

# MILL TOWN MESSENGER

Volume 13, Issue 2

April/May, 2019

*From the President's Pen*



by Cathryn Baird...

*“Metal detecting is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you’re gonna get.”  
~DirtFishing.com*



Robins, peepers, mud and frost heaves are just a few of the harbingers of Spring. As the snow disappears, snowdrops and crocuses poke their way through the earth, much to our delight. The ground thaws, too; yard work begins and the accumulation of debris can be overwhelming! During the outside/inside ritual of Spring cleaning, there may be many hidden treasures waiting to be discovered. It’s a good time to remember that artifacts and paper ephemera are always welcome at the Newport Historical Society. Perhaps this is also the season that you try **Dirt Fishing**, aka metal detecting. You never know what treasures you may find.....



## 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 13

Mon., June 10

Mon., July 8

**PROGRAMS: 6:30-8PM,**

Tues. May 14 - Richards Free Library Ballroom

**“A Soldier’s Mother Tells her Story”,**

Presenter, Sharon Woods.

Tues. June 11 - Richards Free Library Ballroom

**“Wild and Colorful Victorian Architecture in New Hampshire”,**

Presenter, Richard Guy Wilson

Tues. July 23 - Library Arts Center

**“Dollhouses, Obsession on a Small Scale”**

Presenter, Mindy Thorpe

## IS IT METAL DETECTORS OR METAL DETECTORISTS?

By Priscilla Hagebusch

Does anyone in your family own a metal detector? How long has it been since your family took it out to “detect”? We have a lightly used one, resting in the garage. When the Historical Society museum posted this photo on the right, asking if anyone knew where it was taken, I thought, “Wow, I bet there is a bunch of metal ‘stuff’ to find there, if I only knew this location!”

**IDEA:** Perhaps we could form a group of metal “historians” who would like to hunt old Newport sites for items of interest. I don’t think Newport has hidden Viking gold, like the delightful British TV Series, “The Detectorists,” but with all the industry and farming here over time, there might be interesting finds. Historical Society Records could put us onto a (perhaps) monthly site selection, and we could add to the Society’s trove of artifacts. Of course, appropriate permissions would have to be obtained, and other details worked out.

If you are interested in participating, I will act as temporary chairperson. You can call 603-863-7970 to indicate your interest. Given the current problems with ROBO telephone calls, if you don’t get an answer, just leave a message and I will return your call.



**Help: If you recognize this location, call  
NHS 603-863-1294**

# THE COLONIAL HOUSE by Larry Cote

One day in March, 2019, as I rounded the corner of Main Street and Central Street, I saw a very disturbing sight. It was one that was not unexpected, but still disturbing. An excavator from United Construction was tearing down the "Old Colonial House". I know that the house had not been lived in for a decade. The Fire Department had practiced drills on the building, breaking out windows and partially blocking them with sheets of plywood. The foundation on the south side needed attention; and, I expected that mold was rampant after many years of neglect. Still it was a grand old home, with an interesting past.

According to the 1961 Bicentennial Booklet from the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Town Charter, the Colonial House was one of the first homes built in what is now downtown Newport". It was built in 1813 by William McAllister, who ran the village grist mill.



Judge Josiah Forsaith moved to Newport circa 1822 and purchased the Colonial House. He practiced law in Newport until his death in 1846. Judge Forsaith, along with James Breck, built the Eagle Hotel, circa 1825. Today it is known as the Eagle Block, and is home to the Salt Hill Pub.

Judge Forsaith sold The Colonial House to Sam Lewis, who sold it to Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Lindsay in 1940. The Lindsays lived there for 41 years. The Lindsays operated it as "The Colonial Inn" and sold used furniture.

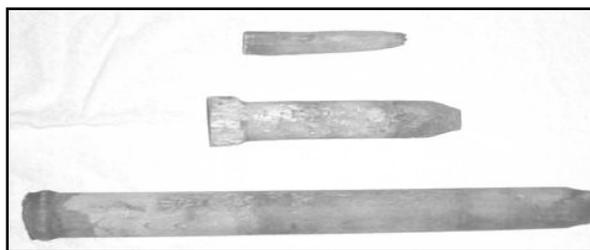
My first contact with the building was in the latter 1970's. I stopped in to see what they had for antiques and saw a few Newport postcards on a bowl on a table in the living room. I purchased the postcards and that has led me to a lifetime hobby of collecting Newport postcards. In latter years, I would stop in to see what Clint Trefethen, a local

artist who operated a small antique shop, had to offer. I later grew to know what a great artist Clint was; sadly this was shortly before his death. My wife and I are lucky to own a painting of the Old Court-house that Clint painted, purchasing it from him three weeks before he died. I believe The Colo-nial House



was of post and beam construction with a slate roof and a large square center chimney. On the second floor, there were one or two Rumford fireplaces in that chimney, with about a four-foot walkway around the chimney. You entered the bedrooms from this hall. The attic had hand hewn beams about 12" square at about a four foot interval, with a vertical post that went to the ridge pole of the roof. It was all mortise and tenon joints using trunnels (also called tree nails) to secure the joints. In my opinion, the attic structure was a work of art.

I know that every old house cannot be saved unless it serves a purpose; but, it is still sad to see a once grand old home being razed.



**What is a Trunnel? Pegs to hold beams together. Large = Bridges, Med.=Barns, Small=Houses.**

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

## THE TREASURER'S DESK by Jackie Cote

It's a busy time for the Memorabilia Committee of the Corbin Covered Bridge Festival. It didn't seem that long ago when the Festival was only a blip on the calendar radar!! Our wonderful Corbin Covered Bridge is the subject of many new items; and, I want to share some of them with you.



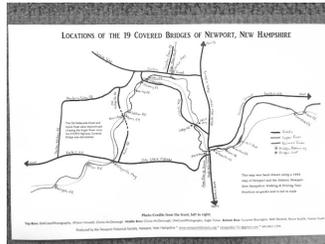
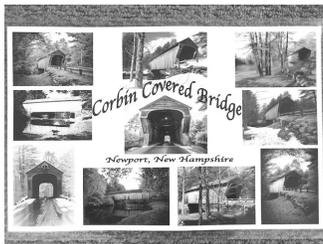
First are this year's additions to our Joan Dodge **hand-painted ornament** series. There are two this year, a fall foliage and winter Corbin



Bridge ornament. The spherical ornaments are difficult to photograph because of the curved surface. The price of these ornaments remains \$13, boxed and bubble-wrapped.

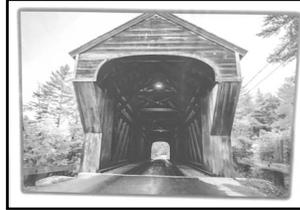


Second addition is the Corbin Bridge Festival **Buttons** (green on white) selling for \$1 each. The artwork was drawn many years ago by Dorothy Bartholomew, and came to us by way of the Library Arts Center Letter Press Studio, thanks to Ann Stout.



Our third item is a wonderful, colorful, laminated **placemat**. The front boasts 10 awesome color photos by local amateur and professional photographers. They include (in no specific order) Allison Howald, DMGrantPhotography, Gloria McDonough, Eagle Times, Suzanne Boyington, Beth Rexford, Bruce Kozlik and Venita Nudd. On the back is a map showing the locations of the 19 Covered Bridges of Newport NH. The placemat sells for \$7.

Most recently we've added two **notecard assortments**, Sets A & B. Together they use all of the 10 photos shown on the front of the placemat. Each assortment consists of 5 different scenes with envelopes for \$5



There is still more to come: **Tee shirts** with a wonderful image of the Corbin Bridge by graphic artist, Jim Chrimes. Also, using the same image, is an etched **Camp Mug**, and a **white mug**, the latter using the same font as the Pier Bridge mug. AND, we'll have **postcards**, 11 Corbin Bridge postcards. Still more items will be announced in our July Newsletter and can be purchased when available.

MAY will see many venues, offsite and onsite, where these items can be purchased. Find us at:

- ◆ Newport Health Center event:  
Friday, May 10, from 1 to 3 PM
- ◆ Newport Farmers Market, weekly from 3 to 6:  
Beginning Saturday, May 17 thru Oct. 11
- ◆ Newport Airport Open House:  
May 18, at the airport, from 8 to 2 PM
- ◆ Newport Historical Society Museum, 22 Central St.  
Sundays from 10am to 2pm  
or by appointment, call 863-1294 to book.

Hope to see you soon, as we celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Corbin Covered Bridge's rise from the old bridge's ashes in 1994 to again span the Sugar River!



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](http://www.newportnhhistory.org)

Email [newporths1761@gmail.com](mailto:newporths1761@gmail.com)

Facebook [NewportHS1761](https://www.facebook.com/NewportHS1761)

## THE MUSEUM REPORT by Larry Cote

2019 is the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Newport, N.H. Police Department. Sam Hurd was the first Constable in 1769. Sam was one of the original young men that came to settle Newport in 1766. The duties as tax collector and appointing men to jury duty were soon added to his job.

The first time that the term "Police Officer" was used was in 1868. At that time there were both Police Officers and Constables. I have not determined what duties were assigned to either of these groups of men.

The Newport Historical Society Museum currently has a display to mark the anniversary of the Police Department in Newport.



Police Medals made for the 250th anniversary of the Police Department



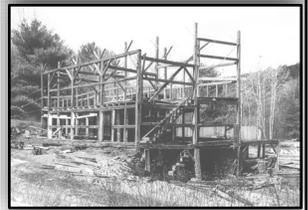
Some interesting donations of artifacts to the Museum were: What appears to be a school report of a sophomore in 1943 on WWII. It is a handwritten report of her observations of WWII and newspaper clippings and political cartoons. Scanning through it one can see information that is not written in any text book. She talks about Finland's involvement in the war. Later in life this lady took pictures and wrote basic information about barns that were being razed in the Newport-Claremont area. In many cases these are the only pictures that the Museum has of these barns.

These photos are all of the same barn in different stages of disassemble. This barn was reassembled at another location. The barn once stood on Rt. 11/103 between New-

port & Claremont across from the Spanos Auto Body Shop. As people move into the area and purchase homes, they contact the Museum to see if they can find the history on their home. It is sad to say that in most cases there is little information available; we are lucky if we have a photograph or two of the property. We can tell you more about Newport's history from 1761 to about 1880 than we know of our history from 1880 to today. Our best source is the 2011 History "Celebrating Community, Newport, New Hampshire" written by Jayna Huot Hooper.

In the first 100 years of the History of Newport, it was not unusual for generations to live on and work the same farm. In these last 100 years we have welcomed everything from the telephone, cell phones and the Internet, and to traveling to the moon!

When you are doing your spring cleaning, or clearing a home, please think of the Museum as you sort through the items. Your donation may just be the answers that the next person is looking for. It does not have to be "1800's old" to be worthy of saving. 1970's things will be quite interesting to Newporters in 2070!



### 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 - 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**