

# Redington Reflections

Preserving History and Culture since 1903

Volume 1 Issue 1

Waterville Historical Society Newsletter

August 2018



Redington Museum  
62 Silver Street  
Waterville, ME 04901  
207-872-9439

## Officers:

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Did you miss Dr. Larry Kassman's wonderful talk about turn of the century "medicines"? He's back to regale us once again in November, and you won't want to miss him! This time he's talking about weathervanes, so mark your calendars!

## Upcoming Programs You Won't Want to Miss!

**August: August 9 @ 5:30 - Larry Dodge**, Head of Patron Services at the Waterville Public Library will present the story of Asa Redington entitled, "**Asa Redington: From Orphan to Community Builder: How an orphan helped win independence, served George Washington, and helped shape a community**".

**September: September 13 @ 5:30- Dave Cheever**, Maine State Archivist, will present: "**How Colby Happened to End up in Waterville**: A story of how a flood on the Androscoggin River in 1817, combined with intrigue, cut-throat capitalism, religious persecution, and bare-knuckle politics brought Colby to Waterville."

**October: October 11 @ 5:30- Pearley LaChance**- "**WWI Gold Star Mothers and Widows: Pilgrimages to European Cemeteries 1930-1933**"

**November: November 15 @ 5:30 - Dr. Larry Kassman**, back by popular demand, will present: "**Weathervanes, a History of Rooftop Ornaments: The Origins and Significance of Weathervane Forms Seen on Barns Across America**".

## New Members

The Waterville Historical Society welcomes the following new members:

Mr. Lee Amalfitano

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Crosswell

Ms. Lisa Hallee

Ms. Patricia Helm

Mr. Eric Hoogland

Mr. Kris Kringle

Ms. Paula Raymond

## President's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

I am delighted to pen a President's message in our inaugural newsletter. I have the good fortune to be supported by many dedicated past and present volunteers, members and donors who are passionate about preserving our rich heritage. We owe each one of them a debt of gratitude for their unwavering support over many years. Your Executive Committee has recently updated our strategic plan for the WHS and the Redington Museum. We are working diligently to maintain our historic building and to conserve valuable artifacts, to provide enhanced programming, and to expand our community outreach activities. Stay tuned - there is much more to come, and our success depends upon your continued assistance!

~ Jay Violette

WHS President



*These two vehicles graced the lawns of the Redington Museum on June 16, the night of the Waterville Historical Society's Annual Spring Membership Event. At left, note the **motorized** ambulance.*

***Motorized** ambulances were first used in World War I, also known as "The Great War."*

*Many thanks to Rick Fisher, for working with us for the display of these beautiful vehicles.*

## Curator's Corner

The past few years at the Redington have been busy- to say the least! If you have not been in for some time, you really ought to plan a visit! The museum has been rearranged to make it more inviting and easier to view. We also have received some new acquisitions that you won't want to miss, like the circa 1930s Kennebec Canoe donated by Charles Connors last year. (See photo below). Bonny and I continually look for ways to improve and transform the museum to make it a place of learning and discovery. We hope to see you there!

Bryan Finnemore,

Curator and Caretaker of the Redington Museum



## “Youth”

*Colby Professor Veronique Plesch stands before Lydia Crosby's painting- a copy of Thomas Cole's "Youth", the second in his series entitled "The Voyage of Life." She reads from a book, entitled "The Voyage of Life; Suggested by Cole's Celebrated Allegorical Paintings", published in 1852, written by the Reverend Jared B. Waterbury.*

**Veronique Plesch dedicated her talk to Alleen Thompson, her friend who first introduced her to the Waterville Historical Society.**

Veronique Plesch, Professor of Word and Image Studies, shed new light on the five-foot painting that dominates the north wall of the Mariner Room in the WHS. Painted by Waterville's Lydia Crosby in 1854, when she was barely twenty-two, the painting was donated to WHS by her daughter, Armenia, in 1927, when the Redington Museum was first opened to the public. The painting is a *copy*- a copy of Thomas Cole's four-painting allegorical series entitled: "The Voyage of Life." A *copy* of the four paintings: (con't on pg. 4)

## Standing Committee Chairs

### Finance Committee:

Pat Michaud

### Membership Committee:

Janice Kassman & Tina Serdjienian

### Acquisitions and Exhibits Committee:

Bryan Finnemore

### Buildings and Grounds Committee:

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### Projects/Programs Committee

Ann Beverage

### ***“Youth”***

“Childhood”, “Youth”, “Manhood”, and “Old Age”, now resides in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. These *copies* were painted by Thomas Cole, himself!

The question Professor Plesch explored with us is this: **Why might Lydia Crosby have copied one of Cole’s paintings and why might she have chosen “Youth”?**

“Copies”, in the days of Lydia Crosby, had no negative connotation, as they might today, when we are apt to equate them with forgeries, Professor Plesch explained. In fact, for centuries, “copying” an original was a way of perfecting one’s skill by emulating the great artists and sculptors.

We learned that Thomas Cole’s “The Voyage of Life” was often copied because of its allegorical nature. Cole attempted to make a “strong moral and religious impression”, with his paintings, in a time when early Americans sought inspirational models, in both art and literature- works by which they and their children could set their moral compasses.

Professor Plesch shared a brief biography of Lydia Crosby Hayden, whose second generation brought the Crosby- Haydens and the painting full circle. Lydia was born in Waterville in 1832 and spent her young life in here, until she was married in 1857. That was when she moved to Vermont with her husband, William Hayden III. Their children grew up in Vermont, and one, Armenia Mamie Hayden, came back to Waterville, where she died in 1927, the year she donated the painting to the historical society.

### ***“Youth”***

Thanks to Professor Plesch, we now have a renewed and greater appreciation of Lydia’s *copy* of “Youth”. Lydia’s work is an example of “schoolgirl art”- reflecting the curriculum for young ladies who attended private boarding schools and female academies in early America. There they studied many forms of art, including drawing and painting. Lydia’s choice of “Youth” as the painting to emulate was meaningful, in that it was “the one that had the most resonance for the young American Republic”. It was the personification of a country still in its youth. Thus, Lydia’s painting serves as an iconic reminder for us, of both the history and the art of the times that she lived in.

***To see this painting and many more icons of the past, join us for a tour of the Redington Museum this summer.***

***We are open until Labor Day and after Labor Day, by appointment.***

### ***In Appreciation***

Many thanks to **Pat Burdick**, Assistant Director for Special Collections at Colby, for her work at the Waterville Historical Society. Pat has helped us explore digital archiving programs and how they are used at other local museums. We have relied greatly on her expertise in answering so many of our archiving questions.

Also thanks to **Katie Donahue**, Technical Services and Metadata Librarian at Colby, for her help with organizing our metadata.



## ***Captain Jonathan D. Bratten***

Captain Jonathan Bratten is the Command Historian for the Maine National Guard. In this capacity he has produced multiple articles on the history of Maine's soldiers, appearing in such publications as *The Washington Post*, *On Point: The Journal of Army History*, and *Army Magazine*. He has also appeared in the Smithsonian Channel documentary, "Americans Underground: Secret Cities of World War I", which aired on PBS this past spring. Additionally, Jonathan is an officer in the National Guard and a veteran of Afghanistan. He and his wife live in Portland, Maine.



**103<sup>rd</sup> Infantry during WWI**  
Photo courtesy of Capt. Jonathan Bratten

# The Story of the “Yankee Division”

## Part I- The Yankee Division is First to France

Presented by Captain Jonathan D. Bratten

This year, at the Waterville Historical Society, we are celebrating the 100th year anniversary of the signing of the armistice on November 11, 1918 that ended World War I. We planned two WWI evening programs for our members: one in May, presented by Capt. Bratten, and one in October, which will be presented by Pearley Lachance on October 11th. And our curators have prepared a new WWI display for you, so come on in and have a tour!

In honor of our WWI veterans and American military participation in France during 1918, we welcomed Captain Jonathan Bratten, Command Historian for the Maine National Guard on May 10th. His story of the “Yankee Division” is presented in our newsletters in three parts: Part I in this issue, Part II in the December issue, and Part III in the March issue.

Captain Bratten presented the story of the 26th Division-nicknamed the “Yankee Division”. He began by giving us some background about the American men who served in World War I. Prior to America’s official entry into the war, there had been no conscription, so at first, the nation relied on the existing ranks of the National Guard to answer the call of duty. Thus, these

servicemen were not part of the “regular” military-the army and navy. Instead they were called the “American Expeditionary Forces”, denoted in the annals using the acronym A.E.F. He explained one of the ways that American forces were different in WWI from future wars. In WWI, communities- friends and neighbors- could volunteer together and serve together. Not only could friends serve together, but also family members could serve together- fathers, brothers, uncles and cousins. This is the last war when this was allowed. It is also the last American war where men from all walks of life, from all socio-economic levels, from all ethnicities, from all races, served shoulder-to-shoulder together. [Master Sergeant Arthur Castonguay, and his brother Alfred, were an example of brothers who signed up to serve together in France. Arthur Castonguay was wounded in action on June 16, 1918 in the action in the Chateau Thierry battle at Sivry/Civray. Two days



later he died. He was honored as Waterville’s first WWI casualty, by the renaming of Waterville’s downtown public square, as “Castonguay Square.” Arthur’s brother, Alfred, was also wounded in the same battle, and for his actions, he was awarded the Purple Heart.

(See: Amy Calder’s recent article in the Sentinel. Find it at:

<https://www.centralmaine.com/2018/05/21/the-100-year-legacy-of-Waterville’s-Castonguay-square>.) ]

As for communities signing up together- Captain Bratten showed us a photo of eight boys from Skowhegan who had signed up together. They had all gotten their H.S. diplomas together. There was also a band from UME, Farmington, that served together.

World War I technology and tactics still had many connections to the past wars: artillery was still pulled by horses, and mules still transported some supplies; cavalry still fought the war; and infantrymen still were engaged in hand-to-hand-combat.

But, Captain Bratten pointed out, new ground-breaking warfare technology was also introduced during WWI. Communication had advanced: for the first time, radios and telephones were used, and that technology advanced throughout the war to evolve into wireless communication.

In this war, vehicles, including ambulances, were motorized. (See: photo on p. 5)

Airplanes gave a new dimension to reconnaissance, and they were outfitted with machine guns and were equipped to drop bombs.

Chemical warfare was employed for the first time. This necessitated the use of protection against mustard gas, which burns the skin; and against poison gas, which is deadly if inhaled. Thus, soldiers had to be equipped with new gear: gas masks, and protective gloves and suits.

Another first: tanks, which could easily traverse rough and muddy terrain, were used in battle.

On April 6, 1917, the U.S. finally entered the war, much to the relief of the beleaguered French, whose country had already suffered great devastation and carnage at the hands of the Germans.

The 26<sup>th</sup> Division was commanded by General Clarence R. Edwards, who had been the Commander of the New England National Guard before the American declaration of war. The 26th included men from all over New England, and thus was aptly nicknamed “The Yankee Division.”

Here’s the organization for the Maine soldiers: most of the infantrymen were in the 103<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of the 26th Division. The 103rd Regiment was commanded by Colonel Frank H. Hume, from Aroostook County, who was affectionately known as “The Old Man” There were fifteen companies in the 103<sup>rd</sup>, made up of mostly Maine men. If you were in the 103rd, most you likely would have a pine tree painted on your helmet, proudly identifying your state. If you were from the Waterville area, and a regular infantryman, most likely you were in Company H of the Second Maine Infantry. There were approximately one hundred fifty men in Company H.

(More on those who served from the Waterville area in the next issues.)

The men from Company H began their official training at Camp Keyes in Augusta on July 5, 1917. Captain Bratten shared that before entering the war, paranoia of German infiltration and invasion existed throughout the U.S. Many from Maine’s 103rd Regiment had already gotten experience serving as National Guardsmen on guard duty on the home front, protecting Maine’s harbors from the threat of possible German spies and German U-boats.

In the autumn of 1917, the 26<sup>th</sup> Division was shipped to Halifax, N.S. From there they were sent across the Atlantic, with a British escort, for a two-week stay in England, where they were in “rest camps” and waited for a transport to France. The troops finally arrived in Le Havre, France later that year- *the first U.S. National Guard Unit to arrive in France, the first Americans to arrive to fight on European soil.* Headquarters were set up in Neufchâteau. Now the troops would begin to train during the winter of 1917-18, which was the snowiest winter on record in that region.

Watch for: “Part II: War” in the next issue

Waterville Historical Society  
62 Silver Street Unit B  
Waterville, Maine 04901-6524  
**Address Service Requested**

**Waterville Historical Society** – Application for Membership

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Type: New \_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_

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Sponsor \$250 \_\_\_\_ Patron \$500 \_\_\_\_ Benefactor \$1000 \_\_\_\_

Please send your dues to Waterville Historical Society, 62 Silver Street Unit B, Waterville, Maine 04901

Visit us online at [www.redingtonmuseum.org](http://www.redingtonmuseum.org)