

About Exeter, Rhode Island:

Exeter is a unique and picturesque rural town in Washington County, in southwestern Rhode Island. It is the second largest municipality in Rhode Island in area with 57.6 square miles, and the 32nd largest in population as of the 2000 US Census, with 6,045 residents.

The Narragansett Indians were the earliest inhabitants of this area. In 1657, the eastern end of Exeter was part of the Pettaquamscutt Purchase from the Narragansetts. During the late 17th and early 18th centuries, colonists began to establish farms and homesteads, and on 8 March 1742 Exeter was incorporated as a town by the Rhode Island General Assembly. By 1790, there were 2,581 residents

During the early decades of the 1800's, Exeter flourished as farmers grew Indian corn, rye and oats and established dairy farms. Villages grew up around the rivers and streams, providing power for cotton manufacturing, a woolen factory, a clothier's works, a nail factory, a flannel mill, a denim mill, saw mills, and grist mills. Stores, blacksmith shops, taverns, inns, a tannery, schools, a library, a bank and churches were all established. Late in the 19th century, however, the villages began to decline, and the US Census of 1910 shows only 778 residents remaining in Exeter.

At the present time, Exeter is an attractive rural community, with gentle hills and valleys, thick woodlands, much wildlife, clear waterways, and a vibrant, community-oriented population.

EHA Programs and Activities

Programs and events will be geared toward everyone - from children to seniors. Some initial plans:

- Four meetings a year, including an annual meeting in May, with programs and events relating to the history of Exeter
- Interest groups in various areas formed according to members' interests, meeting as frequently as the participants desire
- Newsletter with topics relating to Exeter history
- Joint Sponsorship of the Annual One-Room Schoolhouse Reunion with the Friends of the Exeter Public Library
- Continued expansion of the Local History collection at the Exeter Public Library, in conjunction with the Friends
- Securing of grants and fundraising to preserve and share historic sites and artifacts in Exeter.

Get Involved in the EHA!

There is a place for everyone interested in the history of Exeter in the Exeter Historical Association.

No matter what your passion or talent is, the Exeter Historical Association welcomes your membership and participation.

Become a member of the Exeter Historical Association:

___ Individual \$15
___ Family \$25
___ Sponsor \$50

Name (s) _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Please make checks payable to:

Exeter Historical Association

Please complete the reverse side and return this form to:

Exeter Historical Association
159 Old Voluntown Road
Exeter, Rhode Island 02822

Donations to the Association are always gratefully appreciated.

EHA Interest Groups

Individual members, families and sponsors may choose to volunteer for one or more of the interest groups below. These groups may meet as often as their members wish, and will be limited only by the members' vision and enthusiasm.

Please indicate area of interest:

- Grant writing
- Fundraising
 - Web design
- Publications, newsletter
 - Genealogy
 - General History
 - Historical Cemeteries
 - Farms
 - Maps
- Old Mills
 - One-Room Schoolhouse Project
- Woody Hill School
- Hall School
- Old Town Hall
 - Churches
 - Villages
- Military
- Other _____

Comments and Suggestions:

Exeter Historical Association
159 Old Voluntown Road
Exeter, Rhode Island 02822



Woody Hill School 1990

Dedicated to the collection, preservation and dissemination of knowledge and information about the history of Exeter, Rhode Island and its residents, and to preserve artifacts and historically significant sites.

www.exeterhistoricalassociation.org

EHA is a RI non-profit corporation.

Applicant for 501c3 status.

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