

# PRIMITIVE PIECES

The Newsletter of The Peace Dale Museum of Art and Culture

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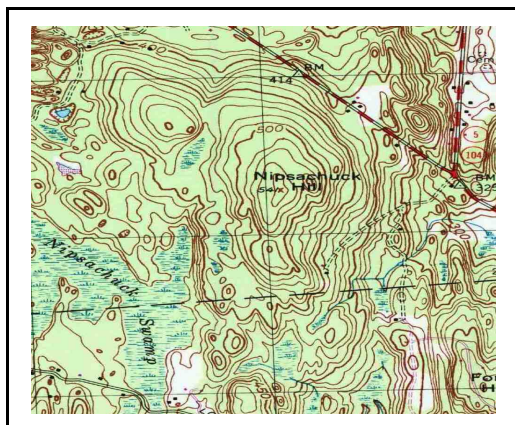
## Battlefield Archaeology of King Philip's War *Discoveries at the site of the Second Battle of Nipsachuck*

The first English to arrived in New England found it to be "spacious and void." It was spacious, but it was not void— its Native inhabitants had lived here for thousands of years. The tensions among the Natives and the invading English grew over two generations, finally coming to a head in the conflict now known as King Philip's War.

King Philips's War (1675-1676) inflicted greater casualties in proportion to population than any other war in American history. Thousands of people were killed, maimed, taken captive, or sold into slavery, and many died from disease or exposure. Entire settlements were burned to the ground. Animals, crops, and stored food were destroyed or stolen.

One of the final battles of the war, and the one believed to have effectively ended the Narragansett resistance, took place in North Smithfield on July 2, 1676. An hour after dawn, 300 Connecticut mounted soldiers

Thursday, April 7



and 100 of their Mohegan and Pequot allies attacked a Narragansett encampment at the base of a hill at the edge of Nipsachuck Swamp. During the three-hour battle, 171 Narragansett men, women, and children were captured or killed. Among them was the elderly Saunk Squaw Quaiapin, sister of the Narragansett sachem Ninigret, who died with several of her lieutenants. She was the last of the principal Narragansett sachems to be killed or captured by the English.

For centuries, the precise location of the Second Battle of Nipsachuck was in doubt. It finally was located in an

investigation sponsored by the American Battlefield Protection Program of the National Park Service. Dr. Kevin McBride, Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Connecticut, led the archaeological investigation of the site. Dr. McBride is the former Director of Research at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center. He has conducted archaeological and historical research in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island as well as Mexico, the Caribbean and Portugal. His research interests include historical archaeology, early 17th century Native-European trade, and battlefield archaeology.

On Thursday, April 7, Dr. McBride will describe the methods used to discover and identify the battlefield artifacts and the historical significance of the battle. The 7:00 p.m. program will be broadcast on Zoom. To register, please send an e-mail to [pdmoac@aol.com](mailto:pdmoac@aol.com)

# 18th Century Travelers in Rhode Island

## Where They Stayed, What They Saw, and the People They Met

What was life like in Rhode Island three hundred years ago? What did it look like? Smell like? What kind of houses did people live in? How did they react to strangers? It's almost impossible for us to imagine. We have no photographs; no recordings; and little physical evidence.

But a few 18th century visitors to Rhode Island did write down their impressions, and those records paint a vivid picture of a world long past.

Sarah Kemble Knight, a Boston innkeeper and wife of a ship's master, was one of those early visitors. In 1704 she was required to travel on horseback from Boston to New Haven to settle an estate. She kept a diary of her journey.

Mrs. Knight, then 38, was accompanied by "post" riders, as was customary for travelers. Crossing South County, she reached the Pawcatuck River,

probably near present-day downtown Westerly.

The river was too high and moving too swiftly for her to cross safely, so she stopped at a home near the river occupied by an old couple and two children.

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### Thursday, May 5

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She describes it this way:  
*"This little Hutt was one of the wretchedest I ever saw a habitation for human creatures. It was supported with shores enclosed with Clapboards, laid in Lengthways, and so much asunder that the light come throu' every where; the door tyed on w<sup>th</sup> a cord in y<sup>e</sup> place of hinges; The floor bear earth; no windows but such as the thin covering afforded, nor any furniture but a Bedd w<sup>th</sup> a glass Bottle hanging at y<sup>e</sup> head on't; an earthan cupp, a small pewter Bason; A Bord w<sup>th</sup> sticks to stand on, instead of a*

*table, and a block or two in y<sup>e</sup> corner instead of chairs."*

Sarah Kemble Knight was one of several who were people brave enough to make a sometimes-perilous journey on poor roads, and literate enough to record what they saw.

On Thursday, May 5, historian Robert A. Geake will recount the impressions of some of those visitors, including Mrs. Knight. He will tell us about the inns and taverns where they stayed and the people they encountered, including the tavern keeper in Charlestown named Davell whom Mrs. Knight refers to as Mr. Devil, and his two daughters, who "look't as old as the Divel himself, and quite as Ugly."

The program will take place at 7:00 p.m. and will be broadcast on Zoom. To attend, please send an e-mail to the museum administrator at [pdmoac@aol.com](mailto:pdmoac@aol.com).



### Please let us know where you are!

We are updating our mailing lists— our old-fashioned snail mail mailing list and our e-mail list.

If we don't have your correct addresses, please send them to our office at [pdmoac@aol.com](mailto:pdmoac@aol.com). We need your permission to send you copies of our periodic e-mails.

## *Celebrating our 130th Anniversary*

### **The Peace Dale Museum of Art and Culture**

1058 Kingstown Road • Peace Dale, Rhode Island 02879 • (401) 783-5711

[www.peacedalemuseum.org](http://www.peacedalemuseum.org)   [pdmoac@aol.com](mailto:pdmoac@aol.com)

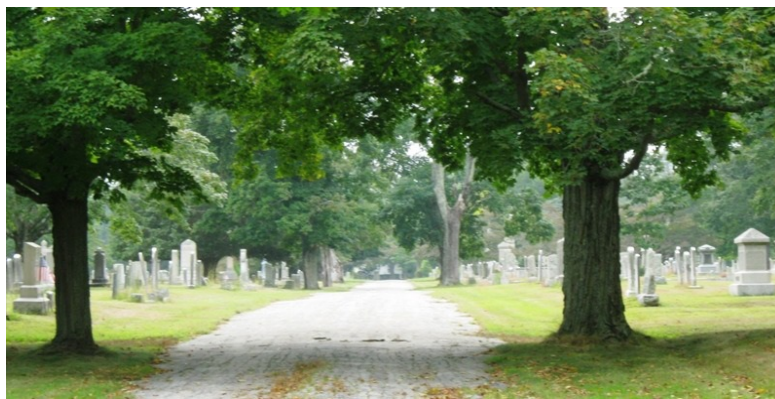
*Julie Wardwell, Museum Administrator • Louise Weaver, Administrative Assistant*

*Mary Brown, Educator*



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## **There are Stories Behind These Stones**

Most people don't think of cemeteries as repositories of history. But a cemetery can hold as much history as a library. One such cemetery is Elm Grove, North Kingstown's first public cemetery and its largest.

Elm Grove was started in 1851, at a time when most people interred family members on their farms. As South County grew and family farms became neighborhoods, many old family burial grounds were moved to Elm Grove, which now covers 44 acres

and holds more than 10,000 graves.

Some of the first white settlers of North Kingstown are buried at Elm Grove, as are many veterans of the Revolutionary War and the Civil War.

Each stone marking a grave is physical evidence of a person who once lived, and the words on those stones were carefully chosen to tell us why the person should be remembered.

On Saturday, May 21, North Kingstown Town Historian Tim

Cranston will take us on a walking tour of Elm Grove Cemetery.

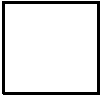
Tim will tell us about the lives of some of the people buried at Elm Grove. When we hear their stories, we will learn some of the history of South County.

The tour will begin at 10:00 a.m. Elm Grove Cemetery is at 960 Tower Hill Road, about two miles south of Wickford.

The tour will start at the Cranston family plot, just inside the southern-most entrance to the cemetery.

***Join Tim Cranston for a walking tour of Elm Grove Cemetery  
in North Kingstown on Saturday, May 21 at 10:00 a.m.***

Peace Dale Museum of Art and Culture  
1058 Kingstown Road  
Peace Dale, RI 02879



## “Trash or Treasure” Fundraiser

Sunday, September 25, 2022



The Dunes Club, Narragansett

Professional appraisals by Tom Tomaszek

Cocktails and open forum appraisals at 4:00 p.m. • Buffet supper at 6:00 p.m.

Cash bar. Business casual attire.

Your ticket entitles you to one appraisal. Additional items are \$10 each.

To reserve your ticket, please contact the Museum Office by phone at (401) 783-5711

or by e-mail at [pdmoac@aol.com](mailto:pdmoac@aol.com)