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# Yesterday & Today

## The 59th Annual Established Edition

### Thank you

To the members of the community who kindly submitted photographs for our use;

To the sales, graphics, editorial, and all the staff at *The Monadnock Shopper News* for their hard work in making this section a success;

To the Facebook group about Keene history where we crowdsourced answers to local history questions, even at midnight;

And to the businesses who purchased ads in this section. Stop in and thank a few of them!

Most of the photos included in this section are from the files of the Historical Society of Cheshire County, which has been partnering with *The Monadnock Shopper News* for many years to supply us with images. The Society is located at 246 Main Street in Keene.

### On The Cover

1. Henry David's Restaurant (formerly Crystal Restaurant or "The Crystal" to locals) on Main Street in Keene, circa 1985.

2. Keene Savings Bank, Fay Smith Clothing, and Howe's Jewelers were located on the west side of Central Square in Keene, circa 1970/1980.

3. Eagle's Loft at 87 Main Street was a first-class gift shop offering everything from elegant chocolate roses to fine crystal and china. The photo is circa 1987.

4. Martino's Spaghetti House was known and loved for its authentic Italian fare. The building stood near the corner of West and Island Streets and was removed in the 1990s to make way for the CVS store complex.

5. This picture taken in 1987 is of the Melody Shop located at Eagle Court and Main Street in Keene and owned by Albert J. Ricci.

Ricci had quite the story: he was shot down over Germany during WWII and spent 14 months in a prisoner of war camp where he did laundry for the other prisoners, earning IOUs he converted after the war into \$2000. He used that money to open a record store and in the late 1940s began to sell TV sets. But like many other TV salesmen in rural areas, he had trouble selling sets because most people in Keene could not get a signal. Ricci went to Pennsylvania to visit cable TV equipment maker Jerrold Electronics; from there he came back to Keene and built one of the largest systems in the US. He developed the character "Abel Cable" as a marketing gimmick. Abel Cable later became the symbol for the cable industry.

6. The Alps – a favorite of the locals for its authentic German fare – was located on Old Homestead Highway in Swanzey. This picture was taken around 1980.

7. Ed Bergeron's The Wood Shed clothing store, pictured in 1980, was one of the many establishments that called 87 Main Street in Keene home.

8. Major Leonard Keep Restaurant on Route 12 in Westmoreland was a favorite of the locals back in 1979 when this picture was taken. This is the present day site of Millbrook Farm Woodworkers.

(All cover photos are courtesy of Historical Society of Cheshire County)

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### Before 1800: Business In Keene

Rivers and brooks supplied the water power for mills which were the early factories, and the 60 proprietors of Upper Ashuelot (Keene) in September of 1735 voted to give 100 acres of "middling good land" and 25 pounds to any party who would build a sawmill. In 1736, such a mill was constructed by John Corbet and Jesse Root on Beaver Brook, near what is now Giffin Street, and in this same year it was voted to build a gristmill. These were the first industries in Upper Ashuelot.

(from *Upper Ashuelot, a history of Keene, New Hampshire*, by the Keene History Committee)

**ESTABLISHED 1850s**



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