

MILL TOWN MESSENGER

Volume 16 Issue 2

April 2022

From the President's Pen: By Arthur Walsh

RISKING ALL FOR DEFENSE OF THE HOMELAND

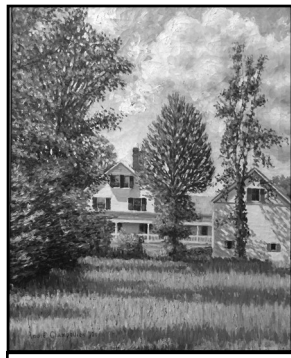
On February 24 of this year the world was shocked as the Russian army invaded a country at peace, Ukraine. The invasion sparked a veritable river of refugees fleeing Ukraine- numbering in the millions, not seen since World War II. But not all crossing the border were leaving Ukraine: less apparent was the substantial flow of Ukrainians and those of Ukrainian descent from across Europe and the world- returning to fight to save their homeland. By March 7 over 140,000 had returned to join the struggle, a high percentage of them joining the Territorial Defense Force, to literally join the battle.

André Cherronnét-Champollion
1880-1915



Just over a century ago, just such a call of patriotism for the Motherland, a call which can bring a person to leave their comfortable home and risk their life in a far-away war zone, inspired a Newport resident to return to France to defend against the Germans in World War I.

André Cheronnet-Champollion was born in Paris in 1880, a great grandson of Jean François Champollion, the person who deciphered Egyptian hieroglyphics on the Rosetta Stone and ushered in the modern study of Egyptology.



The Champollion House, in Newport, painted by Andre.

André's Father, Count René Cheronnet-Champollion, was married to Mary Corbin, the daughter of Austin Corbin. They maintained residences in France as well as their home here in Newport, just north of town on Route 10. After both René and Mary had passed away by 1892, the 12-year-old André came to Newport to live with his grandparents, the Corbins.

He graduated from St. Paul's school and Harvard. Then, after art school, he married Adelaide Knox, daughter of John Jay Knox and did extensive world traveling, painting as they toured both the Near and the Far East. In 1904 he became an American citizen.

When war broke out in Europe in 1914, André felt a compelling patriotic duty to return to France to help defend his homeland. His writings show that he was torn between this noble call versus safely remaining here with his wife and 5 year old son, René. He finally chose to join the fight in France.



Sadly, on March 23, 1915, he was killed doing a volunteer mission in the trenches in France. He is buried there, along with 16 of his comrades, and was posthumously awarded the Croix de Guerre medal.

A bronze tablet commemorating him is in the Austin Corbin family plot at Woodlawn Cemetery in New York City, and some of his lovely artistic renderings of Newport, Egypt, and India can be seen any Sunday at the Newport Historical Society Museum.

Meeting Times

Business Meetings:

Apr. 11, 7 PM, Museum

May. 9, 7 PM, Museum

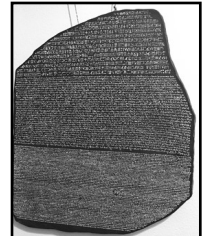
June 13, 7 PM, Museum

July 11, 7 PM, Museum

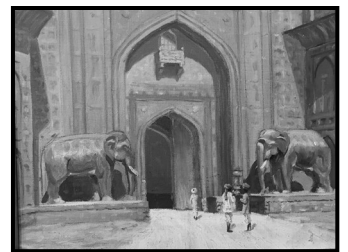
No programs at the present time

Museum Hours;

10AM-2PM Sundays



A model of the Rosetta Stone can be seen at the NHS Museum.



One of Andre's paintings from trip thru Near and Far East, seen at NHS Museum.

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

BY PAM LAFOUNTAIN



If you haven't noticed lately, the Train Mural, located in the Wilmarth Place Park on Main Street seems to be *"blowing in the wind."* Yes, as the cold winter winds "chill your bones," they are also causing pieces of the 25-year-old mural to blow around town. The elements of sun, rain, snow and wind are taking their toll on this valuable piece of Newport history.

The Train Mural's centerpiece is a scene depicting the first time a railroad train crosses Newport's Main Street. "The Franklin", built by the Amoskeag Locomotive Works in Manchester, NH, first traveled across Main Street in close proximity to the location of the mural, on the night of November 21, 1871.

About a year and a half before, according to Edmund Wheeler's town history, a ceremonial groundbreaking had taken place near the passenger depot at sunrise on May 31, 1870. Crowds of people cheered as church bells rang, and cannons were fired. Two of the oldest and most respected gentlemen in town, Seth Wheeler and Dr. Mason Hatch participated in the ceremony. Wheeler struck the first pick, followed by Hatch "who wheeled the first barrow of dirt."

Regular train service from Bradford, NH west to Claremont, NH began the morning of September 16, 1872, as part of the Concord to Claremont Railroad System. This system was the "internet" of the time, bringing visitors, citizens returning home, and goods from around the world to our small town. Its importance is seen in the economic growth of Newport during this time. The Richards Block with space for shops and offices (now Bar Harbor Bank) was built by Dexter Richards in 1873, to meet the demands of a growing commercial economy in Newport.

Fast forward in history to September 1997, when Newport was selected to host the New England Artist Trust Congress IV. This was the first time the Congress was held in NH and the first time it was located in a rural community. As part of this event, art/community-based projects were established; among them was the Train Mural. Over 100 members of the community, ages 6 - 82, were involved in the project, which was headed by three professional artists, Thor Carlson of Charlestown, NH, Bryony Romer of Brooklyn, NY, and Nick Scalera of Lempster, NH. Patryc Wiggins and Kathy Hubert were the Congress' Co-Producers.

The Newport Middle and High School was turned into an art studio for the summer, where community members could paint

part of the mural and understand the value of community members working together. As stated by the co-producers in a letter called **"Welcome and Thank You"** that appeared in the News Leader, *"a strategy of the Congress was to leave behind needed, lasting, treasured contributions to the community"* and *"The artistic integrity and community spirit expressed in the completed public work of art serves to extend honor and ownership to all for years to come."*

The park area where the mural is located was also rejuvenated by local businessmen, the town, and community members. Lake Sunapee Bank and Harrington Jewelers were major sponsors of the Train Mural Project and LaValley Building Supply donated materials to make the mural. In addition to the central theme of the railroad crossing, the mural also includes historic buildings in Newport, yearly changes in scenery, and Newporters doing activities they have enjoyed for years.



Bricks showing thru where paint is torn off from weather.

But now, the Train Mural, made of thirty-six 4' X 4' panels, is in need of a "makeover." Heidi and Jeff North, who now own the building where the mural is located, approached the Library Arts Center in Newport and asked if they might consider taking on the project. Money in the form of a \$5,000 grant provided by

ECON (Economic Development Corporation of Newport) was already part of the project. The Arts Center, seeing the artistic and historical significance of the mural, agreed after meeting with the Norths, to take on this project. Nick Scalera, a member of the original mural committee, has agreed to lead the construction part of the project, with Heidi Lorenz, of Goshen, NH, taking on the role of lead artist.

The project, which has three phases which will require a budget of approximately \$40,000, will include

- (1) Construction of the Mural, including taking down the present mural, constructing frames which will hold the panels, and placement of the new mural on the Johnson Block.

(Continued on page 3)

THE EARL A. POLLARD DOLLHOUSE, A LOVELY ADDITION TO THE NHS MUSEUM

BY PRISCILLA HAGEBUSCH

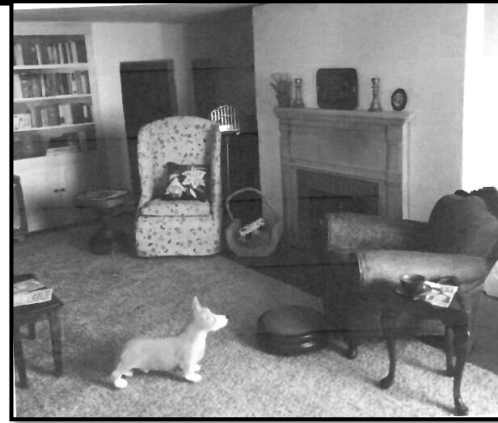


The dollhouse sits in the kitchen of the Museum. Its roof, front, and back panels snap on and off for viewing (and rearranging the furniture?)

SOMETHING NEW AT NHS:

A recent donation has given the Nettleton House Museum a beautiful 3/4" scale model of an actual Newport home, the "Pollard House," at 27 Prospect Street, in the Pine Crest subdivision. The dollhouse is a copy of the newly built house the Pollards moved into in February of 1941.

This little house was built by Earl and Esther Pollard, he doing the carpentry and she, painting, knitting, and making Shaker rugs and furniture. The dollhouse was a Christmas present for Beverly Pollard.



This cozy living room, and all the other rooms, have delightful furnishings created or found by the Pollards and Mindy Thorpe. Even the perky dog is "built" to the 3/4" scale.

Beverly grew up and married Charles Monahan. After Beverly passed, and as none in the family wanted the house, Charles had our local "Dollhouse Artist", Mindy Thorpe, renovate it. Nancy Pollard, of Keene, another of Earl and Esther's daughters, loaned Mindy pictures of the house and the family. If you look very closely, the tiny photos are copies of the family photos, and the furniture is placed where it was in the 1950's home, including an "I Love Lucy" picture on the TV! Charles, with Mindy's exquisitely detailed work, donated the house to the Newport Historical Society. Come in to the Museum on Sundays, from 10-2, and see this 3/4 scale "work of art". Only we won't let you rearrange the furniture!

CONTINUED FROM THE TRAIN MURAL ARTICLE on Page 2

(2) Painting Reproduction, this phase will involve creating a frieze (smaller scale model), selection of a paint palette, line drawing, overseeing other artists who will help with the drawing and painting, and will then complete the finish work of painting the mural.

(3) Community Involvement, this is an important component, as many community members will be needed to complete the project.

A special Community Day is being planned when community members can meet on the Newport Town Common to help paint. The public will be able to view the professional artists at work in the **Arts Center's Main Street studio**. Also being planned is a Celebration Day when the final mural is unveiled. Special consideration is being made to ensure that there is a plan in place to do future renovations, and that history depicted in the mural is easily available and accessible.

So, Newporters, it is time to "come together again" to do your part in making sure that this piece of artistic history is preserved for generations to come. Already there are items depicted in the Train Mural which have disappeared from the Newport landscape, i.e. The Newport House, the Universalist Church, the railroad tracks themselves and the flagman's hut for example. Sled dog racing, which has a rich history connected to Newport and our Winter Carnival, is also preserved on the mural, but no longer part of the carnival.

After two years of "lockdowns," remote learning, and social distancing, let's bring back the original spirit of the Artist Con-

gress and "leave behind needed, lasting, treasured contributions to the community." As we strive to reach a monetary goal, and help in the painting process, we hope to find, as in the first mural painting sessions, the elder of our community sharing their experiences. That interchange could inspire the young to ask questions and want to learn more about the community in which they live.

There is no better time than now to get involved. Help us meet our goal of \$40,000 and mark your calendars for future dates to paint, share stories, and come together to celebrate an accomplishment that will make us all proud to be Newporters.* Remember, "The artistic integrity and community spirit expressed in the completed public work of art serves to extend honor and ownership to all for years to come."

Sources:

Larry Cote at the Newport Historical Museum for pulling together articles about the 1997 Artist Congress and Train Mural, which include:

- "Welcome and Thank You"- September 25, 1997, *News Leader*, and "There's a Mural Movement Afoot in Newport, New Hampshire."
- New England Artist Congress IV Program pg. 19 by Ann St. Martin Stout
- The History of Newport New Hampshire from 1766 to 1878 by Edmund Wheeler
- Celebrating Community: Newport New Hampshire, 1761-2011, by Jayna Huot Hooper

(*Donation address on Page 4)

TREASURER'S REPORT

By Jackie Cote

SALE – SALE – SALE – SALE

We are having a clothing sale at the Museum! In an effort to make space, we are reducing the price of the **beige**, Corbin Covered Bridge Sweatshirts from **\$22.00 to \$12.00** each. Available sizes are small, medium, large, Xlarge and one 2Xlarge. We also have one Corbin Covered Bridge Festival **green sweatshirt**, size Large also reduced from **\$22.00 to \$12.00**. We have **green Covered Bridge Festival tee shirts** in sizes Large and XLarge reduced from **\$12.00 to \$6.00** each.

These are great prices, especially for tees and sweats of this quality. We hope that you will take advantage of them as we will not be offering sweatshirts and tee shirts in the future. We can ship them if you are not local, or you may visit the museum on Sundays from 10am to 2pm. As always, thank you for supporting the Newport Historical Society!

*Donations for the **Main Street Mural Project** may be made payable to "**Library Arts Center**", and sent to:

Library Arts Center

58 N. Main St.

Newport, NH 03773

with "Main Street Mural Project" in the memo line.

MUSEUM REPORT

By Larry Cote

We had (18) visitors sign the register at the museum since we reopened on April 3rd, 2022.

We purchased (1) artifact, an advertisement from **Angles Clothing Store** when it was located in the Wheeler Block, no date on the document.

We are in the process of changing the displays at the Museum. The bedroom display has a Sarah Josepha Hale display within it and the pictures on the walls have been changed. The kitchen display now has the Pollard dollhouse and some miniatures and collectables on display. Both halls have all new photos.

The Corbin Covered Bridge display has been popular and will be retained for another year since the pandemic has limited the visitation to the Museum. More changes will be coming in the next few weeks, so if you haven't visited the Museum lately, this may be your last chance to see the some of these current displays.

The Library/Reference room on the third floor is an underutilized asset of the Museum. Documents, photographs, genealogy, Town and County reports, Military records, school documents and postcards or stereo optic cards with views of Newport are all available to be seen. You could even look at lesson plans used in our schools **from the 1890's!**

We are open to the public on Sundays from 10AM until 2PM or by appointment. Call 1-603-863-1294 for an appointment and we will get back to you and arrange a day and time. An appointment for non-Sunday hours is very useful for a detailed study of the items on the third floor.

NHS Board: Arthur Walsh, Pres., Jerry Hagebusch, VPres., Pam LaFountain, Sec., Jackie Cote, Treas., Larry Cote, Museum Director, Pris Hagebusch, Newsletter Editor, Arnie Hebert, Laura McCrillis, Donna Menard, Dean Stetson, Stan Sweeny.

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Newport Historical Society Membership Form:

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Your annual membership earns you a new or continued, subscription to this newsletter!

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 \$ _____ Building \$ _____

Life Membership (\$250 - each person) _____ (Never have to renew again!)

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

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