

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.

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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.

The story begins in 1778, in Philadelphia, and comes to an abrupt end on the shores of the Hudson River in the 1780. It brings you into the world of the family of Philadelphia Judge Edward Shippen, a prominent loyalist family.

A leading character in this story is the patriotic, but naive, young, dedicated maid, Miss Clara Bell. A subplot is developed between her and another young male member of the Shippen household, who is more aligned with the patriot cause.

A very important leading character is the British Major John Andre, Peggy's former lover who was stationed in Philadelphia until the American army came to town. Andre, who is uprooted from his post in Philadelphia and, from Peggy, is now stationed in New York City, working directly for British General Clinton. He finds himself the chief of British Intelligence, in charge of recruiting spies.

A key person in this story is, Joseph Stansbury, a loyalist, and a very flamboyant Philadelphia china merchant. He becomes Peggy's close friend and confidant. He ultimately becomes an informant and runner, crossing American lines into British held New York. His passes were signed by none other than Gen. Benedict Arnold, the newly appointed military governor of Philadelphia.

A scheme begins to take shape when Stansbury returns from New York. Understanding Peggy's true nature, her feelings, and her grandiosity, he sells her an idea that involves her husband, and a certain British Major in New York. Peggy now sells the idea to her husband. He adamantly and fervently rejects it...at first. At that point, due to his history, he's too emotionally wounded and vulnerable; he buys in, hook, line and sinker. Shortly the couple and their very unhappy uprooted servants find themselves on the long road to a country mansion in upstate New York. General Arnold's request to be in charge of the fort at West Point comes to fruition. With a little imagination, one begins to see a pattern of a plot emerging.

There are many other characters, both fictitious and real, who round off this story to make it captivating. And of course, there is General Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and the Marquis de Lafayette. Imagine what would have become of America had these three important men been captured, as was the plan.

This book is as much about loyalty as it is about deception and betrayal. It is as much about selfless young love as it is about self-centeredness and pretentious love. It is as much about simple heartfelt dreams coming to fruition as much as it is about grandiose ideas, narcissism and failure.

To consider the non-fiction side of the story, and for the student of Benedict Arnold, do not look to this book to provide insight in the periods of his earlier life when he was indeed an American hero at Quebec, Valcour Island, Fort Ticonderoga, or on the battlefield of Saratoga. This covers only the period when he lost his way.

There are no good excuses for what Arnold did, but surely he had his reasons. His wife's reasons on the other hand were one hundred percent self-serving as the book portrays.

Some of the characters are real historical figures, and of course, some are the creations of the author's mind, but the thing that makes this novel so engaging, so hard to put down, is the way that the author so artfully interweaves her fictitious characters with the historical ones.

I have read several historical novels, which are fun to read as well as being captivating. So I can say with certainty that Ms. Pataki's ability to create and endow her characters all throughout this historical period, without ever losing the essence of what actually happened is quite amazing. In the end, it all comes together! Outside of the fact that Arnold and his wife Peggy betrayed their country, there is a happy ending to this book. After all, it is fiction. This is a must read for anyone who loves American history, deceptive plots, romance and historical novels.

John Parsons

[ed. note: John is a long time member and director of the AEHS]

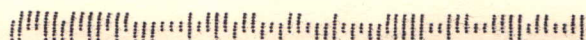
AEHS New Membership Form Note: membership fees change after Jan. 1, 2014

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:	New fees as of Jan. 1, 2015
_____ Individual Member	\$ 30
_____ Family Membership	\$ 35
_____ Contributing Membership	\$ 75
_____ Life Membership	\$ 250 (one time payment)
Additional donation for Society programs	\$ _____ (tax deductible)

➡ To order the Booklet, **The Great Carrying Place Portage Trail**, send check for \$5.00 to AEHS. For non-members, add one additional dollar for postage (\$ 6.00 total).

➡ 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 can be ordered unfolded, for framing or wall mounting for an additional \$ 6.00 to cover cost of shipping tube and postage.



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