

EXPEDITION MESSENGER

NEWSLETTER OF THE
ARNOLD EXPEDITION
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



December 2013

Special Edition

As most members know, our December edition of the *Messenger* includes our yearly photo essay of Society activities. This year, there have been two significant events that are of special interest to each member. To include these, we have expanded our edition from eight to twelve pages.

One is the amazing adventure by Sam Brakeley, following the entire Expedition's route from

Pittston to Quebec City by himself, in a sixteen foot Old Town canoe in a two week period. This seems almost impossible, but his story will show that it was done. It is an expansive article, but one of great interest to Society members.

The second event, somber and sad, is in regards to the loss of one of the Society's founders, Duluth Wing. This is a great loss foremost to his family, and to all his many, many friends. "Dude" as he was known by all, knew more about the history of the Expedition as it passed through the Dead River country than anyone.

We have included his entire obituary here to illustrate how great a person he was. All in the Society would offer our condolences to his fine family, especially to his wife, Betty, who was also an honorary member of the Society.

So this edition of the *Messenger* will be a mixture of joy, interest and sorrow.

[editor, Steve Clark]

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

- Nichols Cabin Improvements
- Annual Meeting Held
- Great Carrying Place Portage Trail
- Duluth Wing and the AEHS
- Passing of a Man
- Tracking Arnold's Expedition

Nichols Cabin Receives Major Improvements!

During the summer season of 2013, the AEHS's Nichols Cabin on Middle Carry Pond, has received many upgrades. These were accomplished by a number of Society members, including, Ron and John Gamage, Bob and Sara Donovan, and especially by Rocky Freeman and his family. (See photos)

A new, sturdy screen door was installed, the inside of the cabin was thoroughly cleaned, brush along the shoreline was cut back, the cabin's exterior was completely repainted Colonial Red, and the trim painted white. The firewood supply was replenished, the gas tank changed, and a new outdoor fire ring installed.

Coupled with the new firewood shed, and a new telescoping flag pole, the cabin is in the best shape it has been for many years. Thanks to all that worked on it. Bob Donovan says a new privy is the next project.

AEHS Annual Meeting Held

On Sept. 21, the Society held its annual meeting at the newly refurbished Colburn House barn. About 60 attended. President Robbins pointed out that it was 238 years to the day, when Col. Benedict Arnold and his troops landed at the Colburn Shipyard in Pittston, to begin their long, epic upriver journey. He also pointed out that the Society was now 45 years old. A short business meeting was held in which Society officers were re-elected for a term of one year. These were John (Jay) Robbins as President, Robert Cunningham as Vice President, Stephen Clark as Secretary and Alan Burnell as Treasurer.

A group of five directors were re-elected for a term of three years. These were Alan Burnell, Robert Cunningham, Norman Kalloch, John Parsons and Laura Stewart.

One noteworthy action that was announced at the morning directors meeting was the vote to forward a donation of \$500 to the City of Lac Megantic to assist the people of that fine city. They had experienced a terrible explosion and fire that had devastated the center of their beautiful community. The Society has many friends there.

President Robbins also noted that individuals could donate by mailing checks to the Farmington, Maine branch of the TD Bank. They have a special account there to forward funds on to the People of Lac Megantic.

Several other new Society initiatives were discussed by President Robbins, which will be discussed in depth in the upcoming spring *Messenger*.

The Colburn House was open for touring and was hosted by Tom and Lori Desjardin. There were a number of reenactors present as well. The Colburn family will be quite pleased with all the improvements that the State, under Tom Desjardin's supervision has accomplished.

The main event was a presentation by Prof. Steven Eames, noted author who discussed frontier warfare experienced by the colonial settlers up to 1745. It proved to be a most enlightening lecture

in which he cited colonial settlement and warfare along the Kennebec River. Prof. Eames did a superb job!

Great Carrying Place Portage Trail To Be Restored

After 239 years of lying dormant, the famous Great Carrying Place Portage Trail will become followable once more. The original route was a 13 mile portage trail between the Kennebec and Dead Rivers. The historic trail had been utilized by Native Americans for many years prior to the Expedition's usage of the route in 1775. After that date the trail fell into disuse. Portions of the route were occasionally used by fishermen and other sports minded people over the years.

The AEHS, during the past thirty years has explored and reestablished portions of this route. This was between the Kennebec and East Carry Pond and between East and Middle Carry ponds.

In 1950 with the flooding of the Dead River Valley, the Appalachian Trail was relocated over the portion of the portage route between Middle and West Carry Ponds. This left only portions around West Carry Pond and westward to Flagstaff Lake.

The AEHS has obtained the permission of the National Park Service to utilize the Appalachian Trail between Middle and West Carry Ponds. The Society has also received permission from a local landowner to construct a connector trail from the south end of West Carry Pond to reach the original route from West Carry Pond to a point near Flagstaff Lake. This will allow the completion of a continuous trail, 12 miles in length, closely following the original route.

The entire route will be marked and signed by the AEHS. A new trail description and maps will also be published in 2014 so the historic route may be easily followed. In the Spring edition of the *Messenger* much more information will be forthcoming.

Duluth Wing and the Arnold Expedition Historical Society

Duluth Wing in his profession as a longtime District Ranger for the Maine Forest Service, had a chance to really learn the intricacies of the Dead River country. In doing so, he became aware and greatly interested in the history and traditions regarding the 1775 Quebec Expedition that passed through his country.

In 1968, with the 200th anniversary of the 1775 Expedition on the horizon, Duluth and a small group of fellow Expedition enthusiasts met in Augusta and founded the Arnold Expedition Historical Society. It was formed as a charitable corporation and began the task of planning for a major reenactment of the 1775 event. Duluth was one of the leaders in this reenactment with more than 200 participants.

After this event, Duluth and others began the long task of organizing the many activities conducted by the Society. He became a director, which he continued throughout the rest of his life.

He has written numerous articles regarding the Expedition. He also worked diligently during more than 45 years to encourage area people, as well as those in Canada to honor the memories of these brave men of the fledgling American Army.

Duluth was also instrumental in negotiating with landowners to protect the route of the Expedition. It was he that worked with landowner Thomas Dickson to preserve land in the Carry Ponds area. These lands acquired in both fee and easement, now preserve much of the old Great Carrying Place Portage Trail.

Duluth, with other leaders of the Society arranged for the purchase and construction of the present Nichols Cabin on Middle Carry Pond, at the exact location of the old portage trail. This is still there, serving the interests of the Society, forty years later.

He also was instrumental in the location and recovery of Expedition artifacts. He and his son, Kenny led the Society in determining the exact location of the so-called "Arnold Hospital" in the Carry Ponds area. He has also recovered numerous artifacts along the Expedition's route near the Chain of Ponds. In one instance, he discovered a cache of nearly a thousand musket balls, hidden by an uprooted spruce tree.

In August of 2013, he and his beloved wife Betty were leaders in organizing a wonderful summer weekend of trips and historic events in the Eustis area, attended by more than a hundred people. This was done in conjunction with his other historical endeavor, the Flagstaff Chapel Association.

Duluth was involved in many other related activities. Bigelow Mountain over time became a part of his soul. He and wife Betty built both a home and camp that overlook the mountain. He was a key figure in the 1978 state-wide referendum that successfully established the 33,000 acre Bigelow Preserve which now protects the entire 17 mile long Bigelow Range.

He and wife Betty have recently been involved in an effort to preserve land along the Expedition's route in the Chain of Ponds area. He was always looking for ways to improve the Society and to promote its interests. He was instrumental in organizing an effort to publish a major historical map of the Expedition's route. He also recently donated a wonderful new telescoping flag pole for the Nichols Cabin which now flies the flag used during the early Revolutionary War.

In 2012, both Duluth and Betty Wing were unanimously voted by the Society, to become honorary members of the Society. It is an honor, to have just known such a fine man, and better to have been his friend. He lived an exemplary life, enriching his family, his many friends and his community.

We will miss him greatly!

The Passing Of A Special Man And An Era

Duluth Everard Wing, 85, of Eustis Maine passed away suddenly at his home on October 31, 2013. He was born on June 16, 1928 in the village of Flagstaff, son of Clifford E. Wing and F. Ettie Bachelder Moody. He graduated Flagstaff High School and always maintained he ranked third in his class because there were only three students in his senior class. He married Betty A. Petty of North Anson on April 9, 1948 and they lived in Flagstaff until it became Flagstaff Lake in 1950 then moving to Eustis.

Duluth was a Forest Ranger for the Maine Forest Service for 38 years, first as a watchman on Bigelow Mountain at 18 years old, promoted as a patrolman in the Flagstaff area, and promoted to the rank of District Ranger in 1954 as supervisor of the Dead River District until his retirement in 1983. He served in the Army Reserves in 1948 and 1949.

He enjoyed his many years of happy retirement with his hobbies of local pre-history, was a serious student of Benedict Arnold and his march to Quebec, as well as many other local historic interests. He was a founding member, life member and special honorary member of the Arnold Expedition Historical Society and served as one of their board of directors for many years, a position he still held. He was a member of the Dead River Historical Society and was a current board member, a member of the Embden Historical Society, the Lexington Highland Historical Society, The Maine Archaeological Society, past president and current board member of the Flagstaff Chapel Association and the current sexton of the Flagstaff Cemetery, a position he held for nearly fifty years. He was a proud life member of NRA, a part-time deputy of the Franklin County Sheriff's Dept for Sheriff French and an Honorary Deputy Sheriff for Sheriff Pike.

Duluth was a long time member of the Wing Family of America Inc and the Wing Assembly of Maine and was always very proud of his family roots. He was a long time member of the Eustis Planning Board. He was a 63 year member of Mount Bigelow Masonic Lodge #202 AF&AM serving every chair during his many years including Master in 1966 and 1967, a Kora Temple Shrine member, affiliate member of Mount Abram Lodge in Kingfield and the old Lingwick Lodge in Lingwick, Quebec, a 61 year member of Somerset Chapter #80 Order of Eastern Star where he was a Past Patron of fourteen years and Grand Representative to the State of Washington.

Duluth is survived by his adoring wife Betty, his son Kenny of Eustis, his daughter Judith and her husband Rev. Richard Lambert of Swanville Maine, his brother Major Lubert Wing, ret., and wife Betty of Phenix City Alabama, grandchildren Jennifer Lambert Campbell, Nathan Lambert, Jonathan Lambert, Ryan Wing, and Sean Wing. Great-grandchildren Kendall Lambert, Ethan Lambert, Hattie Lambert, Thaddeus Lambert, Rhowen Campbell, Jovan Duluth Lambert, Finnegan Wing and Avery Wing. He is predeceased by step-brothers Dewey Wing and Dr. Lemuel Moody, step-sisters Deliana Moody Fenwick, Gwendolyn Wing Burke, Dorothy Wing Stevenson Jones, and by a sister Margret Wing Rogers.

Duluth had several passions in his life besides his family; boating on Flagstaff, enjoying his camp on the lake, guns and reloading, snowmobiling, four-wheeling, fishing, hunting, looking for Indian and Arnold artifacts, writing, researching, harmonica playing, watching every Celtics game, tree farming, helping out in the Wing Community and spending time with all his close friends in Maine, NH, and Canada. (cont. page 5)

A Memorial Service was held at the Flagstaff Memorial Chapel on November 23, 2013. In which many friends and family attended. A Masonic Funeral ceremony was held as well.

Duluth always said he did not want a long solemn funeral service but rather hoped those attending would just tell a funny story about him instead. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to either the Mount Bigelow Lodge #202 AF&AM in care of Kenny Wing, Secretary, P.O. Box 35, Eustis ME, 04936, or the Flagstaff Chapel Association in care of Nancy McLean, Treasurer, 703 New Portland Road, Embden ME 04958, or the Arnold Expedition Historical Society in care of Alan Burnell, Treasurer, P.O. Box 94, Eustis ME



A Special Man: Duluth Wing

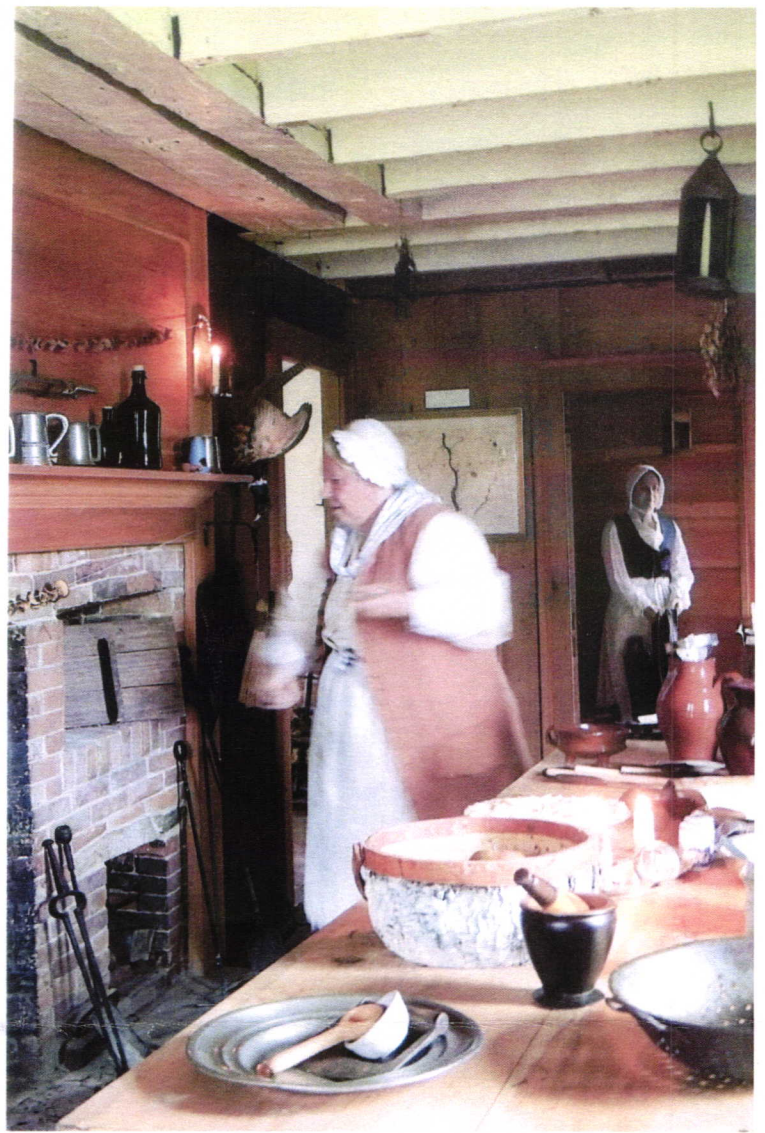


New Interpretive Panel and bateaux next to City Hall at the lake's outlet. Lac Megantic, Quebec, Canada.

Spring Trail crew, working on the Great Carrying Place Portage Trail. Taken at Nichols Cabin, Middle Carry Pond.



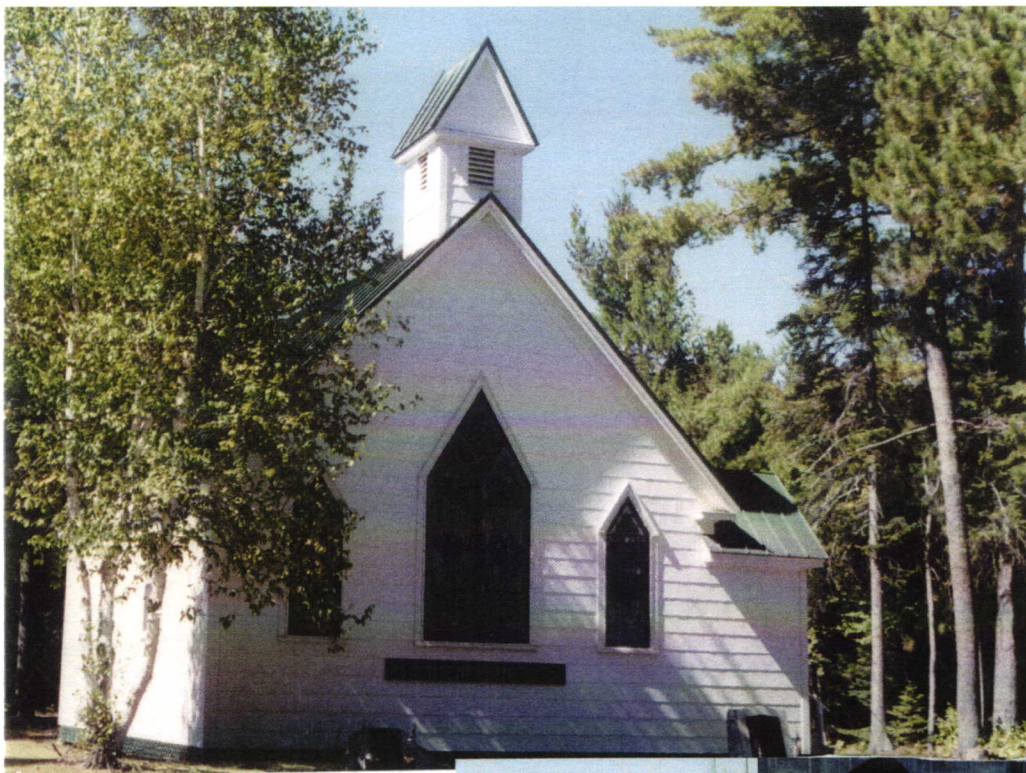
AEHS tour of Archeological site at Fort Richmond, on Kennebec River near Swan Island. There were actually three forts, built here, one on top of the other. More than a million artifacts were recovered.



**Fall, 2013! Old Fort Wester meeting and diner at the Colburn House (L).
Preparing meals, the Colonial way, at the Keeping Room fireplace (R).**



**Tom Desjardin's
restoration of
1800's one horse
carriage, Colburn
House.**



**Flagstaff Memorial Chapel
Eustis, Maine, site of the
AEHS-Flastaff Chapel
Association Summer
Weekend, Aug. 2-4, 2013.
Components of the chapel
were moved here in 1950
when the valley was flooded.**

**AEHS directors and members
in Colonial period dress, at
the Flagstaff Chapel.
A wonderful picnic dinner was
served to about a hundred
hungry attendees.**



**A guided tour of the
Expedition's route from
Flagstaff Lake, along the
No. Branch of the Dead
River was conducted
during the Aug. weekend.
Here, guide Steve Clark
describes events that
took place at Shatagee
Falls (in background).**

Tracing Arnold's 1775 Expedition to Quebec

By Sam Brakeley

[Ed. Note: In the fall of 2013, Sam performed an almost unbelievable adventure of paddling his 16 foot Old Town Canoe from Pittston to Quebec City. Sam, an AEHS member, is a professional trail builder living in Vermont.]

As I paddled around the corner and took in the drizzly view, I stopped and drifted for a while, absorbing the foggy panorama before me. Just in front of me lay the Saint Lawrence River. It was quiet - not a boat to be seen on its waters and the buildings on the far shore were mere blurs through the fog, - and I couldn't help but wonder if this was a view similar to one beheld by Benedict Arnold and his men nearly two and a half centuries earlier. I took a couple quick strokes to the riverbank and, as I unloaded my gear for the penultimate portage, reflected on the two-week journey that got me to this point. It had been quite a paddle.

I discovered Benedict Arnold's Expedition to Quebec, like many others, by reading Kenneth Roberts' Arundel. The romance of the journey struck me and I was enthralled by the lives of the men who undertook the journey to Quebec City. I wanted to live the experience, understand what those men went through by paddling the same waters and walking the same paths (although hopefully avoiding the same gnawing hunger, extreme weather and conflict they found.) And so it was that in late August of 2013, I found myself preparing for the trip from Pittston, ME to Quebec City, QC and replicate the route that Arnold and his men took in 1775.

My partner Elizabeth dropped me off at Colburn House on the Kennebec River on August 21st. She took a couple of pictures, begged me not to be eaten by rabid animals and waved farewell. Then I was off. For my boat I chose to paddle a 16' Old Town Penobscot. I had grown up paddling canoes and at 6'4" find myself more than ever committed to the tradition and roominess of canoes over kayaks. My gear, carried in a waterproof duffel bag, included a tent, sleeping bag, warm clothing, rain gear, food staples: coffee, oatmeal, peanut butter and jelly, pasta, rice and beans, an axe, maps, toiletries, and the other small necessities of an extended trip. For each portage I intended to carry both gear and boat at once and so packed as lightly as possible. But I also included half a dozen books about the Arnold Expedition, including journals kept by some of the men with him.

The Kennebec River felt surprisingly wild. While I portaged numerous dams and passed through many small towns, long stretches of secluded forest were filled with wildlife. Some of the original riverbed is currently buried under impoundments behind the dams but much of it is still free-flowing as well. I spent long hours paddling hard miles upstream, occasionally poling and/or lining particularly challenging sections. However, as an experienced paddler in a well-built Royalex canoe, however, I saw few of the challenges Arnold faced, and I arrived at Wyman Lake four days into the trip, ready to take on the Great Carrying Place.

My days were simple and peaceful. I'd wake with the sun, enjoy the mornings (my favorite time of day) and be on the water usually by 7:30 a.m. after a breakfast of oatmeal and coffee. I was in the boat for much of the day, stopping for lunch when I was hungry and breaks as needed. I paddled until I grew tired, setting up camp in an unobtrusive spot along the side of the river. Dinner, like breakfast, was over the fire and then I would sit up until light faded reading the journals I had with me. Sometimes I felt the ghosts of 1775 there with me as I read about particular islands, bends, portages or rapids I had passed by myself. Reading those journals each night was a very powerful way of bringing the history of the trip (continued page 10)

to life. Afterwards I'd crawl into my tent to do it again the next day.

From Wyman Lake I left the Kennebec and crossed the Great Carrying Place. The first and longest portage was clearly marked and maintained and brought me up a long, gradual grade that had me panting at the top. Thankfully it was just a brief downhill to East Carry Pond. A quick paddle and then across the next, passing the AEHS cabin. The third portage was along the Appalachian Trail. I recall distinctly looking forward to seeing the faces of hikers I might meet on the trail as I portaged along, and sure enough I was rewarded with expressions of complete surprise as I met two halfway along the two-mile portage. Finally I crossed West Carry Pond under gray skies and blustery winds before portaging into Flagstaff Lake along a nicely graded road where a truck driver pulled over and asked incredulously, "Do you need help?" I suspect he was more concerned with my sanity than what I carried on my shoulders.

After crossing Flagstaff Lake, I met up with Duluth Wing, whom many know as an especial Arnold enthusiast and who paddled the trail himself decades ago. We spent the morning together and stopped in the museum where his Arnold memorabilia is displayed, again bringing the 250 year-old journey to life as though it were yesterday. He also gave me some invaluable advice on portaging through the Chain of Ponds near the height of land. It was a singular visit for me and helped to propel me onwards.

The North Branch of the Dead River was low throughout and as I paddled up it I was forced more and more frequently to get out and walk my canoe. But it was also the wildest section of the trip and an example of what an untouched river can look like. Much of this section of the trip still appeared as it would have in 1775 if you rule out the contrails from planes in the sky and the Jake brakes from trucks along Rte. 27. My campsite along the river that night was one of my favorites, nestled as it was among fir trees and on a soft bed of needles with the burble of the shallow river over a small set of rapids. At its head was the Chain of Ponds which I navigated smoothly with Duluth's advice.

Arnold crossed the height of land via a different route than the road currently takes but given the choice between a four-mile road portage through the border and an illegal four-mile bushwhack, I chose the former. The Canadian border patrol were grinning as I portaged up to the crossing and gleefully wrote down 'Canoe' under the 'Vehicle' heading on their forms – something they don't get to do very often. Soon after a small blue car pulled over next to me and I held an impromptu interview with a local reporter on the side of the road. Neither of us was particularly fluent in the other's language but between his bad English and my worse French we managed to have a conversation.

Now in Canada, the Arnold River began steeply but soon flattened to a meandering river through a marshy delta area. It was a pleasant paddle out to Lac Megantic although the shores were certainly a far cry from those of the Dead River with large houses and manicured lawns lining its shores and powerboats populating its waters.

As I came around the bend to the town of Lac Megantic, a frantic melee of rebuilding greeted me. Trucks and equipment honked and beeped; police officers directed traffic this way and that; and orange cones, tape, signs and other markers wore at the eyes. The town was still in the throes of recovering from the train disaster earlier this year. I quietly took out on the perimeter and portaged through town, singlehandedly stopping traffic as people turned to stare. Finding the river once again, I put in below the dam next to several yellow booms spanning the river. A nearby recovery crew warned me the booms would impede my way for the next ten miles. Indeed, the upper Chaudiere looked more like an industrial thoroughfare than the quiet Canadian river it usually is.

For the first half-day on the river I crossed dozens and dozens of booms capturing spilled oil. Most necessitated that I paddle to the bank, clamber out, drag the canoe over the top, climb back in and

(cont. on Page 11)

continue paddling although some I was able to circumvent while still in the canoe. An oil slick covered much of the Chaudiere and I was forced to find drinking water in the towns I passed instead of simply taking it from the river. As I paddled past additional clean-up crews, power-washing the riverbanks, they would stop en masse and stare. I explained that I was on vacation. They were aghast. Who would spend their vacation paddling down an oil-slicked, polluted river?! No doubt, once more, my sanity was a topic of conversation.

Gradually as I continued downstream the river began to clear. Below the dam at Saint-Georges, the spill and clean-up efforts all but disappeared although the occasional boom reminded me to continue to find water in towns. It was also here that some of the best whitewater occurred. In contrast to the upper reaches of the Chaudiere which had low water and boney boulder fields that necessitated constant maneuvering and frequent scraping, the middle Chaudiere was a joy to paddle. Long stretches of Class I and II rapids abounded and Grand Falls was stunning. However, campsites were tougher to come by as I neared civilization; I was forced to make do with some lower, swampier areas for the last couple of nights. Where Arnold and his men were thankful they had at last found towns and people, I rued the increased size and frequency of buildings and cities. It meant my journey was nearing an end.

The final challenge of the trip was how to get to Saint Henri on the Etchemin River from the Chaudiere. Arnold took a diagonal route, leaving the Chaudiere at Scott's Landing and heading northwest nineteen kilometers before reaching water again. Given that Arnold's men had forsaken their boats by this point and become a marching army I chose to again diverge slightly from his route. I paddled past Scott's Landing and took out further downstream on the Chaudiere at Saint Lambert-de-Lauzon. From there it was a much more direct portage to Saint Henri of only thirteen kilometers! It was a long, hard slog. Pouring rain and buffeting winds tired me needlessly as I fought to keep the canoe balanced on my shoulders. Cars slowed and honked as they passed and one duo of young men stopped twice to check on me. I gave them a tired thumbs-up and kept walking. It took three hours to travel and my sore feet were nearly finished off by the time I dropped my boat in the Etchemin River. But I had done it. I camped soon afterward and went to bed very early that night.

The Etchemin was a powerful river and I picked my way down multiple Class III's, IV's and V's, skirting waves and holes and lining and portaging where needed. I passed by power plants and trains and under highways. Civilization in all its glory and dirt began to surround me. One portage around a series of ledges brought me through a makeshift shanty town in the woods where some enterprising kids had constructed a neighborhood of forts and shelters. Another was down a steep gully where I was forced to haul my canoe nearly vertically down a cliff face. Between the long portages and challenging rapids, the journey was not letting me go easily.

At last, fourteen days and three hundred miles from Colburn House, I paddled around the final corner and there lay the Saint-Lawrence spread out before me. I could only imagine what Arnold felt as he first gazed upon the watery expanse, but I suspect it was a combination of the same sorts of feelings that filled my chest. Pride at a journey completed, relief that no more challenges or obstacles stood in the way, and anticipation of Quebec City - although he had a battle to wage in front of him whereas I was simply headed towards a warm bed and a large meal. I certainly felt a bittersweetness that he, with the starvation, disease, and anguish experienced in 1775, likely did not. As with any long canoe journey, I was aware of a mixture of eagerness for the comforts of civilization and the knowledge that the simplicity and tranquility of life on the trail would disappear as 'real life' kicked back into gear. It was a magnificent journey and to live it in 2013 while celebrating the achievements of the men in 1775 was a canoe trip like none other. As I dipped my paddle into the river for the final strokes across the St. Lawrence and into Quebec Harbor, I knew I would hold this experience dear for many years to come.

AEHs New 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.

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

➡ To order the Essay, "**Crisis in the Megantic Swamps**," on a no charge basis, Send order to Society at address below. This includes maps.

➡ To order the AEHS map of the 1775 Expedition's route from the Kennebec River to Lac Megantic, Canada, 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.

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