number of acres owned and the assessed value. The town board met annually during that time period.

There is no information available to tell us how an assessor determined values for property assessment in the early periods of the town. There is no mention of training schools, however surveyors were well trained and perhaps filled the gap.

From time to time the number of assessors, serving the town came up for consideration by the town board. No action was taken at this time as recorded in the minutes. On March 25, 1971, at a town meeting, the Board adopted a local law subject to mandatory referendum that the office of assessors shall continue to be elective. Notice of a public hearing to be published in the Enterprise and the hearing to be April 22, 1971 at 7:30 PM at Vermontville Town House. Voting on the referendum by the people to be held in Vermontville Town Hall prior to July 1, 1971.

At a March 16, 1972, Town Board Meeting, Frank Cass, Chairman of Assessors informed the board that the State of New York requires an assessor to have an office. It was at this time that an office approximately 6 feet by 8 feet was constructed by Mr. Ezra Symonds in the town hall at Vermontville. Mr. Cass was authorized to purchase a filing cabinet from Montgomery Ward for the new office.

The office of assessor consisted of three elected members from 1836 until 1984. However, changes were coming regarding the number of assessors serving the town. A Public Hearing was held June 28, 1983, to consider a change in the office of assessor from three elected assessors to one appointed assessor by the Town Board of the Town of Franklin. The proposed local law states that the term of office shall be six years as provided in New York Real Property Tax Law, Section 1557. The term is to commence January 1, 1984. A public notice was placed in the newspaper advertising the position. The Town Board reviewed all applications received and John J. Ryan was appointed as sole assessor for a term of six years. His first official term of office began January 1, 1984. However, Mr. Ryan began working as assessor for the Town of Franklin as of October 1, 1983, bringing twenty-five years experience as assessor for the Town of Jay in Clinton County. All required courses of training and certification have been completed. On May 12, 1987, Mr. Ryan was awarded the title of State Certified Assessor Advanced, one of 169 in the state. An assessor is required to take 30 credits of training per year at an approved school, the duration of which is one week. Mr. Ryan has an aggregate of ten to eleven years of these week courses at Cornell in Ithaca.

Upon the appointment by the Town of Franklin, Mr. Ryan began organizing the assessor's files. Two fireproof filing cabinets were purchased for the filing of New York State approved Data Cards describing each parcel in the town. A filing system was started indicating each tax map number, which has to be constantly updated due to merged parcels, and splits, which occur yearly. Also, cards with photos of all improvements mounted on them and filed by street/road when changes have been made. Tax rolls and Assessment rolls reside in the assessor's office where the public is welcome to review. Grievance notices and reports are maintained. Building permits are issued and maintained by the Codes Enforcement Officer, J. Allen Hogan, who shares the office with John Ryan. Record keeping in this office has become so complex that the office had to be enlarged as of April 1997. The New York State mandated re-evaluation taking place in the current year is to be computerized upon completion.

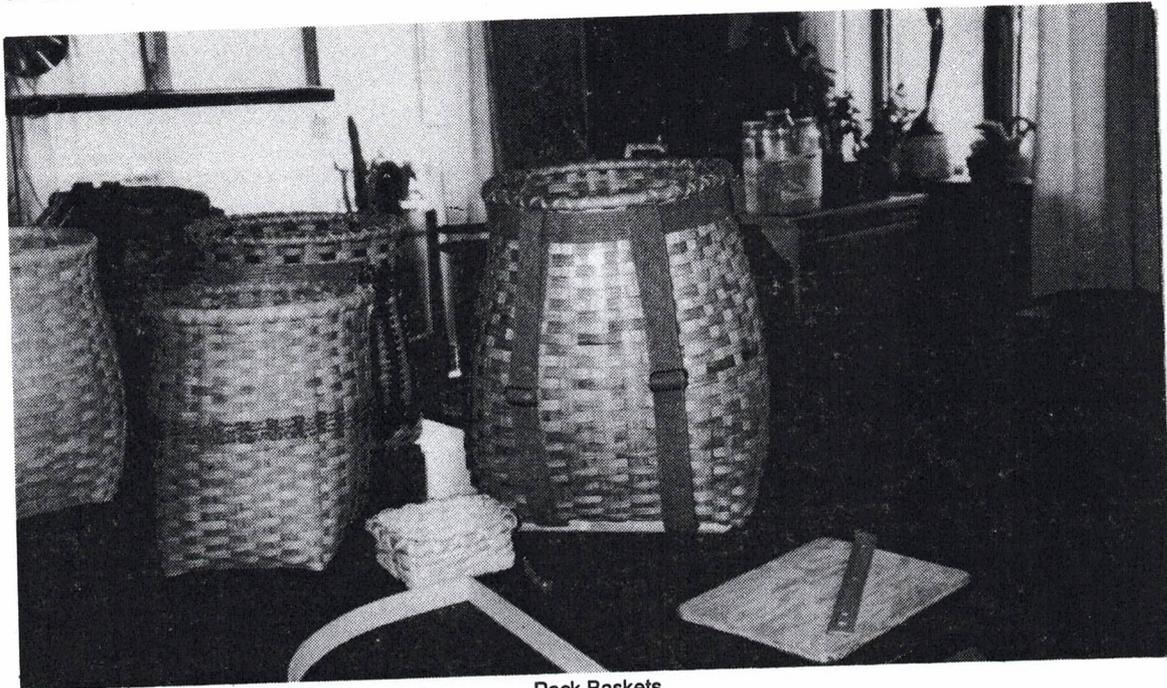
CLEAR CREEK WEAVERS

By Sandy Muller and Bud Zioikowski

Bud and I have been weaving baskets since 1989. The idea of creating useful and beautiful items from natural materials has always appealed to us. So, when we first learned how to make a basket, we were thrilled. We began experimenting with different designs and materials. We were hooked on basket weaving.

The business aspect of it came about unintentionally. A friend asked Bud if he would teach a basket-making class. Bud agreed, had fun and got paid for it. That put a whole new light on our budding hobby – the possibility of turning it into a business. Before we knew it people, were asking for more classes and to purchase our baskets. We became official and formed our company, Clear Creek Weavers (named for Bud's favorite trout stream). Since then we have taught hundreds of people how to make baskets. Our baskets are for sale in many local shops and we participate in craft shows throughout the region.

We weave baskets using an array of materials: reed, ash, cedar, grape and dogwood to name a few. The Adirondack packbasket with its traditional appeal is our most popular item. We make all kinds of baskets though, for all kinds of uses. Probably our most interesting project so far was a set of horse saddlebags to be used in a Civil War re-enactment.

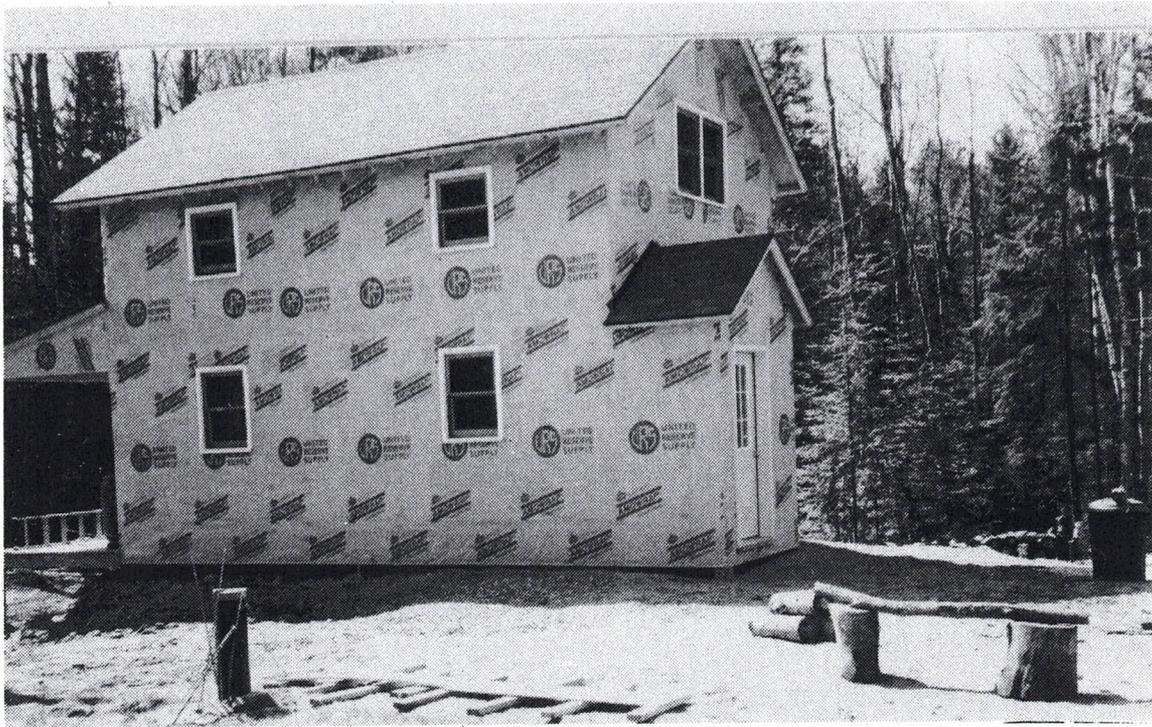


Pack Baskets

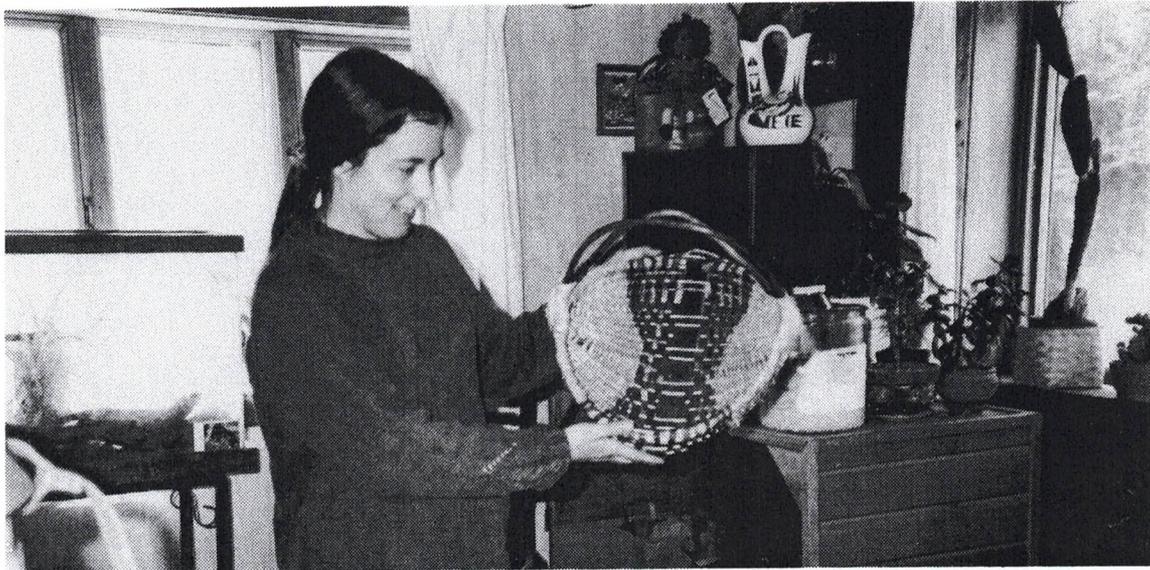
At first we both worked full-time jobs (our educations are in Fish and Wildlife biology). The business has grown to the point where I am now weaving full-time, Bud part-time. There is a basic kind of satisfaction in the weaving process, and in the final product. Our favorite part, though, is interacting with all different kinds of people at shows and in classes. We enjoy teaching and talking about our craft.

Until now we have been operating this business out of our house. As anyone who has ever made a basket knows however, basket weaving is a messy operation and takes up a lot of room. We have outgrown our house and are in the midst of building a workshop. Soon we will move the business over and actually be able to use our living room again!

We are still infatuated with this traditional craft. It helps us keep in touch with the rhythms of the earth. With any luck it won't be too long before we can make it a full-time endeavor for both of us.



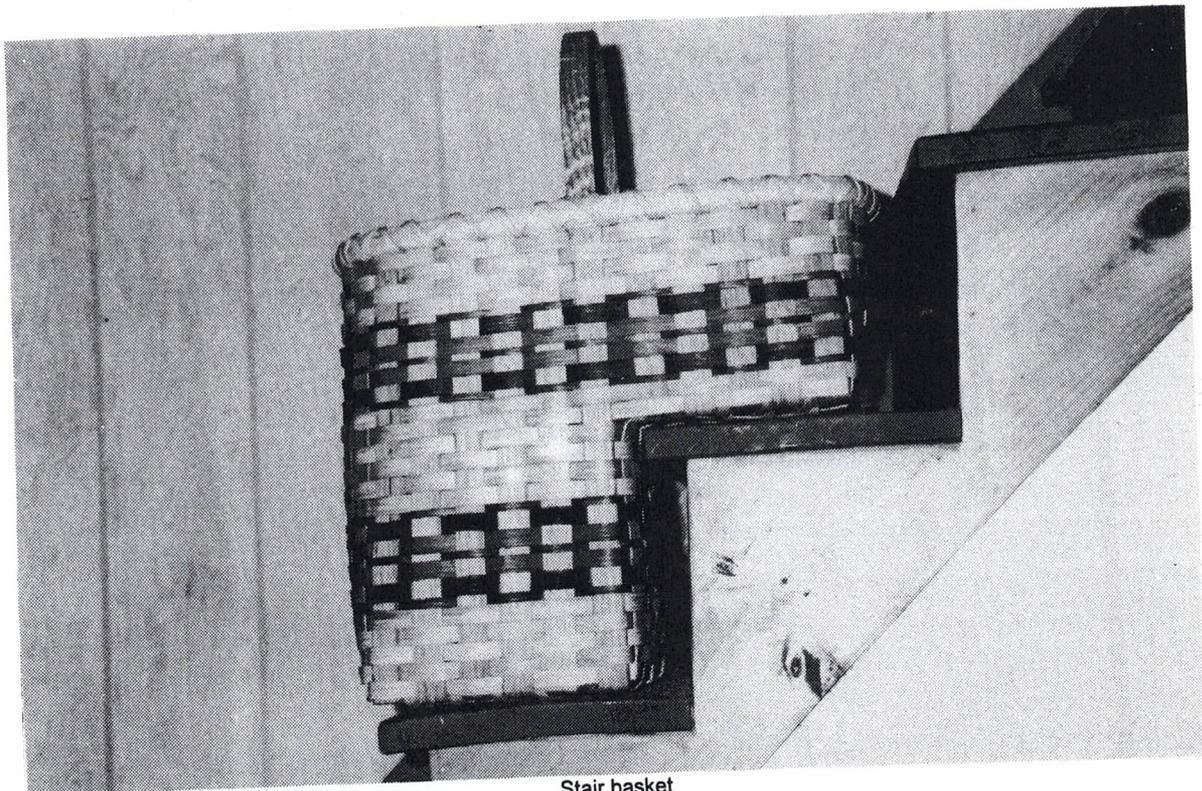
Workshop under construction



Sandy Muller



Bud and Sandy at work



Stair basket

PLAYING STORE

By Fran Oliver

Now that Franklin Co-op ceases to exist, our equipment having been properly disposed of, it is interesting to review almost two decades of working with a group of dedicated folks of all ages in a common effort to purchase and distribute high quality goods at a reasonable price.

It all started in the fall of 1977, when we were looking for a sponsor for a suggested food-buying club. After months of discussion, Emma Wright, President of the Town of Franklin Senior Citizens Club suddenly brought it to a vote: 4 ayes, 2 nays and Franklin Co-op was born. Dorothy White, Cora Hinkley, Martha Muzzy, Adeline Skeels and I set about to draw up some by-laws and basic guidelines. Keeping it as simple as possible, we decided:

- Our name shall be Franklin Co-op in honor of the town which sponsored us
- Membership shall be open to all
- There shall be no membership fee to join
- Non-workers shall pay a surcharge of 1 ½% (later raised to 5%)
- Should the club fail at any point, any and all assets shall revert to the Town

These rules being established, we mounted a publicity campaign to attract members and announced our first meeting.

That first meeting was well attended and we proceeded to hold an auction-like sales effort to reach a minimum order quantity for each product; i.e., 50# of flour. At least ten people had to buy 5# of flour to enable us to buy it. So it went with each item: honey in a 60# tin, walnuts in the shell in a 25# bag, peanut butter in a 35# tub, molasses in a 60# drum. Each member tallied his own order and handed it in, like homework. Our supplier required a minimum sale of \$1,000 to qualify for delivery, so we encouraged bidding until our minimum was reached. Only once did we fail to reach the required minimum, so we cancelled that delivery and held another meeting the next month.

We tallied the individual orders in a loose-leaf notebook. Frequently, items members agreed on at the meeting did not match quantities written on the order sheets. As a result we were forced to change quantities up or down to meet the required minimum, a privilege we assumed from that time on. We rarely abused that right, and members seldom were offended if what they got did not match what they ordered.

The loose-leaf order sheets then became the work sheets for each item, listing member's name, quantity needed and price so that a volunteer easily could weight and divide the item. It soon became apparent that much time would be saved if labels for each item were prepared in advance. That became another volunteer task: to type member's name, item name, item number, quantity desired and total price on each label. It frequently involved typing 4,000 or more labels by hand.

Our main supplier, Clear Eye Corp., Savannah, New York did not at that time offer herbs, so we originally purchased herbs and spices directly from Frontier Herbs, Norway, Iowa. This delivery went directly to Dorothy White in Bloomingdale and she spent many an hour weighing ounces of onion powder, cinnamon, parsley and oregano in her kitchen, writing all the labels by hand.

At about this same time, someone suggested we develop a file for manufacturers and store coupons, a task assumed readily by Irene Rushlaw and maintained by her steadfastly to this day. She developed a forty-box system of current coupons, accurately filed as to product, such as "Pet Food", "Coffee and Tea", "Shampoos", etc. Members readily helped themselves to coupons and to savings and contributed any unused coupons they had collected. We all owe a great deal to Irene's perseverance.

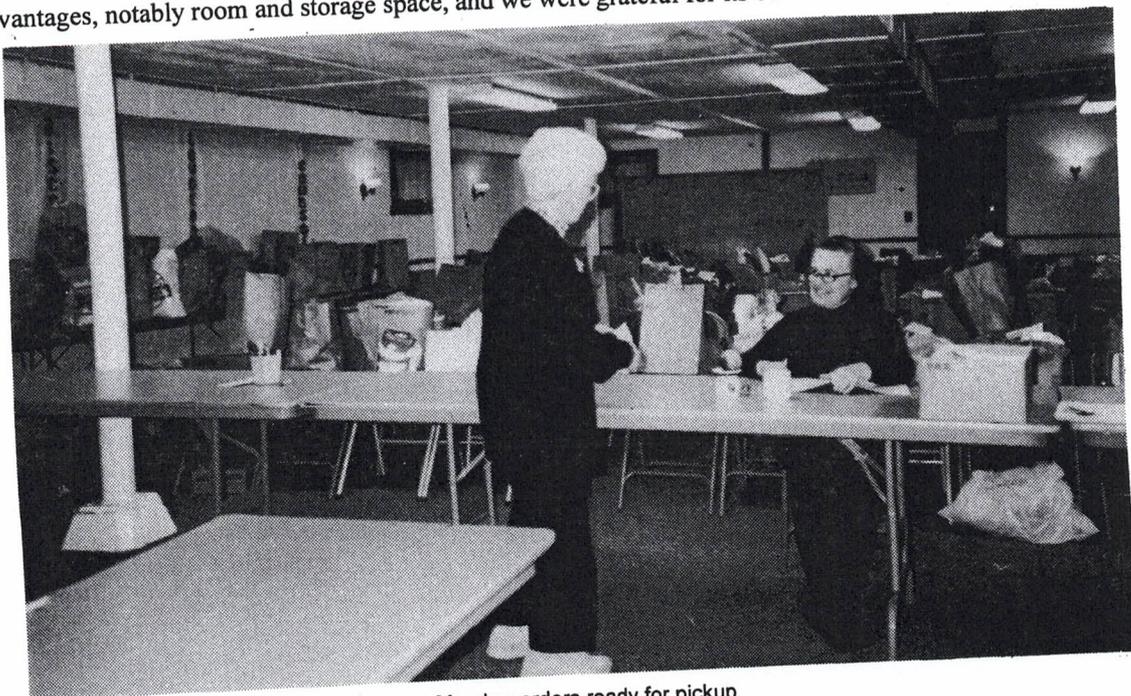
In 1980, a member suggested to Teresa and me that we should certainly get acquainted with a computer. It was with great trepidation that we contacted Adam Brayshaw for his advice and encouragement. He was most generous with both, walking us through hesitant steps with computer, program and printer. Adam was a constant source of information and encouragement, supporting us through three different systems. His own copywritten program FOCOS is well known in the trade, and certainly boosted our capacity as evidenced by the accompanying chart.



Coupon box

The drop in sales in 1986 remains a mystery, but it might have been due to a change in catalogue structure, a sure cause of confusion to our members. Why a seriously customer-oriented business should arrange its promotional literature to feature vendors as opposed to buyers was something we could never understand. If a buyer has to struggle to locate a product or a price, he often simply gives up and goes shopping at the supermarket. We sometimes resorted to creating our own catalogue of selected favorite products for the convenience of our members, but found that procedure hard to sustain, since products and prices changed monthly.

Although sponsored by the Senior Citizens Club of the Town of Franklin, and covered by the Town's liability insurance, the Co-op outgrew the Town Hall and needed more space and availability. Rev. Patrick Mundy of St. Paul's parish in Bloomingdale, and his successor, Rev. Joseph Trombley, graciously allowed us the use of the parish Center from 1992 until we closed in December 1996. This site had many advantages, notably room and storage space, and we were grateful for its convenience for many years.



Member orders ready for pickup

We are often asked why we did not continue this well established and experienced buying club and would have to respond with a host of reasons (excuses):

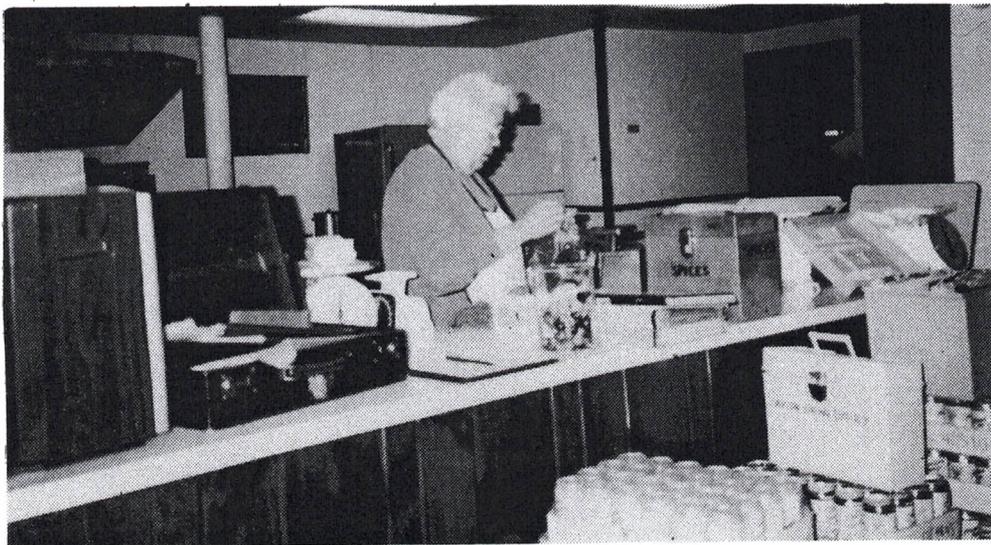
1. Declining sales. Members' nutritional preferences changed drastically over a period of time, as did the availability of such products as tofu, tahini, special beauty preparations which now are common in supermarkets, Sam's Clubs, Wegman's at very competitive prices.



Monthly truck delivery night (*Enterprise photo — Vincent Fallica*)

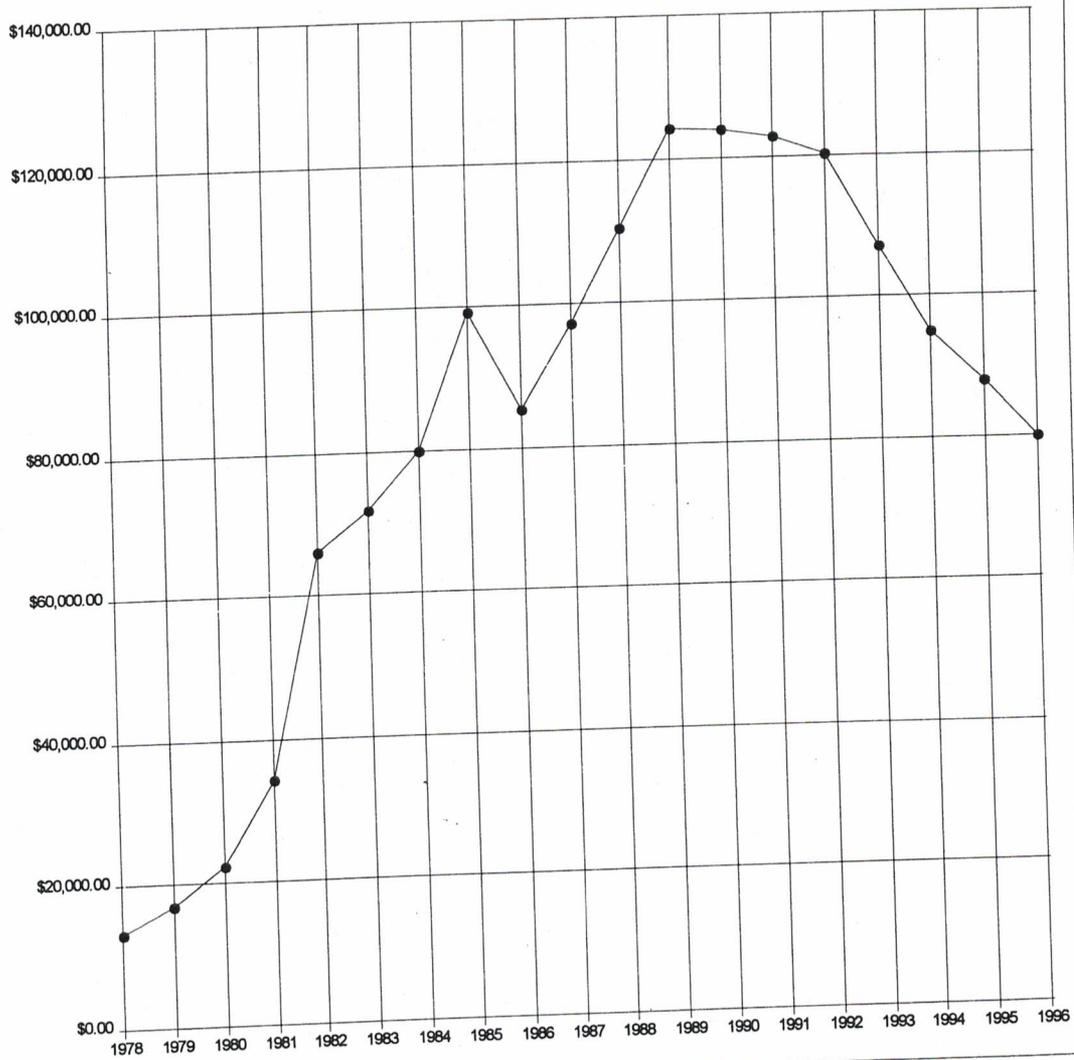
2. Declining participation particularly by senior citizens on whom we depended so heavily because of their willingness to appear during the daytime hours. Our membership was aging with the Club.
3. Competition from major bulk buyers previously mentioned. Sam's Club can offer bulk quantities of chocolate chips, flour, rice, spices at reasonable cost, eliminating the chore or pre-ordering and pick-up necessary to a food-buying club.
4. Negotiability, or lack of it. We felt somewhat put-upon by our suppliers from time to time, as though our business, as brisk as many storefronts, did not warrant any special consideration. We were paying at least 6% more for all products, yet could not arrive at a satisfactory agreement on how an invoice should be paid. We could not read most of the information faxed to us, yet never solved that problem either. We were just too small a club to deal with such a super-corporation.

The real reward in our whole adventure has to be our contacts with so many wonderful people. The North Country is a great area for volunteerism, and people of all ages will help even at some inconvenience to themselves. It was a never-ending source of encouragement to see such commitment to a job at hand as evidenced by our many, many friends at Franklin Co-op.



Violet Willard organizing at end of pickup

SALES VOLUME BY YEAR



THINGS TO DO

By Millie Vorath

"Things To Do" has been a life long dream, with the actual name being realized about a generation ago when I was always looking for "things to do" while raising three children. Being a single mother, it took imagination to keep the kids occupied and learning, while all the time keeping costs low. Crafts for us became a necessity and a way of life. The kids who were close in age learned to cooperate and work together whether it was a gift to the grandparents or decorations for the Christmas tree.



Also, I am very indebted to my parents who took the time with my own childhood crafts, the basic being crocheting.

About three and one-half years ago after returning "home" to the North Country after an extensive leave, I met Donald whom I have since married. It was with his encouragement and physical help and the above background idea waiting for the right time that "Things To Do" is now a reality in Vermontville on Route 3. The shop is located in the former Peckham's Store and offers a wide array of some of the following craft supplies:

- Yarn
- Floss
- Needles and hooks
- Plastic ceramics
- Paints
- Brushes
- Booklets
- Stencils
- Dolls
- Kids kits, etc.

Another service provided will be to secure special or difficult items for a particular person or project. My aim is to provide area residents with either lower or competitive cost all the while saving them a trip to Plattsburgh for their craft needs. I have been extremely pleased with community support and encouragement and welcome any suggestions to make "Things To Do" even better.



Millie Vorath, proprietor of Things To Do

One of the difficulties encountered was actually finding retail space to rent; thus realizing how limited our township is in available space. Hopefully other small shops and businesses can be established in our township thereby helping our community in immeasurable ways of growth and commerce.

We welcome residents and visitors alike to visit "Things To Do" for a look around, maybe answer some of your questions and if you like, enjoy a cup of coffee.



Articles for sale at Things To Do

IT TAKES A COMMUNITY OF VOLUNTEERS TO MAKE A FOOD PANTRY

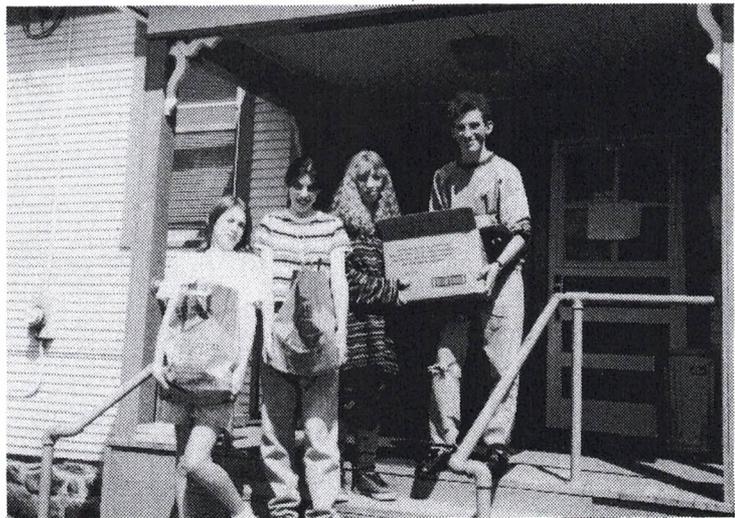
By Mary Ellen Keith – Pantry Coordinator

Once a month, the St. Paul's – Assumption Food Pantry sponsors a "food distribution day" for the Town of Franklin and the Town of St. Armand. The Town of Franklin volunteers the use of the Franklin Town Hall as the site for the storage and the distribution of food from the pantry.

The success of this food pantry is based entirely on the vast network of volunteers who donate time, money, services and expertise.

A volunteer may be:

- Someone who coordinates and or collects food in a food drive
- Someone who makes the long distance phone calls, submits reports and grant applications
- Someone who participates in fund raising such as food sales, raffles, pie making for annual pie sale and also patronizes the sales
- Someone who makes and displays posters, arranges for public announcements of activities of the pantry
- Someone who loads and unloads shipments of food, opens cartons and packs food packages
- Someone who shops for the pantry to take advantage of sales and contributions of food
- Someone who works on food pantry days, distributing food, setting-up of tables, cleaning of facilities, assisting others in carrying their food to their vehicles
- Someone who picks up food packs and delivers them to his neighbor who is unable to come to the pantry
- Someone who donates cans and bottles as well as the person who redeems them for five cents a container
- Someone who donates food, soap and toilet articles on a regular basis



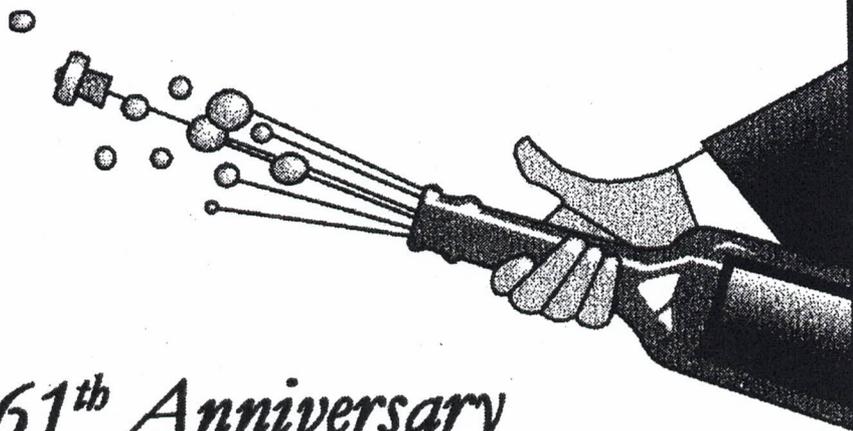
Young volunteers on Food Pantry Day

Each volunteer contributes so much to meet the needs of a family that often have no food for that particular day. This network enables the food pantry to serve an average of 130 families per pantry day, seven to nine families per month on an emergency basis and 100 holiday baskets each year. We serve on an average 300 – 325 people per month.

Thank you "volunteers of the pantry" – you are such a happy, generous group of people!

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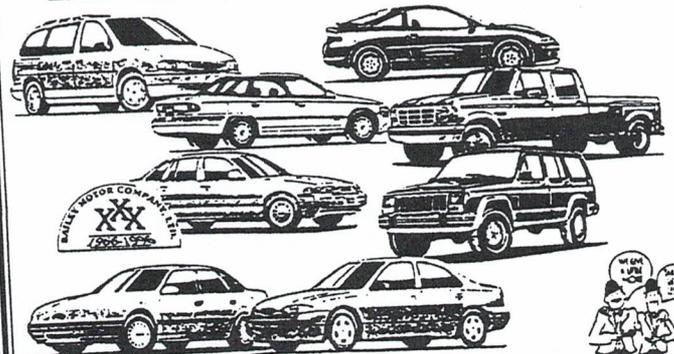
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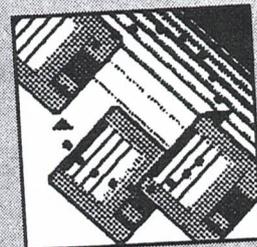
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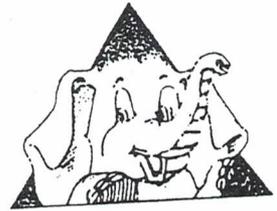
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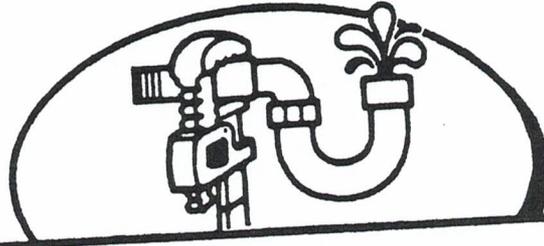
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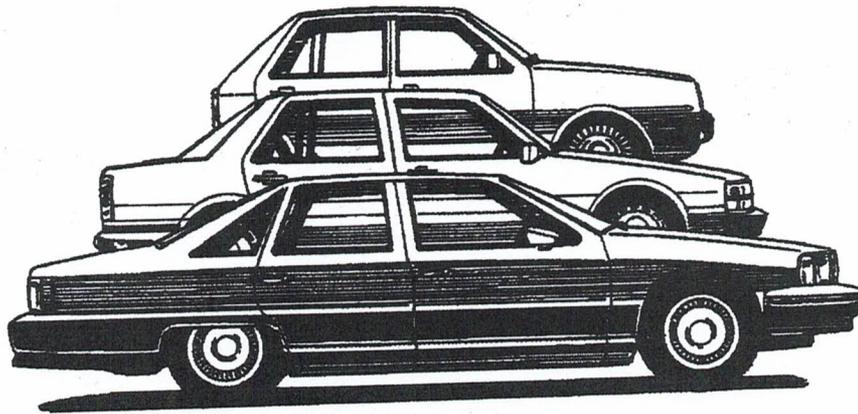
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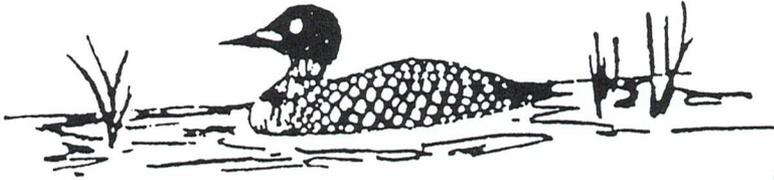
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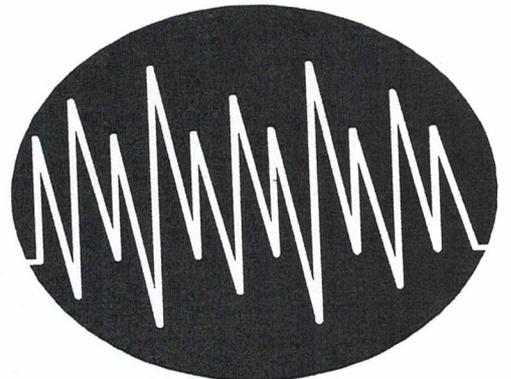
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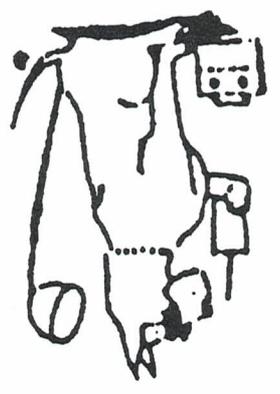
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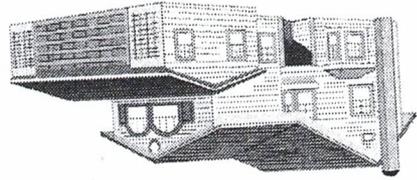
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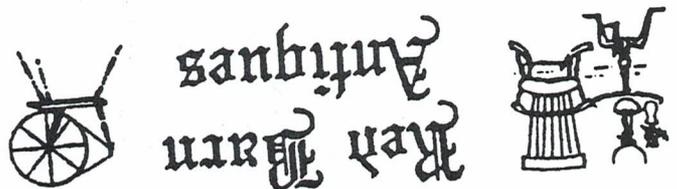


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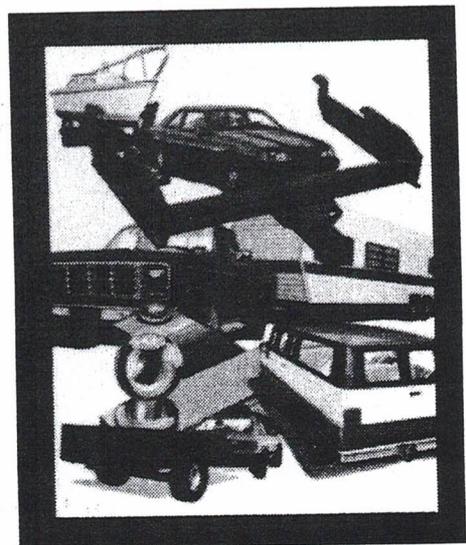
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