

RYE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND TOWN MUSEUM

Covid-19 Statement

Until further notice, the museum will be open by appointment only, limited to 2 visitors per appointment. Masks are required inside, as is hand sanitizing upon entering the building.

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

Schedule Museum Visit

RYE FOUNDING FAMILY FOCUS

Capt. John Locke 1627 – 1696

By Geoff Smith

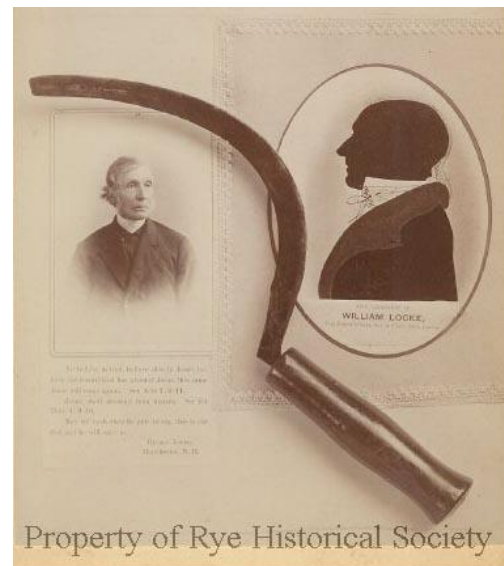
Captain John Locke came to Rye when it was known as Sandy Beach sometime after 1656 and before 1665. Prior to this he had lived in New Castle and Portsmouth, and his name is recorded numerous times in town records. He was a carpenter as well as a farmer, and framed the first meeting house in Portsmouth in 1645. Having establishing a farm at the far end of Sandy Beach, it is evident that he considered himself under the jurisdiction of Portsmouth, and vice-versa, as evidenced by continued assessments to support the church there.

But Hampton took a different view. According to Hampton records, “He sat down on the public lands at Josselyn’s Neck” and began clearing a farm without saying “by your leave”, and as the inhabitants claimed the right of saying who should become citizens of the town, they chose a committee May 24, 1666, to pull up his fence, and March 12, 1667, to warn him to desist from improving his farm. He was labelled “Trespasser” and was warned to appear at the next town meeting and give an account of himself.

On the 18th of March, 1667, the town voted “Upon the motion of John Lock who desireth to yield himself to the town of Hampton as an inhabitant here among us, living already settled upon Josselyn’s Neck in Hampton bounds, the town hath accepted of the said John Lock for an inhabitant accordingly.”

Thus, John Locke went from being a notorious squatter to a founding settler in the north reaches of Hampton, and Josselyn’s Neck became Locke’s Neck.

Over the next decade relations with the local Indians soured. Captain John



Property of Rye Historical Society

Captain Locke's sickle, flanked by portraits of two descendants.

Locke's house was the strongest in the area, and when Indian incursions occurred, his neighbors would garrison there. Locke himself had a fearsome reputation and success in skirmishes with the Indians. But in 1696 good fortune failed him. A revenge party of eight Indians arrived with the express intent of killing him, and surprised him as he was reaping grain, mortally wounding him with his own gun that he had left against a rock. One account says that when the Indians ran up to scalp him, he had just enough strength to cut off the nose of one with his sickle.

His house and farm were located near the corner of present-day Locke Road and Old Beach Road, where the original Locke family cemetery still stands. (And not far from the original Berry homestead – see last month's Founding Family.) The sickle, along with his sword, are now at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord. The Locke Family Association still meets every year and undertakes a pilgrimage to view these artifacts about every ten years.

[Click here to leave a comment.](#)

Locke Family Cemetery

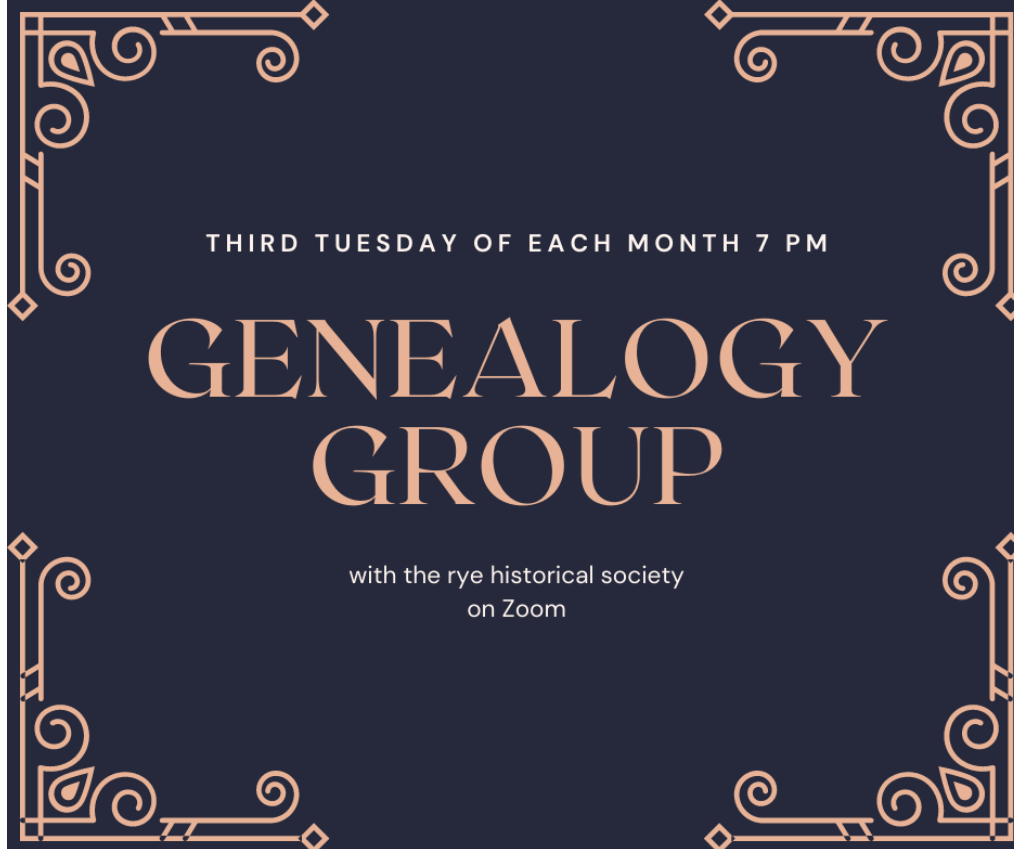


How Old is Your House?

A group of people interested in documenting the older houses of Rye has begun research that carries on the work done by Louise Tallman of Rye Historical Society. Progress has been made in finding out who built the house, the approximate year built, architectural style and changes to the house over time.

The goal of the group is to share their research with the house owners and promote preservation of the architectural heritage of the town. Progress on this project will be reported in future issues of this newsletter.

Join the the Genealogy Group's second meeting on Zoom
Tuesday, March 16 at 7 P.M.



THIS MONTH IN RYE HISTORY

Sea Road Renamed

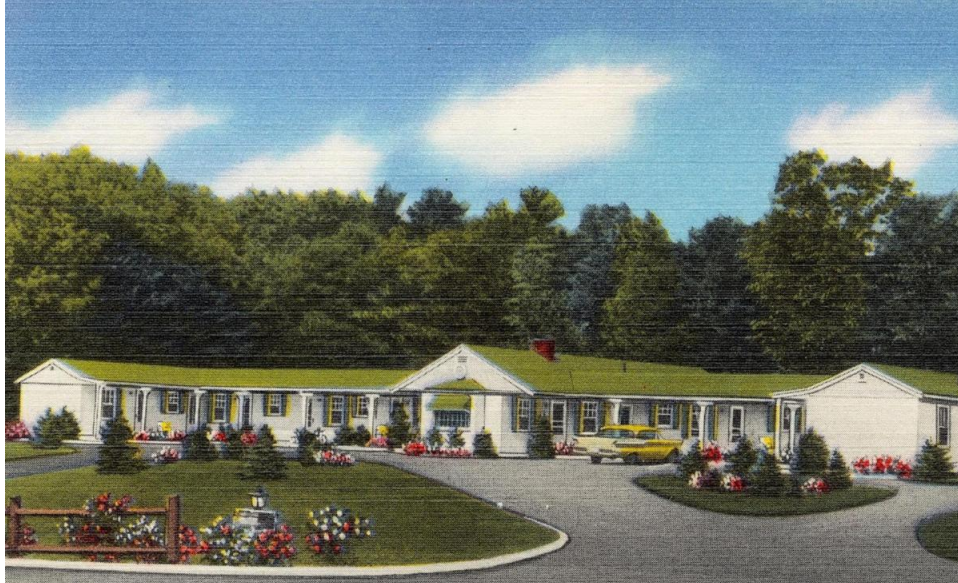
At town meeting on March 15, 1893, the people of Rye approved the first official list of names for the town's roads. Sea Road, which ran from Central Road to the Atlantic Ocean (not the Atlantic Sea) was renamed Ocean Road.

The corrected name proved to be a hard sell.

In his 1905 History of Rye, L. B. Parsons notes that hardly anyone accepted the change. Rye folks kept calling it Sea Road. And more than a century later, we still do.

Where is this?

Click on the picture if you know! Answer will be in next month's newsletter.



First person to reply correctly will be mentioned in next month's newsletter.

Last Month's Winner

Frank Drake was the first to identify this 1922 view as the lobby of Stoneleigh Manor. Honorable mention to other respondents who remembered the hotel's reuses as a school building and Franciscan retreat.



History Happy Hour FaceBook Live Sundays at 5 pm

The dredging of Rye Harbor's channel and a tidying up of the adjoining mooring areas should finish this month. Listen in to our Sunday readings of *Just Rye Harbor - An Appreciation and History* by Thomas C. Clarie and Rosemary F. Clarie, edited by Peter E. Randall.

View our trailer below!



**History
Happy
Hour**

[Sundays FaceBook Live 5 pm](#)

Share The History of Your Home with a Historic House Plaque

Many Rye homes, business and public buildings are adorned with these handsome plaques. [The cost of a plaque is \\$85.](#)

If you would like one for your home to add to the heritage of the town, house plaque applications may be picked up at the Rye library on the coffee table (behind the RHS brochures).

Check and application may be mailed to PO Box 583, Rye, NH 03870 or left in our mailbox by the front door of the museum.



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Audio tour

Rye Beach Block

★★★★★ 4 reviews | Rye | Free

Did you know there is a guided walking tour in Rye Beach? [Download the IziTRAVEL app and get started!](#)

Don't want to walk? You can take this tour from the comfort of your easy chair!

**RHS is a 501(c)(3) non profit
organization**



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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!"