

RYE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND TOWN MUSEUM

Rye Center War Monument is 100 Years Old

According to the Town Report for the year ending January 31, 1920, the selectmen voted for "Patriotic purposes: Aid to G.A.R. and Soldiers' Memorial \$1510.... J.W Berry, Memorial Day appropriation. \$10 E.A. Tucker, Soldiers' memorial appropriation \$1500." (The Grand Army of the Republic was the term still in use from the Civil War to designate the US Army.)

Using *The History of Rye, NH* by Langdon Parsons 1905, the town listed on the monument those who served in World War I, including the three who died, as well as those who served in the Spanish American War and Civil War. For some reason they did not include earlier conflicts which Parsons' history lists including the thirty eight who died in the Revolutionary War.

Thanks to the leadership of World War II veteran Maynard L. Young Jr. and others, the 244 names of those from Rye who served in WW II were added to the monument in 2000. Richard Goss was the one Rye man who died in that war. No further names have been added since 2000. Research needs to be done on those who served in more recent wars and their names added to the monument, but we do know that two Rye men lost their lives in the Vietnam war: Michael Geister (Army) and Andre Marcotte (Marines).

A century ago there were very few cars in Rye, the first one not having been registered until 1913. When the monument was built most of the traffic was still powered by real horses as well as scheduled stops in front of the monument by the trolley (1899 – 1927). With increased vehicular traffic over the years it has been increasingly difficult for pedestrians to access the monument. For this reason, one of the suggestions from the Plan NH session last June to reconfigure the Washington/Centra road interchange creating a small park which would incorporate the soldiers memorial as well as slow traffic.

Although there is currently no small store, Rye Center has all the elements of a classic New England village: church, town hall, library, museum, fire/police, cemetery, school, fine historic houses and a place to honor those who served in the military. We look forward to the day when people will slow down to enjoy all that Rye Center has to offer.

Alex Herlihy, Museum Director



2019 Marks the Centennial of the Rye Beach Precinct Building

At one time Rye had eight hotels and over thirty boarding houses, but the WWI epoch saw the decline

of Rye as a summer hotel resort. At about where St. Theresa's Church is now located, the Sea View House was built in 1869 by George Lougee. It operated for about 45 years before falling out of fashion. The Sea View House was razed early in 1918. In September 1918, the then current owners of the property, Mr. and Mrs. Shirley Philbrick and Mr. and Mrs. Francis E. Drake conditionally deeded a portion of the now empty lot to the Rye Beach Precinct. Per the deed, ... "The conditions of this deed being that the property herein conveyed is to be used for public purposes only and for the benefit of the residents in Rye Beach Precinct; and that no intoxicating or spirituous beverages will be manufactured or sold on said premises; and that in case of failure...to abide by these conditions the property...shall revert to the Grantors."



In late 1918 the Rye Beach Precinct voted a \$25,000 bond to build the Precinct Building, pretty much the same building that is there today. The bond was paid off in 1938. It was initially built to house the Rye Beach Post Office, moving it from a back room in the Spear House at the intersection of South and Central Roads and to provide meeting space to conduct Rye Beach Precinct business. All the RBVD Annual Meetings, Zoning Board hearings and Planning Board meetings, etc., have been held there ever since. Later, in 1930, when the Precinct formed its volunteer fire department and bought a 1930 Model A Ford fire truck (Santa's fire truck), it was garaged at the Precinct Building. You can see the difference in the shading and curved shape of the bricks and mortar on the south side where the garage once was. This was the Rye Fire Department until the new station was built in Rye Center in 1954.

What follows are some anecdotes from my personal recollection and hearsay. The precinct building was the "bus stop" circa 1956 before there was door to door service. There were probably 50 continuous years of piano recitals by South Road resident Evelyn Drake held there. My father, Philip and uncle, Herbert had recital performances there, circa 1935. My piece was, circa 1960, "March of the Toy Soldier." Rye's Jim Oeser's "welcome home from Vietnam party" was held there about 1966 (details redacted). There were neighborhood Christmas/Santa parties and it was occasionally rented out for private events over the years.

Frank Drake, Rye Beach Village District Commissioner



Board Member Spotlight

Debbi Toohey

How long have you served on the RHS Board of Directors?

DT: Since January 2017

What got you interested in the history of Rye?

DT: Researching our house which was built as a summer inn.

What is the most exciting part of RHS for you?

DT: Linking relationships which are meaningful in the community back to Rye Historical Society goals.

What is your favorite historical landmark in Rye, and why?

DT: The International cable which linked Rye Beach, NH and the USA to Great Britain.

SAVE THE DATES: NOTE THE LOCATIONS!

December 8

1:00 p.m.

Rye Holiday Parade

Look for the RHS sleigh!



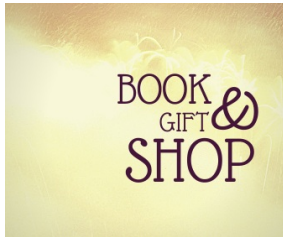
December 10

3-6 p.m.

Open House

*Stop by for a cup of cheer and shop
for your family members who are
history buffs.*

Rye Town Museum



Visit our Gift Shop ONLINE!

Do some Holiday shopping from the comfort of home.
Pick up in museum!

Also visit Judith Brown Meyers Photography exhibit at Rye Public Library
and order a beautiful print of Rye nature.



Proceeds benefit Rye Historical Society

IN MY BACKYARD

Judith Brown Meyers Photography
Exhibit located in upper community area of Rye Public Library



JUDITH BROWN MEYERS LIVES IN RYE ON A NON-TIDAL MARSH
WHERE SHE HAS BEEN PHOTOGRAPHING WILDLIFE FOR THE PAST
SEVEN YEARS.

More information on the artist and ordering located at desk

Are you on Instagram? Facebook? Twitter? RHS is!

Follow RHS on Social Media
Click the Icons below



Share Your Talents and Skills with the RHS

Volunteers Needed For:

- Old House documentation (NEW NEED!)
- Coordinator between RHS resources and Rye schools
- Archival work and genealogical research
- Exhibit updates and creation
- Textile organization and display
- Computer technology and website maintenance
- Administrative work
- Building care and maintenance

DID YOU KNOW.....
The Museum is open by request at
(almost) ANY TIME?

We're here for you - please email
info@ryenhistoricalociety.org to
make an appointment



Intimate Rye History Online - Access Rye History

Have you looked at all the new material recently posted on our web site? Under the tab: "Resources" click on **Access Rye History** and you will see over 1600 pages of a wide and diverse variety of primary source material from Rye 1850 - 1920. From diaries to letters to account books and much more you can open a window into the past and make Rye and American history come alive. Thanks to a grant from the New Hampshire Charitable Fund and the work of Robin Silva from the Portsmouth Athenaeum, RHS is now able to share a rich body of the past from our extensive collection.

[Visit our website](#)

Share The History of Your Home with a Historic House Plaque

Many Rye homes, business and public buildings are adorned with these handsome plaques. The cost of a plaque is \$85.

If you would like one for your home to add to the heritage of the town, house plaque applications may be picked up at the Rye library on the coffee table (behind the RHS brochures).

Check and application may be mailed to PO Box 583, Rye, NH 03870 or left in our mailbox by the front door of the museum.



**RHS is a 501(c)(3) non profit
organization**

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10 Olde Parish Road, Rye, NH 03870

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