

# NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# MILL TOWN MESSENGER

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## *From the President's Pen . . . .*



by Cathryn Baird

*"Once an organization loses its spirit of pioneering and rests on its early work, its progress stops."*

*Thomas J. Watson (IBM CEO, 1956 - 1971)*

Although the author of the above quotation was a pioneer in the development of accounting and computing equipment, his words continue to apply today to organizations both large and small, regardless if their status is for profit or a 501.C3 entity. During the past five years, the Newport Historical Society has experienced an explosive period of growth as it evolved from humble tenant to respected homeowner. The pioneering spirit of the membership has enabled the NHS to expand its collections and resources for the future of the community. Just as the early pioneers were the first to discover and settle in Newport, the current day pioneers are creating new ideas and methods to preserve the heritage of Newport, "The Sunshine Town."

**Thanks to the NHS "spirit of pioneering", progress continues.**

## 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Newport Winter Carnival

As we approach February of 2016, there is excitement about reaching a great milestone, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Newport Winter Carnival. We believe we have the oldest continuous Winter Carnival in the country!

How did it all begin? It appears to have started as a business plan between the owner of the Newport House, William Rand, and the Boston and Maine Railroad. Looking at the Winter Carnival program from 1917, the Carnival was held on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>, or Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Some of the events were: Snowshoe, Skating, Skiing, Skijourning and Potkukelkka races.



Whoa, wait a minute, what are Skijourning and Potkukelkka Races, you ask? We will tell you more in the next issue of the Milltown Messenger, in January. Stop by and see the new Winter Carnival display in the Nettleton House Museum, where we have a Potkukelkka sled!

The 1917 Carnival must have been a success; because here we are 100 years later preparing for our 100<sup>th</sup> Winter Carnival!

## 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. October 12**

**Mon. November 9**

**Mon. January 11**

### **PROGRAMS:**

**Tues. November 10**

*Visions of the Past, Part 2*

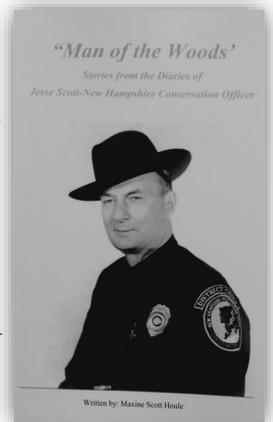
presented by Larry Cote.

6:30 to 8 PM, in the Richards Free Library Ballroom.

## **NOW AVAILABLE:**

### *"Man of the Woods"*

The long-awaited book by Jesse Scott's daughter, Maxine Houle, can be purchased at the NHS Museum, or any offsite venue where we "set up shop".



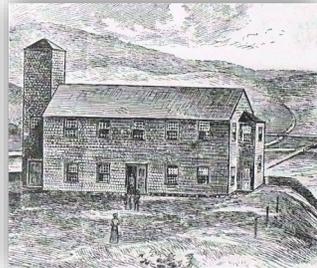
Maxine does not live locally so NHS is helping her make the book available for anyone wanting to purchase a copy. For mail order, please email [newports1761@gmail.com](mailto:newports1761@gmail.com) for instructions. The book sells for \$25 and checks must be made to Maxine Houle.

# Where Was Newport First Settled? by Larry Cote

When the first settlers from Killingworth, Connecticut, came to settle Newport in 1765, they arrived at Fort number 4, which is now Charlestown, N.H. They walked through the woods, camping near Pike Hill, and settled along what is now Unity Road and Pine Street. The town center, complete with a Common and meeting house, was located along Unity Road. They were farmers who thought that if they settled along the banks of the Sugar River, early frost would kill their crops.

Later, a combination church/school/meeting house was built along what is now Spring Street near the Hilltop Motel. Commerce was set up in the interval where the South and East branches of the Sugar River meet approximately where the Newport Health Center is today. Around 1806 the Croydon Turnpike was built from Croydon to Goshen. The merchants soon saw that they should be located on the other side of the river along the Croydon Turnpike to take advantage of the wagon and stage coach traffic.

Two successful merchants of the time were **James Breck** and **William Cheney**. They were rivals in business, religion and politics. If one said up, you can be sure the other would say down! Breck wanted the town center to be south of where the Sugar River crossed what is now Main



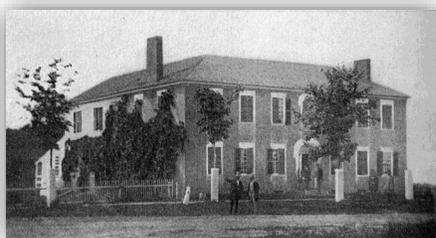
**First Church, location now Spring Street**

Street. Cheney wanted the town center to be north of the Sugar River.

About 1810, Cheney built a long wooden business block on the site of what is now the Lake Sunapee Bank building. Cheney built his mansion adjacent to his store around 1816.



**Cheney's business block.**



**Cheney Mansion, 1816**

Breck, on the other hand, built his business block on the South side approximately where Rite-Aid is now located. Next to his store, Breck built his home.



**Breck's home, called the Lafayette House after that dignitary's visit.**

Around 1821, Cheney was instrumental in having the First Baptist Church built on the north end of the Common. About 1822, Breck was instrumental in the construction of the South Congregational Church in its current location.

Breck and Cheney were involved with town politics and both served as Selectmen. Knowing that there was talk that Cheshire County was to be divided into two counties to better serve the public, Breck and Cheney commissioned a Courthouse to be built in 1825-26. The new county was named Sullivan County in honor of a Revolutionary War soldier, John Sullivan.



**Breck & Cheney's Courthouse**

The town offices were located on the first floor of the Courthouse and the second floor was available as the County Courthouse. Because Newport already had the building and was more centrally located within the new county, Newport was granted the County Seat. The people realized that the question of where the town center should be located was settled when Breck and Josiah Forsaith built the Eagle Hotel located north of the Sugar River crossing.

However, the rivalry didn't end there. In 1825 General Lafayette, a French nobleman who fought with George Washington in our Revolutionary War, was taking a farewell tour of the United States. The town's people intercepted him while on his way from Concord, N.H. to Montpelier, Vt. He was taken to Cheney's home for a celebration. When the festivities were over at the Cheney home, Lafayette was brought to Breck's home for another celebration.

Cheney died in 1830 of consumption and Breck moved to Rochester, New York. (continued on page 3)



**William Cheney**

**(Newport, continued) by Larry Cote**

Both men were instrumental in forging the town of Newport as we know it today. They were rivals, but could work together for the common good, a lesson we could use today.

**Citations:**

*Wheeler's History of Newport 1761-1878 by Edmund Wheeler-Granite Monthly issue June 1910 pages 185-186 "Two Historic houses"*

**MUSEUM COMMITTEE REPORT****By Larry Cote**

It has been a busy summer for the Newport Historical Society Museum. The new windows have been installed and painted. Pris & Jerry Hagebusch have re-hung the draperies. Thank-you to all who could support the window project.

The third floor bathroom fixtures have been removed so we can turn the area into long term storage for the more temperature and humidity sensitive items. Dick Gassett, Dean Stetson and I have been working on the landscaping around the building, removing vegetation and replacing it with stones to keep insects away from the building. Dick Gassett has repaired the stone wall and walkway between the Museum and the Old Courthouse.

As you may know, the block and granite wall in front of the Museum was damaged by a delivery truck this summer. Thanks to Ken Dennis, who witnessed the accident, the trucking company has paid to have the wall fixed. The work was done by Michael Hale who originally built the wall in 2011. Thank you Ken and Mike!

We are in the midst of changing the displays for the town's birthday on October 6<sup>th</sup>. Since 2016 will be the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Winter Carnival, one of our new displays will feature the Winter Carnival. We have one Princess Tiara and one Queen Trophy in the display, we were hoping for more. If you could part with your Tiara or Trophy for a year, we would love to display it with your name and the year you won it.

Donations to the Museum both in money and Newport memorabilia have been gratefully accepted. Many of the items donated over this past year will be incorporated into the new displays. Over the last years your Historical Society Museum has grown tremendously. Thank you for your support for that growth.

*Remember, a gift of a Historical Society membership gives twice, once to the recipient, and second, to the Historical Society's mission of preserving Newport's past.*

**FROM THE TREASURER'S DESK****By Jackie Cote**

When you receive this newsletter, we will be in the midst of our fall Membership Drive for our membership year 10/1/15 to 9/30/16. Renewal and new member dues and donations fund the operations of the Society for such categories as museum costs, public education, society operating and fundraising expenses. Your continued support allows us to continue our mission to collect, preserve, and share Newport's rich history. We just ended our membership year on 9/30/15 with 263 members. When considering that we had only 13 members in 2005, all that I can say is WOW! And thank you all for helping us reach that number.

Regarding our Windows Replacement Project, only two remaining items are left to complete, 1) Harrington's is engraving the brass plaques to be installed, one on each window sill, for those who purchased a window, and 2) Christina O'Brien is creating a list of all of the contributors to this project. It will be framed and hung in the upstairs entryway.

When planning your Christmas shopping list, we hope that you will consider our two shirt lines—the white tee shirts and sweatshirts with the colored Opera House/Sunshine scene on the front and/or the beige Town short and long-sleeve tee shirts and sweatshirts. Also new since



**The wreck on the Wiley covered bridge** enclosed with the cards. This photo is one of the scenes in the set.

the last newsletter is our set of 12 post cards of Newport Railroad and Highway covered bridges. The set comes with an explanation sheet

We recently received the three proofs for our 2016 Winter Carnival ornaments and they are awesome! They include a dog sled race scene exiting the Corbin Covered Bridge and turning onto Croydon Brook Road, a snow sculpture from 1951 called "King Carnival", and an ornament honoring all of the queens, princesses and princes. For the latter, a list of all of the Carnival Queens will be included in the box. These three 2016 ornaments will be available in early February.

Beginning Friday and Saturday, November 6 & 7, you can find us in the foyer of Sugar River Bank through December 18 & 19 (Thanksgiving weekend excluded). Our ornaments will also be available at the Gallery of Gifts and the Library Arts Center.

**IT'S RAINING APPLES!** Or, what to do with all the apples from the old apple trees which have magically created fruit after years of inactivity. Like the early New Englanders, one hates to let this bounty go to waste. Early cookbooks abound with recipes for using apples. The 1954 "**New England Cookbook**", by Eleanor Early, lists 21 apple recipes. The "**Old-Time New England Cookbook**", by MacDonald and Sagendorph, which is an unabridged republication of "**Rain, Hail, ... and Baked Beans, a New England Seasonal Cookbook**" published by Ives Washburn, in 1958, lists 27 apple recipes. Early's book has a recipe with a story, "Sparkin' Pie." A girl wished to impress a boy who was *sparkin'* her, prepared this pie and it turned out so good he popped the question, they got married, and lived happily ever after. Sara Josepha Hale's 1841 cookbook "**The Good Housekeeper**", reissued as "**Early American Cookery**" in 1996 has an almost identical recipe, calling it "Rich Apple Pudding". Try it yourself, whether *sparkin'* or not!

*By Pris Hagebusch*

### Sparkin' Pie, or Rich Apple Pudding

*From Eleanor Early and Sarah J. Hale*

- 3 large eggs, well beaten  
 1½ C. applesauce, canned or homemade (easy to do)  
 ½ C sugar (SJH calls for brown sugar)  
 1 tsp. Cinnamon, or half cinnamon, half nutmeg or mace  
 (SJH uses lemon rind and lemon juice instead)  
 ¼ tsp. salt  
 1½ C. whole milk (SJH uses rich cream)
- Combine all ingredients and pour into an unbaked pastry shell (SJH calls for Puff Pastry, available at grocery stores now!)
  - Bake at 450 degree oven for 10 minutes, then 400 degrees for 5 minutes, then reduce to 350 degrees for 15 to 30 minutes or more, depending on the moisture in your applesauce. A knife inserted in center should come out clean.
- Let cool, or chill, and serve to your beau. Good Luck!

### Homemade Windfall Applesauce

Or, as the old New Englanders called it, Apple Sass!

Gather fallen apples as soon as they fall. Wash them in several changes of water, with one having a bit of bleach in it (removes the powdery mildew found on many apples.) Rinse after this bath. Cut apples into quarters (old apples are usually small) cutting off blossom bits, stems and any bruises, leaving skins and cores on. Apples with red skins will make a darker colored applesauce than greens. Fill up your Crock Pot to the brim. Add water until you can just see it, and a little lemon juice. Cover and cook on low overnight. Run the softened apples through a food mill, potato ricer, or even a sieve (that's the hardest.) Put the puree back into clean crock pot. Cook on low, with lid OFF, until you achieve your desired thickness. Add sugar and spice to your own taste. If you add stick cinnamon and star anise in a spice bag, and cook to thicker consistency, you'll have apple butter. This can be frozen or canned (water bath 10 minutes.)

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 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, Jackie Cote, Larry Cote, Pris Hagebusch

### 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**