

RYE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND TOWN MUSEUM

Covid-19 Statement

Until further notice, the museum will be open by appointment only, limited to 2 visitors per appointment. Masks are required inside, as is hand sanitizing upon entering the building.

Make your appointment online, email us at info@ryenhistoricalociety.org, or call 603-436-9278

Schedule Museum Visit

THE RYE HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS AN INDEPENDENT, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO COLLECTING AND PRESERVING THE RICH HISTORY OF RYE, NEW HAMPSHIRE BY ENGAGING RESIDENTS AND VISITORS THROUGH OUR MUSEUM AND PROGRAMS

Rye History Trolley Tour

Monday, September 6

10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.



Rye History Trolley Tour - July 5th and Labor Day

Eventbrite - Rye Historical Society presents Rye History Trolley Tour - July 5th and Labor Day - Monday, July 5, 2021 | Monday, September 6, 2021 at Rye Historical Society, Rye, NH. Find event and ticket information.

[Read more](#)

www.eventbrite.com

A Key Donation!



The Society recently received this key tag from the Ocean Wave House. It was donated by W. Peter Hood, now of Illinois, through his daughter Suzanne McFarland of Rye. The hotel, also known at one point as the Harrington, was located on Ocean Boulevard north of Foss Beach and was destroyed by fire in 1960. Philbricks by the Sea now occupies the site.

In his youth, Peter was a bellhop at the hotel and remembers one couple, the Palmers, from New York, who were regulars, staying for one month or more in the summer. His most vivid memory is of Mr. Palmer who "...was very cheap in his tipping, several bags for 25 cents!..."

Our thanks to Peter for this wonderful addition to our collection of Rye hotel memorabilia.

Lew Karabatsos



EARLY RYE FAMILIES

REV. SAMUEL PARSONS, 1707-1789

After Rye abruptly dismissed its first minister in 1733, the parish took its time auditioning possible replacements. Not until the summer of 1736 did the call go to Samuel Parsons of Salisbury, a Harvard-educated cleric. Samuel's great-grandfather Joseph Parsons had come from Dorset, England around 1635 to trade furs. Cornet Parsons, as he was known, helped settle the towns of Springfield and Northampton, Massachusetts.

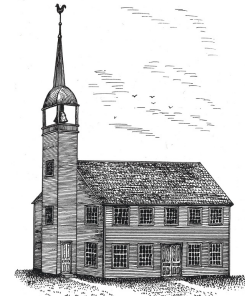
Samuel was ordained on November 3, 1736. Rye's parsonage was unfinished; the steeple on the meetinghouse was incomplete. "No one ever called a New England meeting house a church," John L. Parsons observes in *The Churches of Rye*. "On Sunday it was always 'going to a meeting' or 'going to preaching,' never going to church."

On October 5, 1739 Samuel married Mary Adams Jones (Mary's grandfather was Sam Adam's uncle) and the newlyweds moved into the now-finished parsonage. Samuel's compensation: £140 and 20 cords of firewood. Unlike his predecessor, Samuel is said to have been a paragon of virtue, and he would

minister to his parish for over half a century. Sociable enough to join his parishioners for a toddy at Garland's Tavern after Sunday meeting, he was a strict taskmaster who required Rye's children to learn 99 Bible quotations and 115 scripture references. A family tale recalls a time when hay was disappearing from the parsonage barn. Samuel saw George Rand, who had no hay, returning home one night with hay for his cows. Samuel slipped up behind the hay and set it on fire. "I won't steal any more of your hay," Rand told him the next day. "The Lord sent fire from heaven and burned it up!"

Samuel and Mary had eight children. Their daughter Mary married John Tuck, son of the Rev. John Tucke, Samuel's esteemed counterpart in Gosport on the Isles of Shoals. Their next child, Joseph, served as a captain in the Revolutionary War. Three younger children died in the great sickness of 1752.

In 1754 a severe thunder-and-hail storm almost destroyed Rye. Instead of repairing the meetinghouse, the parish built a new, larger structure on the same spot. Construction, including a full steeple, was completed in 1756. Ten years later the meetinghouse got its first bell. Samuel was still Rye's minister when the men of the town went off to fight for American independence. In 1784, when age and infirmity finally caught up with him, the parish hired an assistant minister, Worthington Porter. After Samuel's death in 1789, Porter served as Rye's third minister.



The Parsons' son Joseph became Rye's first resident physician. His progeny – legislators and justices, physicians and surgeons, military leaders and mariners, educators and merchants – helped shape Rye over the next century and a half. (Joseph's female descendants also contributed, usually without benefit of professional degrees or public office.) For biographical notes on the Parsons of Rye, see the [Wikitree branch](#) maintained by Edward Parsons.

Two longtime Parsons homes still stand on Washington Road in Rye Center. Dr. Joseph Parsons' house across from the top of Lang Road remained in the family until the 1970's, when Esther Parsons made it possible for the town to acquire Parsons Field and the Rye Town Forest. The house remains a private residence. Col. Thomas Jefferson Parsons bought the square house at the top of Central Road in 1827 and for 56 years ran a store in the basement. After Col. Parsons' death the house became the home of his son Langdon, author of the *History of Rye, NH*.

James Locke Macdonald

Comments may be submitted by clicking [this link](#).



DO YOU REMEMBER THESE SIXTH GRADERS?



We've identified some members of the 1951-52 Rye Consolidated School Sixth-Grade Class. Can you help us fill in the blanks?

- Front row** -- standing (left to right): Tom Jameson, Ann Morris, Shirley Moder(sp?), _?_,
- Second row** -- standing (left to right): Carol Trefethen, Wilson Sanders Earl Katsonis, _?_, Marsha ?, Diane Boutiller
- Third row** -- Miss Lewis (teacher), _?_, Nancy Moynihan, Joanne Stanley, _?_, _?_
- Fourth row** -- Ronald Weber, Sandy Clarkson, ? Herlihy, Bruce Tibbid, Jon Buck, _?_
- Fifth row** -- _?_, ? Herlihy, Edward ?, Cardon Caskill (sp?) Bill Pease, _?_
- Sixth row** -- Preston Bemis, James Jameson, Winthrop ?, Ewis Waldron, _?_, Glen ?, Robert Wycoff

[Click here](#) if you can attach names to any of the unidentified..

Where is This?

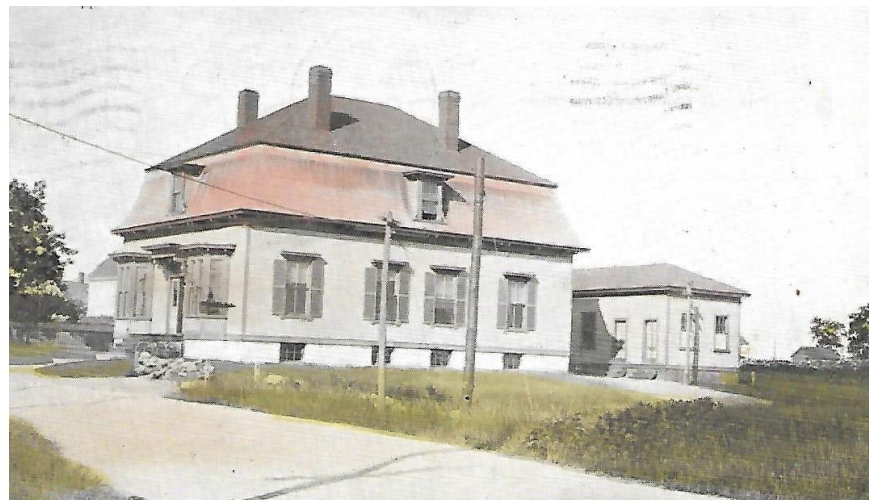
[Click here or on the picture if you know!](#) Answer will be in next month's newsletter.



First person to reply correctly will be mentioned in next month's newsletter.

Last Month's Winner

Shaun Rafferty was the first to correctly identify 1. US Cable Station -- where the operations of the first, direct undersea telegraph cable between Europe and the U.S. were monitored. Located on Old Beach Road, the Station closed in 1921 and is now a private residence.



THIS MONTH IN RYE HISTORY

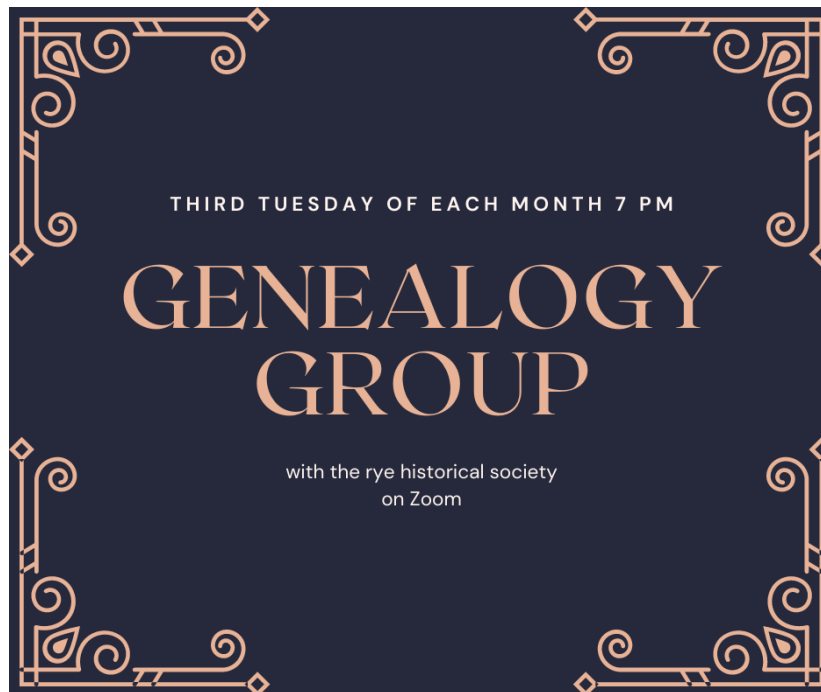
PRESIDENT ARTHUR TOURS RYE

September 9, 1882. After breakfast at the

Wentworth, President Chester A. Arthur toured Rye and Portsmouth before lunching at the Rockingham. Arthur's host, ale baron (and recent member of Congress) Frank Jones, wanted the president to reject a proposed closure of the Portsmouth Navy Yard. Arthur may have been easy to convince: historians credit his administration with reviving the U.S. Navy.



Join the the Genealogy Group's meeting on Zoom
Tuesday, September 21, at 7 P.M



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!](#)

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Rye Historical Society

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