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recount how he used a bar of soap carved into the shape of a gun to escape from the jail in 1965.

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Infamous art thief revisits criminal past in Ellsworth

Mass. man broke out of old jail in 1965

BY BILL TROTTER

BDN STAFF

ELLSWORTH — It has been nearly 50 years since notorious criminal Myles J. Connor Jr. stepped foot inside the old brick building at 40 State St.

The last time he was there, when it was the old Hancock County Jail, he confronted a jail guard with a bar of soap he had blackened with shoe polish and carved into the shape of a gun. He used the fake firearm in a brazen escape from the jail that earned him five days of freedom — two of which he spent hiding in the attic of the Ellsworth Public Library — before he was snagged in a manhunt in the neighboring town of Hancock.

Now 71 years old and a resident of Blackstone, Mass., Connor was back at the old Ellsworth jail on Wednesday with a



A bar of soap blackened with shoe polish and carved into the shape of a small gun sits in the bottom of a glass jar at the old Hancock County Jail in Ellsworth on Wednesday. Art thief Myles J. Connor Jr. used the fake firearm to escape from the jail in 1965.

documentary film crew, recounting his first major criminal incident in a decades-long career of flamboyantly breaking the law. Balding with gray hair, he wore a long beige winter coat to stay warm inside the chilly building.

"I had no idea the commotion

that I started by this stunt," Connor said Wednesday of his daring summertime jail break in Hancock County when he was 22 years old. "And of course they had helicopters and guys with bloodhounds and the whole thing after me."

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