

Exciting New Archeological Study To Be Conducted

In the wilds of the remote Boundary Mountains of NW Maine, a new Archeological Study will be conducted this fall, jointly by the Arnold Exception Historical Society and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC).

This will take place along the route of the 1775 Revolutionary War Quebec Expedition. At the west end of the beautiful Chain of Ponds, an eight mile portage trail connects the headwaters of the south flowing Kennebec to the north flowing Chaudiere River.

Six miles of this portage trail currently lies within the United States. The last two miles are located in what is now Quebec Province in Canada.

The portage trail had been established for many years prior to the Expedition's passage by Native Americans as a major route to connect the Atlantic coast and the St. Lawrence River.

The study will attempt to shed light on a number of crucial events that occurred during the army's passage over the mountains. We estimate that nearly a hundred bateaux were abandoned by order of the army's commander, Col. Benedict Arnold. Where did this happen? Were there any established campsites along this route? And can we more accurately determine the location of the portage trail itself?

The study will be complicated by previous human activities in the area. Forests have been harvested several times, tote roads built, dams constructed and other development has taken place. But the area is still very much as it was in 1775. The study would identify places that may need protection from future development that would destroy any remaining artifacts.

The study is called a Phase One study to identify those locations that warrant future, more incisive and detailed exploration. It will require several weeks of work by a field crew. The AEHS will work with the crew which will be conducted by professional archeologists.

The study is being managed by the MHPC but is funded by two significant grants. One of \$12,000 funded by the generosity of the Mabelle Haynes family in memory of their mother who was a long time director of the AEHS. The other is a \$6,000 grant from the Jean Lockyer bequest. She was an advocate for the restoration of the Colburn House in Pittston for many years. The results of this study will be made available later in the fall, and we will report its results in the December edition of the newsletter. The study has great potential to reveal mysteries of the Expedition long hidden to historians and the interested public. The army was running out of food at that point in the march, and it was being transformed from a water-borne army to that of an army on foot. The crisis facing the army occurred here. We need to know more of the story. This study will begin that process.

***The Traitor's Wife* Book Review**

By Allison Pataki, Reviewed by John Parsons

One of the most interesting American historical figures, without hesitation is the infamous American traitor, Major General Benedict Arnold, who attempted a diabolical plot of betrayal to his country, as well as General George Washington. This occurred not long after his court martial in Morristown NJ. But, not many actually knew about Arnold's coconspirator, Mrs. Peggy Shippen Arnold, his intelligent but duplicitous wife.

The book was published in 2014 by Howard Books, a Division of Simon & Schuster. Author, Allison Pataki came to the realization that this little written about character of the Arnold plot was as interesting as her husband. She played an instrumental role in the story.

With her love of history, her passion for research, and her creative writing abilities, Ms. Pataki has written a fine historical novel about Peggy, and all the people surrounding her, both good and bad.

(Continued on Page 7)

(cont. from page 2, Nominee)

On June 1st of this year I retired and several weeks later returned home to Readfield, Maine.

During that last tour in Norfolk, Virginia I tried my hand at Revolutionary War reenacting and joined the 7th Virginia Regiment of the Continental Line under the leadership of Mr. Mike Cecere. It was then I realized there was a small world connection between the 7th, Mike, and the AEHS. A small detachment of the 7th marched the Arnold Trail in 2010 and they want to do it again. Mike himself is a UMF alum. I learned to hand sew, start fires with flint and steel, and drink rum from canteens. We fought and burned powder at many battles in and around Hampton Roads with the British, culminating with the Battle of Great Bridge every December in Chesapeake, VA

I am now in Readfield, ME with my wife Vanessa, my 9 year old daughter, Kailey and 6 year old son, Jakob. I am presently employed as a Program Manager at Alternative Manufacturing in Winthrop. I still have my flint rifle, a smoky scented waistcoat and a canteen that still has a hint of rum smell to it. Looking forward to years to come with the AEHS and being home.

Spring Work Trips

On May 14th, the AEHS conducted a work trip to improve the Colburn House. There are two projects we are currently working on; making improvements on the interior presentation of the Carriage House including better lighting to display the various artifacts acquired by the Society. Several visual displays will also be included including a new color portrait of the Society's first president, White Nichols. LTD lights will be installed by Fred Clark to provide much needed lighting for the artifact displays.

The second project at the Colburn House is long term improvements on the surrounding grounds. This will take several years to upgrade as the grounds have been gradually falling into disuse. A good beginning was made by removing briars and blackberry bushes, plus several large trees and limbs with chainsaws.

The pathway leading down to the river has been cleared but will need more work. The lawn was also mowed for the first time this year and the grounds picked up from winter debris.

Those working on this project were Fred Clark, Mike Holt, Daniel Holt, Hank Dillenbeck, Steve and Sherri Clark.

On May 21, the scene shifted to the Great Carrying Place Trail near the Carry Ponds. This was the annual trail clearing that keeps these trails open for public use. Two crews worked on either end of the 12 mile trail. The first crew consisting of Norm Kalloch and Laura Stewart worked on the so-call connector trail over the ridge above West Carry Pond. The trail here follows a wide old haul road. 12 new directional signs were installed to guide hikers along the road for a bit over a mile.

The second crew consisting of Fred Clark, Bob Donovan, and the Holt brothers cleared from Wyman Lake out of the valley to East Carry Pond. Luckily the winter damage was minimal, although one massive hardwood nearing three feet in diameter had come down right across the trail. It took nearly an hour to remove it.

Over Memorial Day weekend, Sam Clark also did trimming on the trail section from Middle to East Carry Ponds.

Thus the entire GCP trail system has been cleared and open to hikers.

Annual Meeting To Be Held

The annual meeting of the Society will be held on Saturday, September 17 at 1:00 PM at the Colburn House in Pittston. A regular business meeting and election of officers and directors will occur. The speaker will be Diano Circo of the Trust for Public Lands. He will discuss land preservation possibilities in the Chain of Ponds area. A directors meeting will be held at 9:30 AM and all members are invited to attend. A bring your own bag lunch will be held at noon.