NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MILL TOWN MESSENGER

Volume 12, Issue 2 April, 2018

From the President's Pen

by Cathryn Baird…

" Spring is the time of plans and projects."
~Leo Tolstoy, Anna Karenina

After the long, cold winter it's refreshing and invigorating to finally have sunshine back in the Sunshine Town! The harbingers of spring can be seen: robins, daffodils, peepers, pussywillows and more trash barrels by the curbside as residents begin the ritual of SPRING CLEANING!

As you sort through and downsize your accumulation of "stuff" please remember the adage that one person's trash could be another's treasure. Many artifacts, papers, photographs and postcards that were destined for the recycle bin have been repurposed to add a new dimension to existing collections of memorabilia and research at the museum. The Newport Historical Society is grateful for the generous donations received this past year but there is always room for more! Warm wishes for a Happy Spring filled with successful plans and projects.

Meeting & Program Times

All members and the public are invited to all meetings and any of these free programs

BUSINESS MEETINGS:
6:30-8 PM, ***NHS museum***,
Mon., May 14
Mon., June 11
Mon., July 9

EVENING PROGRAMS:
6:30-8 PM ***Richards Free Library Ballroom***

- Tues. May 8—**Calvin Coolidge,** portrayed by Tracy Messer
- Tues., June 12—**The Latchis Family,** by Jonathan Bosche
- Tues., July 17—**Covered Bridges of NH,** by Glenn Knoblock *

Mark your Calendars!

* Co-sponsored with the New Hampshire Humanities

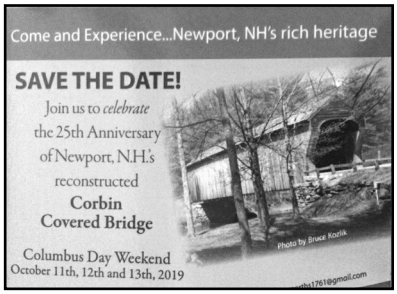
HISTORICAL SOCIETY BITS AND PIECES

The 2018 Ornament

This year we are only offering one ornament, **Leapin' Lena.** This is a specially modified vehicle used in parades. When a lever is pulled, the front of the vehicle raises off the pavement. It has been a fixture in Newport parades for over 50 years. On the front is painted "One and Only" and it truly is. Still selling for $13.00, it is a "must have" for your ornament collection.

The 2019 Corbin Covered Bridge Festival

Please do **save the date in 2019** for the Corbin Covered Bridge Festival to be held near the bridge on the turf runway of Parlin Airport. It will unfold on Columbus Day weekend, a premier event not to be missed!



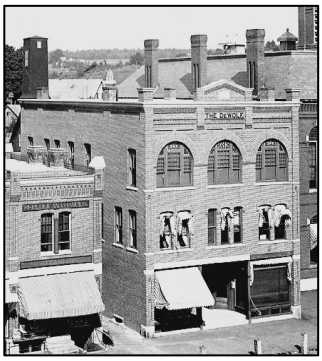
Pick up your free refrigerator magnets at all NHS venues!

Help Earn a Few Extra Dollars for the Newport Historical Society!

The Newport Historical Society, a charitable organization, is now signed up with Amazon Smile. When purchasing items on Amazon, log on as follows: https://smile.amazon.com/ch/22-2549952. Amazon foundation will donate **0.5%** of your purchase price to the Newport Historical Society at no extra cost to you. Thanks in advance for helping to support our Historical Society! If you need additional information, please email us at newporths1761@gmail.com or call 603-863-1294 and leave a message. Your call will be returned shortly.

THE END OF AN ERA by Larry Cote

We would like to wish Kathy and Gunther Hubert a long, happy and healthy retirement! With their retirement, a 46-year business in the heart of downtown Newport will come to an end.



DeWolf Block, circa 1894, (1908 photo) home of Hirsch Dept. Store, till purchased in 1972 by the Huberts.

Gunther's father, Thomas Hubert, purchased the J. S. Hirsch Department Store in July of 1972. The Huberts operated the Hubert's Department store in the DeWolf Block on the east side of Newport's Main Street until 1984, when they purchased the Wheeler Block and relocated their business to that building.

The term "Department Store" is seldom used today. Often today we know a business just by its name like "Home Depot", "Wal-Mart" or "Hubert's". What is a department store? Its definition is, "A large retail establishment with an extensive assortment of a variety and range of goods, organized into separate departments, all under the same roof."

As a child growing up in Newport in the 1950's, I remember the J. S. Hirsch Department Store. It was on the first floor of the DeWolf Block that was built in 1893 by Samuel D. Lewis. It occupied the entire first floor. They sold a variety of items from children's books, lady's items like scarves, gloves, perfumes to ladies, children's and men's clothing. Each classification of goods was located in a separate section of the store, thus the name "Department Store". The store was dark as compared to today's standards. The floors were of hard wood and creaked as one walked around the store. Sally and Joshua Hirsch were the only attendants that I can remember; but, there may have been others. They established the store on May 11, 1934 and operated it for the next 38 years.

Under Kathy and Günther's ownership, the store grew to have seven or more locations. Upon retirement Kathy and Gunther sold their interest to Gunther's brother, Tom. Upon reorganization of the business, the Newport store, which at one time was considered to be the "Flagship" of the company, will close. It is a sad day; and, we wonder what will occupy this great historic building in the future.

Wheeler Block building (built in 1858,) prior to Hubert's purchase and move in 1984.

THE TREASURER'S DESK by Jackie Cote

As the snow melts and flowers' leaves poke through, our thoughts turn to the Newport Farmers Market, as our first-of-the-season offsite venue. I hope you'll come visit our booth.

Plans are well underway for the Corbin Bridge items for the 2019 Corbin Covered Bridge Festival celebrating its 25th anniversary since replication occurred in 1994 after the terrible arson fire in May of 1993. We are planning several unique commemorative items including a book on the 19 covered bridges of Newport. Yes, Newport was once home to 6 highway and 13 railroad covered bridges! Today only three remain.

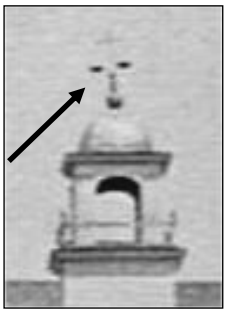
A few of the retired ornaments are still available, including Courthouse, Richards School, Opera House, Richards Library, Mary's Lamb, Skating on the Common, 250th Anniversary, South Church and Sarah J Hale selling for $25 each. If you began your collection after some of these were retired or if a few have been broken, now is your chance to replace them.

Our new furnace was installed in January, with the air conditioning component to be replaced now that good weather has arrived and the snow is gone. Thank you to those who sent contributions to help cover this $6,200 unanticipated expense. It's not too late to send a "furnace" contribution our way.

As of this writing, our membership stands at 255, just 20 short of last year's all time high of 275. We hope to regain and surpass last year's total. As always, the Board thanks all of you for your support. We couldn't do it without you!!

THE TORNADO OF 1848 AND OTHER STORIES by Larry Cote

While browsing through the ephemera binders at the Museum, I found several interesting articles from past Argus-Spectator newspapers. This one was printed on August 4, 1848: *"The Tornado, which passed over this region on Thursday of last week, seems to have left its card at various points. Fences were razed to the ground, trees blown over, corn fields were torn to pieces, barns unroofed, chimneys thrown down, windows disposed to respect private property more than is usual in similar cases, and gave no especial attention to anything short of public buildings. Accordingly it hurled bricks from the chimney of the jail, walked into the Universalist chapel through a window, entered the county safe in a like manner, and finished the exploit by carrying away the scales from the cupola of the court house- thus sparing the throne of justice while it demolished its emblem. We perceive the wooden cannon upon the top of the gun-house has also been dismounted and we suppose Boreas took it along with him. With the emblems of war and justice in each hand he doubtless pursued his journey with "impunity and great boldness""*



The Scales above the Courthouse.

In the fall of 2015 or 2016, the Town hired a brick mason to re-point the bricks in the Old Courthouse. When he was up in the third floor above what was the old courtrooms he noticed that it appeared to him that the top portion of the building had at some point shifted. He asked me if I knew what might have caused it. I remembered reading the story in "Tales from the History of Newport" by: Sam. H. Edes, written in 1961 for the 200th Anniversary of the Town charter, about the Tornado of 1848. One never knows when two pieces of information will come together. We cannot be sure that the Old Courthouse shifted in the Tornado of 1848 but it makes a good story.

The Courthouse

A second article from the Argus-Spectator dated September 5, 1913 was titled: **"Old Sword Found"**. *"Workmen who were removing a section of wall at the Eagle Block discovered an interesting relic in the shape of a saber. The weapon is of an ancient pattern, utterly unlike those of the Civil war period, and quite similar to one known to have belonged to Col. William Cheney more than one hundred years ago. The hilt is brass trimmed, the grip wire bound, the blade 28 inches in length, strongly curved and badly hacked and rusted. The scabbard is of leather bound in brass and on a plate is engraved the name "Webster" with what looks like a T or J for an initial.*

The town history says that Samuel Webster, who moved here from Goffstown in 1796 was a lieutenant in the Revolution. He had a son, John, born in 1781, who lived in the west part of the town. It is recalled that a widow named Webster once had a millinery store in the building." Where is the Sword today?

CLASSIFIED ADS FROM THE APRIL 21, 1916 ARGUS AND SPECTATOR NEWSPAPER

AUTOMOBILES

My Automobile business has grown until it demands my entire time and attention, which I shall give to it in the future. My office will be in Corn Alley and I shall be prepared to provide automobile owners with accessories or to give demonstrations to those interested in cars at any time.

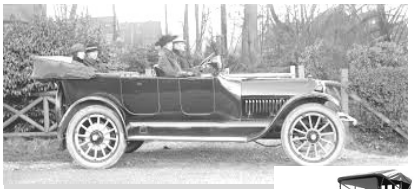
Studebaker	**$1085 and $875**
Briscoe	**$750**
Ford	**$ 440 and $399**

If you are considering the purchase of a car I shall be pleased to explain to you any of the above makes. Let's talk it over. It may be to our mutual advantage.

FRED'K GAMASH

Studebaker Briscoe Ford

1916 Briscoe



1916 Studebaker

1916 Ford Model T

THE AUTO SEASON

The Automobile Season is now upon us and every owner of a car needs Auto Lamps, Flashlights, Red Seal Dry Batteries, etc.

I have a complete stock of all these articles and solicit your patronage.

Remember the new law requiring dimmers on all electric head lights. I shall shortly have a line of attachments for use with your present lamps and thereby comply with the spirit of the law at small expense

Get the Habit of calling here when in need of anything electrical. Satisfaction Guaranteed.

Ralph H. Tenney, 3 Depot Street

The *Mill Town Messenger* is published quarterly by the Newport Historical Society
P.O. Box 413, Newport, NH 03773,
Museum phone number 603-863-1294
Call the Museum number above for appointments to tour the Museum at alternative times.

Website www.newportnhhistory.org
Email newporths1761@gmail.com
Facebook NewportHS1761

THE MUSEUM REPORT by Larry Cote

2018 is starting off to be a positive year for the Newport Historical Society Museum. Since the first of the year we have had 66 visitors that have signed the register (many do not sign). We have had 21 donations of artifacts totaling 209 items. We were host to the Kearsarge Magazine's reception for Newport area people and businesses that are written about in the Kearsarge Magazines Spring 2018 issue. Dean Stetson and I visited the 6,7 & 8th grade Social Studies classes to talk about items of interest that the students wanted to know more about. The classes were very respectful and we hope to be invited back again.

As we prepare for the Oct. 10-13, 2019 Bridge Festival, we are accumulating photos of all the Covered Bridges Newport has ever had. The table below indicates where we are missing photos. We would appreciate it if you would look in your family's old scrap books and albums to see if you might have a photo of one of the ones we are missing. You might even have some fun looking through them!

Covered Bridges of Newport for which we have NO Photos

NAME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	PHOTOS
Railroad Covered Bridges – 13 in Newport. We only have photos of 7 of them			
Cole's	near the Wendell Train Depot	It spanned the Sugar River. Only supports remain.	Need
Comstock	near the location of the defunct Paradise Road Highway Bridge across the Sugar River.	Today it is part of the snowmobile trail using the old bed of the bridge.	Need
Pillsbury	North Newport, west of where the old Draper Bobbin Factory was located, near Sibley Scythe Factory	These were replaced by metal bridges that are part of the Rails-To-Trails at these locations.	Need
Willey			Need
Fletcher	On railroad tracks through into Kelleyville	1896 flood changed river's course and these two bridges were removed and tracks relaid. No remaining photos.	Need
Ayers			Need
Highway Covered Bridges—6 in Newport. We only have photos of 4 of them.			
Oak Street	On Oak Street next to the old Brick Stone???	Replaced by S4 Michael E. Brady Highway steel bridge in 1888.	Need
Kelleyville	Built in 1839 over Sugar River at Kellyville	This was the town's first Covered Bridge. We have NO data on it.	Need

NHS Board Members: Cathryn Baird, Pres.; Jerry Hagebusch, V. Pres.; Larry Cote, Museum Director; Jackie Cote, Treas.; Jayna Hooper, Secretary; Priscilla Hagebusch, Arnie Hebert, Rita James, Laura McCrillis Kessler, Dean Stetson, Stan Sweeney, Arthur Walsh.

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 $_____ Building$_____

Life Membership ($250) _____ (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**