



Rolend and Julianne Dufresh.



Chuck and Karen McHugh swirl away at the dance floor. Photos by: Nadya Korytnikova



Elizabeth Biscoe and Richard Anderson.



Tim and Pam Foley.



Brenna Joyce from the Daddy-O! band.

'Meet Me at the Tremont' sheds light on historic factory's future

By Nadya Korytnikova
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Laughter, chatter, music, and the aroma of fresh food filled the Tremont Nail Factory on Saturday night as Wareham residents and friends celebrated the site's 200th anniversary during the Meet Me at the Tremont gala.

The historic 7.2-acre Elm Street property was purchased by the town in 2004.

Officials are now making slow but steady progress toward transforming it into an artistic and recreational hub near the center of town.

At Saturday's gathering, Town Planner Kenneth Buckland presented architectural drawings of potential future site renovations. The site is making slow but steady progress toward becoming an artistic and recreational hub near the center of town with a mix of commercial and public uses.

"When we first started out a couple of years ago, we had a concept of improving this site. It looked very pretty on paper, but what we have right now is something more

specific," said Buckland.

Officials expect that some of the funds needed for renovations will come from money generated by the town's lease of a large steel building on the property to Organa Brands for the manufacturing of marijuana products.

While the lease has been finalized, the Organa facility is not yet in operation.

The Tremont Nail Factory District is also undergoing an extensive \$1.4 million environmental cleanup to remove heavy metals and other containerized waste from the soil and groundwater.

Over the last eight weeks, Ransom Consulting had been injecting more than 100,000 pounds of a remedial agent into the ground.

"We had to work closely with the Conservation Commission because this is a really sensitive area and you have a beautiful herring run that comes up the river," said Ransom Consulting Senior Project Manager Tracey Costa. "As we are sitting here, enjoying ourselves tonight, those materials are doing their magic, so we

are going to be back here in November to collect groundwater samples and see how effective that method is."

The event, organized by the Cape Cod Canal Region Chamber of Commerce, showcased musical group Daddy-O.

Dinner and desserts for the evening were provided by Lindsey's Restaurant.

Guests also had the opportunity to view a "pop-up museum" of historical artifacts. Put together by the Wareham Historical Commission, the museum exhibited photos, portable "watchclocks" and wooden patterns used to make molds to cast nail machine parts.

"The people from those times, the 1800s forward, had an incredibly hard, long workday, and they persevered and laid the foundation of this community," said Wareham Historical Society President Angela Dunham. "I am proud that we have pictures of those hard-working men that made this community the strong community it is today."

Among the guests, some had a long-time connection with the historic site. Gary

Franklin, a fifth generation cut nail maker, remembered his great-great-grandfather, Charles Franklin, who "set up the machines, cut different style nails and fixed malfunctions" at the Tremont Nail Factory back in the late 1840s.

"It's the novelty of this craft that I love," said Franklin, who works at the modern-day Tremont Nail operation in Mansfield. "It is something that I started doing and realized I could be pretty good at."

Starting in 1819, the site was home to the Tremont Nail Company. For more than 100 years, cut nails and other products were manufactured in the complex before the company moved to Mansfield shortly after the town purchased the property using Community Preservation Act funds.

Proceeds from the event went towards scholarships provided by the Cape Cod Canal Region Chamber of Commerce to students from Upper Cape Tech, Wareham High School, Bourne High School, and Sandwich High School.