

# Webster 'Snow Scene' restoration heralds future plans

By **Mary Ann Bragg**

BANNER STAFF

A prized oil painting from the town's art collection, by the American painter E. Ambrose Webster, has been cleaned, framed and hung in the Judge Welsh Room at Provincetown Town Hall, part of the continuing effort by the Art Commission to restore works of art in the town collection.

The painting, "Snow Scene, Tamworth, NH," was painted in 1915 and given to the town as a gift by Webster. The board paid \$3,800 to a company in Maine for the restoration and \$1,500 for the framing by Stanhope Framers of Boston.

"It was badly conserved about 25 years ago," commission member Steve Borkowski said this week. "There was over-painting, which changed the character of the piece. It was increased in size, if you can imagine, to accommodate a larger frame. This restoration has brought it back to where it should be."

The town has 300 works of art in its collection. Over the next few weeks commission members will work with part-time collections manager, Amy Heller of



PHOTO MARY ANN BRAGG

*"Snow Scene, Tamworth, NH," oil painting on canvas, 1915, by E. Ambrose Webster.*

Provincetown, and a consultant to prepare a restoration plan, with approximate costs, for the Board of Selectmen.

"This is what we're trying to do with the entire collection," commission member Peggy Pritchett said this week of the Webster painting's restoration. She added that the higher valued paintings, such as "Snow Scene," would also be framed.

The art collection consists of work by local artists as well as nationally known artists who have resided in town, and includes paintings, sculpture, murals, prints and drawings.

For the upcoming grand re-opening of the Provincetown Art Association and Museum, the town has contributed eight paintings by American painter Oliver Chaffee (1873-1946). Four of the largest ones have been restored and framed, and the commission plans to hang those in the children's area of the public library following the PAAM exhibition.

The commission has an annual budget of around \$16,300, funded by property taxpayers.

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