

NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MILL TOWN MESSENGER

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From the President's Pen . . .



by Cathryn Baird

"The sun always shines on both sides of Newport's Main Street." ~ Billy B. Van



Dear Families and Friends of Newport,

In the early 1900's, Newport's nickname "**The Sunshine Town**" was coined by Billy B. Van, a successful vaudeville entertainer and silent motion picture actor/producer who moved from New York City to Newport. Van was a featured performer in Newport's 1911 Sesquicentennial Celebration and was fond of saying "**The sun always shines on both sides of Newport's Main Street.**" One hundred and one years later the sun continues to shine and highlight appealing Main Street restorations but it is the wonderful **spirit of the townspeople that shines the brightest.**

It doesn't seem possible that a year has passed since people gathered on The Common to celebrate the **250th** (Semiquincentennial) anniversary of the signing of its charter by King George III on October 6, 1761. This year, in honor of this significant event, the Newport Historical Society is planning a "**Charter Day**" birthday celebration to showcase our rich heritage and continue to highlight community pride. We hope you will join us for an afternoon of **old fashioned festivities, food and fun.**

**YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED
TO ATTEND A BIRTHDAY PARTY
FOR THE TOWN OF NEWPORT, NH
ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2012
FROM 12 NOON TO 4PM
AT THE
NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM
20 CENTRAL STREET, NEWPORT**

Join us on Oct. 6 to celebrate the **251st birthday** of our wonderful town. Make your own Apple Cider. Bring apples from your yard or store. Enjoy Chili, Chowder, Cake and Music. Tour the Museum and see the new exhibits.

2012 Lecture Series

Meeting Times

Executive Committee Meeting, 6 PM

General Membership Meeting, 6:30 PM

Programs, 7 to 8 PM

Monday, Nov. 19

Sarah Josepha Hale by Andrea Thorpe

The Inside Scoop

- **Newport Notable**
Austin Corbin
- **Museum Report**
- **Treasurers Desk**

NEWPORT NOTABLES

Austin Corbin, By Larry Cote

Austin Corbin, son of Doctor James Corbin, was born on November 28, 1791, and died on June 14, 1876. When one mentions the name Austin Corbin, it can be confusing, as there were four men by the name Austin Corbin. The first was Austin Corbin, son of Dr. James Corbin. The second was Austin Corbin II, the son of Austin Corbin. The third was Austin William Corbin, son of Austin Corbin II born in 1870 and died in 1873. The fourth and last of this Corbin line was Austin Corbin Junior, son of Austin Corbin II, born in 1873 and died in 1938.

Little was written about Austin Corbin so we must rely on Wheeler's History of Newport, N.H. 1761-1878 for information. We can verify Austin Corbin's involvement in town affairs by searching Newport's old town records and town reports. One can see his signature on various documents.

Austin Corbin was the first born and eldest son of Dr. James Corbin and his wife, Lois Kibbe. He was born in Somers, Connecticut, in 1791 and came to Newport with his father the following spring. Wheeler, in his History of Newport, N.H., said that Dr. James Corbin came to Newport in 1790 to become our first permanent Doctor.

Austin attended public school in addition to being privately tutored by Reverend Abijah Whines. In his early days, Austin worked on the family farm while his father was away attending to his professional duties as a Doctor. As a young man, Austin was a teacher in the Newport



Austin Corbin's headstone, next to his parents, James and Lois Corbin, in the North Newport Cemetery.

Schools. We do not know at which District School he taught, as our records at the Museum do not go back that far. Does anyone know?

In the genealogical section of Wheeler's History of Newport (page 352), Wheeler said that Austin Corbin, along with two other men, purchased the Argus newspaper then printed in Claremont, N.H. and removed it to Newport in 1834. The next year the Argus and Spectator united and became the Argus-Spectator. Edmund Burke became the sole editor.

Austin was a Town Selectman in 1830/31, a State Representative in 1832/33 and a State Senator in 1834. He was a great advocate for the veterans of the Civil War, helping many veterans and widows of veterans to collect their pensions.

Austin built his Georgian home on the site of the present Corbin Mansion. In those days with the fields cleared for agriculture, one could look across the valley from his father's home on Oak Street to his home on what is now Corbin Road. I know of no photograph of this home which was razed by his son, Austin Corbin II, to build his version of a "Russian Palace". It still stands today near the Corbin Covered Bridge.

Austin married Mary Chase of Claremont, N.H. in 1817 and they had six children. This connection to the Chase family will prove to be an important connection for their oldest son, Austin Corbin II, in future years. Watch for the article of the life of Austin Corbin II in our January 2013 newsletter.

Do you know of other Newport Notables? The Newport Historical Society collects Oral Histories of individuals, companies or organizations who have been part of our town's history. An Oral History is a recorded interview where the subject tells their story for later transcription. If you have memories of your early days in Newport, we would like to capture your thoughts in an oral history. We are hoping to target our efforts on the older Newport generations but will certainly be interested in anyone who wants to share their insights. We are also asking for volunteers to be trained to take oral histories. Please call the museum at 863-1294 or Jackie Cote at 863-3105. if interested.

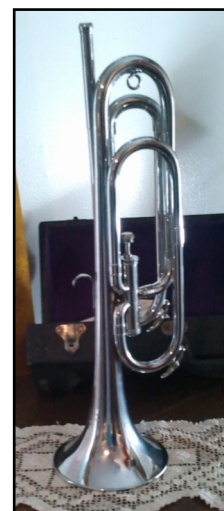


MUSEUM REPORT

This past quarter has been great for donations to the Newport Historical Society Museum collection. Deirdre Dane Wachtel donated a large quantity of household items, Dotty Collins donated a variety of items and June and Jack Lieberman donated several photographs and letters, some dating back in the family until 1812 or so. Alice Allen Carlson from Florida has sent us a very large collection of photographs, histories and genealogy for the Allen's that lived on a farm on the East Mountain Road in the early 1790's. Anyone doing genealogy on that line of Allen's has a real leg-up on the task!

We are still in search of a button and program from the 2012 Winter Carnival. While we have a nice collection of carnival buttons from the 1970's up until 2011, we are still looking for buttons from the 1960's back. Does anyone know when the Newport Winter Carnival started to use buttons? We also collect Carnival and Carnival Queen Programs and photographs.

The Museum Committee is always looking for volunteers to help staff the Museum on Sundays from 10 A.M. until 2 P.M. You could break up the time into 2 hour blocks (10 to noon or 12 to 2). You would be paired with a member of the Museum committee who would conduct the tours. We have put up a number of signs to help identify items and give credit to the donors. The displays will be changing in October; so, if you haven't had a chance to drop by to see the new displays, please do so soon.



Band Instrument identified!
 Thanks to all who tried to identify our instrument. It is a Soprano Bugle, which has an added valve for playing in the marching band. The photo in our last issue was a generic piece of clip art, This is the correct photo.

The Newport Historical Society Executive Board recognizes and thanks these volunteer's for their contribution of time and effort in staffing the museum and the Farmer's Market booth, and newsletter production and distribution : Larry Cote, Dotty Collins, Rita James, Pris Hagebusch, Gordon & Jackie Bell, Michelle Hamilton, Susan Ordway, Virginia & Peter Irwin, Cindy Hogarty, and Stan Sweeney.

Contact Christina O'Brien to join these volunteers 603-863-6905

Volunteer Opportunities with the Newport Historical Society

I would like to be contacted to volunteer in the following area(s):

Docent at the Nettleton House (open Sundays 10-2PM and by appointment) _____ *Docent training provided!*

Working at the Historical Society's Sales table at various public venues throughout the year _____

Bringing refreshments for monthly meetings _____ Writing/suggesting articles for the Newsletter _____

Providing/suggesting a meeting program (topic: _____) _____

Research projects at the museum, working with Museum holdings _____

Retyping Museum materials into digital format for publication _____

Assisting with cataloging and preserving Museum holdings _____

Mail to: Newport Historical Society, P. O. Box. 413, Newport, NH 03773

or call Christina O'Brien 603-863-6905

FROM THE TREASURER'S DESK BY JACKIE COTE

When you read this article, our Fall 2012 Fall Membership Drive will be well under way. Several of you took advantage of early renewal or new membership offered in our last newsletter. Your names have been put in the box for the drawing. Those who had renewed in a previous year for multiple future years have also been included. The funds to support the Newport Historical Society come from three sources—membership dues, donations and profit from the sale of our Newport related items. Now that we have our museum building to maintain and with the wonderful, sharp uptick in artifact donations, your support is more important than ever. Without it, our museum, conservation efforts, monthly programs and other activities would not be possible.

Enclosed as an insert, you will find a listing of all of the items that your historical society currently offers for sale. On the back, you will see a sampling of our new note cards, which are in color. These scenes are from the first ten ornament proofs by Joan Dodge. On the back of each card is a brief description of the scene on front. The inside is blank for your special notes. The note cards come in two sets of 5 different scenes each, Set A and Set B, with envelopes, and sell for \$5.00 a set. These note cards have been very popular and would make a good gift.

To last year's note card set of the watercolor Christmas scene of the Nettleton House, we added a set

of the Fall watercolor of the Nettleton House. These are sold in separate 5-card packages for \$5.00.

We hope that you will give our Newport books and other memorabilia consideration for your Christmas shopping list. Shop our gift shop at the museum on Sunday's from 10 am to 2 pm, at the October 6 birthday party (see page 3 of this newsletter), at the Farmers Market until October 5, and in the Sugar River Bank foyer in the late fall. The ornaments will be featured in the Library Arts Center's Gallery of Gifts.

We are currently working on selecting the ornaments for 2013. Our decision will be announced in the January newsletter. This is the last year for purchase of the Corbin Bridge, Mary Had a Little Lamb and Richards Library ornaments. We also have had a small, new quantity of last year's 250th anniversary ornament painted. This ornament was a special one-year issue only. If you are collecting the complete series and have not yet purchased the 250th ornament, please contact us via email, newporths1761@gmail.com or by phone at 863-3105.

We are working with Jim Chrimes of Bacon Graphics on a Newport shirt design that we hope to offer for sale beginning next summer. Thank you for your continued support of your museum and our activities with your membership, donations and by shopping at our various sales venues.

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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 \$ _____ Cemetery \$ _____

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

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