

MILL TOWN MESSENGER

THIS NEWSLETTER GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY JEFF MILLER, EDITOR OF WWW.LAKESUNAPEECHAMPION.COM

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NEWPORT'S WINTER CARNIVAL 1916 - 1917

To some, confusion and folklore surround the date of Newport's first Winter Carnival. Did it take place in 1916 or 1917? A close examination of reference sources shows the *very first* Winter Carnival took place on February 5, 1916, and was sponsored by the YMCA. These organized winter games, held at Cutting Meadow (site of the shopping center on John Stark Highway) were designed to increase outdoor winter activities and get people away from "denning" in front of the fire. Newporters were surprised at the success of this first carnival of winter sports, as it drew 600 people to town. On to a good thing, spearheaded by William Rand of the Newport House and encouraged by the B&M Railroad, local businessmen met in October 1916 to plan an even bigger and better event for

1917. At this meeting the first memberships in the Newport Outing Club were solicited, dating the beginning of that organization to 1916. Also at this meeting the first suggestion to flood the common for ice skating was put forth by John McCrillis. The Newport Outing Club built the longest toboggan chute in New England (comparable to those in St. Moritz), a ski jump, and a snowshoe area on Judge Bar-

ton's meadow (grounds of the Newport Middle High School). This second carnival included a parade of athletes, floats, and the surprise performance of horses "just returned from the trenches" that ate a "college ice," or sundae, in the middle of the street and drank from a glass. The horses were ridden by F.P. Murphy, Fred Gamash, and Ty L. Barker.

(continued on page 2)



One of the chief attractions of the 1917 Carnival was a deer drive on snowshoes in the Blue Mountain Park sponsored by Austin Corbin III. One hundred people participated, and the outing ended with a dinner of boar and deer at the Central Station Club House, furnished at a reduced price by the Blue Mountain Club and catered by Childs of Newport.

Please join us!

NHS Monthly Meetings Open To All

Second Monday
of the Month

Sugar River Bank
Community Room

February 9

March 9

April 13

6:00 pm Exhibit
7:00 pm Meeting

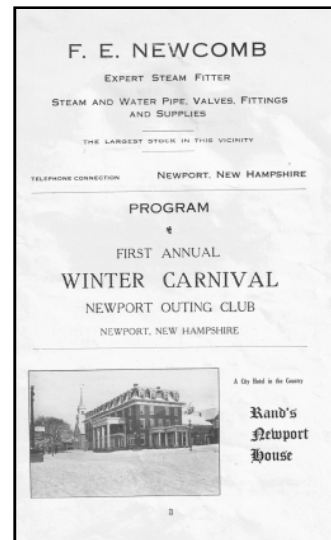
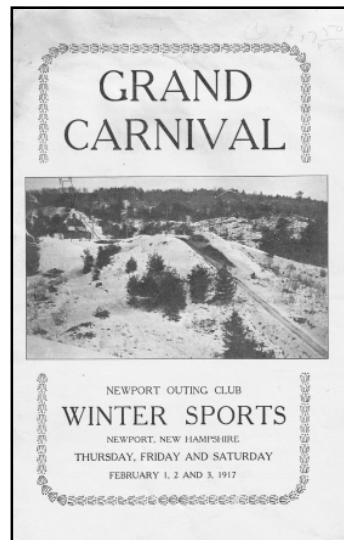
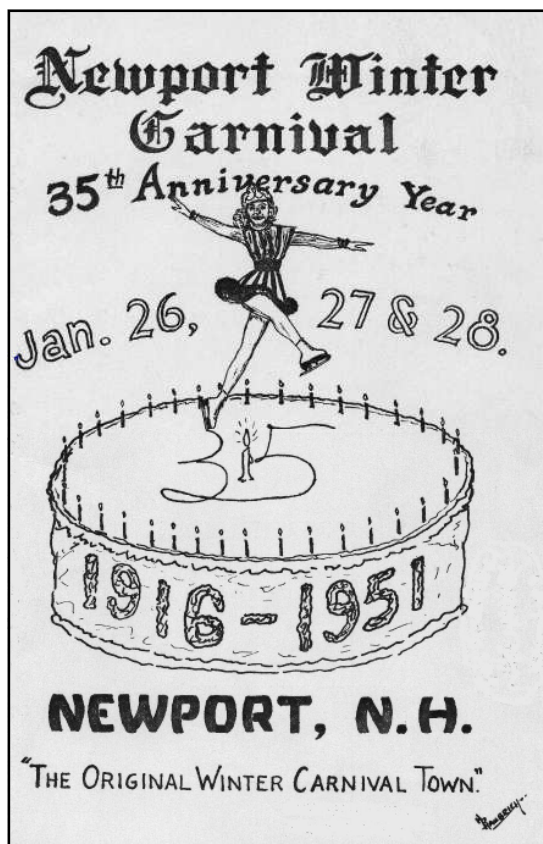
The Inside Scoop

- *Winter Carnival Pictures*
- *Membership Drive*
- *Service Award*
- *Fundraising News*
- *Recent Donation:*
Dottie Collins &
Putnam Blodgett
- *Newport Notables:*
Loren D. Towle

WINTER CARNIVAL... CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Mention of the "First Annual Winter Carnival" in the 1917 program shown on this page is the source of the old story that a fire, which burned the Gamash, Emerson and a third building between today's Lake Sunapee Bank and the Newport Fitness Center, occurred on the first night of the first Winter Carnival.

We hope you enjoy this year's 93rd Winter Carnival which celebrates Broadway. Now that theme would greatly please Newport's showman Billy B. Van! LC



1917 Front Cover & Page 3: Cause of the confusion



1916 Carnival Gathering on the Common: notice the three-story Cheney Block, original Richards Library, the Library House and horse-drawn sleighs on snow covered streets.



Early Saturday morning, February 3, 1917



Participants in the Parade

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

An integral part of our annual membership drive is the raffle, made possible by supportive local businesses. This year we would like to thank Hubert's, Harrington's, the Salt hill Pub, and Shaw's for their generous donations. The lucky winners were Jeff Kessler (\$50 gift certificate from Hubert's), Robbie Parker (\$30 gift certificate from Salt hill Pub), Jean MacConnell (\$25 gift certificate from Shaw's), and Clyde Barbour (\$25 gift certificate from Harrington's). Congratulations to all the winners and a heartfelt thank you to our new and renewing members. Your dues and contributions allow us to continue the efforts to preserve and share Newport's history. JC

SERVICE AWARD

Last year the NHS presented its first Distinguished Service Award to Jackie Cote for her phenomenal work in almost single-handedly raising \$143,000 to save the Pier Bridge. At the January 2009 meeting, NHS awarded its second Distinguished Service Award to Mary Lou McGuire for her contributions to the Society as *Writer, Researcher and Publicist*. Mary Lou has worked long hours researching, verifying and writing material for our various publications. We thank them both for being active members of our Society.

FUNDRAISING NEWS

In 2006 the NHS began offering hand painted Christmas ornaments which feature Newport landmarks. The Pier Bridge ornament was offered in 2006, the Old Courthouse in 2007, and the Richards School and Opera House in 2008. Each collectable ornament will be offered for three full years before retirement, and we are glad to report that sales have been brisk. The next additions will be the present Richards Free Library and the Corbin Bridge. Ornaments are priced at \$11.00 each. Remember, our flagship ornament of

the Pier Bridge will not be available after 2009. So be sure to start or add to your collection now! These ornaments, and all items, can be purchased throughout the year. Call Jackie Cote at 863-3105 for more information.

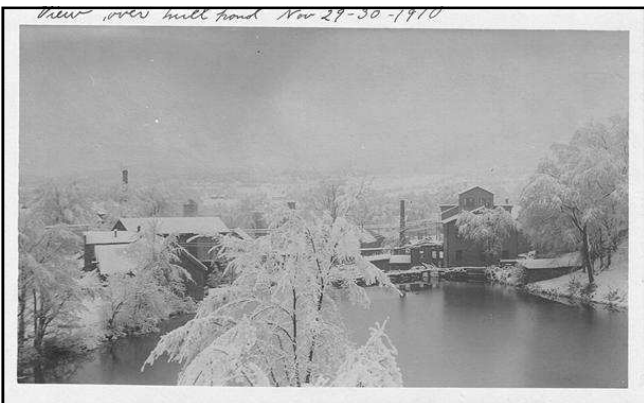
Participation in the Library Arts Center *Gallery of Gifts* this holiday season was a welcome new



2006: Pier Bridge

venue for the sale of our retail products, in addition to our location in the foyer of the Sugar River Bank. Products available at the LAC were the four hand-painted Christmas ornaments, the *Mansions* book, *Replicating Corbin Bridge*, a reprint of Wheeler's *History of Newport*, the Corbin Bridge video, and Pier Bridge items. Sales totaled \$618.00. A big thank you to Kate and Fran at the LAC for allowing us to participate. We plan to be back in 2009, so look for our Newport related products at next year's LAC *Gallery of Gifts*. JC

HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S LATEST GIFTS



View of the Mill Pond, 1910

If you have any postcards of Newport, Guild or Kelleyville tucked away in the attic or hall closet, please consider donating them to the Society. Just call Ray Reid (863-3147) or Larry Cote (863-3105) to make arrangements for your donation. LC

On January 21st, 2009 the NHS received a collection of 108 Newport postcards belonging to Loren D. Towle, and generously donated by his grandson, Putnam W. Blodgett of Lyme, NH. This collection contains a number of rare real photo postcards, a great source for documenting Newport as it was. This, and the collection of postcards given to the Society in December by Dottie Collins, are real treasures. Our sincere thanks to Dottie Collins and Putnam Blodgett!



Looking North on Main Street from the Eagle Block

Newport Historical Society Membership Form

Date: _____

New Membership _____ Renewal _____

Name(s): _____

Address/City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Personal Membership Type: _____ Individual (\$15) _____ Family (\$25) _____ Junior (\$1)

Corporate/Business: _____ Bronze(\$25) _____ Silver (\$50) _____ Gold (\$75) _____ Platinum(\$100) _____ Diamond(\$100+)

Here's my additional donation to the: Museum Fund \$_____ Operating Fund \$_____

Payment Method: _____ Cash _____ Check (Newport Historical Society) Total Enclosed \$_____

Please mail to: Newport Historical Society PO Box 413 Newport, NH 03773

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Newport Historical Society

PO Box 413

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NEWPORT NOTABLES: LOREN DELBERT TOWLE

Loren Delbert Towle (1874-1923) was born in Kelleyville and graduated from Newport High school (1892) and the Eastman Business College in Poughkeepsie, NY (1893). Entering the dry goods business in Boston in 1893, he went on to establish his own real estate company by 1894, and became the most successful and influential broker in Boston and New England. Properties in the Back Bay and the downtown business district were his major interests. His office was in the twelve-story Newport Building which he built at 60-68 Devonshire Street. At the apex of his career he engaged the Olmstead Brothers to

design a neo-Gothic estate in Newton Highlands, with accompanying gardens. Unfortunately, he died just prior to its completion in 1923. On order with Louis Comfort Tiffany was the stained glass window "Autumn Landscape," never installed, and eventually donated to the Metropolitan Museum of Art by Tiffany's cousin. His unoccupied estate became the home of the Newton Country Day School of the Sacred Heart in 1925. Mr. Towle offered to build Newport a new high school in 1916, providing plans by his own architect. Perhaps Newport just missed having an Olmstead build-

ing because the town refused Mr. Towle's plan, and proposed one of their own. Mr. Towle withdrew his offer to fund the school, but eventually George Fairbanks and Frank Chellis convinced him to accept the plan offered by the Newport School Board. Mr. Towle died from complications of surgery before the school's completion, leaving no provision to pay the remaining costs of the project, which were shouldered by the town. Mr. Towle also donated windows to the Church of the Good Shepherd in memory of his parents.
MM

Sources: *A Beginning Who's Who of Newport*; *The Granite Monthly*; *The Book of Boston: Fifty Years of Recollections of the New England Metropolis*.

