



# Arnold Expedition Historical Society

Pittston, Maine, September, 2004  
Newsletter 102

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sept. 25 <sup>th</sup> & 26 <sup>th</sup>	Trail Work Bees	Carry Ponds & Eustis	9:00am
Oct. 10, 2004	Annual Meeting	Holiday Inn, Waterville, Me.	11:00am - 3:00pm

## TRAIL WORK BEE

It's been quite a while since we have had a trail work bee. At a recent directors meeting we selected Sat Sept 25<sup>th</sup> and Sun Sept 26<sup>th</sup> as work bee dates. Two locations were selected to concentrate on:

**Carry Ponds trail.** We will meet at the parking area along the Ridge Road, near Sandy Stream, in Carrying Place Twp, at 9:00am. If you are planning to attend you need to contact Ron Gamage at 207-474-3530. We generally concentrate on Saturday, and depending on progress, we may do more on Sunday. October 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> are rain dates.

**Eustis trail.** We will meet at Duluth Wing's house on Rt 27 in Eustis at 9:00am. If you are planning to attend, you need to call Duluth Wing at 246-6211.

Participants need to talk to the trail leaders at least a few days prior to the work bee so that they will know how much interest there is in helping. Each participant should bring their own equipment, that which they are comfortable using. As always, gloves, water, hat, and clothing suitable for the weather that day are recommended. You are welcome to come along just to participate even if you don't have trail clearing tools or experience. Helping hands are always appreciated.

## ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday October 10<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Inn in Waterville, Me. We will meet in the Colby Room with a social hour at 11:00am, lunch at 12:00 noon, followed by brief business meeting, election of officers, and a presentation by our guest speaker. Buffet lunch consists of two entrees, three salads, vegetables, drinks and desert. Planning arrangements have changed in that you need to have a tentative count by September 30<sup>th</sup>. Let Dan Warren know (207-582-7080) the number attending. Price this year will be \$19.00 per person.

John J. (Jay) Robbins, historian and genealogist of Richmond Maine, Will give a talk entitled the Colonial History of the Kennebec River. Jay is actively involved in numerous historical and social organizations along the Kennebec watershed. His talk will take you through the settlement of this region and focus on the inter-relations between them, and include slides and displays.

The annual meeting is one of the few events that allows us all to get together, share our common interests and keep acquainted. Please show your support for the society by attending, visit and enjoy the program.

Directions: From the south take 295 to Gardiner and then proceed on 95 to exit 130 (Upper Main Street Waterville/Winslow-formerly exit 34). Head in-town, and it's only a few hundred feet from the exit ramp on the left. Route 104 passes right in front of the Holiday Inn.

## LOST MEMBERS

We have lost track of the following members. If you have a current mailing address, please send it to the secretary: Delores Colburn, formerly of Calistoga, CA.

We are also looking for any information or leads that anyone might have about Harriet Sherman of Westport, Conn. She reportedly summered at the Colburn House as a young lady.

## AEHS PUBLISHES COLBURN MEMOIR

The AEHS has published "*Memories of My Childhood*" by Bertha A Colburn, a great granddaughter of Major Reuben Colburn and the last Colburn descendent to occupy the Colburn House, which now serves as our museum and headquarters.

Bertha Colburn lived from 1858 to 1941 and served for over 30 years as Director of Kindergartens in the Portsmouth, New Hampshire, public schools. She wrote the memoir towards the end of her life, for her niece Helen Averill Colburn Pomeroy. The period depicted in her memoir is from her earliest memories until around age ten.

Although almost any reader will enjoy the author's vivid account of growing up in a small Maine town during the Civil War, AEHS members will take special interest in the Colburn family historical notes that are appended to the memoir. Many of these notes describe aspects of Benedict Arnold's stay at the Colburn House.

One especially tantalizing fact relates to a man's queue comb that was found behind wainscoting that was removed during renovations of the Colburn House in 1921. The comb, made of metal, was inscribed with the letters "G.W." Miss Colburn believed that the comb may have belonged to George Washington. According to Miss Colburn, the "caretaker or dean" of Mt. Vernon saw the comb and was "very enthusiastic about it."

The memoir was transcribed from the handwritten script by Arthur L. Flitner, an AEHS member from West Chester, Pennsylvania. "Dan Warren gave me a photocopy of Bertha's memoir when I visited the Colburn House a few years ago. Bertha's handwriting was difficult to read, but I was so impressed with it that I wanted others to be able to enjoy it without eye strain, so I began typing it into my computer."

"Dan and I then struck upon the idea of publishing the memoir and using the proceeds for upkeep of Bertha's home, the historic Colburn House. A little over two years later, the project was completed. I hope that other AEHS members will want to add this little gem to their libraries and help support the Colburn House."

Bertha's narrative, including family history notes, runs for 14 pages plus two pages of endnotes for readers who want to know more about persons and events mentioned in the memoir. The cover art for the booklet is a photograph of the Colburn House taken by Professor Justin Smith in 1901.

Copies of "*Memories of My Childhood*" can be ordered for \$8.00 each, plus \$2.50 shipping from the society at the address on the back of the newsletter.

**Membership renewals are from:** Douglas Allen, Swampscott, MA; Eleanor Archer, Otis, ME; Michael A. Audino, Albany, NY; Peter & Grace Avitabile, Braintree, MA; Marie & Joseph Barnett, Jr., West Chester, PA; Dee C. Brown, Jr., Readfield, ME; Stephen Clark, Shapleigh, ME; Kenneth & Virginia Colburn, Dover, MA; Nina Colburn, Northboro, MA; Richard & Eleanor Currier, North Jay, ME; Russell A. Dole, Rockland, ME; Garry B. Domingues, York, ME; Florence Elliot, Round Pond, ME; Fran & Guy C. Grant, Jr, Stratton, ME; Charles F. Hatch, Hermon, ME; Stephen & Sue Havas, Glenfield, NY; Michael & Doris Lailer, New Portland, ME; Kenneth E. Liberty, Bangor, ME; Margaret G. Linton, Manchester, ME; William T. Lucy, Orono, ME; Carl H. McCourtney, Gardiner, ME; Denis M Nee, Boston, MA; Marie and Albert H. Nimblett, Peabody, MA; Barry O'Neill, Bangor, ME; Robert Roth, Kingston, NY; Barbara Rumsey, East Boothbay, ME; Dr. Edwin P. Russell, Rome, NY; Edwin R. Scallion, PN; Howard A Shearer, Jr., N. Falmouth, ME; William P. Siebert, Dixmont, ME; Gregory A. Smith, Derry, NH and Ruth Zervas, Gardiner, ME.

**New members since the last newsletter are:** Rev. Gary K Price, Wales, ME; ; Edwin R. Scollon, William R. Smith, Pennsauken, NJ; and William R. Smith, Pennsauken, NJ.



# Pittston house on national register

## Benedict Arnold prepped for 18th-century attack on Quebec City there

By BETTY ADAMS

Staff Writer

8/17/04

PITTSSTON — A home where Revolutionary War figures Benedict Arnold and Aaron Burr rested while preparing to attack Quebec City has been added to the National Register of Historic Places.

The Colburn House, which sits on a hilltop overlooking the Kennebec River, was on the chief route north at the time Arnold led his expedition through what was then the Maine wilderness.

Kirk Mohney, assistant director of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, said the Colburn House already was on the national register as part of a national historic district.

"The new nomination expands upon the history of that building and the family that then continued to occupy it until the early 20th century," said Mohney. "By doing this new nomination, we're really focusing on the other elements of its history, the family and the ice industry."

The two-story, red-painted colonial was the home of Major Reuben Colburn 238 years ago.



Staff photo / JOE PHELAN

**The Colburn House in Pittston, shown in this photo taken Friday, recently was added to the National Register of Historic Places.**

In 1775, Colburn was hired to build 200 bateaux — shallow-draft, wooden row-

ing boats used in the 18th century — to ferry 1,100 soldiers to Quebec. But the

boats were made of unseasoned wood and proved too heavy to do the job.

The expedition ended in failure, but the historical connection of the home, the family and the area is promoted by the Arnold Expedition Historical Society.

Four generations of Colburns lived in the house between 1765 and 1953, and it is one of few homes remaining from that time.

In addition to building ships, the family farmed and logged, using the nearby river for log drives and harvesting ice in the winter.

Today, the building has had some partial restoration work.

The New Century Community Program paid a \$10,000 grant to do sill work on the house at the request of the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

"The building has undergone a lot of change in its life," Mohney said.

Currently, it is owned and managed by the state Bureau of Parks and Lands. It is not generally open to the public.

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