

EXPEDITION MESSENGER

NEWSLETTER OF THE
ARNOLD EXPEDITION
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Spring, 2011

AEHS Activities Planned for Summer

A number of activities are planned for 2011. Below is a synopsis of these activities. There are several articles in this edition of the *Messenger* that elaborate in more detail on these events.

May 21 A one day trail maintenance work trip will be conducted to open the portage trail in the East and Middle Carry Ponds area. The Society maintains about 4 ½ miles of the Great Carrying Place in this area. For more information on where to meet and what to bring, contact trip leader, Ron Gamage. He can be reached by calling (207) 474-3530.

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

- 2011 Summer Activities
- AEHS Receives Sizable Grant
- AEHS Opposes Highland Wind
- AEHS Membership Day Scheduled
- An Invitation From Lac-Megantic
- The Denis Getchell Scouting Trip

June 11 Lac Megantic, Canada. (about 50 miles north of Stratton). An open house will be held in the refurbished old railroad station which has been made into a cultural center. One of the displays will be built around the Arnold Expedition (American Invasion). A contingent of AEHS members will be attending and it is open to the public. See article on this elsewhere.

June 25 AEHS Directors Meeting, at Colburn House, Pittston, ME at 9:00 AM. Members are invited.

June 25 AEHS **Members Day**, to be held at the Colburn House in Pittston. This will include four workshops. See article describing this event elsewhere in the *Messenger*.

July 18 Land Use Regulation Commission public hearing on the controversial Highland Wind Proposal will be held in a two-three day session at Sugarloaf, USA. AEHS will be testifying at this hearing. See article elsewhere in the *Messenger*.

August 20 Exploration to search out and explore the site of the so-called "Arnold Hospital" near East Carry Pond. This is open only to AEHS members. Call Steve Clark, trip leader for more details. His number is (207) 510-1230.

October 1 AEHS Directors and Annual Members Meeting at Great Western Motel function room in Augusta. More information on this meeting will be given in the September *Messenger*.

AEHS To Receive Sizable Grant

TransCanada, a Canadian energy company, has agreed to donate a \$50,000 grant to the Society for seed money to acquire a protective corridor along the old Height of Land portage trail. The company has received a permit from the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission to build 11 wind turbines north of the Chain Of Ponds. It will be an expansion of the already operating Kibby Mountain Wind Development.

The grant is predicated upon the actual construction of these turbines. It is not clear at this time as to when the project will begin construction.

The use of this grant, assuming it will be forthcoming, is dependent on many factors. It will take time to formulate a comprehensive plan. Possible proposals will be discussed and debated during the next year. It should be noted that any possible acquisition of land can only occur if landowners agree as a willing seller, and if substantial additional funds can be generated.

The goal would be to form a protective preserve along the portage trail and around some of the small ponds connecting the portage route. It will take years for this to happen, and will require many people's support other than AEHS members to succeed. The larger current need to stabilize Local, State and Federal budgets will also play an important part in this process.

We would like to hear from our members as to their opinions on the use of this grant, and if land acquisition is a viable goal for the Society. Please write us and we will include them in future *Messengers*. Feel free to contact us at our mailing address or e-mail clarkbooks@hotmail.com

We will report on the outcome of these plans in our September newsletter.

AEHS To Oppose Highland Wind Power Development

As many of the AEHS members know, a huge, 39 turbine wind development has been proposed for construction on the Highland Mountains, just south of West Carry Pond. The 37 story high wind turbines would be very visible from both the east shore of West Carry Pond (particularly from Arnold Point) and to a lesser degree from East Carry Pond. It is estimated that the distance from Arnold Point to the northern most turbine would be approximately 4 miles.

The AEHS directors voted to oppose the development on the grounds that the visual impact would be detrimental to the long term goals of maintaining the Great Carrying Place as close as possible to the original 1775 condition that was experienced by the expedition's men. These industrial scale turbines in such close proximity to the old portage trail, would have a very negative visual effect on those passing along the route.

The application of the developer, Independent Wind, is currently being considered by the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission. A public hearing will be held sometime in the early summer. A coalition of other groups will also be opposing the application. These include the Friends of the Highland Mountains, the Maine Appalachian Trail Club, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the Appalachian Mountain Club and other organizations and individuals.

This is the first time the AEHS has taken a position either for or against such a development. The AEHS directors felt that the negative visual effects from this proposed development were so great, that action was warranted. The Society is not an environmental organization. It strives to maintain the integrity of the route of the

(Continued on Page 4)

AEHS Members Day

On **Saturday, June 25**, the AEHS will sponsor a Members Day. It will be held at the Colburn House in Pittston, Maine, just off ME Highway 27. It will be an opportunity for members to interact, and to enjoy a number of programs to be presented. It will also be a chance to see some of the extensive restorative projects that have made the property so much more attractive and interesting than in the past.

Although not completed, the ongoing restoration of the Barn is a major project in itself. However, there is much that has been accomplished. The outside of the main Colburn house has been repaired and repainted, the Carriage House has been renewed, the outside electrical lines have all be buried and hidden, there is new landscaping around the property and a new path has been constructed down to the scenic Kennebec River front and a picnic area established.

Inside the main house, there have been major changes in the "Keeping Room," including extensive repairs on the huge central fireplace and, chimney and brick oven. Each of the rooms have received repairs and the new birthing room honoring Martha Ballard has been completed.

In addition to just touring the facility, there will be a series of four "mini" workshops beginning at 1:00 PM. Officers and directors will be on hand to guide visitors and answer questions. The program is scheduled, rain or shine, but if rain threatens, just bring some gear. If you wish to bring a picnic lunch, there will be tables provided. We think you will enjoy the day.

Following is the Schedule:

9:00 AM to 11:30 AM, AEHS Directors Meeting. Members are most welcome to attend.

12:00 Noon Picnic at the Colburn House or at the nearby Kennebec River Picnic area. Bring your own lunch, but bottled water and cups will be provided.

1:00 to 4:00 PM guided tours of the facilities commence.

Workshops

1:00 PM A workshop on metal detecting will be held. If you have one, bring it along and the experts that will conduct the workshop will show you how.

1:45 PM A 20 minute Video program including Duluth Wing's comments on the Arnold Expedition (Carriage House). Duluth Wing, is one of the founders of the AEHS. He will be on hand to comment and answer questions.

2:30 PM A half hour discussion by Thomas Desjardin, State Bureau of Public Lands Historian, on the process of renovation of historical structures, and future plans for the Colburn House property.

3:15 PM A half hour discussion on the background of why bateaux were used on the expedition and how they were built. Presented by Steve Clark, President of the AEHS.

All in all, it should be a most interesting day. There will be no charge, but donations to the restoration of the Colburn House will be appreciated. We look forward to seeing you there. If you have any questions, contact us by mail or at this email address: clarkbooks@hotmail.com

Lac-Megantic on the Route of the American Invasion

The town of Lac-Megantic, Quebec, is soon presenting a brand new year-long exhibition to honor the heroic passage of Colonel Benedict Arnold and his troops through this very area on their way to invade Quebec City. On Oct. 27th, 1775 sheltered in an Indian bark hut on the eastern shore of Lake Megantic, cold and weary after terrible ordeals on the Dead River, Arnold wrote a letter to his Excellency General Washington stating that French inhabitants on down the Chaudiere "appear very friendly... and will very gladly join us". Today, Québécois keep up the friendly, convivial tradition toward their southern neighbors and we urge *you* to join us at the bilingual Arnold Exhibition Opening Ceremony at **4 p.m., Saturday, June 11th**, located in the Lac-Megantic Historic Train Station. Following the Arnold Trail (present-day Route 27) along the Dead River, beside Flagstaff Lake, in view of Bigelow Mountain and over the Height of Land into Quebec, you'll follow closely the same terrain traversed by the Continental Army initially comprised of 1,100 soldiers and over 200 bateaux.

At a cost of over 1.5 million dollars, Lac-Megantic is proud to have recently renovated its old downtown CPR Train Station. Now housing the Tourist Office, a craft and antique shop, an art gallery, a railway photo collection and space for cultural exhibition, the station has regained its vocation as a crossroads and meeting place. Remembering the revolutionaries, nearby you can view the swift-running Chaudiere River or at the marina embark on a Lake Megantic sightseeing cruise. Consult the informative website at www.tourisme-megantic.com or call 1 800 363-5515 for lodging, dining and other area attractions.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is a full-sized replica of one of Arnold's bateaux, a generous donation from the AEHS back in 1975 when American re-enactors created quite some stir by marching into town and making camp. Interpretative panels include maps that give basic facts about the expedition route and a short bio of the British cartographer, John Montresor. Two large frames display AEHS's Arnold's Wilderness March, Map and Guide, another meaningful gift to the town. Under glass, three period firearms graciously on loan from a local gun collector will complement the Dude Wing artifact collection. And, a talented Megantic seamstress is at work to create the military costume worn by Arnold's men. Finally, our committee has extracted from town archives photographs from the 1975 Bicentennial Re-enactment.

I wonder how many of you came to Quebec for that memorable event *36 years ago...* it's high time you return!

Helen Greffard

Commission des arts, de la culture et patrimoine [And AEHS Member]
Lac-Megantic, Quebec

(AEHS To Oppose.... cont. from page 2)

expedition, especially in areas where there is minimal developmental effects. This situation is present along the Great Carrying Place.

If AEHS members wish to examine the proposed development in more detail, they can obtain a disk with the full application from the Land Use Regulation Commission, Station 22, Augusta, Maine 04333. We also would be glad to send the Society's full statement to any member. Just write us to that effect.

The Getchell Report

When the Expedition was beginning to organize itself, Washington and Arnold consulted with one Rueben Colburn who owned a small shipyard and sawmill in what is now Pittston, Maine. It was located on the Kennebec River, not far from the location of his home. He also at that time was a captain in the local militia. He was charged, among other things, to send a scouting party up the Kennebec to determine the river's conditions, the portages and to obtain other military intelligence.

Colburn hired one Dennis Getchell and his friend, Samuel Barry of Vassalboro to do this. It is a most insightful account of their activities and indicates some of the issues encountered later by the army. For instance, Getchell does not describe much information about the actual conditions of the difficult 13 mile Great Carrying Place and other portages.

His unwillingness to proceed further than the upper reaches of the North Branch of the Dead River left many issues unanswered. It also did not provide Arnold and his officers enough information to plan well for the ascent of the Kennebec and Dead Rivers.

As Getchell did not progress onto the Chain of Ponds and the crucial Height of Land portage, as well as the route around Lac Megantic, it left dangerous holes in the information needed by the leaders of the Expedition. This lack of solid information was later to cost the Expedition dearly.

Getchell's concerns regarding the native Americans he encountered is most insightful. His report establishes the reasons why Col. Arnold treated the Indian Natanis as an agent of the English military. It also explains why Lt's. Church and Steele were later warned by Arnold to attempt to capture or kill the presumed spy, Natanis.

This lack of detail regarding the physical route, the portages and river conditions may be explained by the fact that neither Getchell nor Barry could write. His verbal report to Colburn was done from memory. It is also interesting that Colburn did not question the two scouts more closely as to the needed vital details. They were unfortunately omitted from this report.

Many historians have missed the significance of this crucial letter. This in part explains some of later disastrous events that befell the men of the Expedition. Colburn descendants who are AEHS members will be interested to read this in Colburn's own handwriting.

On the following two pages is the actual report as written by Colburn. It is currently in the possession of the Maine Historical Society.

Comments by Steve Clark

Did you know that....

The Expedition in ascending the Kennebec watershed had to climb from sea level at Fort Western up to a height of 1300 feet over a ridge west of West Carry Ponds, and over a gap in the Boundary Mountains of nearly 1600 feet. This is greater than hauling their bateaux and equipment up the Empire State Building!

Denis Getchell Report, on Scouting Trip

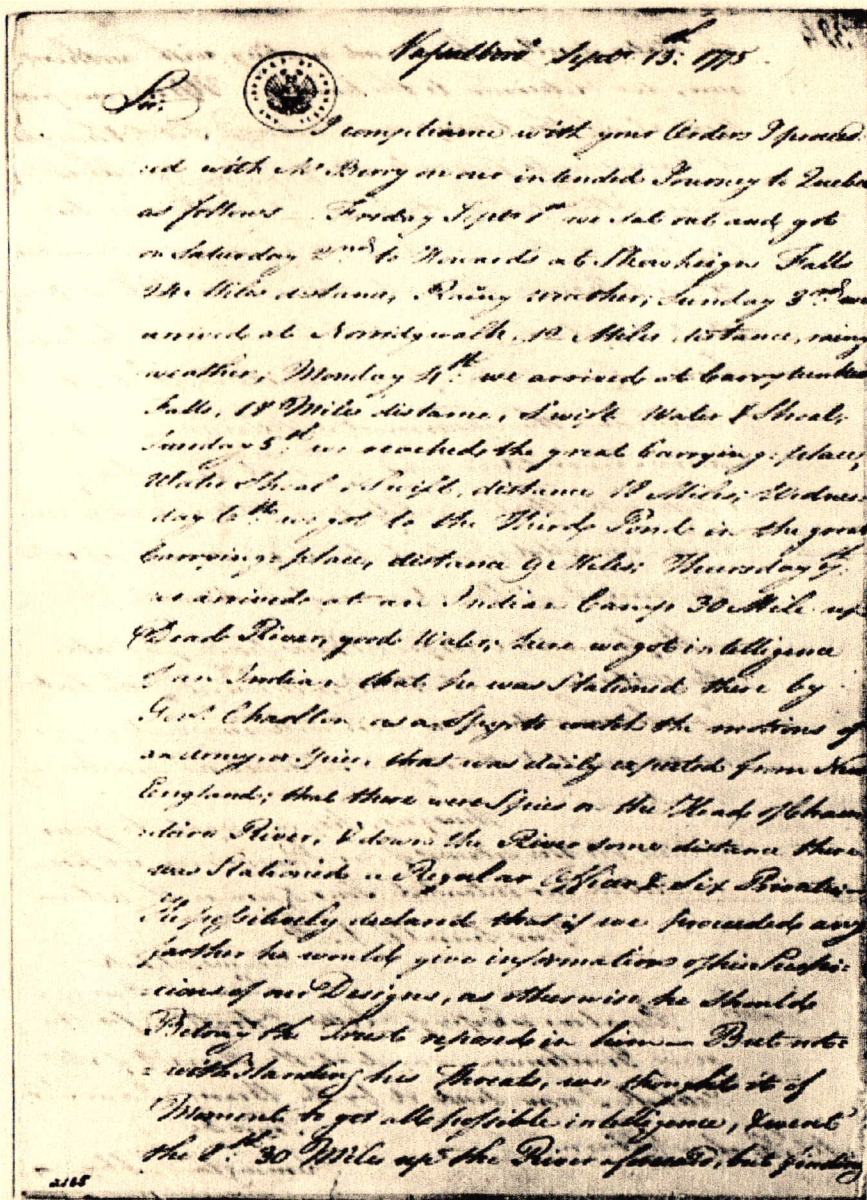
Vassalboro Sept. 13. 1775

Sir,

I compliance with your Orders I proceed:

ed with Mr. Barry on our intended Journey to Quebec as follows. Friday Sept. 1st: we set out and got on Saturday 2nd to Howard's at Skowheign Falls 24 Miles distance, Rainy weather; Sunday 3rd: we arrived at Norridgwalk 12 miles distance, rainy weather; Monday 4th: we arrived at Carrytunk? Falls, 18 Miles distance, Swift water & shoal; Tuesday 5th: we reached the great Carrying: place, Water shoal & swift, distance 18 Miles; Wednes: day 6th: we got to the Third Pond is the great Carrying place, distance 9 Miles; Thursday 7th: we arrived at an Indian Camp 30 Mile up Dead River, good water there we got intelligence of an Indian that he was stationed there by Govr. Charlton as a Spy to watch the motions of an Army, or Spies, that was daily expected from New England: that there were spies on the Head of Chau: dare River, & down the River some distance there was Stationed a Regular Offi cer & six Privates-He possitively declared that if we proceeded any farther he would give information of?

cions of our Designs, as otherwise he should Betray the trusts reposed in him. But not: =withstanding his threats, we thought it of Moment to get all possible intelligence, & went the 8th: 30 Miles up the River aforesaid, but fi nding



Vassalboro Sept. 13. 1775

Sir,

I compliance with your Orders I proceed:
ed with Mr. Barry on our intended Journey to Quebec as follows. Friday Sept. 1st: we set out and got on Saturday 2nd to Howard's at Skowheign Falls 24 Miles distance, Rainy weather; Sunday 3rd: we arrived at Norridgwalk 12 miles distance, rainy weather; Monday 4th: we arrived at Carrytunk? Falls, 18 Miles distance, Swift water & shoal; Tuesday 5th: we reached the great Carrying: place, Water shoal & swift, distance 18 Miles; Wednes: day 6th: we got to the Third Pond is the great Carrying place, distance 9 Miles; Thursday 7th: we arrived at an Indian Camp 30 Mile up Dead River, good water there we got intelligence of an Indian that he was stationed there by Govr. Charlton as a Spy to watch the motions of an Army, or Spies, that was daily expected from New England: that there were spies on the Head of Chau: dare River, & down the River some distance there was Stationed a Regular Offi cer & six Privates-He possitively declared that if we proceeded any farther he would give information of?

cions of our Designs, as otherwise he should Betray the trusts reposed in him. But not: =withstanding his threats, we thought it of Moment to get all possible intelligence, & went the 8th: 30 Miles up the River aforesaid, but fi nding

Contributed to Maine Memory Network by the Maine Historical Society

Date: September 13, 1775

Description: Letter from Denis Getchell and Samuel Barry, copied by Hobby Remington about the condition of the route of Benedict Arnold's March to Quebec through Maine.

the Water pretty shoal, and making with nothing new, we returned to the Camp. Upon our first arrival at the Camp our Indian Pilot thought it dangerous to proceed any farther, but after going with us — in the time of our absence he conferred with an Indian Squaw — of whom we got intelligence that all the Young Indians from that Quarter had gone to Johnson, but the Indian trade a commission from Charlton, that at the uppermost Settlement on Chau:

diere River there was a great number of Mohawks that would have destroyed us if we had proceeded, & that the spy hourly expected the arrival of three canoes of Indians.

We found the carrying Places greatly passable, the water in general shoal, in consequence of the late dry season; the Trees were well marked as far as we went, & the way is so direct as may be found.

Thus far, Sir, agreeable to your Orders, & to the utmost of our power have we proceeded on our intended Tour & are with Esteem Sir Your humble Srvt.

Dennis Getchell

Samuel Barry

The above is copy of a letter I drafted for the above Gentlemen — and at the Request of Mr. Getchell I now send it by the Bearer; I am Sir

Mr. Reuben Colburn

Remington Hobby

the Water partly shoal, and making with nothing new, we returned to the Camp. Upon our first arrival at the Camp our Indian Pilot thought it dangerous to proceed any farther, & declined going with us — in the time of our absence he conferred with an Indian Squaw — of whom we got intelligence that all the young Indians from that Quarter had gone to Johnson, but the Indian trade a commission from Charlton, that at the uppermost Settlement on Chau:

diere River there was a great number of Mohawks that would have destroyed us if we had proceeded, & that the spy hourly expected the arrival of three canoes of Indians.

We found the Carrying Places greatly passable, the water in general shoal, on account of the late dry season; the Trees were well marked as far as we went, & the way is so direct as maybe easily found.

Thus far, Sir, agreeable to your Orders, & to the utmost of our power have we proceeded on our intended Tour & are with Esteem Sir Your humble Srvt.

Dennis Getchell

Samuel Barry

The above is Copy of a letter I drafted for the above Gentlemen — and at the request of Mr. Getchell, I now send it by the Bearer; I am Sir

Your obs.

Mr. Reuben Colburn

Remington Hobby

New AEHS Membership Form

Mail this in with your check and membership info. Include your phone number and email address if this is acceptable to you. Make check payable to AEHS.

Category.

_____ Annual Member	\$ 20
_____ Family membership	\$ 25
_____ Contributing member	\$ 50
_____ Life Membership	\$ 200 (one time payment)
Additional donation for Society programs \$ _____	

To order the new map of the 1775 Expedition's route from the Kennebec River to Lac Megantic, send check for \$ 5.95 to AEHS. These make great gifts for birthdays and Christmas. These can be ordered unfolded suitable for framing or wall mounting for an additional \$ 6.00 to cover cost of shipping tube and postage.

Arnold Expedition Historical Society
60 Burnham Road
Scarborough, Maine 04074

Arnold Expedition Historical Society
60 Burnham Road
Scarborough, Maine 04074

SO. MAINE P&DC 040

29 APR 2011 PM 4 L



To:

Mr. ROBERT ROTH
31 SOUTH ROAD
KINGSTON, NY 12401

1240107120

