

**Tuck Museum
Collection & Research Center**

A Place for Remembering

This is a story of a father's love, and his determination to honor his only son, U.S. Army Captain William D. Downs, and others who died the same way.

It took 12 years, from 1945 when Bill Downs read the War Department telegram telling of his son's death at sea, until Memorial Day 1957, when the New Hampshire Marine Memorial at Hampton Beach was dedicated.

It is a place to remember all New Hampshire sons and daughters, in all branches of the United States Military, who lost their lives at sea serving their country.

The Memorial is a statue of a granite lady who rises to a height of 12 feet. She is a mother, holding a wreath, looking across the sea to the eastern horizon.

"Reverently she lays a wreath upon the soft waters which embrace them. As she looks across the waters, she asks that the winds and waves be gentle, as a mother who covers her sleeping child at night," said New Hampshire artist Alice Cosgrove, who designed the Memorial.

How the Marine Memorial Came To Be

Captain William D. Downs was away for three years, fighting in World War II in the South Pacific. He was on his way home on rotation leave, aboard a ship, when he got sick. He died at sea on May 26, 1945, thousands of miles from home. His canvas-wrapped body slid into the South Pacific for burial.

Captain Downs left his parents, and his wife, Carol. He had a daughter, born after he left for combat, who he had not seen. He was 25 years old.

Bill Downs, William's father, asked the Federal government for a grave marker for his son. He was told there were no markers for service members lost at sea. Bill then asked for a Federal monument in Washington, D.C. to honor all military men and women lost at sea. The answer was no.

What Bill got, with a lot of help and support, was a first of its kind memorial at Hampton Beach – the New Hampshire Marine Memorial, which honors all U.S. service members who were lost at sea.

A "Must Have" in a Colonial Town

For a colonial town like Hampton, a tavern was essential. And not just because tavern keepers served hard cider, beer, wine, rum and other spirits!

The tavern was the town's information center. Townspeople learned the news of the day from travelers who stopped in to revive themselves with food, drink, camaraderie and a night's rest.

The tavern served up hospitality. In addition to welcoming weary travelers, churchgoers gathered here between Sunday sermons, as did folks attending Thursday lectures and market day, for refreshment.

But perhaps the tavern's most important function was supplementing the colonial government. A short distance from the meetinghouse, which doubled as the courthouse, the tavern supported the smooth operation of the court by providing lodging, meals and alcoholic beverages for court officials, jurors, plaintiffs, defendants, witnesses, servants - and horses.

Joanna Tuck Hampton's First Female Tavernkeeper

As Joanna Tuck sailed with her husband Robert in 1636 from England to New England, she would never have thought that 18 years later she would be a businesswoman. Robert, one of Hampton's first settlers, ran Hampton's first tavern. It was located in the Tuck's house, which was situated where Drakeside and Lafayette Roads meet today. The meetinghouse was nearby, where the Tuck Museum resides on Park Avenue.

Robert's tavern was called an ordinary, and he had a license to operate it, as was required.

When Robert died suddenly in October 1664, court was in session in Hampton. His widow Joanna was quickly granted a license to run the ordinary.

Love Sherburne and Joanna Lane

When Love Sherburne took on sole responsibility for the ordinary she and her husband Samuel ran, they had eight children, four under the age of 13, and she was pregnant with their ninth child.

Samuel, a captain in the Hampton military, had been killed by Indians. Love, a capable woman, continued the work, serving both inexpensive and expensive wine, rum and the beer she brewed. She also continued to make the meals.

Samuel died in 1691 and Love operated the ordinary for the next 10 years.

In 1701, Love leased the ordinary to John and Joanna Lane (of Boston). In 1703, Hampton's selectmen qualified Joanna to run the ordinary.

Mary Leavitt An Illegal Start for a Line of Innkeepers

Mary and Moses Leavitt started selling alcohol illegally in 1703, shortly after their marriage. They could not have guessed that this was the start of a business their descendants would continue for the next 150 years.

A cousin tried unsuccessfully to stop them. He reported to the court that the Leavitts were selling drink without a license. As proof, another cousin testified he had bought rum and a friend testified he had bought hard cider from them.

It wasn't until 1706 that Moses applied for, and received a license to run a tavern. After his death, Mary kept the tavern by herself for 22 years, until her death.

Their son John took over as the next in the line of family innkeepers.

Rachel Freese

Fulfilling her Dead Father's Wish

When Rachel's husband Lieutenant Jacob Freese died in 1727, she didn't need to keep a public house. She was financially secure with inheritances from her husband and father.

But her father's will stipulated that Rachel keep a tavern in the house bequeathed to her.

The tavern was near the salt marshes and had a steady clientele during the summer and fall when men were harvesting salt hay. A slave assisted Rachel at a time when Quakers wanted to abolish slavery.

Rachel ran her tavern for almost 10 years, until her second marriage, when she moved to Stratham.

Sarah Roby Ordinary Owner and Operator

In 1670, Sarah Roby's husband Henry was granted a license to operate an ordinary that one day would be hers.

The Roby's first place of business may have been the Tuck ordinary. Eighteen years later, at Henry's death in 1688, the ordinary's location may have been a house he bought from the estate of William Cole (husband of the infamous Eunice Cole).

As a widow, Sarah could own property, which, by law, she could not do as a married woman. She owned and operated the ordinary until her own death about 1703.

From 1691 to 1698 Hampton had two ordinaries, both women owned and operated. Sarah's counterpart was Love Sherburne.