

Newport Historical Society Minutes

April 19, 2010

Sugar River Bank Community Room

This meeting was called to order by Cathryn Baird at 7:00 PM.

Attendees

Samantha Rosendahl, Stan Sweeney, Lorraine Padova, Patrick Hayward, Brenda Curtis, Larry Cote, Andy Andrews, Dakota Sargent, Kevin Sargent, Arnie Hebert, Mary Lou McGuire, Cathryn Baird, Jackie Cote, Todd Coull

Guest: Samantha Rosendahl - Sturm Ruger

Samantha Rosendahl, Newport High School graduate and Keene State College student, presented a research paper on Sturm-Ruger. The basic premise of her paper was to research the relationship between Sturm-Ruger and Newport from an economic perspective. During her research, Samantha employed accepted practices such as location theory, which is concerned with the geographic location of economic activity. She also interviewed twenty-nine Ruger employees.

Samantha discovered that the main reason William Ruger Sr. relocated his gun factory to Newport from Southport, Connecticut was Mr. Ruger's personal ties to the region: specifically, hunting in Corbin Park. Opportunity also played a part with the 1962 closing of the Federal Tool Corporation, making available a suitable factory building. Interviews with employees showed a very strong theme of family involvement stretching across three generations. Many aunts, uncles, mothers, fathers and siblings work together at Ruger and plan to work at Ruger until the end of their careers. Samantha graciously donated a copy of her paper to the NHS Museum, and the public is encouraged to visit the museum and read it in entirety.

1. Executive Committee Reports

Secretary Report

The affirmative vote to accept the Secretary's report was moved by Jackie Cote and seconded by Larry Cote. Approved.

Treasurer Report

The affirmative vote to accept the Treasurer's report was moved by Mary Lou McGuire and seconded by Dakota Sargent. Approved.

2. Old Business

A. Discussion regarding meetings at the Museum

By the general agreement of members it has been decided that Newport Historical Society meetings will be held at the Museum, located over the Court House Restaurant, from May 2010 to September 2010. Benefits to this change include the opportunity for members to become familiar with Museum holdings and to follow the progress of museum staff. The site unfortunately has the limitations of no bathroom facilities and difficult access of steep and narrow stairs with no handicap accessibility. If this site prohibits people from attending we will review the matter. See addendum below.

B. Reactivation of the Building Committee

After discussion, it has been decided to reestablish the Building Committee. The present location of the Museum offers poor conditions for housing artifacts, is not handicap accessible, and has no bathroom facilities. President Baird calls for interested parties to serve on this committee by requesting that they contact her directly at cbaird@summercrest.net or 863-5089. The goals of this committee are to propose and assess possible sites, related issues and expenses, to investigate possible ways to accomplish the task of acquiring safe and secure housing of Museum artifacts, and to create a business plan so the Society can responsibly deal

with this issue. The Building Committee will meet outside of regular meeting hours. Please contact President Baird before May 6 if you want to serve on this committee.

3. New Business

A. Adoption of consent agenda and Executive Committee

President Baird presented for approval by the NHS membership a consent agenda format for routine Society procedures. Using a consent agenda means that Executive Committee minutes, Treasurer, Secretary, and committee reports are approved as a unit at the beginning of each meeting. These documents are distributed to members at least one week prior to the regular meeting, and it is required that members read the reports prior to the meeting. The purpose of approving these reports as a whole, without discussion, is to save time at each meeting. If any member wishes to remove an item from the consent agenda to the regular agenda for discussion, they may do so before the vote is taken. A motion to accept the consent agenda format was made by Larry Cote and seconded by Arnie Hebert. Unanimously approved.

Members of the Executive Committee have agreed to meet monthly on the first Thursday at the Museum at 5:30PM. The purpose of these meetings is to handle business items and review secretary, treasurer and committee reports. These meetings are open to any member who wishes to attend.

B. Sunshine Social

The Sunshine Social, the joint major fundraiser for the Opera House and the Library Arts Center, will be held Saturday, May 1 at the Opera House. The Historical Society has donated to the auction a framed, 16x20 foil impression of the Charles Seamans headstone located at Pine Street West cemetery.

C. Apple Pie Festival

The Newport Historical Society will be participating in the Apple Pie Festival held annually by the Library Arts Center. This year's date is Saturday, August 28th. The NHS booth will feature foil impressions, hand painted ornaments and other appropriate items.

D. LAC Signs Exhibit

The Library Arts Center is planning a fall exhibit to focus on signage, both historic and current. The NHS will be cooperating with the LAC on this venture.

E. Historical Articles for Valley News

President Baird has been in touch with the Valley News regarding historic articles about Newport to appear in the newspaper. This is a great opportunity for publicity for Newport and the Society. Members wishing to contribute articles are invited to contact President Baird.

F. Newport's 250th Celebration Update

President Baird, Chairperson of the Newport 250th Committee, reports that the 250th Committee has had several meetings and will shortly put out a call for public participation. Watch for an article in the Claremont Compass by Ann Stout for more information. The next meeting of the Steering Committee, which includes Ken Dennis, Betty Maiola, Ella Casey and Cathryn Baird, is scheduled for May.

4. Committee Reports

Fundraising Committee

The committee is meeting on Tuesday, April 20th to approve the artist's proof of the 2010 ornament: the Common in winter. President Baird requested that the committee consider a theme for the 2011 ornament to complement the 250th celebration. If anyone has a suggestion for the ornament design for 2011, please contact Jackie Cote (863-3105.)

Pier Bridge

The Pier Bridge restoration schedule has been set: construction begins on May 31, to be completed by September 17. Some structural work on Wright's Bridge will be part of the project. See the attached schedule for specific information. Not part of this funded project, but occurring at the same time as the intumescent coatings, will be the fireproofing of the Corbin Bridge, to be paid for by the Town of Newport.

Website Committee

Recent postings to the NHS website (www.newportnhhistory.org) include the NHS constitution and bylaws and NHS affiliations: NH Historical Society, NH Old Graveyard Association, and the Association of Historical Societies of New Hampshire. Be sure to visit this site regularly to access genealogical and historical information about Newport and to keep current on Society happenings.

Cemetery Committee

A recent meeting was held to discuss the presentation of Society work at the Pine Street West cemetery to the Board of Selectman. Documentation of this site will be completed within two weeks. On May 1 a professional assessment of the restoration requirements of Pine Street West cemetery will be conducted by Kai Nalenz of Gravestone Services of New England. The Cemetery Committee will be interviewed by the Valley News on Tuesday April 20, so watch for the upcoming article! The committee attended a meeting of the New Hampshire chapter of the Association of Graveyard Studies in Amherst on April 17th.

Newsletter Committee

Thanks are extended to Andy Andrews, Dakota Sargent, Larry Cote, Brenda Curtis and Jackie Cote for contributing articles or suggestions to the May issue.

Museum Committee

Recent discoveries at the museum include a wooden Revolutionary War canteen and an original survey of Newport by William Heyward and received in Portsmouth by Isaac Rindge February 2, 1769. Also located was a tax list for 1793. This past winter over 5,000 objects have been entered into the Past Perfect database, which provides an inventory of and easy access to the NHS collection. Arnie Hebert, Chairperson of the Museum Committee, conducted a six hour workshop for the Goshen Historical Society on how to use the Past Perfect software. Arnie also suggested we advertise in the Soonipi Magazine.

5. Announcements/Queries/Follow-ups

- Enfield Shaker Museum spring Forum on the Shakers: May 7-9, 2010 Enfield Museum
- NH Old Graveyard Association meeting: Saturday, May 8, 10:00 AM, Bedford NH Library
- Historical societies from the surrounding towns met in Grantham on March 16 for a roundtable discussion on issues facing historical societies and to explore how they can be mutually supportive.

This meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Lou McGuire
Secretary

Addendum: The next meeting of the Newport Historical Society will be on May 10, 7:00 PM at the Sugar River Bank Community Room. The Executive Committee has revisited the decision to meet at the NHS Museum, and in the interest of member comfort and safety (lack of bathroom facilities and handicap inaccessibility) has decided to continue meetings at the SRB location.

