



Campton Historical Society



This informational brochure was produced by the Campton Historical Society, founded in 1991 to preserve the community's heritage, and to recognize and protect significant historic structures and sites.

The Society's headquarters is the 1855 town House, located one mile north of Blair Road and Route 175.

For further information, write to us at PO. Box 160, www.CamptonHistorical.org

Town of Campton, New Hampshire
HISTORIC SITE SERIES
Site #12



The village of Beebe River is located off N.H. Route 175 South, 2.2 miles from Route 49. Turn right at Campton Farm.

This brochure is underwritten by:

The Village of Beebe River

The original owner of this area, along with much additional acreage, was the Publishers' Paper Company. At this time, the Woodstock Lumber Company (a subsidiary of Parker-Young Co.) operated a sawmill in Woodstock. It burned in 1913. In 1917, a 22,000 acre tract in Campton was sold to the Woodstock Company, and a double band sawmill was in operation by November of that year. The mill needed people to work it, so a complete village was built for them and their families on site in 8 months (see footnote). This was on the model of a Utopian village as envisioned by Martin Brown and the Parker Young Co. A quarter of the spruce timber was used in airplane making. A small bobbin mill was added to the village. A logging railroad was started in 1917, up through Sandwich Notch to Mt. Whiteface, and was completed in 1921. This included 26 miles of track. The line was co-operated with the sulphite and paper mill in Lincoln NH, also a Parker-Young facility.

By May of 1925, the final deed was completed to sell the entire operation to Draper Corporation of Hopedale, Massachusetts. Draper was the world's largest maker of automatic looms, and needed an additional source of hardwood for bobbins in their looms. A finishing mill was added to the operation. In its prime, Beebe River manufactured the largest number of bobbins in the world (100,000 per day), and employed 235 people. At one time it accounted for 40% of the taxes for the Town of Campton.

Interestingly, Hopedale had also been started in 1841 by Aden Ballou, as a socialist utopian experiment, but the farm faltered after 15 years. In 1967, North American Rockwell bought the Draper Corporation, including Beebe River Village. Operations closed here in 1980.

Today, it is a precinct village of the Town of Campton. The water system has been upgraded, several of the houses are privately owned, and others are leased from the Trust Company that owns most of the area. Several of the original mill operation buildings are also intact, and some are being used for individual light manufacturing businesses. The logging railroad bed is still recognizable, and used today for recreational purposes.

Footnote: In full operation, the Village of Beebe River included the following:

19 dwelling houses with electricity, running water, and bathrooms.

A boarding house for 200 people

A general store that also served as post office, place of assembly, railway and express office

A company office building

A garage

A recreation hall, ball field, and several ponds

Various rail sidings to service the log storage and mill operation areas