

Letters

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Pineapple is symbol of hospitality

I WAS thrilled to read that visitors to Weymouth and Portland are being welcomed by a replica of a pineapple.

I have seen this many times in the USA where we live. Here the pineapple has been a symbol of hospitality since the days of the early American colonies. The legend began with the sea captains of New England, who sailed among the Caribbean islands and returned to the colonies bearing their cargo of fruits, spices, and rum.

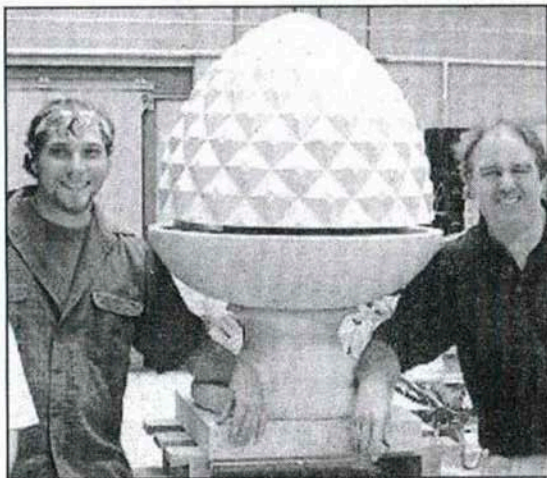
According to the legend, the captain would spear a pineapple on a fence post outside his home to let his friends know of his safe

return from the sea. It was an invitation for them to visit, share his food and drink and listen to tales of his voyage.

As the tradition grew, colonial innkeepers added the pineapple to their signs and advertisements, and bedposts carved in the shape of a pineapple were a common sight at inns across New England.

The legend has continued to the present, and frequently one sees the pineapple symbol in hotels and restaurants to signal the presence of hospitality.

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STONE WELCOME: The pineapple symbol is a common sight in New England, it seems