



Artifacts and Anchors

A quarterly newsletter for Members, Volunteers, and Friends of the Kittery Historical & Naval Society



Attendees of Kittery Seaside Gardens Through the Centuries take in the stunning gardens and architecture of the Bray house, home of Jonathan King and James Stott.

Fall 2022

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Garden Tour was a tremendous success

The gift of perfect weather on July 9th capped the experience of attendees at the Kittery Historical and Naval Society's garden tour fund-raiser. A year in the planning, all facets of the tour came together to make for a hugely successful event. In addition to the sparkling sunshine, the gardens were gorgeous, the houses were beautiful, and the attendees were uniformly complimentary of the experience.

A total of 347 people bought tickets for the tour. The Society utilized online ticketing for the first time with success; 241 of the tickets were purchased through the ticketing website, with the remainder sold in person at the Museum, at the Kittery Block Party, or at the event. Check-in of online purchased tickets worked smoothly using scanning software on volunteers' cell phones. A small army of more than forty volunteers helped set up, direct parking, act as docents in the gardens, and then wrap things up at the end of the day.

The organizing committee was pleased to learn the tour netted over \$7500 to advance the digitization of the Museum's collections. Thanks to everyone who contributed, in so many ways, to making this event such a success. We could not have done it without you!



This arbor is a striking addition to the side yard of the Lady Pepperrell House.



Trisha Olmstead and her dog welcome tour attendees to the beautiful grounds of her home on Foyes Lane.



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From the PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

As the end of summer approaches, I'd like to thank all of you who either renewed your membership in the Kittery Historical & Naval Society or who joined us for the first time. We really do appreciate your support.

Along with the change of seasons that is rapidly approaching, we also anticipate a real change of seasons in the museum with the departure of our present Director, Kim Sanborn, at the end of September. The Board of Trustees is presently accepting applications and interviewing candidates for an administrative assistant who will be taking on the administrative part of what Kim is presently doing. That leaves a lot of other tasks for the trustees and volunteers to take on. This presents several opportunities for our membership to become more involved in activities both inside and outside the museum. We are putting together a list of those opportunities and will send it out shortly. Watch your email for details

Thank you,

Bob

Bob Gray
President

From our library:

TALKING TO PEOPLE OF THEIR
OWN AFFAIRS.

MANNERS

Culture and Dress

IN THE

Best American Society

by Richard A. Wells, A.M.,
King, Richardson & Co., Publishers,
1890

Remember that people take more interest in their own affairs than in anything else which you can name. If you wish your conversation to be thoroughly agreeable, lead a mother to talk of her children, a young lady of her last ball, an author of his forthcoming book, or an artist of his exhibition picture. Having furnished the topic, you need only listen; and you are sure to be thought not only agreeable, but thoroughly sensible and well-informed.

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Information about The Kittery Historical and Naval Museum may be found on our website: kitterymuseum.org or on [facebook.com/KitteryMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/KitteryMuseum).

From the DIRECTOR

September 2022

Hello Friends,

As we finish Kittery's 375th Anniversary year, it doesn't feel like I have been here at the Museum for over a decade. As many of you know, I will be leaving at the end of September for new adventures.

First, I would like to say what a pleasure it has been all these years to work for the community and share our amazing local history. I have learned so much in my time here. Many of our treasured historians are now gone, but they left us so many stories, legends and lore of Kittery. I feel very lucky to have known them and heard their tales of the past. We have worked hard to conserve this legacy through the Museum. I have also been fortunate to work with those who are still here and are passionate about preserving the history for the centuries to come.

Secondly, I would like to sincerely THANK all the members, past and present who have supported the Museum and Society while I was here. The Museum is such a precious resource to our community; a hidden gem that needs to shine brightly for generations to come.

Thirdly, I would encourage you all to become an active part of the Museum. It takes volunteers to preserve our legacy by educating, sharing and recording the history before it becomes "just a thing of the past". The community is a critical component of this process.

It has been a wonderful experience and one of the best opportunities I could have ever asked for.

Sincerely,

Kim

Kim Sanborn, Director

News & Events

Independence Day Celebration attended by Governor Mills

On June 25, Governor Janet Mills was among the dignitaries attending Kittery's Fourth of July celebration and annual reading of the Declaration of Independence at the Thresher Memorial Park next to the Museum and Town Hall. Senator Mark Lawrence and Representatives Michele Meyer and Kristi Mathieson were also in attendance.

Upcoming Events

Murders in Kittery with Bob Gray Thursday, October 27, 6 - 8 p.m.

Traip Academy, \$20

Offered by Kittery Adult Ed, register online

For over 100 years, Kittery has been the location of numerous despicable crimes. Come hear the tales of foul murder committed by drunken fiends and other ne'er-do-wells at the turn of the century. Bob will travel back through history to focus on the poor victims as well as the criminals who committed these heinous crimes.

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon Nov. 7 at Warren's Lobster House

Invitations will be going out soon.

Holiday Open House, Dec. 8, 9 & 10

Returning after a two-year absence. See Page 7 for details!



Town Manager Kendra Amaral greets the crowd assembled to hear the annual reading of the Declaration of Independence. Also in attendance were State Senator Mark Lawrence, State Representative Michele Meyer, Governor Janet Mills, and State Representative Kristi Mathieson.



Governor Mills, Kittery town councilors, and state legislators pose for a photograph with Colonial re-enactors at Kittery's Independence Day Celebration.

Twenty-eight years ago the Kittery Historical Society invited Raymond Tobey to speak at one of its meetings. The December 1994 issue of the Society's newsletter, *Arti-facts*, printed Mr. Tobey's memories of growing up in Kittery Point.

We are so lucky to have people like Raymond Tobey writing for us about the Kittery of the past. Mr. Tobey now lives in Rye, N.H., but hometown to him will always be Kittery Point.

On November 8, he was able to come to our meeting and speak to us about his youth. A brief review appears on the last page of this issue.

Raymond Tobey, our speaker on November 8, was born in Kittery Point 88 years ago. He lived in the 1763 Frizzell-Phillips house, Pepperrell Road for a few years before moving to his family's newly built home on Chauncey Creek Rd.

Through Mr. Tobey's descriptions of his youthful activities we were treated to glimpses of the past such as watching the trolleys and later the steam trains go by, "prowling" the harbor in a small boat, coasting down Tenney's Hill in winter, skating on Deering's Pond, fishing off the deck of the old schooner "Louella," hiking from Mitchell School to Mt. Agamenticus, shaking hands with President Taft, and playing baseball for the Traip Academy team.

Interspersing his talk with humorous incidents Mr. Tobey also mentioned places – the trolley car barn, Cooper's Store, Sawyer's Store, Brave Boat Harbor School, Frisbee's icehouse on Deering Pond – that now exist only in memory.

Back City

by Raymond Tobey

Reprinted from the 1994 *Arti-facts*

Probably a great many Kittery dwellers today are not familiar with the term "Back City" in reference to the area which includes the Bartlett Road, the Norton Road, the Lewis Road and the outer Haley Road. Its boundaries were never well defined but seventy-five years ago the name was in general use. Gullible strangers exploring Kittery looked in vain for the bustling metropolis described to him by some local joker.

My buddy, Alexander Waldron, and I frequently visited the area on foot, usually starting from the ice house at the foot of Deering Pond and following a wood road on the east side of the pond. We soon reached a cut over section which included a sawdust pile left by a portable sawmill. That was a fine place to pick raspberries in season. Pushing on toward the York Harbor & Beach Railroad tracks we passed a second sawdust pile which was occasionally ignited by cinders from a passing steam locomotive.

On one occasion we arrived there while the local fire department was extinguishing one of these blazes. We volunteered for a small sum to spend the night there in case it flared up again. We managed to stay awake until near dawn when a small flame appeared which we promptly suppressed. When the fire chief came out in the morning to check he deflated our great work by saying that it probably would have gone out by itself.

A lady hermit named Molly Miles used to reside nearby. All that remained of her occupancy was a small pile of debris known as Molly's dump.

The path beyond the railroad tracks crossed part of the pasture of Joe Emery, dairy man and longtime provider of RFD service from the Kittery Point post office. For many years he battled the drifts of winter and the mud holes of spring, first by horse power and eventually by gasoline power

Next was a swamp crossing on stepping stones to the Hill brothers orchard. Apparently due to differences in housekeeping standards, one brother lived in the house and the other in an outbuilding. Here we picked up a road that branches off the Bartlett Road. Today it is known as the Charles Hill Road but at that time as far as I remember it was anonymous. Before leaving the Hill property we were given a cheery hail from someone walking toward us across the field. That was Adolphus "Dophy" Weeks, occupant of the next house. He didn't have many people to talk to in the course of the day so was

making up for lost time with a steady chatter, questions about our relatives and general goings-on down in the village. He walked along with us toward Charley Carter's keeping up chatter as long as we were within earshot. We didn't see Charley. He was probably out somewhere whitewashing a ceiling, one of his major occupations.

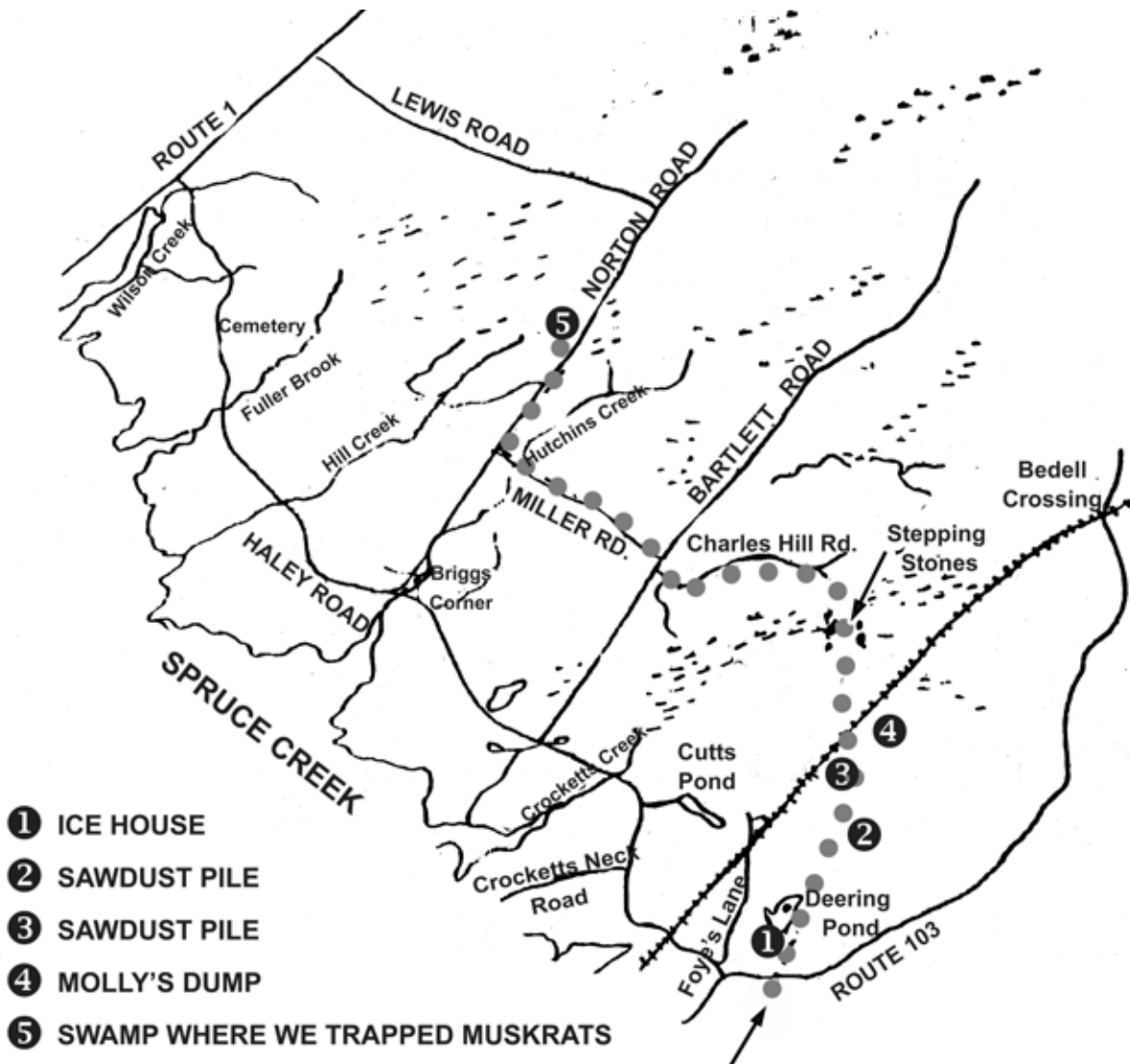
Leaving the Bartlett Road we took the Miller Road across to the Norton Road, into comparatively unknown territory with fewer houses. At one house that I remember especially, the whole family came to peer out the window. Although they lived less than three miles from downtown Kittery Point they probably had not seen us before and vice versa, and they were probably wondering who those strangers were.

We made one important discovery, a fair sized swamp on the far side of the road with numerous muskrat

dens. We decided that when opening day of the trapping season came around we would be back. When that time came it took only a couple days to prove that hiking out to check our traps and getting back in time for school wasn't easy, so we began to take our traps out on Friday afternoon, checking them on Saturday and Sunday morning, then bringing them in until the following Friday. By freeze-up I had thirty five dollars worth of muskrat hides.



Not having visited the Back City for seventy years I took a quick trip out there recently. A lot of new homes had been built in the Haley Road area but there had been no boom along the Bartlett and Norton Roads. Much of the land that had been cleared at that time for gardens, pastures and miscellaneous usage has reverted to woods. Apparently it will take some years for the restaurants, discount stores, motels, etc. to expand enough to swallow up the old Back City.



VOLUNTEER Spotlight

We are so glad **John Perry** found time in his busy schedule to volunteer at the Kittery Historical and Naval Museum this season. After a career in the nuclear power industry, he returned to Kittery in 2007 and decided to become active in public service. Besides serving on the Kittery planning board, he is president of the trustees of the Kittery Water District. John feels his involvement with the town over the last several years has made them some of his most rewarding.

John has a long connection with Kittery Point – he grew up on Haley Road in a house that has been in the Perry family since 1784. After graduating from R.W. Traip Academy in 1960, he worked two years at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard before applying to Wentworth Institute of Technology. There he earned an associate degree in nuclear engineering.

His employment in the nuclear test group for reactors on submarines at General Dynamic’s Quincy Massachusetts shipyard began a lengthy career in the nuclear field. While at Quincy as a supervisory test engineer, John went on two sea trials of new submarines built by their Electric Boat division, both with Admiral Hyman Rickover (considered “Father of the Nuclear Navy”) on board. While at Electric Boat in Groton, Connecticut, he spent over a decade as a chief nuclear test engineer, and went on his third sea trial, again with Admiral Rickover on board.

John continued work in the nuclear field with employment at Knolls Atomic Power Labs in New York state on the Trident Missile system; Public Service Company of Indiana, for the Marble Hill nuclear power plant, and then as a consultant travelling extensively along the East Coast.

Semi-retirement brought him a new life chapter working in the hotel industry, alternating between properties in Maine and Florida. Now, “fully” retired and back in Kittery, his friendly manner, knowledge about nuclear powered submarines, and familiarity with the town have made him an engaging and enlightening source of information for our museum guests.



Volunteer John Perry



From the Archives

Spotlight on Collections

Who, What, Where

On close inspection, it is probably evident what this item consists of, but what was it specifically used for?

Answer on page 8.

TRUSTEES News

- The Board of Trustees recently heard an informative presentation by Patricia Violette, Executive Director of the Albacore Park in Portsmouth, NH. Her topic – the organization of small museums – addressed fundamentals such as by-laws, mission statements, boards of trustees, collections, and the educational value of exhibits. On her recommendation, the Museum has become a member of the American Alliance of Museums and will be participating in their Museum Assessment Program (MAP). AAM states that “Since its inception in 1981, MAP has helped more than 5,000 small and mid-sized museums of all types strengthen operations, plan for the future, and meet standards.”
- The board has had several special meetings to contemplate the transition after our long-time director, Kim Sanborn, leaves at the end of September. An administrative assistant position has been advertised locally and posted on our website.

- The front of the Museum received much-needed painting this summer. It was an immediate improvement to the appearance of our building.

- Four large vinyl banners hung in the Museum’s faux exterior windows also contributed to our more colorful appearance this season. Through a grant from Kennebunk Savings Bank, we designed and had printed banners celebrating the 375th Anniversary of Kittery’s incorporation. One banner promoted Kittery Seaside Gardens Through the Centuries, a Society sponsored fund-raiser; two banners featured images of Kittery’s William Whipple and Sir William Pepperrell; and one banner announced the re-publishing of John Frost’s *Colonial Village*, a book first published for the 300th Anniversary of Kittery in 1947.



The Holiday Open House Is Back! **A Nautical Noel**

After a two-year absence due to COVID, our holiday open house is returning! This year’s theme is “A Nautical Noel.”

We are currently seeking the support of local businesses with a silent auction and raffle. All the prizes will be awarded, and all donations support the Museum in its effort to preserve and promote the history of Kittery.



FRI, SAT, SUN

December 8, 9, and 10

The bake sale will also be back, and we would love to have our baker members contribute items to the line up: breads, cookies, bars and candy are all welcome.

We are looking for donations of items for the silent auction and raffle. Theme baskets are being considered, such as a cat lover’s basket, dog lover’s basket, dorm helper basket and so forth.

If you have items to donate or would like to volunteer to help create the baskets, contact the Museum (207-439-3080) and leave a message for Jeanne.

If you would like to help at the front counter during the event, sign up on the white board in the office.



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Answer to Who, What, Where (p. 6): An antique brass stencil, about 13" in diameter, with letters of the alphabet, numbers 0 through 9, and fractions, among other symbols. A brass marking gauge on a knob turns to select and isolate the letter or number away from the others for inking. The inking kit contains a short, round brush and ink. It was used to mark product, such as wooden barrels, boxes and other commercial pieces. Patented in 1868 and 1871. Object ID 1992.97