



Historical Society *and* Museum



The Rye Town Museum is open to visitors on Saturday mornings from 10 to 12 May through October, and at almost all other times by appointment.

Make your appointment online: email us at info@ryenhistoricalociety.org, or call 603-436-9278

Schedule
Visit



Holiday Open House at the Rye Town Museum

Stop in after the Holiday Parade for shopping, cider, and browsing our exhibits.



YE OLDE GIFT SHOPPE is stocked with fun items for your holiday shopping – Snowman soup mugs, old maps of Rye, stuffed lobsters, and lots of books for booklovers!

Be sure to visit this weekend:

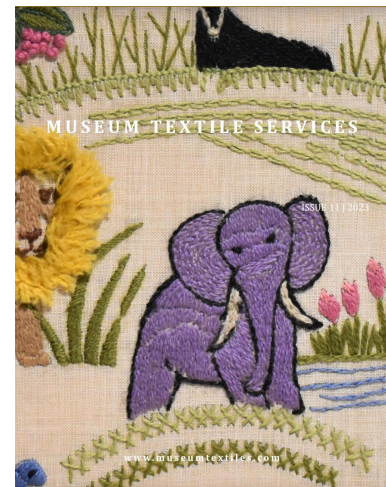
Saturday from 1-4

Sunday after the parade

Arthur Locke's Flag Gets a Wave!

Earlier this year, we sent a flag from our collection to Museum Textile Services (MTS) in Andover, MA for evaluation. From that review, we learned our 19th-century, fourteen-star, State of Vermont, commemorative flag belonged to Rye's Arthur Locke. MTS determined that provenance via an ultra-violet examination of a hard-to-read signature on the hoist trim of the flag.

In the latest issue of Museum Textile Services Magazine, our flag was among a few other "What's in a Name" MTS projects highlighted in an article on textile "signatures." Our flag was pictured as Fig. 48 in the article and attributed to Rye Historical Society in the photo credits at the back of the magazine.



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

All kinds of textiles contain writing, be it a weaver's mark, written label, embroidered sampler, or friendship quilt. Here are a few examples from the past year.



Fig. 48. "Arthur Locke" inked on the linen hoist of a 14-star American flag from New Hampshire.

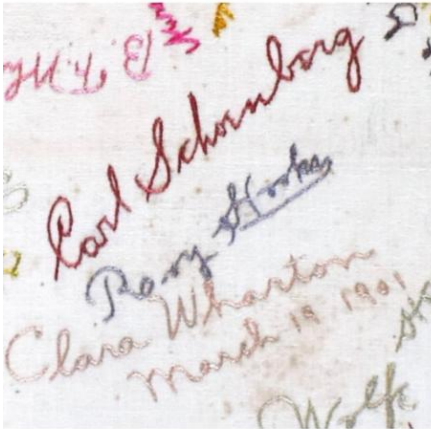


Fig. 49. Embroidered signatures from a cotton handkerchief.



Fig. 50. Inked signature from a Massachusetts cotton patchwork quilt.



Fig. 51. Stitched name from a silk & linen sampler.

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We are pleased that pieces from our collection are being recognized outside our immediate community!

Lew Karabatsos
Chair, Collections Committee

Down the Road

Rye's Ann Malpass donated this reproduction of an original photo showing a view of Sea Road from the Allen house. Can you identify some of the buildings shown?



Caswell Family Burial Ground



This month we look at the Caswell Graveyard on Washington Road, which is being cared for by RHS board member David Caswell.

How long have you been taking care of the Caswell Graveyard?

I've been cleaning stones both in the Caswell Graveyard and a number of family headstones in Rye Central Cemetery for about three years.

What interested you in taking this on?

I started cleaning stones during Covid and after I retired. I first started with my parents monument that was starting to collect a growth of lichens and their flat headstones that were also getting dark from black mold.



David Caswell on right



Headstones after cleaning

What is the most rewarding aspect of it for you?

Bringing headstones back to a bright and easily readable condition gives me a sense of accomplishment, knowing that their names can again be read easily by visitors. It's a little like bringing the departed back to the light.

Is the graveyard accessible to the public?

The Caswell Family Burial Ground is not a roadside graveyard and is only accessible with the current adjacent landowner's prior notification and permission.

Ginna Macdonald

Playground Fundraiser SUCCESS!



The recent Rye400 Playground Fundraising Party raised \$27,833.62 to support the new, accessible Rye Elementary School playground. Andy Stecher, Rye400 Chair, presented a check to Michelle Pitts, Rye Elementary School Principal, while Allison Salzer, President of the Rye PTA, looked on. Coupled with the recent \$3,510 raised through the “Rye400 Evening with Dan Brown” event — designated for Rye student field trips to the Seacoast Science Center — it brings the total of Rye400 donations to Rye, NH schools to \$31,343.62 to date.

With Appreciation

As we approach the end of this remarkable year, I am honored to write this letter on behalf of the Rye400 Committee, reflecting on the incredible journey we’ve shared throughout 2023.

The Rye400 Committee was formed by the Rye Historical Society at the request of the Town of Rye. It has been our privilege to plan and offer more than 60 programs and events that reflect the diverse and long history of our town. Those activities ranged from historic lectures and walks, trolley & Shoals tours, beach clean-ups and athletic events, to Rye Day, founding-family reunions,



an historic home tour, holiday tree lighting, art shows and educational programs for our Rye students. These events acknowledged our Indigenous, European and enslavement roots as well as the environmental, economic, and social realities of fishing, farming, tourism, and community activism. As a result, we believe we achieved our goal to strengthen the bonds with the community, our history and each other.

One of the most heartwarming outcomes of our collective efforts was the financial support we were able to provide to Rye's educational institutions. Several events raised funds not only for field trips to the Seacoast Science Center for Rye students and classroom art programs, but also for the installation in 2024 of a new, accessible playground at the Rye Elementary School.

In addition to the many memories and photographs, we are excited to announce that this year-long celebration will culminate in the dedication of a Rye400-specific monument that will stand as a permanent testament to our celebration and the history that defines our community. Furthermore, we are committed to distributing any remaining funds from the Rye400 fundraising efforts to several causes that benefit the quality of life in our community. More information is forthcoming.

None of it would've been possible without the support of our town, generous individual donors, community-minded local businesses, and a host of dedicated volunteers. To all of them, too many to list, we say **THANK YOU!** In addition, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Rye Historical Society and members of the Rye400 Committee, who worked tirelessly throughout the year to bring these programs to you. It is they, who through their unwavering support, dedication, and enthusiasm, made it happen on the community's behalf.

Rye's legacy is something we all share, and it is our collective responsibility to protect, honor and preserve it for generations to come.

Thank you for an extraordinary year, and here's to an even brighter future for the Town of Rye. Onward and upward!

With heartfelt appreciation,

Andy Stecher
Chair, Rye400 Committee

Rye400 Upcoming Events

Dec. 2 — Rye400 Historic Home Tour -SOLD OUT

Dec. 2 — Rye400 Tree Lighting, Petting Zoo, Campfire, Toasting Marshmallows, Winter Clothing Drive , Sweets and Drinks; Parsons Field; 3:00-4:30pm (tree lighting @ 4:15pm). Sponsored by Tate & Foss/Sotheby's International Realty.

Dec. 3 — Holiday Parade, 1:00pm. Sponsored by the Town of Rye.

Dec. 13 — Lecture, "1623: The Untold Story of New Hampshire's Founding Fathers ," by J. Dennis Robinson; 6:30pm, Rye Public Library.

Dec. 27 — Save the Date for Rye400 closing event; details forthcoming.

THIS MONTH IN RYE HISTORY



CHRISTMAS 1623

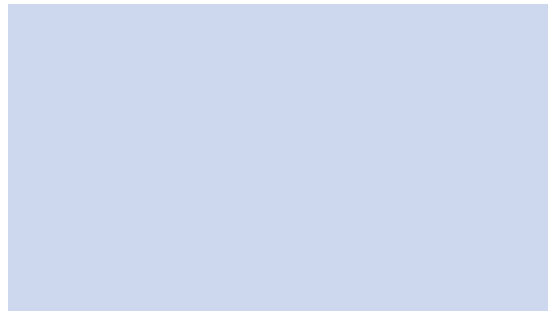
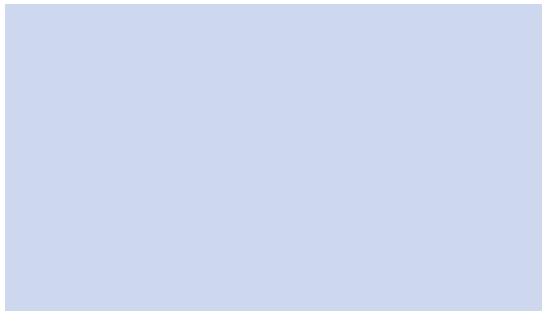
David and Amias Thomson left no account of their first Christmas at Pannaway. Unlike the fun-shunning Puritans, our first settlers would have celebrated merrily. Back in England, Christmas Day rang in [almost two weeks](#) of feasts and festivities, carols and wassails, pranks and alms-giving. King James so enjoyed the Christmas season that he started celebrating in November!

The Thomsons surely did their best to provide a bountiful Christmas feast for their little band of servants and fishermen, and for visitors who happened by. The menu probably featured the "great store of fowle of diverse sorts" that explorer Christopher Levett reported dining on at Pannaway that winter.

Did David read the Nativity story to his young son and organize games for his well-fed guests? Did Amias and her maid sing "The First Nowell" and other carols – and did the menfolk respond with a rousing "We Wish You a Merry Christmas"? We can only imagine.

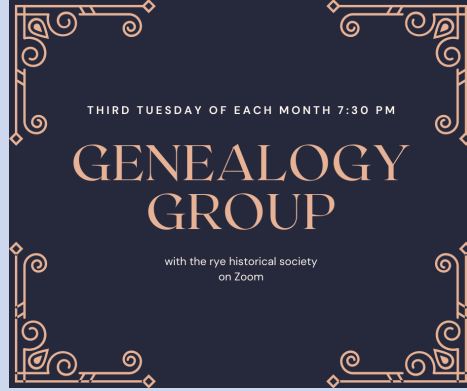
Young Johnny Thomson probably didn't get any presents, at least not on Christmas Day. In the 1600's gifts were given at New Year's.

Ongoing Free Programs





Free Self-Guided
Rye Beach Block Tour **izi.TRAVEL**



Get Involved



Become a Member



Make A Donation



Volunteer



Vision: To preserve and share Rye history by understanding the past, informing the present, and influencing the future.

Mission: To engage and educate a diverse population in Rye, New Hampshire's rich history through our programs, collections, and outreach, to encourage them to make a personal connection with their community.

603 436-9278

info@ryenhistoricalociety.org

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Rye Historical Society | 10 Olde Parish Road , P.O. Box 583, Rye, NH 03870

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