

# EXPEDITION MESSENGER

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
ARNOLD EXPEDITION  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



December, 2011

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## AEHS Annual Meeting Held

On Oct. 2 in Augusta, the annual meeting of our Society was held. Yearly election of directors and officers were held. Elected to president, was John Robbins of Richmond, ME, John Parsons of Monroe, NY as vice president, Alan Burnell of Eustis, ME. as treasurer and Stephen Clark of Scarborough, ME as secretary. In addition, directors were elected. For a term of three years were Rusty Arsenault of Skowhegan, Stephen and Sherri Clark of Scarborough, ME, Guy Grant Jr. of

Orono, ME. and Robert Donovan of Emden, ME. For a term of two years, elected were John Parsons and Laura Stewart of Manchester, NH. Thomas Desjardin presented a very interesting talk about the artifacts recovered this summer from the Hospital Site in the Carry Ponds area.

Outgoing president Steve Clark described several programs that are being proposed by the AEHS directors. One will be the exploration of acquiring land to establish a historic park in the Chain of Ponds area to preserve about four miles of the old Height of Land Portage Trail near the Canadian border. This possibility will be explored during the next year.

Another program will be to assist the State Bureau of Parks and Lands to install a series of new interpretive signs along the route of the 1775 Expedition. Money has been appropriated to manufacture and install these signs. The first will be on US 201 in Caratunk, to mark the point where the Expedition left the Kennebec and began the torturous portage over the Great Carrying Place. It is hoped it will be ready for dedication in 2012. More on this will appear in the spring edition of the *Messenger*.

Continuing restoration work at the Colburn House was described and it was pointed out that the major work on the Barn should be completed for the 2012 summer season.

It was reported that Dude Wing had generously obtained a fine telescoping flag pole for the Nichols Cabin and he installed it during the summer. Trail maintenance by Ron Gamage and Rusty Arsenault and others was described. All present trails in the Carry Ponds area are open for public use.

The high point of the meeting was a fine presentation by long time member, Bob Cunningham, on the subject of the 1975 reenactment. It took place along the route of the Expedition along the Kennebec, Dead and Chaudiere Rivers to Quebec City. He also supplied scrap books with newspaper clippings of the three week event. It was very well received.

Recognition was made to both Sherri Clark, secretary and Bob Cunningham, treasurer, who were stepping down after three years of service to the Society. Both will continue as directors.

## HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

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- AEHS ANNUAL MEETING
- The Lost Hospital, Found
- Test Your Knowledge Of The March Progress At The Colburn House



## The Lost Hospital, Found

The site of the so-named "Arnold's Hospital," lost since 1775, has been located. It was built along the Great Carrying Place portage trail as a temporary structure to house sick soldiers. It was described by Henry Dearborn as being a "blockhouse." There was no record left of its specific construction, its size or its exact location.

As it was built hastily, it was probably a simple log wall structure, with no foundation, and a bark roof. Cracks were chinked with moss and would have had one or two openings. It was built to house only about 12-15 sick men, as specified by Col. Arnold. It was probably about 16 X 16 feet in size. Such a structure would have long ago rotted away, leaving no trace of its location.

Around the hospital, was located a large campsite with many campfires, and tents. Arnold used this campsite as his headquarters for several days. As the four divisions each in turn passed through this campsite; most likely it could accommodate up to 300 men at a time. With this number of men using the site, it could be expected that metal objects were lost or left behind to mark the location. Using descriptions in several of the soldier's journals, an approximate location was pinpointed. It would have been near the beginning of the portage trail between East and Middle Carry Ponds. It was in this area that the hunt began.

On August 20<sup>th</sup> of this year, 11 AEHS members met at the Nichols Cabin on Middle Carry Pond. From here, the group struck out for the designated site for the hunt. Duluth and Kenny Wing had once explored the site and felt it was a probable place to start. It was close to the pond's shore, and was level, making it a logical site to accommodate several hundred men. Eight metal detectors were used and it was not long before "hits" began to sound through the woods. The group fanned out and explored an area with a radius of about 100 yards. At the center of this search area a large number of metal artifacts were recovered, marking the campsite's location. The large number of artifacts definitely delineated the

location of the campsite.

Recovered were a broad axe, an English half-penny, a beautiful pewter spoon, a pewter military button, with the number "3" on it, a jackknife, six musket balls, musket parts, and the most important find, parts of a cast iron camp kettle. It is this latter item which is the clincher. It was in 17 pieces and when some were assembled, it indicated a kettle that would be used by a large group, for communal cooking. It would have weighed more than twenty-five pounds. It is possible that this kettle was left at the hospital to prepare meals for the invalided soldiers.

So the number and concentration of the metal artifacts have identified the site as being where the hospital and larger campsite were located.

These artifacts after being treated and preserved, will be displayed most likely at the Colburn House in Pittston. The site near East Carry Pond has proven to be the most important location along the entire route of the Expedition, ever discovered. It now solves the mystery of where the hospital was located. All in all, it was a great day for the Society. Not quite as storied as the discovery of King Tut's Tomb, but almost!

### Test your Knowledge of the Expedition!

1. How many companies comprised the Expedition?
2. Who was the Expedition member who later led an American army defeating the British at Cowpens?
3. What Expedition member later became known as the "Patriot of Worcester and has a statue there?"
4. What two captains leading Expedition companies, were from Maine?
5. There were four portages as the Expedition ascended the Kennebec River. Name them in order from first to last?
6. A certain tributary along the main stem of the Kennebec River was known by the men of the Expedition as Six Mile Stream. What is it named today? (See Answers on Page 7)