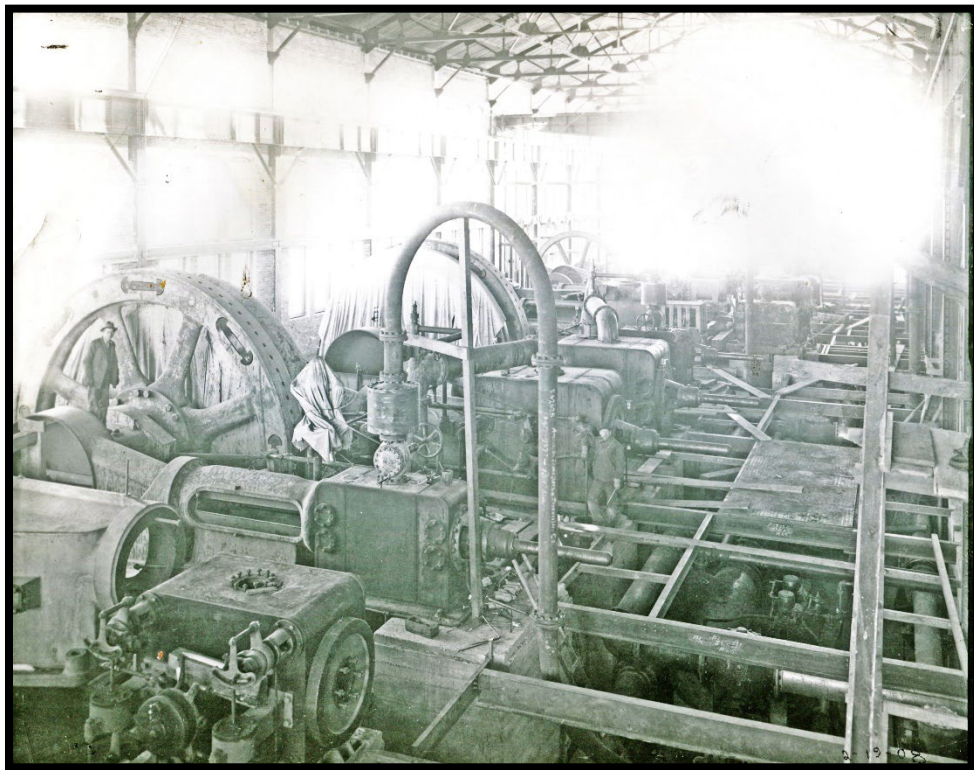


Keith's Corner/McGill News

August 4, 2023

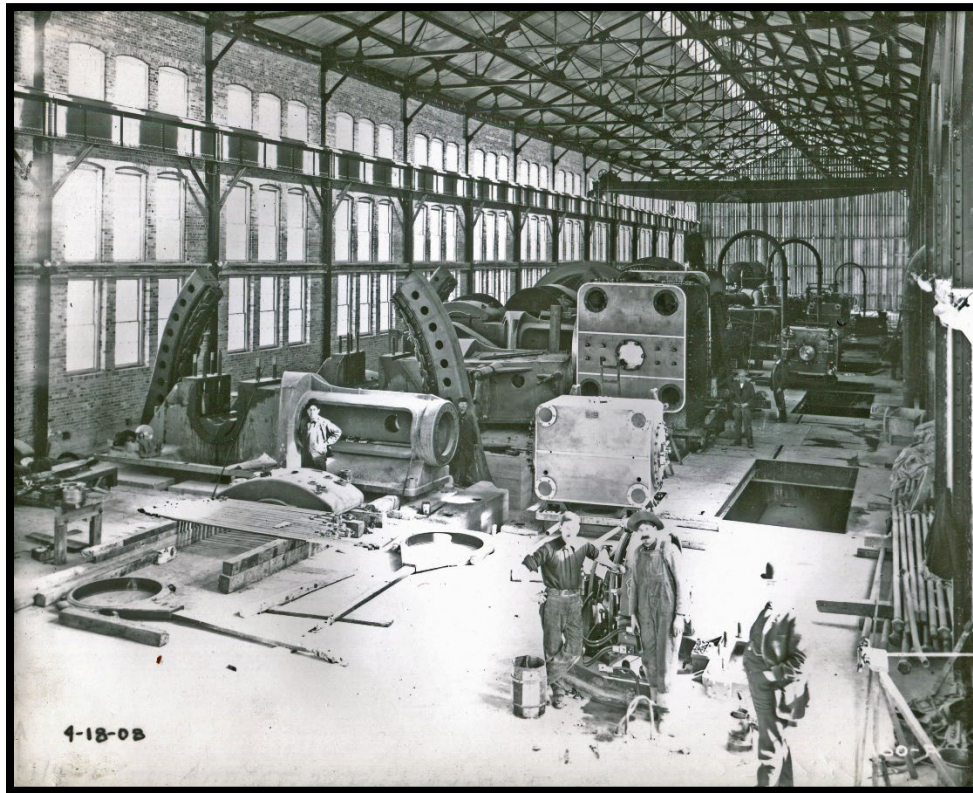
Power House-1906-1957

While researching the power house era, I stumbled across some interesting facts. In early January 1907, the General Mgr. of the Copper Company or NCC, a Mr. Yeatman, discussed the quality of the concrete being used. He said it was not good enough and put forth a plan to use lime from the lime quarry at McGill. He also had a rail spur line put in, from the McGill siding to a nearby gravel pit. He had a steam shovel moved to the pit to load the sand and gravel for use in making concrete. This concrete was to be used in the foundations of the smelter, power house and the mill. By November of 1907 the power house was almost finished and ready for the generators and steam boilers to be installed. Here is an undated photo, probably late 1907 or early 1908.



It was also reported by Mr. Yeatman that 200 train cars full of structural steel and machinery were to arrive in 1907. That is astounding in itself.

I marvel at how these massive units were designed, cast and machined. Also I am amazed at how the men were able to move these units and put them together. Also how fast they built the huge power house, out of brick and with all the windows and skylight. Here is a photo dated April 18, 1908, showing the installation of a large generator. You can see the older ones from the previous photo, towards the back of the photo. Notice the length of the building.

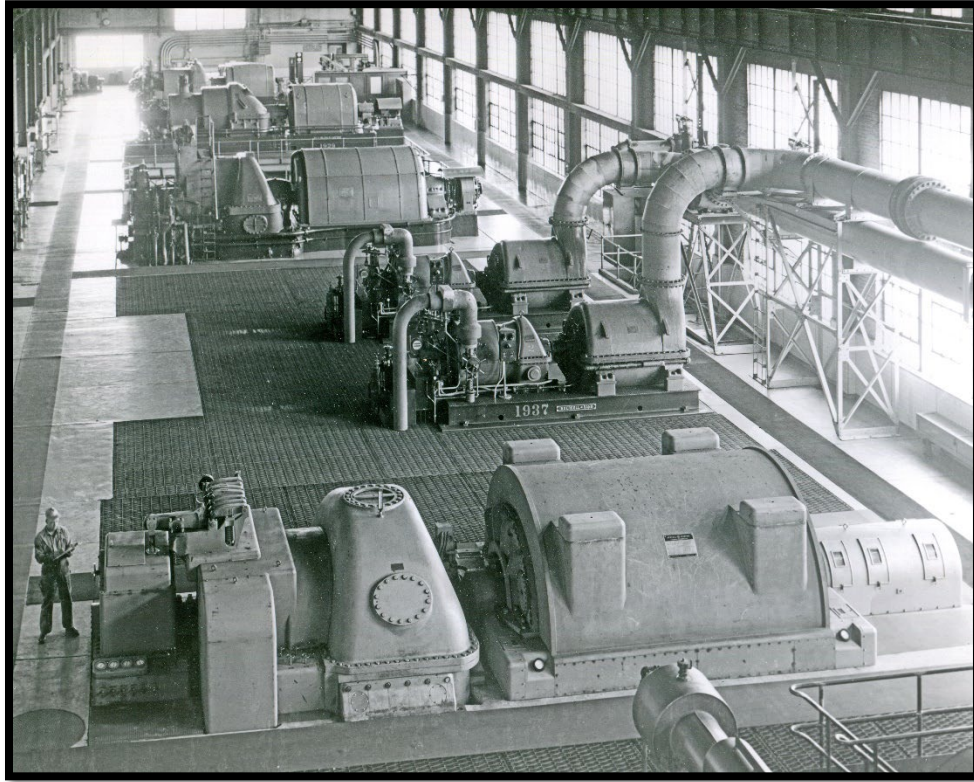


It was reported in early May 1908, that 2 massive 1000 HP. Generators were ready to be put into use for the smelter and mill.

An odd note—I found some newspaper ads for the Smelter Livery in McGill in the fall of 1908. They had horses and buggies for rent along with feed and grain. The ad gave the location as just West of the 'OLD power house'. So was there an original power house. I think there had to have been one in order to power the overhead crane in the newer powerhouse and other buildings.

As time went on, more generators were installed. They tended to be smaller and more efficient.

The picture from last week's Newsletter---



The generator in the foreground was put in during 1857. The 2 smaller units were installed in 1937 and are massive compressors that fed compressed air into a unique distribution system to all parts of the smelter to provide air for power tools of all kinds. The air was also pumped into the converters. The thump, thump of these air compressors could be heard all over McGill and was quite comforting.

The two older generators at the back of the building are marked 1929.

I will continue to get more data on all the upgrades over the years.

Old Photo



This phot is dated July 1907. The site of the power house is in the center and just to the left of the trestle at the end of the white ramp. The first power house may be the building at the extreme left at about 9 O'clock. My guess anyway.