

LEARN



INSPIRE



+



**WELCOME
TO THE
WINDHAM MUSEUM**

EXPLORE



DISCOVER





The Windham Museum

This booklet is dedicated to the past, present and future children of Windham. Our mission is to excite and inspire our children about learning Windham's history through the museum's artifacts and stories from our past. Thank you for visiting the museum.

WELCOME TO THE WINDHAM MUSEUM

The Windham Museum is a fun place to learn, explore, and discover exhibits about the history of the town of Windham, New Hampshire.

Do you like to collect things? Museums are places that hold many collections of objects. These collections from the past are called artifacts. Our museum tells stories of hundreds of artifacts and gives examples of their historical and cultural importance.

Learning about your town's history is important for you to understand the values and significance of traditions and heritage of the town where you live.



THE WINDHAM MUSEUM

Built in 1898, the Armstrong Memorial Building was the town's first library.

Note: this was the first stand-alone library. The collection had been previously kept upstairs at Town Hall.

HISTORICAL & EDUCATIONAL GOALS OF THE WINDHAM MUSEUM

To collect and preserve Windham artifacts from the 18th century to modern times

To continue to educate children and residents in the history of Windham

To continue to collect recent Windham historical materials

To plan events to bring the community together to share in the history of Windham

To conduct research on collections of artifacts in Windham's history

HISTORY OF WINDHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE

- This area was initially home to the Pawtucket Native Americans.
- Scottish immigrants seeking religious freedom began to settle in the area in 1719.
- The region was known as "Nutfield" and also included what are now the towns of Derry and Londonderry.
- Windham was the second town designated by Governor Benning Wentworth following the establishment of the New Hampshire-Massachusetts border.
- Windham was the birthplace of Samuel Dinsmoor, who served as the Governor of New Hampshire from 1831 to 1834.
- The first census was in Windham in 1790 and totaled 663 residents.
- In the most current 2020 census, Windham has 15,815 residents.

Windham's historic sites include:

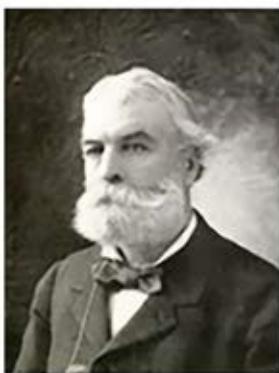
Searles School and Chapel
Searles Castle
Windham Depot
Town Center

THE WINDHAM MUSEUM HISTORY



- In 1870, Colonel Thomas Nesmith bequeathed \$3,000 in his will to fund a library.
- By the early 1880's, there were 2,500 books in the library and space was limited with the need for more books and space.
- One of the descendants of the founding families of Windham, George Washington Armstrong, funded the library in memory of his paternal ancestors as a gift to the town of Windham.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE ARMSTRONG MEMORIAL BUILDING



William W. Dinsmoor
was the architect

Loreen Bailey
was responsible
for stone laying

George William Thorn
was responsible
for the carpentry



- The stones used for the construction of the building were from native stone from the local fields and reflected wealth and opulence of the time.
- This building was designed for beauty, for convenience, and for durability, and could hold up to 10,000 books and a legacy that would last.
- The shelves would be able to hold any size book.

DEDICATION OF THE ARMSTRONG MEMORIAL BUILDING

Here are a few quotes from the presenters at the library dedication that was held on 4 January 1898:

- *"Mr. Armstrong - this gift is in dedication of the memory of your father, one who is worthy of good deeds, whose character give grace and dignity to the good he does."*
- Reverend James P. Harper
- *"This building is a gift to the town of Windham, New Hampshire. I charge you as given the keys of the library not only as a home for the library given to the town by Mr. Nesmith but as a memorial hall for those born in Windham."*
- George Washington Armstrong
- *"There is no danger that the average man, woman or child in our New England communities will read too much, and become a bookworm and nothing more."*
- William Henry Anderson, Esq.
- *"This will help to furnish to future generations to illustrate to them the life of those who have gone before."*
- Reverend Augustus Berry

WHAT ARTIFACTS ARE DISPLAYED IN THE WINDHAM MUSEUM

The Windham Museum has a large collection of artifacts pertaining to the history of Windham, New Hampshire. Some of the museum's archival collections include pottery, letters, documents, maps, blueprints, diaries, books, and photographs.

The museum's collection also consists of textiles, quilts, household items, artwork, furniture, china and glassware, military history, signage, and farming equipment. Many items belonged to historic Windham families such as the Campbells, Armstrongs, Harrises, and Dinsmores.



The Reading Room as it was in 1898.
This room in the museum looks similar today
with the same table and carpentry.

How old are the Artifacts?

The collection of artifacts began over a century ago with the goal that they be preserved by the town. Listed below and on the following page are some of the objects that you will see:



Entrance: When you enter the museum, you will see a plaque with a coin that shows the 300th anniversary of Windham and highlighting the three towns of Windham, Londonderry, and Derry.



Wreath of Hair: When people during this time period died, some families made a wreath of hair from their loved one as a memory of their family member.



Foot Warmers: These were perforated boxes filled with coal to keep feet warm.



Shoes: These are soles of shoes that show that, at the time, there were no right shoes or left shoes, only shoes that could be worn on either foot.



Chamber Pot: This is a container that is kept in a bedroom that is used as a toilet. People used this pot for the bathroom so they would not need to go outside to the outhouse in the middle of the night in winter.



Spinning Wheel: Colonial women used spinning wheels to create homespun that is woven into fabric.



Thresher: This is a farm machine that separates grain and seed crops from their chaff.

IMPORTANT FAMILIES IN WINDHAM

The Campbell Family

The Campbell Family was one of the founding families of Windham. Alan Campbell's family has loaned and donated items to the museum. These include furniture, books, historic town reports, games, family portraits and photographs, antique eyeglasses and a typewriter. The museum also preserves several Campbell family diaries.

The Harris Family

During the 19th century, the Harris Family was prominent in the town of Windham in affairs of religion, education and government. The first full time pastor of the meetinghouse in Windham in 1805 was Reverend Samuel Harris, the patriarch of the family. The meetinghouse is now the Town Hall. He earned \$400 per year. In addition, he was one of the first trustees of the library and was also a member of the School Committee and on a committee for inspecting schools.

Daughters of the American Revolution: The Molly Stark Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) contributed artifacts to the museum which were directly related to Windham's history.

CHILDREN'S GAMES AND TOYS IN COLONIAL TIMES

Although children in Colonial times did not have much free time to play, the children made their own games out of their chores.

When children weren't making games or contests out of their chores, the children would sing, tell riddles or practice tongue twisters and say rhymes to pass their chore time faster.



Carrying Wood



Husking Corn



Picking Berries



Gathering Eggs

Here are two examples of contests:

- Boys would make contests on who could carry the most wood or carry the wood to their home the fastest
- Boys would carry the eggs the fastest without breaking or dropping them

Songs that were popular in colonial times are ones that young children learn today:

- "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush"
- "Ring Around the Rosy"
- "London Bridge is Falling Down"

Tongue Twister: Here is a popular tongue twister that seemed quite difficult for colonial children and that children practiced during their chore time.

"The skunk sat on a stump and thunk the stump skunk, but the stump thunk the skunk stunk".

Here are some Colonial Riddles:

- What comes down but never up?
- What kind of room is not in a house?
- What can run but can't walk?

Riddles Answers:

- Rain
- Mushroom
- River

Rhymes that were recited to pass the time while doing colonial chores:

Lucy Locket lost her pocket. Sally Fisher found it, not a penny was there in it. Just a ribbon round it.

GAMES AND TOYS OF YESTERDAY

Have you ever played tag, hide-and-seek, hopscotch, yo-yo, puzzles, dominoes, marbles, pick-up sticks, jump rope, spinning tops, leap frog, card decks, dice, and dolls? Colonial boys and girls played these same games and toys.

- Toys had to be found in nature or in the house, or adults and children had to make them. They made dolls from corn husks and rags. Leftover wood and string could be used to make spinning tops. Hoops from barrels could be used in races and a variety of games.
- Children in the Colonial Times did not have much time to play since they worked on a farm and everyone had specific jobs. Once their chores were completed, many children liked to run outside and play games with their siblings or friends. Many of the outdoor games they played are classics that are still played today, like tag, jump rope, and hide and seek, while others have become less common.
- Toys were very gender specific.
 - Boys had more hands-on skills to prepare for a trade.
 - Girls were preparing themselves for housework, cooking and becoming a wife and mother.

Typical Colonial Toys:

Playing cards

Dolls

Dice

Marbles

Cup and Ball Game

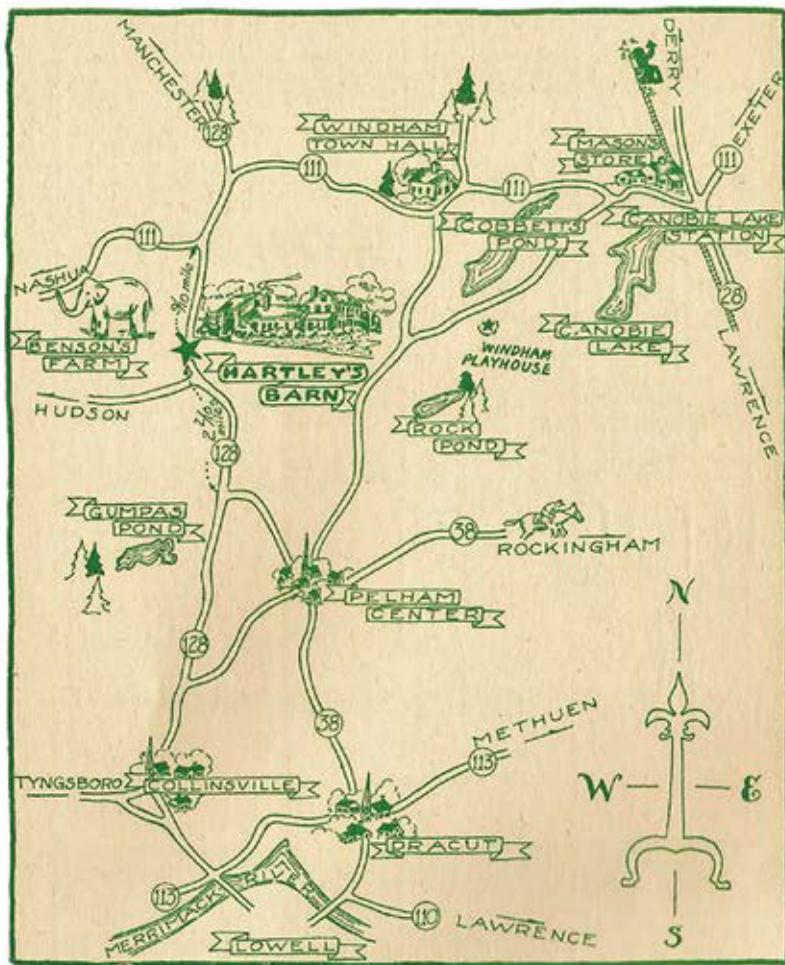
Hotch Potch Doll (to learn the alphabet)

Captain's Mistress Game (like Connect 4)

Balls of all kinds

MAP OF WINDHAM 1950

Can you recognize any of these sites?



OUR STORY: THE WINDHAM MUSEUM

Hometown History: Think About Your Visit to the Windham Museum

Here are some questions to reflect on your trip to the Windham Museum:

When was it built? _____

Why was it built? _____

Name one artifact that you liked at the museum. _____

What surprised you at the museum? _____

What is something that you learned today? _____

What was the funniest or weirdest museum artifact that you saw today? _____

What would you tell your parents about the museum?

What will be your best memory of the Windham Museum?

Visit the Windham Museum with your Family:

The Windham Museum is open by appointment and also during the day of the Christmas Tree Lighting on the town common.

Contact Information:

Please call the Windham Museum to schedule a tour: 603.965.1245 or email jmanthorne@windhamnh.gov; dsaffie@windhamnh.gov

Resources

Dedication Exercises of Armstrong Building for Nesmith Library, Windham, New Hampshire January 4 1899.

By Leonard Allison Morrison

The History of Windham in New Hampshire (Rockingham County), 1719-1883.

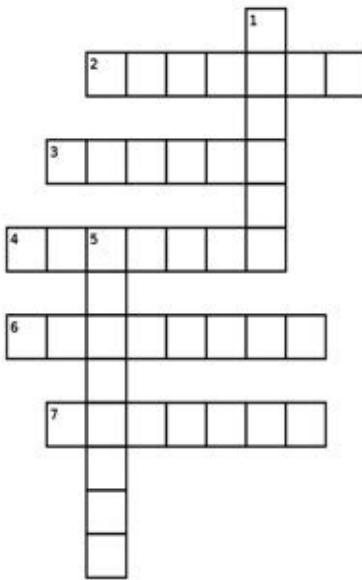
By Leonard Allison Morrison

Rural Oasis: History of Windham, New Hampshire, 1883-1975 By Town History Committee

Historic Tales of Windham.

By Derek Saffie

WINDHAM MUSEUM CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Down:

1. a building where objects of historical interests are displayed
5. the area of three towns where nut trees were many

Across:

2. the ways and customs of a particular nation or group of people
3. an ornamental tablet
4. a town where you live
6. an object that is of cultural or historical importance
7. a place where books are kept

WINDHAM MUSEUM UNSCRAMBLE

UMESUM	_____
DMWAIHN	_____
NFLEDITU	_____
RACATTSIF	_____
SGTMRNORA	_____
LEAPUQ	_____
RLBIYRA	_____
YRHOTSI	_____
VRPSEERE	_____
DUOCNTIEA	_____
LRUETUC	_____
CIOOECLTLN	_____
PMA	_____
EIHTIXB	_____
ARHCSREE	_____
DDNNROEOYLR	_____
UCPWAKETT	_____
RYEDR	_____
INLOLOAC	_____



WINDHAM MUSEUM WORD SEARCH



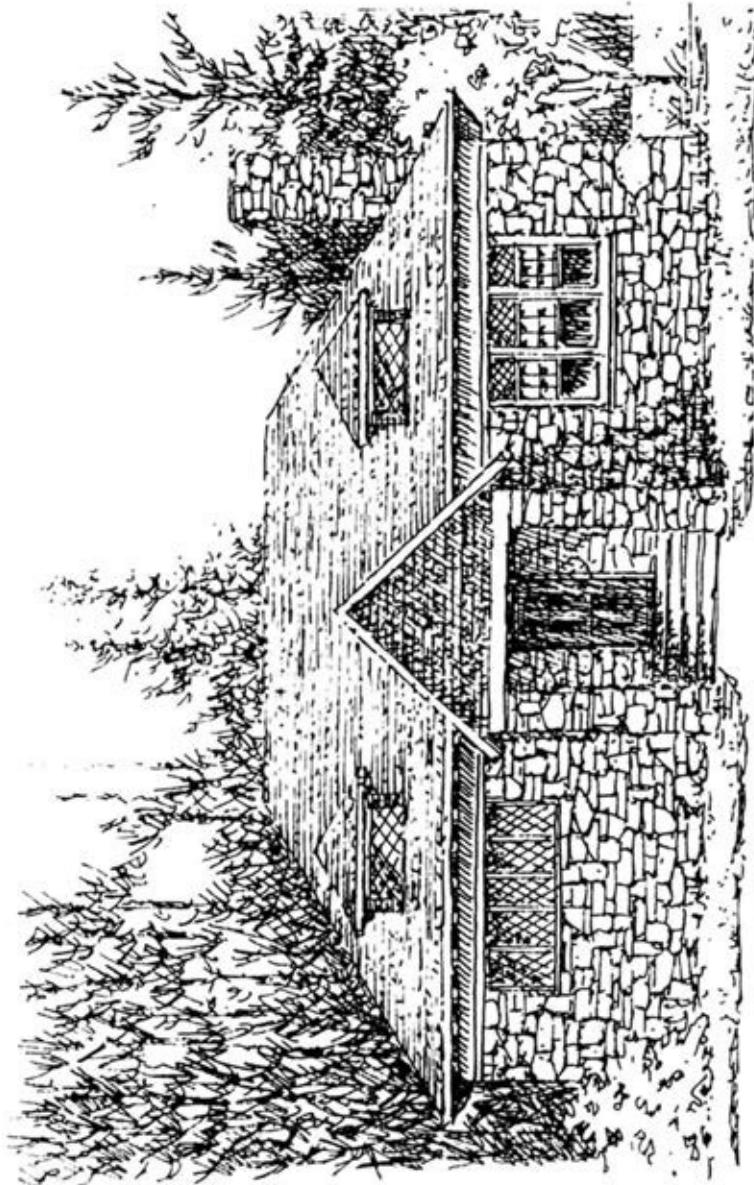
SWORD
PLAQUES
WINDHAM
PLAYHOUSE

SOLDIER
FLAX COMB
SPINNING WHEEL
CIVIL WAR

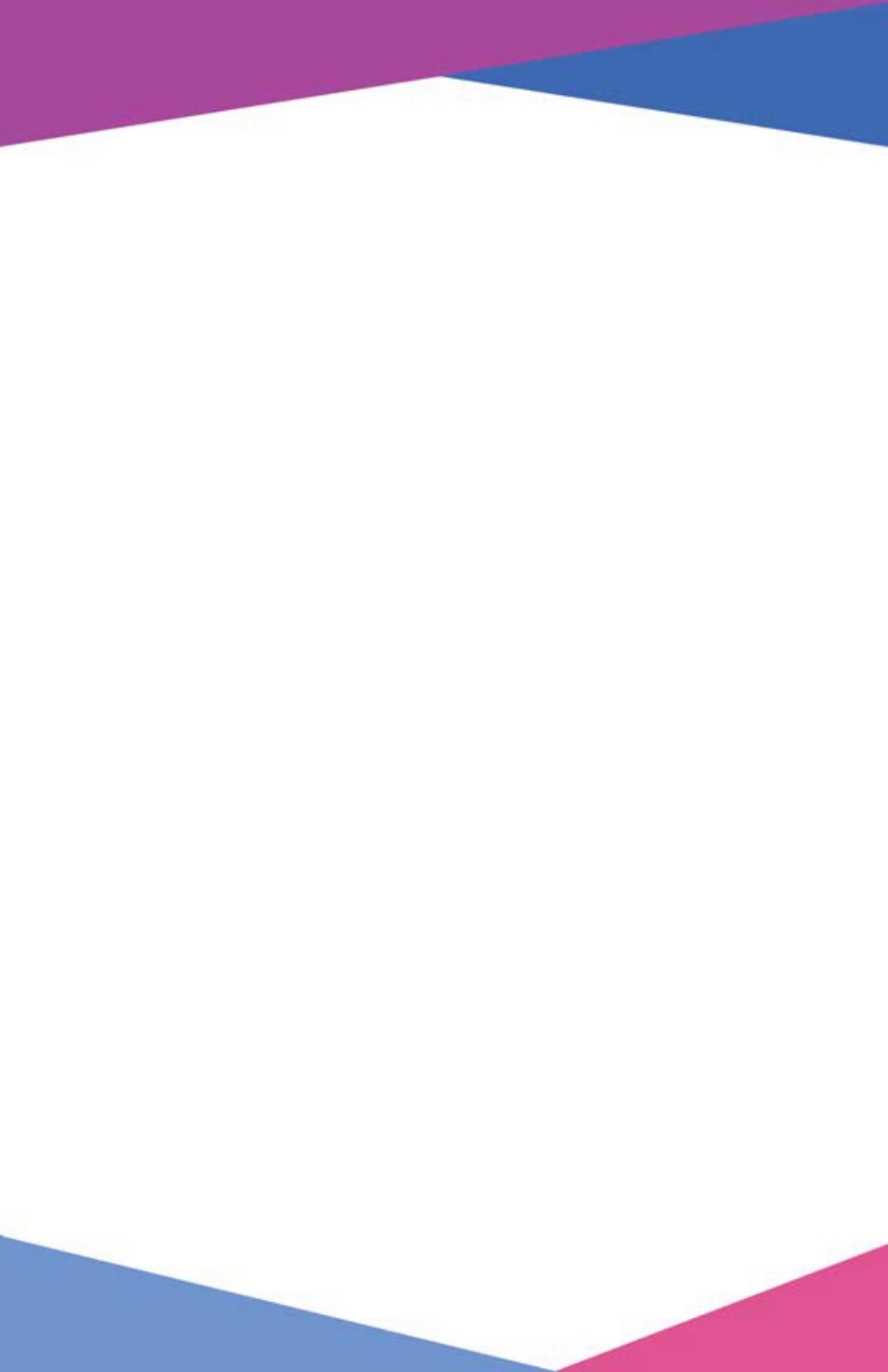
NUTFIELD
CHAMBER POT
ARTIFACTS
LIBRARY



WINDHAM MUSEUM COLORING PAGE



The Windham Museum
Windham, Connecticut



RESEARCH

COLLECT

PRESERVE