

RYE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND TOWN MUSEUM

A Short History of the Rye Central Cemetery



In mid-May Debbie Toohey and Alex Herlihy led the first virtual RHS tour of Rye Central Cemetery which can be watched below this story. This short history is a follow up to that

tour. The earliest public burial area was in the graveyard behind the 2nd Congregational church (1757 – 1837). Col. Benjamin Garland, who ran the Garland Tavern across from the church from 1756 to 1800, was buried here in 1802 along with other Garland family members as well as those from the Marston, Trefethen, Goss, Parsons, Lang, and Drake families from the 1800s.





In 1893, Rye purchased six acres of land from the Locke family for \$840 to begin laying out the new Central Cemetery including Division 1, the triangular shaped area that runs along the woods, and Division 2 and 3 in front of the garage. For \$600 a vault was built to store bodies until they could be buried in the spring.



Cemetery trustees were voted in, a superintendent was hired, a hearse was bought and a garage was built on site. A “viewing station” was also erected in the 1890s, which still stands, for the superintendent to watch until the graveside service was complete so that he could then finish the burial. The town laid out 314 lots and the cemetery began to fill up with 232 having been sold by 1901. In town reports from that era, there are complaints from the superintendent that many plots were littered with trash and the grass had not been mowed. The old-world tradition of partying with ancestors was alive and well in Rye.



The trustees also predicted that family graveyards would be abandoned and that many new lots remained for purchase, but over sixty families kept their farmstead graveyards intact and they can be viewed today. Photographs and notes of these historic graveyards have been digitized and may be seen on the town web site under [Heritage Commission](#).



To expand the cemetery, in 1938 the town bought the Bartlett Field, located adjacent to where the town green is today. In that same year the Parsons family at One Central Road donated the field adjacent to the new Bartlett acquisition for a town green and the town then erected the stone wall separating the green from the road. The cemetery also planted seventeen maples in a row as a memorial to Edward Dodd.



The historic burying ground remained part of the church property and plots left in that area continued to be sold to people throughout the 20th century. This historic space is now in its third century as a resting place for Rye families behind what is now the 4th Congregational church erected in 1961. Those who own plots here and in Central Cemetery have funded upkeep of their plot through perpetual care.

In the mid-20th century the town purchased the Perry Field which became Cedar Lawn, the newest part of the cemetery and burials commenced in the late 1970s. The first section had no above ground monuments, but starting in 2014, monuments were allowed for burial plots in the rear part of this section.

Walking down from the historic burying ground toward the main part of the cemetery you are descending the ridge that the town center was built on starting in the late 1600's. There is a bench part way down to take in this pristine view of one of the loveliest cemeteries in

New England. As you come in the entrance of the cemetery and look to the left you are equally rewarded with one of Rye's most picturesque landscapes of the town green, cemetery, church, town hall, One Central Road and the former Garland Tavern. The location of this beautiful cemetery adds a fine aesthetic to a classic New England town center.

~ Alex Herlihy, Rye Historical Society, Rye Heritage Commission

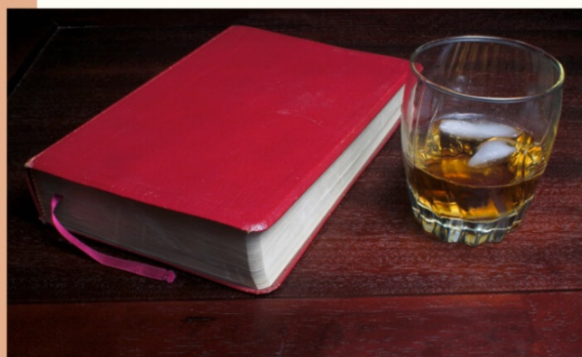
Watch the full tour here



WE REMEMBER

The Rye Historical Society is working on updating the names on our War Veterans Memorial Monument in the center of town. If you know Rye residents who served in a war since WWII, please fill out the survey in this post. Thank you for helping us!

Rye Museum Virtual Tour



History Happy Hour

[Sundays FaceBook Live 5 pm](#)

From the recipe files of board member Debbi Toohey who recommends to "pour a cup of coffee and enjoy!"

Buttermilk-Rhubarb Muffins with a Sugar Crumble Topping.

These delicious Buttermilk-Rhubarb Muffins are out of this world. Dusted with a sugar, cinnamon topping, they're the perfect combination of tart and sweet for breakfast or mid-morning snack.



Prep Time
15 mins

Cook Time
18 mins

Total Time
35 mins

★★★★☆
3.34 from 3 votes

Course: Breakfast, Snack Cuisine: American

Keyword: Buttermilk Rhubarb Muffins, easy spring muffins, fresh rhubarb Servings: 12

Calories: 383kcal Author: Jackie Currie

Ingredients

For the crumble topping

- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 2 tbsp melted butter or margarine
- 2 tsp cinnamon

For the Muffins

- 2.5 cups flour
- 1.5 cups brown sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 egg lightly beaten
- 1 cup buttermilk instructions for making your own in post
- 2/3 cups oil
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 cups finely chopped rhubarb

Instructions

1. Combine topping ingredients (sugar, melted butter and cinnamon) and set aside.
2. Combine dry muffin ingredients: flour, sugar, salt, baking soda and cinnamon in large bowl.
3. Combine egg, oil, buttermilk and vanilla in separate bowl.
4. Add wet ingredients to dry and stir gently.
5. Fold in rhubarb until just mixed.
6. Fill muffin liners 1/2 to 3/4 full and sprinkle with sugar/butter/cinnamon topping.
7. Bake 18 minutes at 375°F
8. Remove from oven and transfer muffins from tin to cooling rack

Nutrition

Calories: 383kcal | Carbohydrates: 57g | Protein: 4g | Fat: 15g | Saturated Fat: 2g | Cholesterol: 20mg | Sodium: 350mg | Potassium: 155mg | Fiber: 1g | Sugar: 36g | Vitamin A: 135IU | Vitamin C: 1.7mg | Calcium: 76mg | Iron: 1.6mg

2020 Programs

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all programs will be suspended and the museum will be closed to visitors until further notice. We are following NH and town of Rye guidelines.

Rye Historical Society invites the public to attend all their programs which are held in the Rye Public Library Community Room at 6:30P.M.

March 26 TBD D. Allan Kerr - Surfmen of the Seacoast.

April 30 TBD Glenn Knoblock - New Hampshire on High: Historic and Unusual Weathervanes of the Granite State

July 16 TBD Thomas Hubka - *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn*

November 10 Neil Novello - *No Mutiny This Time*

Rye 1623, the committee formed to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Rye's settlement, will also have two programs:

May 26 TBD Craig Musselman *Historic Mills of Rye*

October 22 Ed Bullock (Eyes That Shine) *Native Storytelling, Song and Dance: Teaching of the Drum and Flute*



Rye Trolley Tours

Take a narrated ride through scenic Rye and learn about our rich history. 10:30-noon \$25

9/7 Labor Day

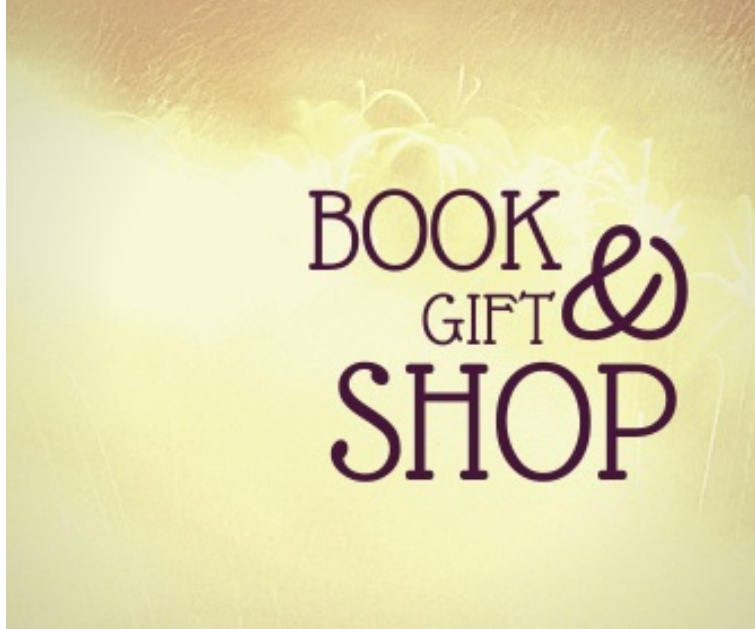
Purchase tickets

Sharing Stories of Rye

Do you have a story to tell? Rye Historical Society has established a community on StoryCorps to help our members share stories. You are invited to join the Rye NH History community on archive.storycorps.org. Please follow this link to create a StoryCorps Archive account and join our community. Next, download the StoryCorps App to record and share your story with us.

If you'd prefer to share your story with a video please let us know and we will add it to our [YouTube playlist](#).

Stories of Rye



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izi.TRAVEL
the storytelling platform



Audio tour

Rye Beach Block

★★★★★ [4 reviews](#) | [Rye](#) | Free

Did you know there is a guided walking tour in Rye Beach? [Download the IziTRAVEL app and get started!](#)

Don't want to walk? You can take this tour from the comfort of your easy chair!

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

Rye Historical Society

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10 Olde Parish Road, Rye, NH 03870

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