



Historical Society *and* Museum

The Rye Town Museum is open to visitors on Saturday mornings from 10 to 12 May through October, and at almost all other times by appointment.

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



Schedule
Visit



Photo: Town of Rye

History Uncovered at Rye Harbor

[As reported in the Portsmouth Herald](#), a slice of the town's history was discovered in the aftermath of the coastal storms and flooding that inflicted

damage in January. Two millstones believed to be from the Goss family farm's 18th-century tidal grist mill were located in a shallow creek at Rye Harbor during post-storm inspection.

Between 1650 and 1800, almost a dozen mills were constructed and operated in Rye. The graphic below is from Craig Musselman's 2021 RHS presentation, [Colonial Mills of Rye, NH](#), available on our website. See also, [Mills and Ancient Cedars in Rye, NH](#).



Town Historian Shares some Recent Rye History

In January the Select Board appointed me the official town historian. I have been serving in this role unofficially for many years through my role at the Town Museum and writing a new book on the history of Rye. It is a humbling position because the more I learn the more I realize I don't know about our past. I welcome interactions with others so their knowledge can be shared as well.

On January 21, 2024 Rye, NH made the front page of the New York Times in a feature article on the Boston Post Cane. It included a photo of one of our two oldest residents at Webster and stories about some other New England towns and their canes. This tradition of awarding a cane to the oldest town resident began in 1909 by the Boston Post newspaper and is still carried on by over 500 towns.



I grew up on the Wedgwood Farm on 19 Lang Rd and a plot plan by the owner from 1918 was handed down to me. It shows all the abutters at that time and an outlying wood lot and salt marsh lot that was part of the farm. These lots were typical of most farms. My brothers and I donated the four-acre

Wedgwood wood lot to the town ten years ago. This plot plan also shows Rye school property and I shared it with RJH staff recently.

The recent town deliberative meeting marked 25 years since Rye voted to split the deliberative part of the meeting from the actual election for candidates and warrant articles. It has resulted in many more people voting, but still only one third of those voting in notional elections. Unfortunately the very important deliberative part of the meeting where warrant article wording may be changed is attended by a small number of residents, 134 this year.



Finally, all of the publicity surrounding the "Free House" on Locke Rd has generated strong interest and there may be a taker by March. It is unfortunate that Rye will lose this historic house, but we will be grateful if it is saved from demolition.

I continue to update my Rye history web site and welcome comments and additions. Ryehistoryrocks.com

Alex Herlihy

RYE 400'S TERRIFIC TRIO!

RHS board members Debbi Toohey, Andy Stecher and Lew Karabatsos did so much to drive Rye400 last year. The board presented them with this caricature to show their appreciation.



Rye Historical Society Programs for 2024

Granite State Gallery: New Hampshire Art

**and Artists through the Years - April 11,
6:30 p.m.**

- Join Jane Oneail as she explores the rich artistic heritage of New Hampshire, delving into the distinctive qualities of art created in the state across different eras, from itinerant and folk painters to landscape artists and modern innovators like Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Childe Hassam, and Maxfield Parrish, made possible by a grant from New Hampshire Humanities.



Genealogical Gold in Town Books and Reports - May 23, 6:30 p.m.

- Join genealogical researcher Robert Cameron Weir as he reveals the untapped potential of old town books and annual reports, often overlooked but invaluable resources maintained by town clerks since colonial times and published from the mid-19th century, offering essential clues to overcome genealogical brick walls, with insights into where to locate, interpret, and effectively utilize these rich historical documents for solving challenging genealogical puzzles.

The Third Life of Herb Philbrick, author of I Led Three Lives - September 19, 6:30 p.m.

- Join Guy Philbrick Hadley as he presents a program that explores Herb Philbrick's lesser-known role as a family man in Rye and Seacoast New Hampshire, shedding light on his businesses and family life beyond his renowned espionage work for the FBI infiltrating the Communist party in the 1940s.

Parsons Field — From Pasture Land to Community Recreation - October 17, 7 p.m.

- Join Rye Historical Board member Lew Karabatsos and Town Historian Alex Herlihy as they delve into the transformation of Parsons Field, from its origins as pastureland facing development to its present-day role as a cherished community hub, highlighting key events and the evolution of its significance through original documents and artifacts.

All Programs are held at Rye Public Library.

How Much Rye History Has Your House Seen?

George Washington visited Rye in 1789; several of the houses he passed are still lived in. A greater number of today's Rye homes were standing in 1814 when the British Navy tried to invade, resulting in the Battle of Rye Harbor. And many of today's dwellings would look familiar to the wealthy who frequented our widely-known resort hotels before and after the Civil War.

How old is your house? If you're not sure, Rye Advocates, a group formed to foster respect for old Rye houses and encourage their preservation, can help. The group is offering two **House Dating Workshops** at the Rye Public Library:

Wednesday, March 27, at 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 24, at 3:30 p.m.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!

Position: Data Management Coordinator

The Rye Historical Society seeks a passionate and detail-oriented volunteer to join our team as a **Membership Data Management Coordinator**. This vital role supports our mission by ensuring the integrity of our data entry and tracking processes, and by maintaining proactive communication with our valued members.

Time Commitment: Approximately 2 hours/week for 6 months

Key Responsibilities:

- Accurately process and enter data into our database system, ensuring member information is up-to-date and correctly cataloged.
- Regularly track and update data to reflect new member acquisitions, membership renewals, member contributions & donations.
- Manage scheduled communications with members.

Qualifications:

- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Computer literate & comfortable working with spreadsheets.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Previous experience in data entry or administration is a plus but not required.

Why Volunteer With Us?

You'll have the opportunity to work with a team of enthusiastic individuals dedicated to providing greater value to our members with an emphasis on better outreach and communication. Your contribution will directly benefit our members through the support you will be providing this initiative. Volunteers gain hands-on experience in data management and member relations, valuable skills in any career.

How to Apply:

Interested candidates are invited to email a brief statement of interest and any relevant experience to info@ryenhistoricalociety.org, to the attention of Jan Olmstead, Membership Chair. Or call Jan at 802-345-7913. Once we receive your information, Jan will be in touch to discuss the next steps

Application Deadline: April 1.

We look forward to welcoming a new volunteer to our team and working together to keep the history of Rye alive for generations to come.

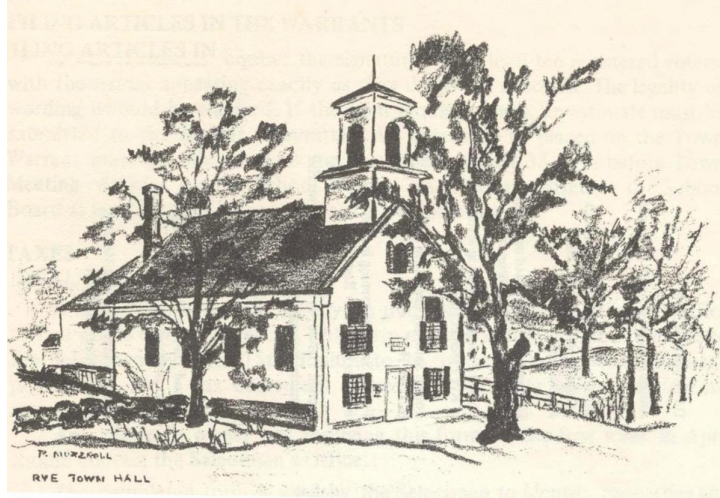
THIS MONTH IN RYE HISTORY

March, 1839

Methodist Society Formed

During the Second Great Awakening, a Protestant religious revival of the early 19th century, Rye

ceased to be a one-church town. Baptists established a small meeting house around 1817 and evolved into a congregation that built a new Christian church in 1839. In March of that same year the First Methodist Episcopal Society of Rye was organized to construct another house of worship. Parsons' *History of Rye* lists twenty ministers who led Sunday services at the Methodist church over the next three decades.



After the Civil War, church attendance dwindled. In 1873 the Methodist Society sold its church for \$1,000 to the town of Rye, for use as a town hall.

Ongoing Free Programs



Free Self-Guided
Rye Beach Block Tour **izi.TRAVEL**

RYE
NEW HAMPSHIRE
Historical Society and Museum

THIRD TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH 7:30 PM

RYE ROOTS

with the rye historical society
on Zoom

Get Involved

we are
RYE PROUD!

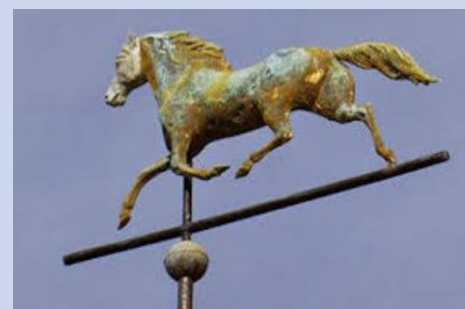
Help Us Reach
400 MEMBERS
in **RYE'S**
400TH YEAR!

JOIN US!

RYE
NEW HAMPSHIRE
FOUNDED 1793
Historical Society and Museum

JOIN RYE HISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG

Become a Member



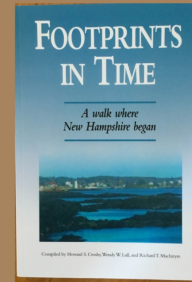
Make A Donation



Volunteer



Visit Ye Olde Gift Shoppe



Vision: To preserve and share Rye history by understanding the past, informing the present, and influencing the future.

Mission: To engage and educate a diverse population in Rye, New Hampshire's rich history through our programs, collections, and outreach, to encourage them to make a personal connection with their community.

603 436-9278

info@ryenhhistoricalsociety.org

Follow RHS on Social Media

Click the Icons below



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