

[Back to list](#)

BLOG: NEW LONDON TOUR – JUNE 2016

09 Jun 2016 2:52 PM | [Kelly Bryer \(Administrator\)](#)

By Tim Adams

Well, Tuesday morning arrived and wouldn't you know, it was raining! Here we were, all set for a tour of the town of New London, including a lot of walking, and it's raining. Not the way I like to start a trip but, knowing it's other name, 'liquid sunshine', and knowing it's 'Always Sunny in New Hampshire', I had a rain coat packed in the car so off I went to join in.

We started by gathering in the downtown region, a parking lot beside the Chamber of Commerce Information booth. While the rain appeared to have stopped for the moment, there were raincoats of many colors adorning the parking lot. Once gathered, we headed out to the northwest end of town and their Historical

District. There were 15 buildings in all, including a little red school house and a meeting hall. Included within the buildings were 24 restored Sleighs, buggies and wagons from the 1850's and later. These weren't the only items on display however. The Blacksmith shop had a working forge, as well as many items that had been handmade with use of the forge and anvil.



Did you know there had been a Violin maker in New Hampshire? Well, there was one building on site with many examples of his work, as well as templates that he used making them.

I'm sure I'm not alone in wishing I could have spent more time visiting the different buildings, but being on a time limit, we had to move along. Did I mention the sun made an appearance? Well, the 'It's Always Sunny in New Hampshire' turned out to be correct!



We headed back into town for a fabulous lunch at Peter Christian's Tavern. While I'm not much of a soup/chowder eater, the 'Soup and Sandwich' served was fantastic. The sandwich was Peter's Mother's Favorite and I can highly recommend it should you be in the neighborhood.

The Tavern itself has a long history going back to around 1800. While it's a bit much to try and list it here, over they years the building was built, rebuilt, added on to and remodeled. It was a boarding house/inn as well as a tavern with rooms to rent, depending on the year of operation and owner. The current owner, Sarah Baas, is doing a wonderful job in maintaining the rustic atmosphere and fantastic food.

Following lunch we headed to off to college. Well, at least the parking lot of Colby-Sawyer College located right in the middle of downtown. We then started a very interesting walking Scavenger Hunt.

Sue Greenbaum, who spent a lot of time arranging this tour for the GSA's, had also spent a bit of time gathering many different bits of information that the rest of us needed to hunt for and find. Starting at the College Library and walking down Main street, we gathered bits and pieces of information at several stops. Who knew the local Ice Cream shop served a dish with 20 (yes, that's 20!) scoops of ice cream or that Tuckers (a great place for Breakfast) had a 'Politician's Bathroom'?

We finished the Scavenger Hunt at the New London Barn Playhouse. Tom was nice enough to give us a bit of the history of the barn from when it first started presenting plays (1934) as a summer theatre, one of many hundred that started up around this same time. This one however has the others all beat – it is the only one that has operated every year ever since! Quite an accomplishment and this seasons schedule looks to be a good one with shows like Brigadoon and Shrek the Musical on their schedule.

Following the tour of the theater, we had about an hour to spend, either walking around New London a bit more or heading over to the Flying Goose Brew Pub where we would be having supper. I, and a few others, did head over to the Pub where I sampled one of their fine home brewed craft beers. Trying a new (to me anyway) brew is always a treat. It might not be the best drink I've ever had but it will certainly be far from the worst and the Flying Goose had one of the better Stouts I've tasted in a long time!

For supper we all were given a choice of either Baked Haddock or Pulled Pork and the people sitting



around me seemed about evenly split when they picked their meal. Everybody was commenting on how good the food was and I agreed with them! A fabulous meal to end a long day of walking about.



Remember the rain I mentioned at the beginning of this article? Well, it returned with a fury while we were eating dinner. Of course all of the rain gear had been carefully packed away in the cars so I think we all expected to get a bit damp running to our cars but, as quickly as it started, it stopped!

Off to our respective lodging for the evening, but first I had to stop and get a picture of the wonderful rainbow! I just wish the power lines had been on the other side of the road. I was staying, along with several others, at the New Hampshire Mountain Inn in Wilnot, just a short trip up the road from where we had supper.

We were greeted by Patrick who gave us a tour of the Inn, and then took us to our rooms. I wandered around a bit with my camera before I decided it was time to call it a day. Patrick had shown us where the coffee was, so in the morning I headed straight there. When everybody was up, we ordered breakfast off their menu and had a great meal.

I again got outside and took even more pictures as I walked around and then, with time getting short, everybody packed their cars, thanked Patrick for the great time, and we headed off to start day two of our tour.

Day two started at a place I'd heard of but never visited, the Fells. The Fells, sonamed after the Scottish word for rocky upland pastures, doesn't really live up to that name today as many of the pastures have been over grown with trees but, if you look closely on your drive into the home, you can see one of the pastures on your right that will let you know why it is called 'The Fells'.

The Fells was the home of three generations of the Hay family, starting with John Hay, who was, at age 22, a private secretary to Abraham Lincoln! John Hay went on and served under several other presidents, as Ambassadors and Secretary of State. It's truly amazing all of the different jobs he had over they years.

It was John's son and grandson (and their wives of course) that modernized the home that John had built and added in the variety of gardens around the property. From the 'Walled' garden in 1910 to the Rock garden of 1930, each pair of hands added a little something to the landscape.



The home itself was also quite impressive. Certainly, it lacks some of the modern 'conveniences', like AC that most of us take for granted today. But this is a home from a different time, and it is built in such a way that cross ventilation is available throughout. Being more of a summer home, there were multiple fireplaces in the bedrooms and also a wing that was dedicated to the servants quarters.

From the Fells, we headed down to Bubba for lunch. Again, like at Peter Christian's Tavern, we were served soup and a sandwich. Well, not really soup but award winning seafood chowder to be more precise, and it was excellent!

We then headed to Mount Sunapee resort and had a tour of their Adventure Park. I expect that every ski area in New Hampshire has some sort of summer recreational area associated with it these days since you can't always depend on Mother Nature to deliver enough snow to keep the slopes opened for a full season. Case in point is this past winter, when slopes had to make snow constantly.



The wide range of activities now available include Zip Lining, Mini Golf, Mountain biking and an Aerial Challenge course. While they currently only have 4 bike trails down the mountain, one easy, two moderate and one operated as a 'black diamond', more are being built on the mountain and a couple should be opened later this year. The nice part of this mountain biking is that you, and your bike, get a lift up the mountain in one of their ski lifts so you merely have to ride down the mountain. Don't have a bike? Well, they have them available for rent in several different packages so you can ride for a couple of hours or for the full day – your choice.

From the mountain we headed to Sunapee State Park Beach. While the water is still a bit cold for most of us and on Wednesday it was a cool day in June, I expect that if families with young children had been present, several of the younger set would have been in swimming.



We then headed for a walk around Sunapee Harbor followed by a ride around the lake on the MV Mount Sunapee. While I'm sure that all of you know what a lighthouse is and what they are used for, did you know that Lake Sunapee has three of them on the lake?

We passed all three during our cruise, with a commentary being given to us by the



Captain as we passed different landmarks. While the trip started out traveling with the wind, many of us moved to the upper, opened deck so we could enjoy the view without the windows in our way. However, on the return trip, when we turned into the wind, the cool breeze drove me, and a few of the others back into the warmer lower deck seating area.

A collection of pictures I took along the way can be viewed by following the link at: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/4xbzv83std8l39s/AAAI4tvLNYtBRRUQO8aB8GBta?dl=0>. The link takes you to a folder on my Dropbox account where I added about a quarter of the pictures I took during the tour.

All in all it was a wonderful two days!

Tim Adams

NOTE: there were SO many wonderful comments and observations about this trip that we have been posting them on our Facebook page. Read them here: <https://www.facebook.com/nhgsa/>

More from our New London Tour...

As part of our recent 2-day tour of the New London area, we had a scavenger hunt down Main Street, New London. GSA Don Eberly wrote up some of the history he shared with us as we walked...

Reflections on a GSA walk down Main Street New London

After a tour of the New London Historical Society village and a great lunch at Peter Christian's Tavern, the Ambassadors embarked on a scavenger hunt organized to introduce us to points of interest and services along Main Street.

We started at the academic anchor of the town, Colby-Sawyer College, charged with discovering its founding date. As always, the librarians came to our rescue with the needed information (1837) only to find it emblazoned on the institution's sign just a short way down our Main Street stroll.

Just beyond the sign was the next target on the list. The 1826 Baptist Church with its Paul Revere hardware in the belfry. Beyond the church and the Whipple Town Hall, we paused at the wonderful flower shop, Alliops!, and gazed across at the bandstand centered on the town green. Its history, reflective of New England values was shared.

The Green had been the original site of Colby Academy which, following the destructive fire of 1893 was relocated higher on the hill to the east of the Baptist Church. Although the Academy retained ownership of the original property, the town enjoyed public use and it became known as "The Town Common". As the Academy grew to a women's junior college and eventually a 4 year baccalaureate coeducational institution, "The Common" remained the province of the town.

When the College fell on challenging financial times in the 1980's, the Board announced the intent to sell the land for development. Enter Ausbon Sargent, lifelong resident of New London and custodian of Colby Sawyer College who at age 94 took his life savings to purchase the 3 acres in the center of town from his former employer and then gift the property to his town.

Ausbon shared a kindred with our long time town administrator, Mary Haddad that stretched far beyond their shared birthday. For years, they celebrated that common day (June 11 th) by climbing Mount Kearsarge together. I recall him grumbling about sore knees the day following his 92nd birthday!

In its acceptance of this most generous gift, New London established a land conservancy in his name (The Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust) and honored the centerpiece of the Ausbon Sargent Common with the Mary Haddad bandstand.

The walk down Main Street continued to the Tracy Memorial Library and a rest at its Olmsted designed gardens, treats at Artisan's Gift Shop, Morgan Hill Bookstore and finally to the New London Barn Playhouse and a terrific history of summer stock theater followed by a fascinating backstage tour.

A terrific day, superbly orchestrated by our Ambassador of the Year, Sue Greenbaum."

More reflections from our recent two-day tour of the New London region...

The Flying Goose Pub..... www.flyinggoose.com

As part of our 2-day tour of the New London / Lake Sunapee area hosted by members of the Lake Sunapee Region Chamber of Commerce, we were invited to dine at the Flying Goose Brew Pub & Grille in New London. It was easy to find at the intersection of Route

s11 and 114 with easy access off Exit 11 of I-89.

As we arrived we were directed to a large dining room where they had fashioned a super long table that could fit all 25 of us. Our waiter, Ryan, was incredible. He handled the entire group with ease and a friendly smile. We started out, of course, by sampling their award-winning, handcrafted brews. I truly enjoyed my Flying Goose Pale Ale and my friends next to me ordered a sampler with 5 of their Flying Goose draft brews to share – I must say, they looked tasty!

We were given a choice of either Baked Haddock or Pulled Pork for dinner. It was a tough choice. My haddock dinner was outstanding, and I found myself eyeballing the pulled pork dinner across the table. Looking around the rest of the dining room, I'm pretty sure you couldn't make a bad choice at the Flying Goose.

One thing I noticed right off were the impressive translucent aspen lamp shades that hung from the ceiling. Artisan Peter Bloch hand-turns these shades on his lathe creating these artistic, radiant and durable beauties. On his website, you can see a video of how he creates them. <http://www.woodshades.com/>

The dining room has a great view out its large windows. During our dinner a strong thunderstorm rolled through. It was a treat to watch it go over the valley from the comfort of the dining room. As we left the parking lot after dinner, there was a large and beautiful rainbow that extended over the valley bidding us welcome to the Lake Sunapee region of NH.



Sunapee Historical Society

On the second day of our 2-day tour of the New London / Lake Sunapee region, we explored the Lake Sunapee Harbor before cruising on the MV Mount Sunapee. One of my favorite places was the Sunapee Historical Society located across from the town docks. Located in a restored stable building, the society has many from their region including documents, photographs, and historical items including artifacts from Sunapee's grand hotel and steamboat era and its earlier manufacturing era when the Sugar River powered more than 20 industries. You can even walk into their reconstructed summer cottage and sit on its porch for quiet break in your day.

The historical society has a busy and interesting program schedule that is posted on their website which includes historical cruises on the lake and educational talks. I'm sure I'll be back to explore the society some more. www.sunapeehistoricalsociety.org.

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