



Historical Society *and* 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
Visit

A Donation InDEED!

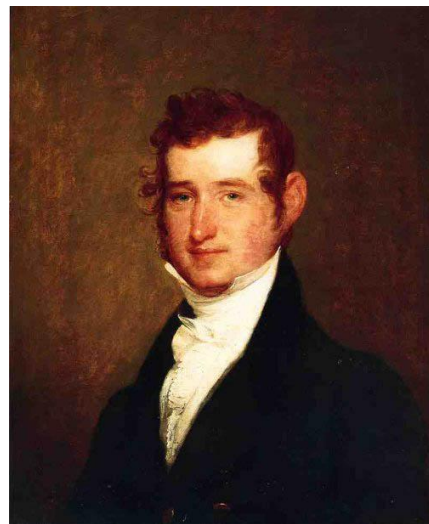
The Society recently received an important donation that has historical significance locally, nationally and to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

It comes in the form of a handwritten deed, dated December, 1820, transferring pastureland in Rye from Benjamin Lincoln Lear of Washington, D.C. (acting on behalf of the Lear family of Portsmouth, NH) to Dr. Parsons of Rye, NH.

Know all men by these presents,
that I Benjamin Lincoln Lear of the City
of Washington, District of Columbia, the son
and only child of Tobias Lear late of said City
deceased, and the grandson of Captain Tobias
Lear of the County of Rockingham
Hampshire, in consideration of the sum of Two
hundred and seventy six Dollars in hand paid
to my grandmother Mrs Mary Lear of Portsmouth
aforesaid, the widow of the said Captain Tobias
Lear, by Doctor Parsons of Rye in the
State aforesaid, and for the further consideration
of one Dollar by the said Parsons to me in hand
paid, before the sealing & delivery of these presents
the receipt whereof I hereby acknowledge, have
granted, bargained & sold, aliened, enfeoffed and
confirmed by these presents do grant, bar-
gain & sell, alien, enfeoff and confirm unto
the said Doctor Parsons and to his
heirs all my right, title & interest of whatever
nature, in & to a certain piece of pasture
lying in the town of Rye aforesaid, and being
— one

Benjamin Lincoln Lear (1792-1832), a lawyer, was the son of Colonel Tobias (1762-1816) and Mary Long Lear (1769-1793) of Portsmouth, NH and the godson of George Washington. Benjamin's father, Tobias, was the personal secretary to President Washington.

In this transaction, Benjamin is representing his grandmother, Mary Stilson Lear (1739-1829), widow of Captain Tobias Lear (1737-1781) of Portsmouth, in the sale of a parcel of pastureland in Rye, NH for \$276.00 to Doctor Parsons of Rye, NH.

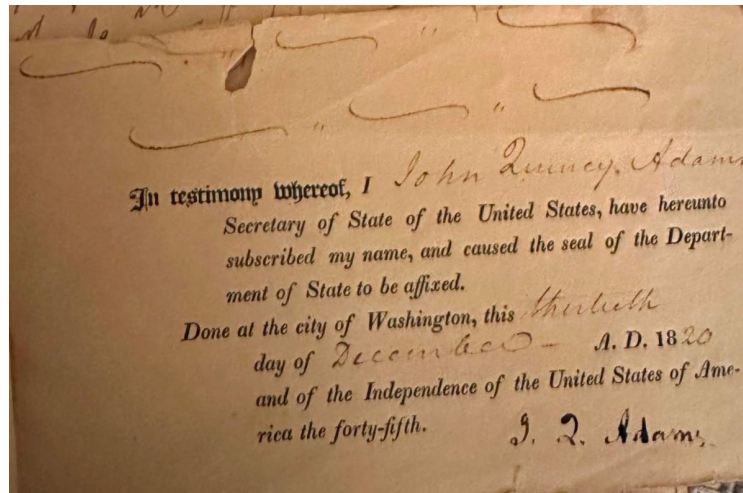


Benjamin Lincoln Lear

According to the Northeast Document Conservation Center of Andover, MA, the seals are most likely starch seals and the ink is iron gall manuscript ink, a purple-black or brown-black liquid made from iron salts and tannic acid from vegetable

sources. It is the standard ink formulation used in Europe for the 1400-year period between the 5th and 19th centuries.

Although the three handwritten pages are in poor condition with folds and tears, the majority of the document's contents are legible and have been transcribed for research purposes. Of particular interest is the original, intact, embossed seal and signature of the U.S. Secretary of State, John Quincy Adams (of Massachusetts), who would go on to become president in 1825.

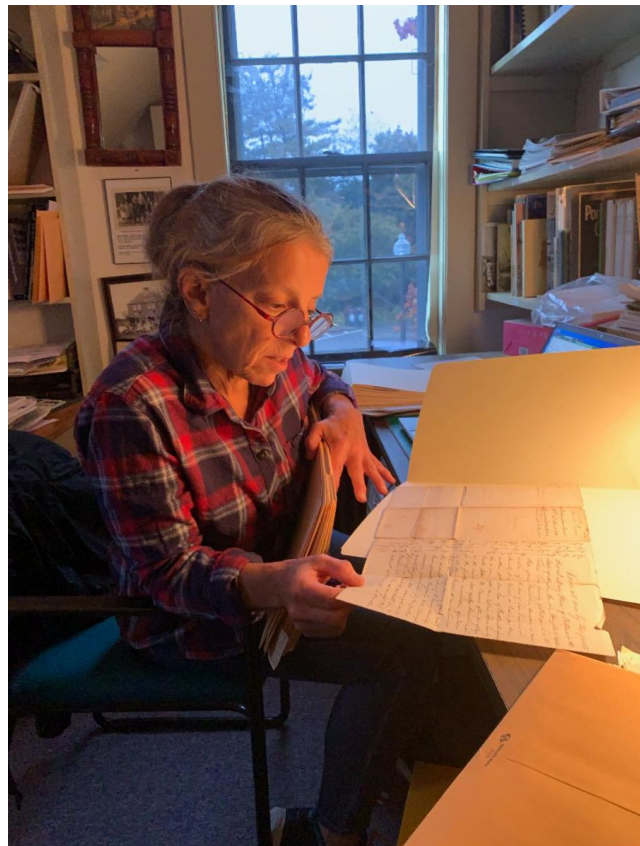


The donation comes to us from Mr. & Mrs. Matt Jones, Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Barbour and Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin Briggs — the children of Society board member, Jean Briggs Badger.

Lew Karabatsos
Chair, Collections Committee

One Good Deed Deserved Another

Speaking of deeds, we want to highlight and thank one of our volunteers, Lydia Tilsley, for completing an incredible project. A while back, Doug Parsons donated a boxful of Parsons-family-related papers that needed to be inventoried. We called for a volunteer and Lydia generously stepped forward. During the past few months, she painstakingly opened envelopes, unfolded documents, deciphered 19th century handwriting, and filed each piece in archival folders to come up with a spreadsheet and descriptions for close to 70 documents, predominantly deeds.



This was an enormous and tedious undertaking and we are so grateful to Lydia for her time, commitment and patience in seeing this through to its completion. Now that we have the spreadsheet, we can, in time, 1) understand what we have 2) catalogue it in our database and 3) make it publicly available online.

THANK YOU Doug Parsons for the original donation and THANK YOU Lydia Tilsley for your invaluable and generous commitment of time.

Lew Karabatsos

The Dan Brown Clue!

**A saintly soul with heart of gold,
Ami de les pêcheurs.
To find him, go to water's edge,
The beach that bass prefer.**

**Turn your back to mother sea,
Traverse a Holy road.
A "baker's" mansion you must pass,
To find his stone abode.**

**You seek a circle made of glass,
A sun within a sun,
On your head, the date will read,
Nine-L-Eighty-One.**

**Beneath the year, a selfie,
To prove you've made the quest.
Stand proud and stately if you must,
But kneeling would be best.**

Those who attended An Evening with Dan Brown, held at the Rye Junior High School in September, will remember that he spoke fondly of a childhood filled with treasure hunts. We reached out to see if he would be willing to provide a clue for our October scavenger hunt and he did not disappoint. Thank you Dan Brown!

Can you guess where he led participants?

Ginna Macdonald

Family Graveyards

Graveyards on the Isles of Shoals - who is buried there? This month we will look at the Beebe Graveyard, on Star Island, which is being maintained by the Star Island Corporation. TaMara Conde, a cemetery restoration contractor, is shown doing restoration work for the Isles of Shoals Historical and Research Association (ISHRA).

Three daughters - Jessie, 2, Minnie,

4, and Mitty, 7 - of Rev. George Beebe were buried here after the older one contracted Scarlet fever while attending school on the mainland. Her little sisters contracted it as well and died. [Read more about this family and graveyard here.](#)



RHS member Hunter Stetz is speaking in Salisbury!

presents. . .

Hunter Stetz

**“Understanding Native
American History Through
Archeological Discoveries”**



November 11, 2023
12:00-2:00pm
in the Colchester Room, Town Hall
5 Beach Rd., Salisbury MA

The event is free (but donations are welcome).

Follow Salisbury Historical Society on Facebook and
Instagram:

Hunter Stetz is a Hampton Falls, NH native, having earned a BA in Archaeology from Boston University in 2015. He returned to his NH roots to contribute to the communities and histories with which he has the deepest personal connections. It is important to him that all perspectives of northern New England's history are elucidated. Of special note, Hunter is a core member of the Indigenous New Hampshire Collaborative Collective.

Field Trip Funding



Rye400 Committee Chair Andy Stecher presents Michelle Pitts, Principal, Rye Elementary School, and Anne Gilbert, Principal, Rye Junior High School, with a check for \$3,510, to support funding field trips for Rye students to the Seacoast Science Center. Looking on is Jim Chase, the Center's CEO. The funds represent all proceeds from the September 21, 2023, "Evening with Dan Brown." Stecher stated, "It is with great pride that Rye400 supports this effort. We believe this funding provides an opportunity for Rye students to better understand the Center's work and its impact on the seacoast community and environment in which they live."

Historic Home Tour & Holiday Tree Lighting

The **Rye400 Historic Home Tour** on December 2, 2023, 1:00-4:00pm is **SOLD OUT!** A big THANK YOU to those who are supporting the event through their ticket purchases.



But there's another event on **December 2nd from 3:00-4:30p.m. on Parsons Field** — the **Rye400 Holiday Tree Lighting!** Bring the family to the live-animal petting zoo, toast marshmallows, eat yummy cupcakes, take pictures by the holiday tractor, watch school children hang their hand-made ornaments, and enjoy the town's tree lighting at 4:15pm. You can also bring new or gently used winter clothing for those less fortunate. All this sponsored by Tate & Foss/Sotheby's International Realty.

Rye400

Events Calendar

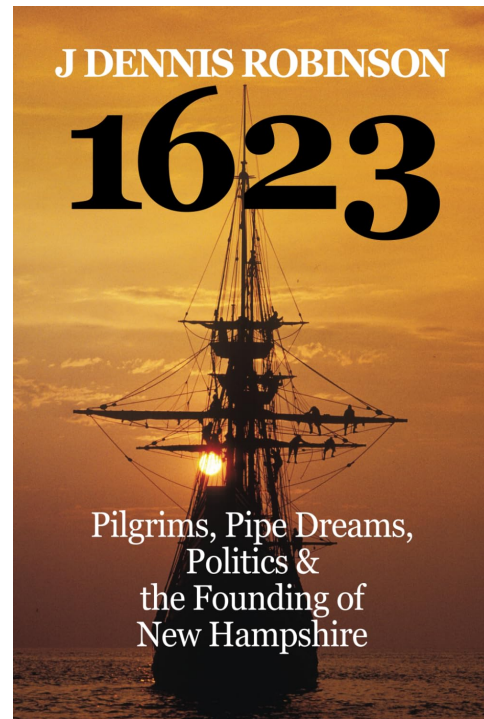
Nov 8: Anne Jennison presents "The Impact of 500 years of colonization on the Abenaki-Wabenaki People of the NorthEast." Rye Public Library 6:30pm – 7:30pm.

Dec 2: Historic House Tour. 1:00pm - 4:00pm.
Sold Out

Dec 2: Holiday Tree Lighting, Marshmallow Toasting and Petting Zoo on Parsons Field, 3:00-4:30pm; sponsored by Tate & Foss/Sotheby's International Realty.

Dec 3: Holiday Parade. Sponsored by the Town of Rye.

Dec 13: Author J. Dennis Robinson presents his new book, "1623," Rye Public Library, 6:30pm.



Holiday Open House

After the parade passes by on **December 3**, stop in at the museum for some mulled cider – and do a little shopping in Ye Olde Gift Shoppe while you're there!

THIS MONTH IN RYE HISTORY

November, 1775

Rye Musters for War

In the summer of 1775, Captain Joseph Parsons of Rye recruited a couple of dozen men, including "Nimshi Locke, Indian or negro," to stand guard at Fort William and Mary, watching for British warships. This small group became the nucleus for the larger company that Captain Parsons assembled in the fall.

The company roster of November, 1775, lists two lieutenants (William Seavey and Nathan Gilman), one ensign (Samuel Wallis), four sergeants, four corporals and 68 privates (again including Nimshi Locke).

Two Marden youngsters, Nathaniel and Joseph, served as fifer and drummer.

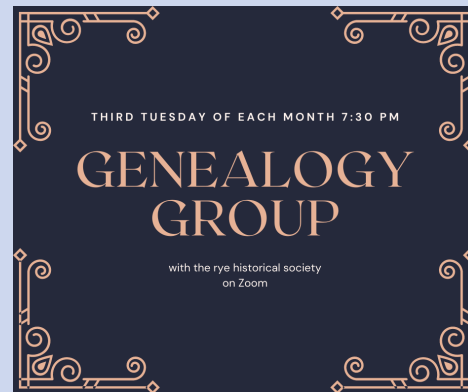
The Rye company joined General Washington's forces in Cambridge and remained until February or March, 1776, when the British evacuated Boston.



Ongoing Free Programs



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



Become a Member

Get Involved



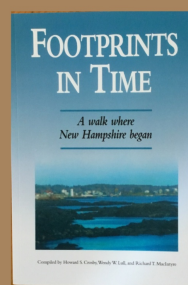
Make A Donation



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
info@ryenhistoricalociety.org

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