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For images, please see attached and additional <http://portsmouthhistory.org/phs-media>

CAPTION: Rose Labrie painting an *Earl of Halifax* sign, ca. 1970. Douglas Armsden photograph courtesy of the Portsmouth Athenaeum.
Earl of Halifax Tavern signs, ca. 1970. Oil on wood. Estate of Richard A. Morton.

Rose Labrie Exhibition Opens at Discover Portsmouth

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"Primitive" artist show begins October 19

Portsmouth Historical Society announces its final 2018 exhibition featuring the work of a beloved Seacoast folk artist. "Rose Labrie, Primitive Artist" opens Friday, October 19 in the Balcony Gallery at Discover Portsmouth and runs through December 23 when the center closes for the season. This rare retrospective, curated by historian Richard M. Candee, shows the breadth of her artwork as well as her writing, illustrations and sketches.

Although she spent most of her professional life as a writer, Labrie found celebrity in her later years as a painter in the "primitive style." She was often called "New Hampshire's Grandma Moses," a reference to Anna Mary Robertson Moses, who painted rural scenes until her death in 1961 at age 101.

"Her years as a writer and then illustrator, laid the foundation for her to promote her painting effectively during the primitive folk art revival of the 60's and 70's," says Candee, "It's fascinating to explore her evolution as an artist."

Born Rose Cushing in 1916 in Dorchester, MA, Labrie, like Grandma Moses, came to painting later in life. In 1939 she married electrician Alfred A. Labrie. The couple and their three children relocated to Kittery, Maine when "Fred" found work at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard during World War II. It was after winning a local art contest in 1965, a decade into trying to paint conventionally, that others began to take her self-taught painting seriously.

By 1977 Labrie was represented by a Madison Avenue gallery in New York and exhibited in Florida galleries and museums each winter. As her reputation grew, many of her paintings were done on private commission or for publication. The

new exhibition brings together a full range of her work as a tribute to this treasured self-taught local artist.

“I paint memories and things I enjoy,” Rose Labrie once wrote. The exhibition is rich with Labrie’s “memory paintings” from her childhood. Her paintings depict horse-drawn sleighs on deep white snow and pastures dotted with animals as well as tall-ships and historic homes from the Seacoast region. She was also the author and illustrator of three children’s books and her art was featured on the cover of several national magazines.

“Rose Labrie, Primitive Artist” is free and open to the public daily beginning October 19 at Discover Portsmouth. It is supported by the generosity of the Labrie Family, the Anne S. Howells Charitable Trust, R. M. Davis, Bigelow & Company, DTC Lawyers, and Piscataqua Savings Bank. Upcoming holiday events at Discover Portsmouth also include an exhibition by the Pastel Society of New Hampshire and the 28th Annual Gingerbread House Contest, now accepting entry registrations.

About Portsmouth Historical Society

Portsmouth Historical Society is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 nonprofit that operates Discover Portsmouth, a facility housing exhibition galleries, a welcome center and museum shop, and the John Paul Jones House Museum and Garden, both in downtown Portsmouth. Both locations are open seasonally, seven days a week. Discover Portsmouth is located at 10 Middle Street; the John Paul Jones House Museum and Garden is located across the street at 43 Middle Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801. For more information, call 603-436-8433 or visit www.portsmouthhistory.org