

NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY MILL TOWN MESSENGER

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From the President's Pen . . .



"Tradition which is always old, is at the same time ever new because it is always reviving – born again in each new generation to be lived and applied in a new and particular way."

~ Thomas Merton, *No Man Is an Island*

Serving my seventh term as president of the Newport Historical Society, I continue to be honored to serve the community and work with a dedicated group of historic-minded individuals who wish to preserve and highlight local history. Our active membership is growing and there is increasing commitment to the preservation of Newport's legacies.

In this newsletter we wish to pay tribute to Joan Dodge who has captured the essence of Newport on commemorative hand-painted ornaments which are sold by the Newport Historical Society. Throughout history many traditions have been "born", traditions which keep the past alive and validate our heritage. Consider starting the tradition of purchasing a yearly ornament and create a Newport connection that is passed from generation to generation.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY NEWPORT

Come celebrate Newport's 252nd Birthday at the Historical Society Museum, 10-2 on Sunday, Oct. 6, with cake, coffee and cider.

by Cathryn Baird

Meeting & Program Times

All members and the public are invited to all meetings and programs.

BUSINESS MEETINGS

Held at the museum, 6:30-8 PM

Mon. Oct 14

Mon. Nov. 11

Mon. Dec. 9

PROGRAMS

Sun. Oct. 6 10 AM-2PM Newport's Birthday Party at Nettleton House.

Tues. Oct. 22 6:30 PM, Richards Library Ballroom. Program: *The Great Sheep Boom*, by Steve Taylor.

Tues. Nov. 19, 6:30 PM, Richards Library Ballroom. Program: *Abe Lincoln & Sara J. Hale*, by Steve and Sharon Woods.



Receiving the American flag are: (L to R) Pat McCabe, past chapter regent; Cathryn Baird, NHS President; Susan Swan, Chapter Regent; Laura McCrillis Kessler, NH Honorary State Regent and past chapter regent; and Jean Barrett, past chapter regent.

1904 AMERICAN FLAG RETURNED TO THE REPRISAL CHAPTER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

At the April 2, 1904 meeting of the Reprisal Chapter of the DAR, held at the home of Lizzie Maria Farnsworth Richards (Mrs. Seth Mason) (presently home to the Richards Free Library,) this flag was presented to the chapter by the hostess. A plaque on the pole states the date and the chapter's minutes of that date tell the story. The flag later disappeared, to turn up in an attic of a home which had changed hands several times. It was recently donated to the Newport Historical Society, who decided it should be re-presented to the DAR chapter. Due to the fragile condition of the silk flag, a new cover was made for the presentation.

THE STORY OF NHS'S HAND-PAINTED CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS

by Dean Stetson

With a steady hand and keen focus Joan Dodge brings the spirit of Newport to the Holiday Season. Sometime in mid-October, The Sarah



Hale Ornament will be available as the 15th hand-painted Christmas Ornament in this very special collection from the Newport Historical Society. This limited edition ornament will be offered for only one year to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Thanksgiving and Newport's Sarah Hale.

Joan's work is personal and intimate as she creates scenes that come alive. Working with different brushes and a pallet of primary colors, Joan adds and mixes the pigments to create the warm colors accented by crisp jet black lines and creamy shadows. Carefully she articulates her brush as the images and words appear telling the story of a person, a season, and a community.

Since 1970 Joan has been painting and considers herself blessed to be a self-taught artist. Joan currently lives in Kissimmee, Florida and is a 72 year old widow with 3 grown children (2 sons, 1 daughter), 8 grandchildren, and 3 great grandchildren. She has 2 painting buddies (her cats) Bitsy 10 years and Lucy 11 years.

Joan is not bashful in expressing her appreciation for her strong religious beliefs. "I am truly blessed with the talent and with my family",



Joan says. "As long as I have my health and sight, I will continue to paint. I truly appreciate all the encouragement and praise I receive for my work. To God be the Glory. When I stop to think about it, I'm thankful for all I have been able to accomplish thru the many years of painting, and have met many wonderful people".

Throughout the years, Joan has participated in numerous craft shows in New England and upstate New York. Joan's work can also be found in the Christmas Spirit Shop in Bar Harbor, Maine – an area she knows

well. In past years Joan has had her work seen and sold in shops from Disney Village in Orlando, Florida to Gimbels of Maine. There is no question that Joan's work is revered and recognized. For the past 3 years she has received 1st place at the same major crafts show in St. Cloud, Florida.

Joan has worked on many different surfaces. Her "canvases" have included ostrich eggs, thimbles, and wall murals but she enjoys doing the Christmas balls best. Joan was not only successful in teaching herself this



unique skill, but has shared her passion and influence in art with young and old as a teacher and supervisor for 32 years. Along with other instructors, Joan taught in the K through 12 classrooms at a Christian school in

Maine. Her passion did not stop there. For about 8 years, Joan also taught painting in 3 local adult education programs in Calais, Woodland and Charlotte Maine. Later on, Joan taught painting in other Northeastern locations such as upstate NY, Maine, and St. Stephen, NB, Canada as well.

She also worked for Gimbels in Boothbay Harbor, painting scenery on wooden thimbles for about 15 years. When they sold out to a craft outfit in Wisconsin, she continued painting thimbles for about 6 years.

"The way I paint the balls is a step process. I can only do 8 balls a day. As in most things, it's the detail work that takes a while". Each one of these pieces of New England Folk Art starts by painting the background and trim on an ordinary 2 ½ inch glass Christmas tree ornament. Joan then asserts her skilled hand to the back of the brilliant globe where with a steady hand and in a gracefully flowing script she titles and dates the image on the front.



Concentrating her efforts to the front of the ornaments, Joan lightly sketches each scene out with a pencil and then one color at a time is applied to each ball. With each brush stroke, the magic of Joan's art starts coming alive as the figures and landscapes greet you, then fall off the horizon of the sphere.

(Continued on page 4)

The Barton Silver Tea Service

Nancy Barton Holmes, of California, has donated a lovely eight-piece silver tea service to the Museum. The tea service was made by the Meriden B Co., a firm in business from 1808 until 1898. Nancy is the daughter of James Winter and Mary Keith Barton, and a cousin of Kathie Andler Barbour.



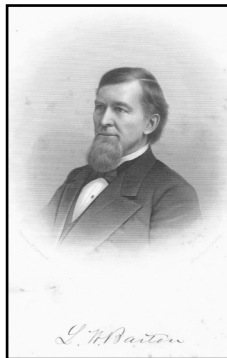
Wheeler's "History of Newport" states that Levi Winter and Elizabeth Jewett Barton celebrated, "...their silver wedding anniversary, (which) occurred August 25, 1877, in the presence of a large circle of friends. They received an elegant silver service, the Honorable Edmund Burke making an appropriate presentation speech on behalf of the donors". The tea service is a great addition to the Newport Historical Society Museum; and, we are looking forward to a proper occasion to display it.

Levi and Elizabeth lived at 49 Park Street on the Newport Common. The home was built in 1853 by the Barton's and remained in the family for nearly a century. Law and Politics were the family business. Levi, his eldest son, Ira McLean, Jesse and Jesse's stepson, Kenneth Andler, were all lawyers, among other professions during their lives.

Levi Winter Barton, the son of a farmer, was able to attend only 10 winter sessions of common school. But with self-study and studying with Dr. John Cooper, Esquire, and Dr. Minor of Boston, Levi became qualified to teach at the common schools.

In 1839, at the age of 21, Levi married Mary A. Pike of Newport and they had a son, Ira McLean. Mary died the following year. Levi continued his education at Kimball Union Academy for two years. He entered Dartmouth College in 1844 graduating in 1848.

Upon graduation, he taught several terms at the Canaan Academy, while studying law with Judge Kittredge and acting as postmaster at Canaan. Leaving Canaan in 1851, he completed his study of law with Metcalf & Corbin in Newport. By 1854 he



Levi Winter Barton

entered a partner-ship with Metcalf until Metcalf was elected Governor of New Hampshire. He then entered a partnership with Shepherd L. Bowers until 1859. During this time, he was still engaged in building, farming, raising stock and growing fruit. He was the Register of Deeds, County Solicitor, Representative to the State Legislature and Senator, all between the years of 1855 and 1868.

In 1852 Levi married Elizabeth F. Jewett. They had seven children, the last being Jesse M. Barton born in 1870. This brings us back to a tea service presented to Levi and Elizabeth Barton at their 25th anniversary in 1877. Levi died in Newport on March 10, 1899, at the age of 81.

North Newport Railroading History Walking Tour with Bruce Davison



Bruce Davison (in safety vest and ball cap) leads a group of 63 walkers for the "Walk Back Through Time" program, sponsored by the Newport Historical Society, on Sunday, September 15. Bruce pointed out railroad landmarks along the rail trail between North Newport and Kelleyville. He was the conductor on the Claremont & Concord Railroad line through Newport until service was discontinued in 1975 and the rails were pulled up. The former rail bed is now a great hiking trail. Bruce shared photos and maps from his collection of railroading memorabilia with the attendees.

HELP WANTED (VOLUNTEER!)

PROGRAM WRANGLER:

Volunteer to be coordinator of activities for NHS monthly programs and special events. Not a big time commitment. Call Pris Hagebusch, 603-863-7970.

MUSEUM DOCENTS:

Volunteers to occasionally work 10-12, or 12-2 shifts on Sundays, at the museum, welcoming guests and answering questions (training provided) Call Biddy Irwin, 603-863-3582.

Joan Dodge: Continued from page 2

Over the past 8 years, The Newport Historical Society introduced the ornaments as a memorable keepsake worthy of "handing down". After the Pier Bridge in 2006, came the Old Courthouse in 2007. The next year, 2008, was Richards School & the Newport Opera House. In 2009, Joan produced Corbin Bridge, Mary's Lamb, and Richards Library ornaments. In 2010, one of Newport's most revered scenes; Skating on the Common, was made available. The next year, 2011, was the South Congregational Church and produced for one year only, Newport's 250th Anniversary. In 2012, the Newport Train Depot and Old Firehouse were painted and in 2013 we were able to add the NHS Tiger and Parlin Field ornaments to the collection.

The Historical Society keeps each ornament available for 3 years then retires them. At the end of the retirement year there is often some stock left to be sold but they will not be reordered. Only the Skating, South Church, Depot, Firehouse, Parlin Field & NHS Tiger are currently in circulation.

Retired and no longer available are Pier Bridge, Courthouse, Opera House and Richards School. Limited quantities of Corbin Bridge, Mary's Lamb, Richards Library, and Newport's 250th Anniversary are still available.

These unique and exclusive ornaments bring the reminiscent scenes of our community and heritage to life. Anyone who has seen the collection has been amazed at these really exceptional pieces of one-of-a-kind historical folk art.



The ornaments are available at the Newport Historical Society Museum as well as the NHS tent found at the Newport Farmers Market, and other community gatherings. In December, they will be featured in the Library Arts Center's "Gallery of Gifts." and on weekends, at the Sugar River Bank.

The Mill Town Messenger is published quarterly by the Newport Historical Society
P.O. Box 413, Newport, NH 03773

Website www.newportnhhistory.org, Email newporths1761@gmail.com

Museum phone number 603-863-1294

Call the Museum number above for appointments to tour the Museum at alternative times

Contributors to this issue: Cathryn Baird, Larry Cote, Dean Stetson

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 \$ _____ Operating \$ _____ Buildings \$ _____

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

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