

# MILL TOWN MESSENGER

## HISTORY OF THE APPLE PIE CRAFTS FAIR AND THE APPLE PIE CONTEST *By Pam LaFountain*

### *The Apple Pie Crafts Fair (APCF) Turns 50!*

Sometime in the early 1970s Marie Bugbee had a brainstorm. Her vision was to have a location to bring together area artists and craftspeople with buyers, both individually or representing shops in the area. And, the name of this event should be something that makes people think of a simple time, a good old American Saturday with friends and family, kind of like an apple pie! The Apple Pie Crafts Fair was born! Marie, with the help of her daughter, Kathy Niboli, did not intend for the event to be a fund-raiser. The only cost for the participants would be \$5 to cover the cost of mailings and advertising expenses. Participants would bring their own tables and handle their own transactions. If artists or craftspeople did not have enough items for a full table, they could sell their items and pay a small commission in lieu of a registration fee. Letters were sent to potential artists and craftspeople both amateur and professional. Owners of local shops were also contacted to inform them of the potential of such an event. Newspapers and posters advertised the event.



Marie Bugbee

The first APCF was held on August 3, 1974. For the first few years, the fair remained only a chance for vendors and shoppers to meet, until in 1976, when the APCF became a fund-raiser for the LAC. That was 50 years ago.

2019 was the first year Marie was not by our side, having passed away in 2018. But her spirit lives on each fourth Saturday in August when the Apple Pie Crafts Fair returns to the Newport Common. Only once in the fair's history was the event postponed, due to rain, until in 2020, when a worldwide pandemic made it impossible to safely hold the fair. The Common was quiet on that 4th Saturday in August.



Kathy Niboli and Kate Luppold oversee the APCF

This year and every year back to 1993, when the Apple Pie Crafts Fair, sponsored by the Library Arts Center, teamed up with the Richards Free Library Book Festival, the fair has always been held on the 4th Saturday in August (signally the end of summer as schools usually started the next week or so). Prior to this collaboration, the fair had been held in late July through the 1980s. Prior to that, the first two fairs were in early August. Twice, the fair was held in September. Once the date was set to coordinate with the end of the Farmers' Market season when growers and plants were added to the craft booths, and once because of postponement of the original date due to rain. After that episode, a rain date location was always set and the fair would be held rain or shine.

### Apples and apple orchards have a long history in Newport:

When looking at an 1877 Bird's Eye View of Newport map, one can see an apple →

NHS Board: Arthur Walsh - Pres., Dean Stetson - Interim VPres., Pam LaFountain - Secretary, Pris Hagebusch - Interim Treas. & Newsletter Editor, Stan Sweeney - Facebook Mgr., April Anderson, Arnie Hebert, Laura McCrillis Kessler, Donna Menard, Ann Stout, Paula Johnson.

### NHS Times

**Business Meetings:**  
**Open to the Public**  
 August 12, 6:30 PM  
 September 9, 6:30 PM  
 October 14, 6:30 PM  
 November 11, 6:30 PM  
**Museum Open Hours**  
 10AM—2PM Sundays,  
 and by appointment  
**Programs:**  
 See below:

### Upcoming Programs

**July 30 Chronicles—Civil War Diaries, 6:30-8 PM RFL Ballroom**

*Diaries and Letters from Newport's Civil War Soldiers.*

**August 20 Chronicles—Parlin Field, 6:30-8 PM RFL Ballroom**

*Parlin Field, Newport's Historic Airport.*

**Sept. 15—Membership Open House & Opening of Governor Murphy Exhibit— 1-5 PM Museum**

*Guided Tours of our ANNEX and viewing of new Governor Murphy Exhibit*

**Oct. 15 Chronicles—The Dexter & Newport's Firefighters 6:30-8 PM RFL Ballroom**

*The History of Newport's Firefighters and Newport Fires.*

**Nov. 19 Chronicles—Sarah Josepha Hale— 6:30-8PM RFL Ballroom**

*More than the Mother of Thanksgiving.*

APCF story continued on page 3

**WE ARE CONNECTED!** By Dean Stetson

The NHS Board of Directors unanimously approved the installation of a Comcast Internet connection at the Museum. As of June 1, 2024, Internet access at the Museum is now available to support the research activities at the Museum.

We have all experienced and recognize the importance of connectivity in our activities and this access will allow users at the museum to share the information they are seeking with much greater ease through email and cloud services. As the organization moves from the Analog to the Digital World, this tool offers more integration with other museums and archival resources and will compliment many of the activities that go on at the Museum. Often times, it is helpful to research other digital archives while pursuing information from our physical archives. This streamlines the ability for immediate access to resources such as the Richards Free Library Digital Archives on the Argus Champion, or Ancestry websites in the search for additional family information. Best of all, direct access to the Internet from the Museum will help to support the curiosities and connections that seem to happen as folks research our archives.

The NHS is very proud of the items in our collections and it is not the intention to display individual items or the museum in a "virtual" tour as may be seen with other museums. But as many of our news articles, obituaries and community events have gone digital, the NHS needs access to this form of media as well. To that point, we are acquiring more and more items that fit in the "Digital Archives" category and that will require cataloguing and archiving.

The Board of Directors recognizes that this service has a monthly reoccurring expenditure and adds to the overhead for Museum operations, but the benefits this service provides justifies the modest increase in cost. We all look forward to the access to the Internet through this Comcast connection and how it may open the door for many opportunities and growth for the Newport Historical Society in this digital age.

**SPIN - SELF PORTRAITS IN NEWPORT**  
by Pris Hagebusch

A chance find on the Richards Free Library's "Free Books" table on the Newport Common during the Friday Farmer's Market, the paperback titled *SPIN - Self Portraits In Newport* became mine. Not being a long-time resident of Newport, I was delighted to read the stories, poems and reflections in this 1998 book produced by the New England Artists Trust Congress IV, collected by Verandah Porche. Young and old Newporters and various groups shared memories of their lives in Newport.

Upon opening the book randomly, I discovered a bit by a person who had delivered cut ice to Newport residents, for their "Ice Boxes", like the one I show people on tours at the Newport Historical Society museum! I would like to share these wonderful pieces via the Newsletter, probably one or two at a time, due to space. These are reminders of Newport, our youth, games, businesses and people. Here are a couple more I liked:

**The SMITH, by Tim Stetson**

My grandfather, sitting on a stool using the forge, is thinking about going home to see his wife. He is a blacksmith. He finishes heating up the steel that now looks as hot as the sun. He brings it over to his anvil and pounds away. The sound is like thunder. He makes curves on both sides and brings it over to a barrel of water. Grandfather puts it in and there is a whoosh! of steam around him. He is left with a cold piece of metal with curves that will soon be the frame of a bed.

**On Sunapee Street, by Tyson Taimi**

On Sunapee Street, it was a League of Nations, Jews, Irish, and more prominently, the Canadian Frenchmen, before the Greeks. I don't think it affected me as a child. The kids spoke their native languages fluently. Because of the League of Nations on Sunapee Street, I can swear in seven languages, and say "thank you" in five.

This wonderful little book will reside in the Newport Historical Society Museum, probably on the third floor with other locally authored books. You could sit down at the table up there on a Sunday, between 10 and 2, and find your favorite!

**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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Building Updates \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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**

## HISTORY OF THE APPLE PIE CRAFTS FAIR AND THE APPLE PIE CONTEST

(Continued from page 1) By Pam LaFountain

orchard on the northeast corner of Elm and Pine Streets. It is unclear who was the owner of this orchard. And in Edmund Wheeler's History, according to an 1870 census, Newport had \$7,299 worth of apples for that year. Dig into any of the local newspapers in the 1800s and you will find not only Newport but also area towns like Croydon, Goshen, Grantham, Sunapee, and Lempster all had apple orchards; and those were just the ones for sale.

Every year since the beginning of the fair, local bakers have made and brought pies to the fair to sell, mostly apple pies but other pies are also welcome. Proceeds from these pies go to the Library Arts Center to fund activities and programs. The number of pies donated has slowly grown from around 100 in the first 20 years of the fair, to over 200 in the most recent years. It should be known that one well-known baker in town, Pris Hagebusch, made 28 pies in one year. That must be a record! And of course the price for a pie at the fair has also increased! Back in the 1970s-90s a pie was \$7.50 and a slice was \$1.50. (Not adjusted for inflation and cost of ingredients!!!!)

### The Apple Pie Contest became part of the fair in 1994:

That year Town Manager Dan O'Neil, Police Chief David Hoyt and teacher Charen Urban judged the first pie contest. The winner was Melanie O'Sullivan. Judges have included business owners in town, town officers, school teachers and principals, LAC Board members, Newport civil leaders, local politicians, and even some "authentic professional bakers" like Robert Steele from the Old Courthouse, and Mary Jane Robbins from the Bakers' Hotline at King Arthur Flour. One panel of judges was even made up of the husbands of the APCF committee. Every year these men put up and take down the "red and white striped tent" known as "Pie Headquarters."

Pie contest winners have won blue ribbons, and sometimes Stetson's Maple Syrup, or a custom made APCF pin. One winner even won a King Arthur Flour Cookbook. But of course the greatest award for the baker is "bragging rights" and the title of "Winner of the APCF Pie Contest." Many of the winners are from Newport, but winners have been from as far away as NJ; Kanla Elsaesser was a summer resident in 2018. The only requirement for the contest is that the pie must be made of mostly apples. Historically, the traditional apple pies appear to be more favored by the judges! It also appears that many of the winners were not novices. They had entered pies before! The number of pies entered in the contest has varied from 8 - 17, but lately only the first 12 pies entered in the contest will be judged. The youngest pie baker to win the contest was 14yr-old Micah Stetson (2011). From records, it appears that Carol Dodge has been the only



Harold & Gerri LaValley & Paul Brown judging pies!

baker to win the contest more than once, but the records are incomplete. I am sure that someone can correct this, if I am wrong! For a while the winning pies were raffled off, but now these pies are sold by the slice after the contest.

**Like any good fair, the APCF has plenty of food choices that have evolved over the years.** During the first fair the apple pies were all made (50 in all) by a friend of Terry Dorr's from Tilton, NH. The booth was sponsored by LaValley Building Supply and Lori LaValley sold the pie by the slice with all the profits going to the LAC. This first fair also had vendors or organizations who brought food items like corn-on-the-cob, hot-buttered popcorn, baked goods, homemade fudge, home baked beans and coffee.

Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Terhune ran a hot dog stand with the proceeds going to the Newport Hospital. In the next few years food options would include hot dogs and later hamburgers cooked by Joe and Jodi Davidson, and then Louis Thompson, and later Lyman Cousens, using the Rotary Club Grill, and Lucia Drew sold her fresh cookies and donuts. McDonald's of Claremont donated cups and punch and Todd Willey sold this beverage. Organizations used the opportunity to sell food to support their programs, like the Newport High Band who was raising money for a trip to Florida and the Firefighters Association who cooked barb-b-cue chicken beginning around the early 1990s to support their programs. Kate Niboli, who would go on to be the Director of the LAC, got her start at the APCF selling hot dogs with Caitlyn Stillson, bringing their traveling hot dog stand, Cate's Hot Dogs to the Common.

In the early 2000s some of the crowd favorites were St. Vasilios' Greek Church's ethnic foods, Howl'n Good Kettle Corn, Stacy's Smoothies, Goshen Fire Department's homemade donuts, and Aurora Bakery/Road to Independence bake sale. Around 2017, food trucks were introduced and provided fair foods. Epic Food Truck, 2B Mobile Eats, Let's Get Loaded, Trucking Tacos and Totally Thai provided a variety that fairgoers were looking for. Meanwhile the LAC began serving "apple themed" food items in the "Apple Cafe" under the red and white tent in the center of the Common. Foods like apple crisp, apple squares, and apple cider floats became a big hit and visitors lined the Common to get one of these tasty treats. Special APCF mugs and glasses could be purchased and filled with any of the apple foods. The ice cream for these delicious treats was donated by Sanctuary Dairy Farm. During recent fairs the apple squares made by Eunice Haight had become so popular that a tray of them has been raffled off with all the proceeds going to the LAC. Oh, by the way, a cider float consists of vanilla ice cream, apple cider and caramel syrup!



Cider Float!  
(Yumm!)

This article continued on page 4

## RICHARDS FREE LIBRARY (RFL) ANNUAL LIBRARY FESTIVAL

By Mindy Thorpe

In 1955, Barbara and Raymond Holden founded the Friends of the Richards Free Library and began their fund-raising efforts with a "Library Day". Rechristened in 1956, the Annual Library Festival, held on the fourth Saturday in August, has remained the Friend's biggest fundraiser for 69 years. (August 24 this year)

The centerpiece of the festival is the HUGE book sale in a tent on the left lawn of the RFL. Throughout the year, books donated by the public or received through the library's weeding projects are examined and then sorted into categories. The "Friends" gratefully accept gently used items in good condition, but must decline encyclopedias, textbooks, condensed books, or anything damaged, marked up or mildewed. The groundwork laid by premier "super sorters," Marty Lovely and Barbara Kvetcovsky, ensures that the quality of the book sale collection is maintained.

All the heavy lifting required to set up the book sale could not be accomplished without the amazing young men and women of Newport High School's athletic teams. For years, girls sports teams have hauled many heavy tables in and out of the library basement while generations of football players have brought tons (literally) of books down from the third floor.

But the Annual Library Festival is about more than just books! The following activities are outdoors, in front of the RFL.

- Under the **Children's Tent**, library staff members provide games, crafts, bubbles, face-painting and stories.
- The **Cookie Walk** tables are stocked with goodies donated by the best home bakers in the area. Buy a bag and fill it with your favorites, but start early because the cookies are usually gone well before lunch.
- At the **Friends Table**, become a new member and gain "early-bird" 8:00 AM access to the book sale, or buy some tickets for the Raffle of a table full of donated prizes. Regular book sale access starts at 9 AM.
- At the **Festival Cafe**, the Library Trustees serve up lunch on the Richards Free Library's front porch.

For additional information, contact the Friends via email at [friends@newport.lib.nh.us](mailto:friends@newport.lib.nh.us)

### MAGICAL HISTORY TOURS CONTINUE IN SEPT.

Newport Historical Society is offering a limited number of our popular MAGICAL HISTORY TOURS of Newport. These are bus tours of historic spots throughout Newport, with tour guides to explain what you are seeing. Even Newport natives say they see things they did not know about on these tours!

The scheduled Tours fill up quickly, so make your reservations by email at :

[birdwatcher214@gmail.com](mailto:birdwatcher214@gmail.com), leaving your names and phone number for available seating. Aug. 23 - Private Tour, Sept. 29, Oct. 27, and Nov. 3 scheduled tours, so far. 10:30 AM is Tour start time. Tours last 1½- 2hrs.

### HISTORY OF THE APPLE PIE CRAFTS FAIR AND THE APPLE PIE CONTEST

(Continued from page 3) By Pam LaFountain

Unfortunately when the Volunteer Firefighters' Association was disbanded in 2023, the chicken barbecue also disappeared from the APCF. People still talk about how in those years when the chicken was cooking, Newporters and visitors alike would come down to the fair, following the smell!

The fair has not gone unnoticed outside of Newport also. In 2019 the Boston Globe named the APCF among the "Fun Things to Do in New England" and in the NH Union Leader the fair was called "one of the top 10 Art Festivals in NH." Even NH Public Radio suggested the APCF was a "must see" for a weekend activity in August.

According to an editorial in a 1975 Argus Champion states "This nation and the world need more Apple Pie Crafts Fairs. Perhaps through them we can find the way to better understanding of our neighbors, warmer friendships and a higher respect for excellence in craftsmanship." I couldn't agree more! Check out the fair on August 24 on the Newport Common and I am sure you will also agree! See you at the Apple Pie Crafts Fair!

Resources for this article: *Digital Archives from the Richards Free Library, Apple Pie Crafts Fair Facebook page, and Annual Town Reports from Newport NH.*



Volunteer Firemen  
BBQ chicken.

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P.O. Box 413, Newport, NH 03773,  
Museum phone 603-863-1294

Website [www.newportnhhistory.org](http://www.newportnhhistory.org)  
Email [newporths1761@gmail.com](mailto:newporths1761@gmail.com)  
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