

RYE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND TOWN MUSEUM

The Rye Town Museum is open to visitors on Saturday mornings from 10 to 12 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 Museum Visit

JANUARY 2023

Happy Quatercentennial New Year!



LET'S CELEBRATE!



Holiday festivities started in early December with the Rye Vintage Christmas Parade. The Historical Society was one of a record number of floats, with our one-horse sleigh carrying Santa decked out in his signature dress surrounded with hand wrapped garland, some holly and of course lots of gifts for the little girls and boys. The sleigh was gifted to the RHS in 2014 by Jack Gacez and dates to the late 19th/early 20th century. The float won first prize in the nonprofit category, making Mr. and Mrs. Claus very happy



The lights are shining brightly at the Rye Town Museum thanks to the volunteer efforts of Steve Cash and Bob Blanchard. They look Great!



ANNUAL MEMBER HOLIDAY PARTY COLLABORATIVE

Sharing and collaboration...what could be better?

This year, the Rye Historical Society and the Greenland Historical Society combined their Holiday Member Parties into one larger celebration at the home of Anne Arnold in Greenland. So much fun was had by all. We look forward to creating even more collaborative events in 2023.



Picture This — Odiorne Family Member



In the wake of our upcoming 400th anniversary, Wendy Widen Blood of Portsmouth has donated — in honor of her mother, Barbara Craven Widen — a 1909 photograph of her great-great-grandmother, Ann Merry Odiorne Spinney Hunnefield. Ann Merry was born on February 24, 1843 and passed on December 25, 1915. She is a direct descendent of her great-4x-grandfather, John Odiorne, who was born about 1628 and settled in Odiorne Point.

Thank you Wendy for your opportune and relevant donation to our collection!

Lew Karabatsos

Native Peoples Thrived on the Seacoast in 1600

[An excerpt from Alex Herlihy's forthcoming book: *Rye New Hampshire: A Town at the Crossroads of American History*]

At the end of the last Ice Age fifteen millennium ago, the rising sea began to cover the natural land bridge between Alaska and Siberia. Before that time, for maybe ten thousand years, immigrants from Asia had crossed the bridge and slowly worked their way down the coast to become the new natives in a strange new land. And they continued to come by crude vessels.

But this new continent did not remain strange for long as they quickly made the land and water their habitat, always honoring their Creator, the Great Spirit, for endowing them with such bounty. Eventually the peoples populated all of the western hemisphere, including the northeast coast of North America.

The first settlers of eastern North America were of Algonquin stock, which is a racial and language group stretching from the Carolinas to New England and points north and west. What would later become Rye was home to more settled Penacook peoples, a confederacy that included a tribe called the Piscataqua, the native group closest to the coast. To the north and east the



more nomadic Sokoki and Abnaki people were predominant.

New Hampshire archaeologist Robert Goodby notes that this area was ice-free about 15,000 years ago. Two millennium later, there were forests and caribou, sandy soil, grasslands and some early people. A rich mythology evolved through the oral tradition recapturing stories from the past and handing them down. These stories reflected the closeness of the people and the natural world. Everything in nature had a spirit and it was important to pay tribute to all aspects of the natural world that sustained human life such as showing respect to the wily coyote. Goodby has found spear points, arrow heads and multi-purpose tools as far back as 2000 BCE (before the Common Era) when big changes revealed the use of more sophisticated tools which allowed natives the time to create art characterized by symmetrical designs. Native peoples always had more leisure time than most modern people assume, and that art would always have been present, although most of it was in a form that did not last. Wampum (shells in different forms) and furs became the medium of exchange. When we think of the Piscataqua living where we live today, we are talking about 10,000 years of continuous settlement – 400 generations. Unfortunately, development has wrecked many native sites.

Native creation myths include stories of their great migrations from Asia. Their past is one of mythic proportions, full of events and worlds we cannot begin to imagine. Stories passed down through generations of native peoples tell of this mythology, and the creation stories make the land a sacred place. When the Peoples were the only inhabitants of this continent, those myths were sacred truth. We would do well to honor them because they represent deeply-held beliefs. Through the respectful telling of these stories and the practicing of rituals that honored nature, their ancestors, coming of age ceremonies, etc., elders taught the youth values and morals that would be passed down over generations until the sacred hoop, the never-ending circle of life, was broken by European immigrants.

Natives kept a documentary history of ancient America through oral history and art. Some descendants of Europeans, through archaeology and writing, have helped to pass that history on to us. Approximately ten thousand years ago, Indians slowly migrated eastward across the great uplift and barren plains into the primordial Eden of the continent's vast eastern woodlands and endless waterways. In the American Midwest today, there is much evidence of the great urban centers they built. Around the time of the fall of Rome in the fifth century CE (Common Era), there is evidence of their many permanent settlements on the eastern reaches of the continent. Clues as to what they found here are all about us in this watery region. The richness of flora and fauna was so abundant that Indians found the entire east coast much to their liking. In the millennium prior to European settlement, their minimal numbers and way of life was integrated with that of the natural world, but ultimately their growing numbers and their behavior left its mark and altered the environment. Indians had an extensive network of trade routes with each other in what is now New Hampshire and that trade included the first half century of European settlement, before wars ended the peaceful coexistence between natives and newcomers.

By living with land and water and not trying to subdue it, and through a deep kinship with the plant and animal world, Indians developed an affinity for health and healing, creating abundant food supplies, developing a way of life that did not require constant work, and evolving a spiritual set of beliefs. When early

European settlers' accounts are filtered for bias, we learn more and come to respect native accomplishments. In his book *Indian New England Before the Mayflower*, Howard Russell describes 450 remedies and 50 drugs that lead to 60 sources of healing used by Indians, including the curative sweat bath, child birth made easier by eating lots of bear flesh, effective poultices and massage, balsam as a salve for frozen feet, unripe cranberry to extract snake venom, different oils to protect against sun and insects and hickory nut paste as a substitute for mother's milk. Balm of Gilead was the best salve for many things. Early European settlers were in awe of the robust health of the Indians they observed. It is no wonder that those trained in the use of these remedies, including many women, became sacred people, Indian priests, who held pow wows to exhibit their work. Medicine women exerted great influence on their peoples.

In what would become coastal New Hampshire, at the beginning of the 1600s native peoples found great abundance in this region from the "fruits" of the forest and the sea. Members of the Penacook Confederacy's Piscataqua tribe found much that was edible and useful from the thick forest that grew right to the shore as well as hunting all manner of wildlife. The ocean was equally abundant with shellfish and so many fin fish that natives could simply wade into the water with baskets and soon find them full, a symbol of the rich and abundant life of the seacoast over 400 years ago.

Alex Herlihy

Sixty-Six Rye History Topics

Over the years people have asked me for history on a specific Rye topic. Langdon Parsons' history of Rye was thematic; my new history is chronological. To answer their inquiries, I cut and pasted from the draft of my book, added more material and in some cases asked others more knowledgeable on the topic for input. In the process, I have accumulated quite a collection: 66 Rye history topics in Word document form. Rye Junior High school staff have already begun to use some of these documents.

If you are interested in a particular Rye history topic, I may have documented it or will take the time to do so for you.

Alex Herlihy alexherlihy@comcast.net

A Generous End to the Year

Since the last newsletter, the following new individuals and local businesses have generously made donations to support the Rye400 2023 celebration activities! The Rye400 Committee gratefully recognizes that support and is pleased to announce we have raised more than \$116,000

Founders — \$400+

Lori & Jeff Graves: \$400
Smyth Family: \$400

Pioneers — \$40+

Great Bay Orthodontics: \$250
Dania Seigle: \$200
Brian Putnam: \$100
Nicholas & Linda Toumpas: \$75
Francine & Robert Hollar: \$40

toward our \$150,000 goal!

Explorers — \$1,623+

Hugh & Andrea Lee: \$2,000

Louis & Christine Beaudette:
\$1,623

David Brackett: \$1,623

Thomas Sedoric: \$1,623

Business Sponsor

Meredith Village Savings Bank —
\$1,623



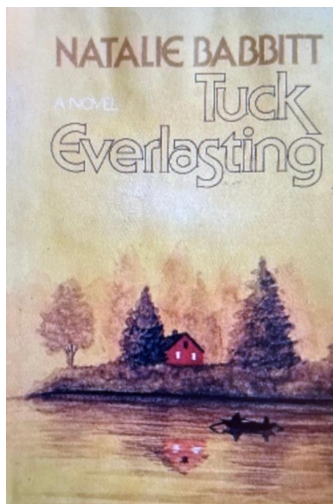
And, as we start the new year, we'd like to once again recognize our Rye400 business sponsors who have generously helped to make our 2023 plans a reality!



CHRISTINE'S



Rye Motor Inn + Swim Shop Service Federal Credit Union



Reminder — Join the Club

Don't forget to join the Rye Public Library's "Rye Reads" community-wide book club by visiting the library to get a copy of Natalie Tuck's novel, "Tuck Everlasting." For more information access <http://ryepubliclibrary.org>.

THIS MONTH IN RYE HISTORY

Rye's First Settler Sets Sail



Detail from John Smith's Map of New England

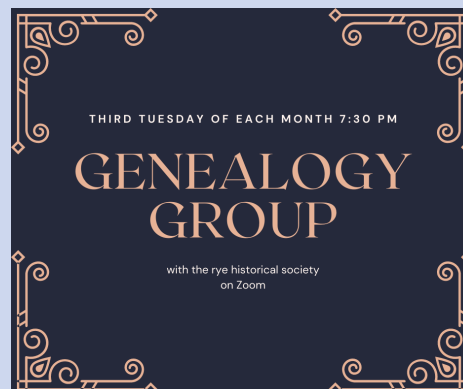
January, 1623. Eager to reach the shores of what is now Rye by the start of the spring fishing season, David Thomson and a handful of workers set sail from Plymouth, England on the *Jonathan*, a ship provided by his merchant backers.

Historians aren't sure whether Thomson's wife, Amias, and John, their young son, sailed with him or arrived later. If Thomson had already built a fortified house near Little Harbor, he could have been eager to get his family settled in their new home. His wife, the daughter of a Plymouth shipwright, may have had other ideas: "Cross the Atlantic in the dead of winter? You go ahead, David. Johnny and I will join you when it's warmer."

Ongoing Free Programs



Free Self-Guided
Rye Beach Block Tour [izi](#).TRAVEL





Get Involved

Rye Historical Society Membership Challenge

WE ARE THE COLLECTOR & PROTECTOR OF RYE HISTORY
& FISCAL SPONSOR OF THE RYE 400TH CELEBRATION

WON'T YOU HELP US REACH
400 MEMBERSHIPS IN OUR 400TH YEAR?



Make A Donation



Volunteer



Visit Ye Olde Gift Shoppe



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.

Rye Historical Society, 10 Olde Parish Road, P.O. Box 583, Rye NH 03870 • 603 436-9278

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RHS is!**

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Your copy should address 3 key questions: Who am I writing for? (Audience) Why should they care? (Benefit) What do I want them to do here? (Call-to-Action)

Create a great offer by adding words like "free" "personalized" "complimentary" or "customized." A sense of urgency often helps readers take an action, so think about inserting phrases like "for a limited time only" or "only 7 remaining"!

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

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