

MILL TOWN MESSENGER

Volume 13, Issue 3

July, 2019

From the President's Pen: by Cathryn Baird

It's hard to believe that 25 years have passed since the Corbin Covered Bridge in North Newport was reconstructed after its tragic demise to arson on May 25, 1993. The community spirit that ensued is honored in the following lyrics.

KEEPERS OF THE HOPE

(c) Tim Kelly 2019

Made of wood and trunnels true
 It stood for years as bridges do
 Burned to the ground one fateful day
 We keepers of the hope were there to say
 When all looked bleak... destruction done
 Then realizing we are one
 One spirit rising from long ago
 To cross this river as we go
 To reconstruct this wooden frame
 Arnold Graton surely came
 Rebuilt it as it was before
 Honoring the days of yore
 Resisted by the powers-that-be
 When it was finished they all could see
 The realization of our spirit dream
 The bridge made whole and hope redeemed
 Naysayers not a one
 After they saw the bridge was done
 In such a way to honor the past
 Moved by the spirit that will last
 This bridge is but a metaphor
 For our community.... its very core
 We come together in time of need
 Resolute that we will succeed.

May we endeavor to maintain our special place and build bridges of kindness.

**TIM KELLY TO PLAY A CONCERT
 AT LAC, THURSDAY, JULY 18
 TO BENEFIT THE CORBIN COVERED
 BRIDGE FESTIVAL**

On Thursday, July 18th pianist-vocalist-composer Tim Kelly will give a performance at the Library Arts Center in Newport, New Hampshire from 7 to 9 p.m. All proceeds will benefit the Newport Historical Society and the Corbin Bridge Festival. The program will consist of instrumental and vocal jazz featuring music from Miles Davis, Dave Brubeck, Thelonious Monk, Al Jarreau, songs of the Great American Songbook, vocal impressions, Broadway pieces and some of Tim's original compositions honoring the Corbin Bridge and other New Hampshire original pieces.



Currently with over 9,700 performances and counting, Tim brings unmatched versatility and experience, as well as masterful instrumental, vocal, comedic and entertaining skills to any performing situation. A Tim Kelly performance is remembered long after the last note has been played.

Tim is a resident of North Newport, New Hampshire, when he is not traveling to perform. The concert on July 18th will be a rare opportunity to experience a world-class musical performance in the Newport area. Previous concerts that Tim has done in this area have been met with rave reviews.

Seating is limited as there is a 70 seat capacity at the Library Arts Center. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased by contacting the Newport Library Arts Center at 863-3040 or at their website [www. http://libraryartscenter.org](http://libraryartscenter.org). For more information and videos of Tim performing, please visit www.tkellypiano.com.

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. Jul.8
- Mon. Aug.12
- Mon. Sep. 9

PROGRAMS: 6:30-8 PM,

- Tues. July 23 - Library Arts Center "Dollhouses, Obsession on a Small Scale," Mindy Thorpe, Presenter
- Tues. August 13- Richards Free Library Ballroom "100 Years of Newport Memories," June Brill Lieberman, age 100, Presenter
- Tues. September 10 - Richards Free Library Ballroom -TBA

REMNANTS OF THE ORIGINAL CORBIN COVERED BRIDGE FOUND! By Dean Stetson

Newport at one time had 19 covered bridges. Thirteen of them were railroad covered bridges, of which 2 survive today, the Pier Bridge and Wrights Bridge. The Corbin Covered Bridge is the sole survivor of Newport's six high-way covered bridges.

Every one of our Covered Bridges has a unique story to tell. Some of the stories are visible, carved in the timbers, such as initials professing a couple's love. Some of the stories are buried in history books, or in the rivers below, as flood, fire and storm have claimed many a covered bridge.



Corbin Bridge Fire in 1994



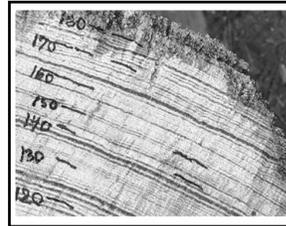
Our Corbin Covered Bridge has been the centerpiece of a special story, of which we citizens of Newport have become a part. This year, on Oct. 12, Newport celebrates the 25th anniversary of our bridge's rebuilding, after the 1994 fire which destroyed it, with a huge celebration at the Corbin Bridge and it's adjoining park.

On June 10th, 2018, members of the Newport Historical Society's "Corbin Covered Bridge Festival Committee" gathered at Newport's Parlin Field to move two remnant beams from the 1994 Corbin Covered Covered Bridge's fire. The beams had been recovered from the banks of the Sugar River, below the bridge.



Drying beams

The timbers are charred and well-weathered and estimated to be around 356 years old! First the timbers were allowed to dry, and the ironwork removed, preparing the timbers for sawing. Efforts are being made to create a keepsake from these original timbers of the Corbin Covered Bridge, to be available at the Oct. 12, 2019 Festival. However, the final condition of these 350 plus year old remnants



Tree ring count on charred original beams.

it was cut around 1843 for the original Corbin Covered Bridge!

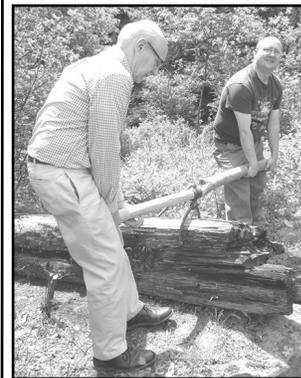
There is no information on the exact origin of these timbers, but it is reasonable

will not be known until they are sawn.

Back in the 19th century, the first Corbin Bridge would have been constructed of spruce or hemlock. Noting the ring growth of the timbers retrieved, the tree started its life around 1663. This tree was over 180 years old when



Heath Marsden chains the beams for lifting



Arthur Walsh and Tobin Menard lift the beams!

to assume that the timbers used in the original bridge were from nearby. It was common to set up a saw mill near the bridge site and have wood and other materials as close as possible. Transportation of all the materials was by oxen or river.



Beams moved by pickup thru Corbin Bridge.



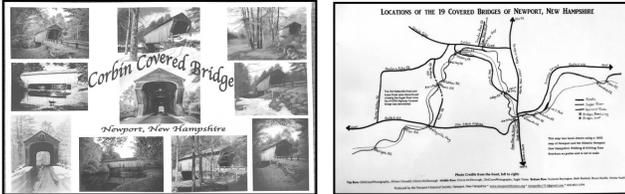
Dry and awaiting cutting

Thanks to Heath Marsden from Parlin Field, Dr. Arthur Walsh, Rita James, Tobin and Annette Menard, and Dean Stetson for helping with the moving of these beams.

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

We have been very busy organizing 36 Corbin Covered Bridge items for sale as you can see on the color insert with this newsletter. One of our favorite items is the laminated placemat featuring wonderful, colorful, four season photos of the Corbin Bridge on the front and a map of the location of the 19 covered bridges (Six highway and 13 railroad) on the back. Of those 19, only three remain.



For those who do not live in the area and would like to have one or more of these items, they can be ordered and mailed to you. Just send an email to newporths1761@gmail.com and let us know what you want.

ANNOUNCEMENT! We are now using the Square technology to enable us to accept credit cards and debit cards. A **big thank you** to Fran Huot, from the Library Arts Center, for helping with the set up and answering questions. Because card information can be entered manually, we will also be able to accept credit cards for mail orders on any of the Corbin Bridge and other items that we offer. The profits from the sale of our Newport items support the operating expenses of the Nettleton House Museum building and we thank you for your continued support.

Regarding the Corbin Covered Bridge Festival on October 12 of this year, we will need many volunteers to help on the day of the event. If you can spare a few hours to help, please contact us at the email above or FESTIVAL@CorbinCoveredBridgeFestival.com. Thank you in advance for your willingness to help.

THE MUSEUM REPORT by Larry Cote

Since the April Newsletter, the museum has had 50 visitors and received 22 donations of artifacts totaling 363 items! I would like to write about eight of these donations. Please do not misunderstand! Every donation to the Museum is of great value; however, some are easier to describe.

We received eight oil paintings that we believe were painted by Sid Bickford. They are from the Patricia Bartlett estate. We say "attributed to" because only one of them was signed by the artist. The other seven are in the style, medium and subject matter that Sid Bickford was known to paint. There is no question in my mind that they are Bickford paintings.

Sid Bickford was born in 1862. Information on his birthplace is vague, so we will not speculate. However, we know that he came to this area by 1888; and, that he died in Newport in 1947.

It seems that Bickford could paint anything, from houses to animals, so life-like that at first glance, one would think them real! In this collection there are four fish paintings, a painting of a famous dog, a pheasant, a portrait of President Teddy Roosevelt and a floral arrangement that is just spectacular!

My first introduction to Sid Bickford was by Ann Tenney, a long time Newport historian who knew Sid Bickford from back in the day. She was quite defensive of Sid's reputation, as it was rumored that Sid had a fondness for the bottle. I was told by a very good source that Sid often paid his bar tabs with his paintings. Whatever his social life was like, one cannot deny his talent.

Come to the Museum this October when many of these Bickford paintings will be on display. It will be well worth your effort.

David Kittredge wrote a piece for the Eagle Times on September 4, 2018. It can be viewed online by doing a Google search for Sid Bickford. The article is very well written and very interesting.



Remember this photo? It was identified by Wayne Swan as the PAK Trucking Company's lot, off West St. & Meadow Road. No potential Metal Detectorists called to join us in hunting interesting historic spots for "treasures". But we are not discouraged. Our next plan is to get permission to explore the site of the "oldest house in Newport" written about in the last newsletter.

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

CORBIN COVERED BRIDGE FESTIVAL UPDATE:

The Festival Planning committee is setting up the program of events for Saturday October 12, 2019, on Columbus Day weekend. Activities on the field will begin at 9 AM and continue to 3 PM and beyond. This will be a busy day with many activities and the Corbin Covered Bridge Celebration committee plans to have something for everyone, including families and youth.

Along with historical and cultural activities, fun, food, demonstrations, hands-on experiences and photo opportunities, the event will include:

- the **“Braveheart Start”** Fun Walk/Run within the boundaries of Parlin Field, starting 10 AM.
- the **“Heritage Parade”** through the Corbin Covered Bridge, 1 PM in the afternoon. The theme will focus on the many forms of transportation the Corbin Covered Bridge has seen throughout the years. We welcome Walkers, Bicyclists, Groups, Friends, Family, horse drawn wagons and antique vehicles. Celebrate and join the parade!
- A **Music Stage** and **“Feature Event”** for the noon hour is scheduled.
- The Festival will also feature a **“Promenade through the Bridge,”** 4-6 PM, where folks will have an opportunity to stroll through the Corbin Covered Bridge and enjoy the craftsmanship. Did you sponsor a trunnel 25 years ago? Have your photo taken among the majestic Town Lattice Structure and share a memorable experience.

DINNER BY THE BRIDGE!

There will also be a *“Dinner by the Bridge”* where you may join friends and family and celebrate the 25th year reunion together at the site of the Corbin Covered Bridge. A multi-course dinner catered and served by Newport’s **The Old Courthouse Restaurant** will be served at tables of eight under the tent on the banks of the Sugar River, next to the Corbin Bridge. The evening dining festivities will include:

- Appetizers and a complementary beverages.
- Delicious multi-course dinner.
- Opportunities for Professional Photography on and by the bridge.
- Music, merriment and memories.

Tickets \$75 each. Contact the Newport Historical Society at the Museum or the Farmer’s Market, to purchase tickets, or contact Mary Schissel, 603-863-7323, or Margot Estabrook, 603-863-7832. **We look forward to seeing you at the Corbin Bridge Festival!**



Dean Stetson with Festival Buttons for Sale: \$1.00 each

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**