

# Looking Back



## Early commercial vacuum on display

Patented on Feb. 25, 1913, the “Everybody’s Vacuum Cleaner” was one of the first commercial vacuum cleaners available for household use.

The vacuum is one of many items featured at the Scarborough Historical Society. It functioned by pulling a wooden handle on the top of the unit that drew air upward into the chamber and collected dust in a small replaceable bag.

The vacuum is imprinted with the logo “Everybody’s Vacuum Cleaner: It gets the dust.”

The vacuum cleaner was donated to the historical society in 1962.

The Scarborough Historical Society is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2011.

People interested in working as a volunteer or who have artifacts to donate to the society should call Mary Pickard at 885-9997.

The museum is located at 649A Route 1 (next to Dunstan Fire Station) and is open 9 a.m to noon Tuesdays.

– Dan Aceto

# Looking Back

---

---



**Crafted in the late-1800s, this board was used to collect spun wool for drying. The horse held the wool as it was collected. The back of the board was polished by rubbing the wool against the wood to impart lanolin for extra shine. It was traditionally given by a husband to his wife as a wedding gift. The item was donated to the Scarborough Historical Society by Henry Griffin of South Portland. To donate an item to the historical society or volunteer, call Mary Pickard at 885-9997. (Dan Aceto photo)**

# Looking Back

## Helpful tool



The bootjack, used to help remove footwear, was an early tool for hunters and civilians and is still used today. The jack allows users to leverage a boot off the foot without bending over or use their hands. It operates by propping one foot on the end of the board and inserting a foot into the v-shaped opening to lift off a shoe or boot. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Scarborough Historical Society. The museum is open 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Tuesdays. (Dan Aceto photo)

# Looking Back



This bronze clock was crafted in the late-1800s to early-1900s, honors the U.S.S Battleship Maine, destroyed by unknown forces outside Havana, Cuba, on Feb. 15, 1898.

The clock was donated to the Scarborough Historical Society by Scarborough resident Ruth Jones, whose son, John Cott, was given the item in Italy in the early 1970s.

Cott, who graduated from Scarborough High School in 1965, was given the clock by his mother-in-law Anna, who ran an antique shop outside Naples, Italy, while he was in the Air Force and stationed at Mount Vergine.

– Staff Writer Dan Aceto

# Looking Back

## Edison invention at historical society



Invented by Thomas Edison in 1888, Edison Gould Moulded Records were one of the first commercially viable formats of music for the phonograph.

The records were made of hard wax and were cylindrically shaped to fit around a hand crank that was turned to play the recordings. The recordings averaged about two minutes in length and cylinders would typically wear out after a few hundred plays.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Scarborough Historical Society.

If you would like to volunteer or donate an item of historical significance, contact Mark Pickard at 885-9997. The historical society is located at 649 Route 1 next to the Dunstan Fire Station, and is open Tuesday from 9 a.m. to noon.

— Staff Writer Dan Aceto

(Dan Aceto photo)

# Looking Back

## Historical society marks 50th anniversary

### Farmers custom built bog shoe for marsh work

*Editor's note: This is the first in an occasional series on Scarborough Historical Society artifacts.*

Similar in design and purpose to the snowshoe, the 'Bog Shoe,' was custom built by farmers during the late-1800s to the early-1930s to prevent horses and oxen from sinking into the marsh while gathering hay.

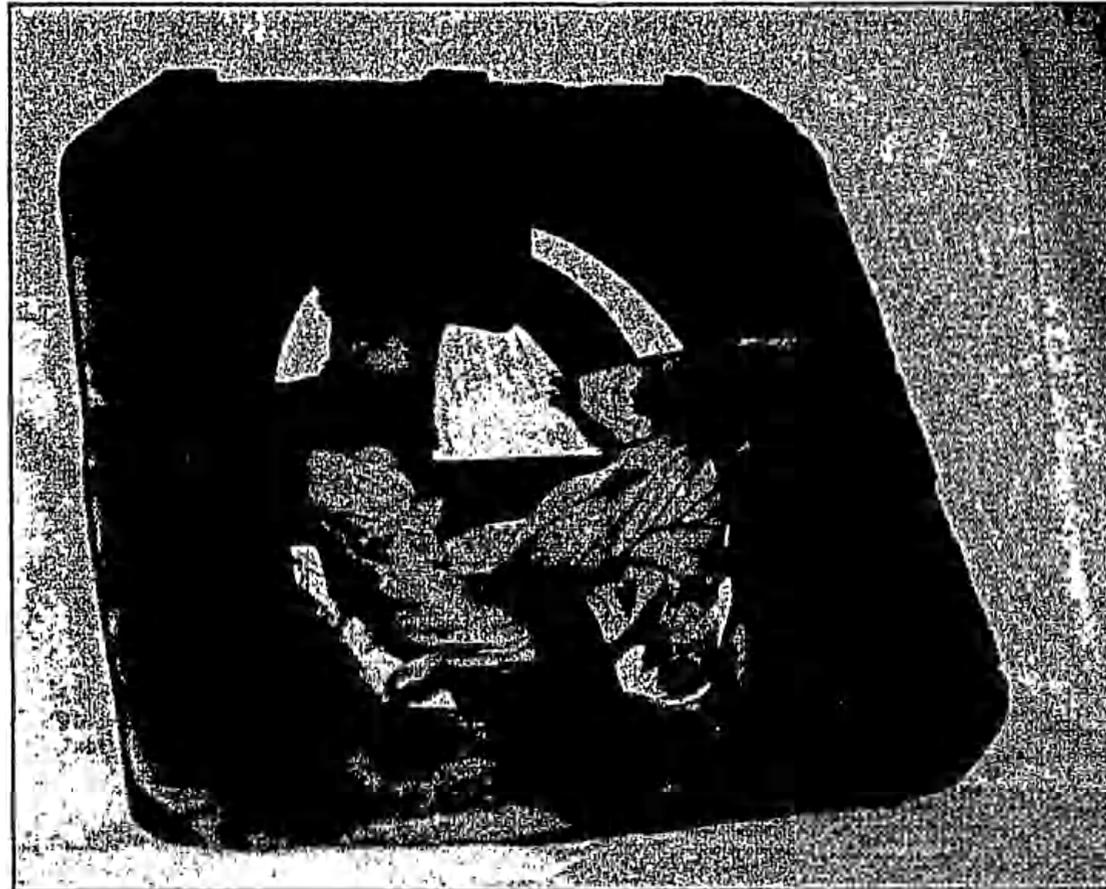
The shoe was generally made with a wood plank and iron brace that would be fastened around the animals hoof for support, while a "mowing machine," would be towed to collect hay in areas such as the Scarborough marsh.

The Bog Shoe was donated to the Scarborough Historical Society by the Harold Payson family in August 1963.

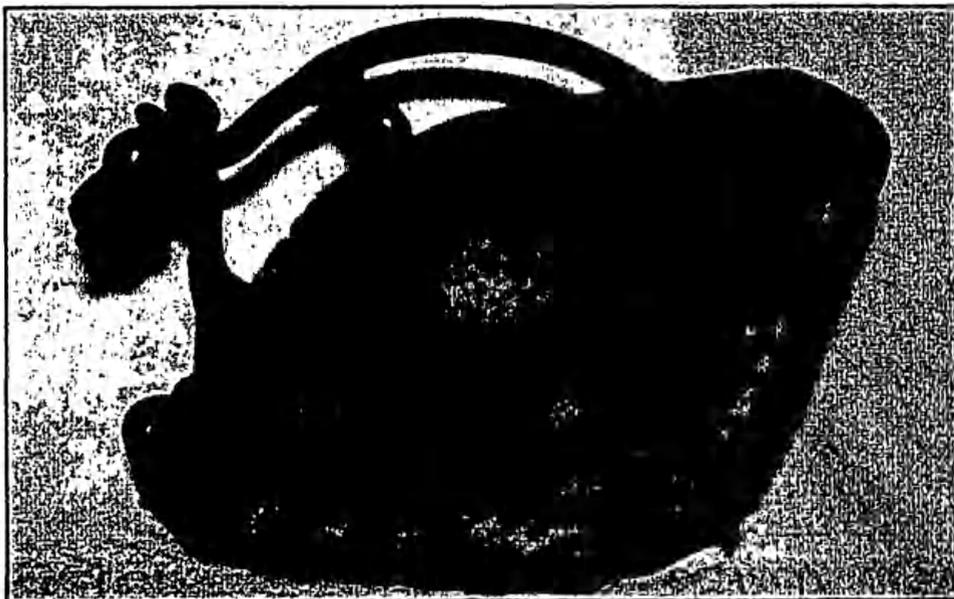
This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Scarborough Historical Society.

If interested in other historical artifacts, citizens can visit the Scarborough Historical Society at 649A U.S. Route One next to the Dunstan Fire Station.

Those interested in volunteering should contact Mary Pickard at 885-9997.



The bog shoe was developed for animals to wear while working in areas such as Scarborough marsh. Shown are two versions of the bog shoe on display at Scarborough Historical Society. (Dan Aceto photos)



May 6<sup>th</sup> 2011

# Looking Back

## Granite mile markers lined King's Highway

One of many granite mile markers previously used to help mail carriers gauge the distance to Boston is on display at the Scarborough Historical Society.

The markers were first placed in 1760 along what was known as the King's Highway, now Route 1, at the order of Postmaster General Benjamin Franklin, who later renamed King's Highway the Post Road, issued the placement of markers to establish a more efficient postal route.

Mile markers were placed with a wheel, which was used as an odometer. This marker, which reads B-120 (120 miles to Boston) stood in place on a small segment of land near Maine Medical Center on Route 1 until 2009, when it



was struck by a vehicle.

The post marker was replaced last year with a monument that details the history of the marker.

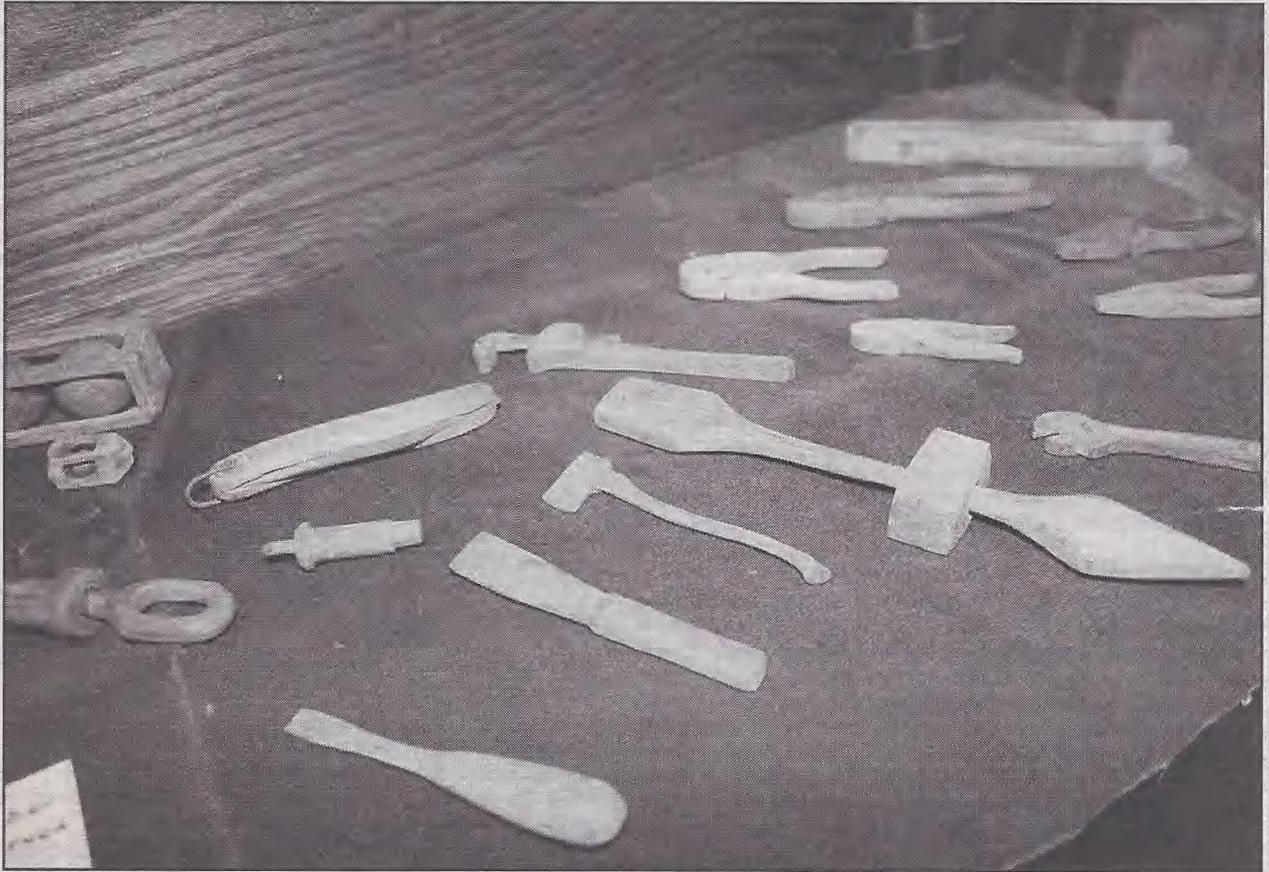
Anyone with additional information about other granite mile markers in

**Granite mile markers were used by mail carriers gauge the distance to Boston. The Scarborough Historical Society has a mile marker, at left, that stood near Maine Medical Center on Route 1 until 2009. (Dan Aceto photo)**

Maine are encouraged to contact the society at 885-9997.

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Scarborough Historical Society.

# Looking Back



These small, hand-crafted ornamental tools were made of wood by Arthur Roberts of North Scarborough in the 1940s. Roberts, who previously worked as a blacksmith, made the tools while he was injured working on the marine railway in South Portland. The tools were kept in a small cigar box and donated to the Historical Society in 2009 by Mrs. Bradford Roberts. This year marks

the 50th anniversary of the Scarborough Historical Society. To volunteer or donate artifacts to the historical society, call Mary Pickard at 885-9997. The museum is open 9 a.m. to noon Tuesdays. It is located at 649A Route 1 (next to Dunstan Fire Station) in Scarborough.

- Staff Writer Dan Aceto

# Looking Back

## Ross Road resident made violins and fishing rods

By Dan Aceto  
Staff Writer

The Scarborough Historical Society is home to a violin built in the late-1800s by Scarborough native Lewis Litchfield of Ross Road.

Litchfield, who worked as a station agent for the Boston and Maine Railroad in the early 1900s, was known for his high-quality bamboo fishing rods and violins.

Several people, including Henry Ford, William R. Hearst and the Duchess of Windsor, were said to have one of his fishing rods.

Among the violins Litchfield crafted, he is best known for building an instrument from remains of a schoolhouse that once stood on Ross Road. Winslow Homer later made a sketch of the violin and gave the instrument to Litchfield's longtime piano accompanist, Addie Kaler Vaill of Scarborough.

The violin pictured was recently played by Dr. Robert Lehman, a professor at the University of Southern Maine, for two concerts at the school.

"The fact that this man was able to make a classical violin without formal training



**This Litchfield violin was donated to the historical society in 2007 by Rodney Laughton of Scarborough, who discovered it on eBay. (Dan Aceto photo)**

and using regular carpenter's tools is astonishing," Lehman said.

Litchfield died in 1963 at the age of 92 in Candia, N.H. He is buried in Freeport.

# Looking Back

Modeled after the original Delia Chapin built at Dunstan Landing in 1847, this toy ship was discovered in the early 1920s by Robert Googins of Scarborough. Googins, who lived in the former Dunstan Landing home of Maine's first governor, William King, found the model. He gave it to his children before he donated it to the Scarborough Historical Society years later. The original Delia Chapin was made out of bark by Major James Waterhouse and was the last ship built at Dunstan Landing.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Scarborough Historical Society.

Anyone interested in volunteering at the historical society or with artifacts to donate can call Mary Pickard at 885-9997.

The museum is open from 9 a.m to noon on Tuesdays.

(Dan Aceto Photo)

