

ABOUT THE ARTIST

The artist, William Abbott Cheever, was born in Andover, Massachusetts, in 1907 but had moved to Amherst, New Hampshire, in 1954 where he lived until his death in 1986. He had a studio adjacent to the family home. Known for his portraits of New England society, he was also an accomplished landscape artist, illustrator, and designer.

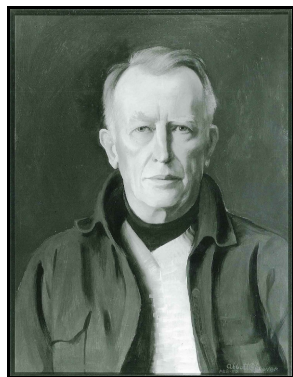
Cheever was a graduate student of the Boston Museum School of Art where he studied fresco painting under Alexandre Jacovleff.

For most of his adult career he taught at the Boston Museum School and Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts. After relocating to New Hampshire he worked in the art department of the Nashua Corporation in Nashua and eventually retired from Hermsdorf Co. in Manchester as art director/designer. It was during his employment with Hermsdorf that the Hooksett murals were created.

In 1940 and 1941 he painted three historical murals during the New Deal era when President Franklin D. Roosevelt was attempting to stimulate the economy. His murals still hang in United States Post Offices in Madison, Connecticut; Smithfield, Virginia; and Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts.

In a review of a 1948 exhibit at the Vose Galleries in Boston, the Christian Science Monitor noted: "There is a quiet independence in his handling of paint. There seems to be a blend of the sophisticated and the primitive. His colors are clear and luminous; his characterizations are human and moving."

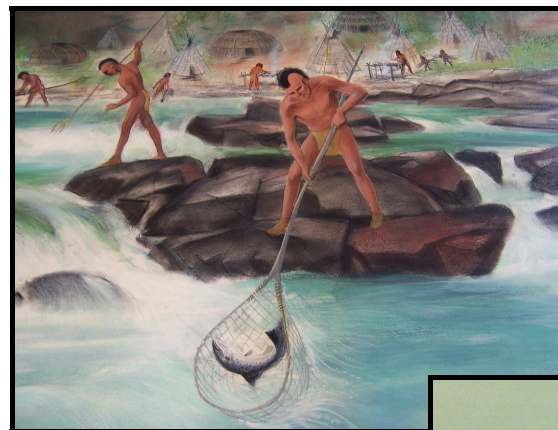
A background piece in an ad offering a painting for sale relates this information from someone who interviewed a friend of Cheever: "His accomplishments are long and varied. He even mentioned to his friend that he did a mural for a McDonald's restaurant at one point in his life."



TOWN OF HOOKSETT HERITAGE COMMISSION

UNVEILING OF CHEEVER MURALS

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2013
6:00 P.M.



ABOUT THE MURALS

McDonald's built their Hooksett restaurant at the corner of Route 3 and Martin's Ferry Road in 1974. The dining room decor featured two large murals showing Native American life.

When the restaurant was remodeled in 1984 the dining room was redecorated, and Vander Wolk Enterprises, the company who owned the franchise at the time, made a gift of the two paintings to Hooksett schools. One was hung at Underhill and the other at the Village School.

When the Village School closed in 2004 the painting was left behind in what was the library. By 2011 the library had become basement storage; the mural was rescued and moved to a safer location by the Heritage Commission. The smaller mural had hung at the Fred C. Underhill School since 1984. So that the murals could be enjoyed together as they were originally conceived, the school district relinquished ownership and turned the smaller mural over to the town.

In 2012 the Heritage Commission applied for a Cultural Conservation Grant administered by the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts for the Department of Cultural Resources. The \$6,300 grant was for the conservation of both murals.

Parma Conservation of Chicago was chosen to do the conservation work. The firm offered an extraordinary level of experience and qualifications. Since 1998 they have conserved over 200 historic murals in municipal buildings, museums, post offices, churches, schools, and residences across the United States including two Cheever murals. They completed their work on site in January 2013. Volunteers for the Heritage Commission repainted the frames replicating the original colors.

In May 2013 the murals were hung in the council chambers of the municipal office building. The unveiling ceremony today is to again welcome the Cheever murals to Hooksett.



Help yourself to refreshments please

Unveiling Ceremony

Welcome

Kathie Northrup, Chair, Heritage Commission

Dean E. Shankle, Jr., Ph.D.

Town Administrator

Van McLeod, Commissioner

New Hampshire Department of Cultural Resources

David R. Boutin

NH State Senator, District 16

Richard A. Boisvert

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

State Archaeologist

Peter H. Cheever

Artist's Son

James A. Sullivan

Chair, Hooksett Town Council

Unveiling

Closing Remarks



The Town of Hooksett is supported
in part by a grant from the New Hampshire
State Council on the Arts & the National
Endowment for the Arts.