



# Roxbury Nine Vie for Their Sixth Keator Cup

*After nearly a decade of fierce vintage sport, the Nine will remember and retire some of its founding stars on Labor Day Weekend*

*PLAY BALL! The Harry M. Keator Vintage Base Ball Tournament in Roxbury on Labor Day weekend offers all of the gusto and hard fought action of modern play with very little protective equipment and absolutely no backtalk to the umpire. Come see the history of base ball unfold right before your eyes as eight vintage teams meet and the Roxbury Nine, five-time Keator champs, defend their title. Photo courtesy of the Town of Roxbury.*

*"It is a haunted game in which every player is measured against the ghosts of all who have gone before. Most of all, it is about time and timelessness, speed and grace, failure and loss, imperishable hope—and coming home."*

*— Ken Burns/Geoffrey Ward*

**T**he Roxbury Nine vintage base ball club will bring home their ninth season of play all Labor Day weekend with three days of action and emotion in Roxbury's historic Kirkside Park. The Harry M. Keator Vintage Base Ball Tournament begins on Friday evening, August 29, and continues full throttle all Saturday and Sunday, August 30 and 31, with the championship game on Sunday at 1 pm—a match the Roxbury Nine has never lost.

Labor Day Keator Cup action will, as always, be gaily ensconced in "all the agreeable pursuits of 1898," as the hamlet

of Roxbury in Delaware County celebrates its ninth "Turn of the Century Days" with historic hamlet and house tours, authentic country fare, crafts workshops, horse carriage rides, Vaudevillian entertainers, children's 19th century pastimes, mountain minstrels, period fashion show and a first-ever community-wide 1898 group portrait in Kirkside Park on Saturday. You and your family can also have heirloom silhouette portraits created on either Saturday and Sunday.

For sports fans of every age, the entire weekend is a once-a-year opportunity to watch the early history of base ball unfold right on the field, as at eight teams from all over the Northeast compete. The "underhand" pitch bracket includes four teams that specialize in the earliest style of base ball, the 1860s and 1870s game, including the Brooklyn Atlantics, the Flemington Neshanock, the New York Gothams and the Waterbury Connors. In the faster "overhand" pitch bracket, playing the game of the 1880s and '90s, will be the hometown boys, Roxbury Nine, the Mountain Athletic Club of neighboring Fleischmanns, the Boston Beaneaters and the Elizabeth Athletics. Whether it's those slow pitch





days of the 1860s or the fast pitch game of the Nine's signature 1898 year, it's base ball played by its most ardent amateurs, for the history and the love of the game.

Feelings will be running high on Friday evening, August 29, as the Nine pay tribute to their late manager, John McAlonen, during the opening game with Fleischmanns Mountain Athletic Club. On Sunday, August 31, the team will retire six of its founding players in its first Roxbury Nine Hall of Fame induction ceremony. Competitive and close-knit, the Roxbury Nine roster includes four sets of brothers, many nephews, uncles, Roxbury alumni and even a Harry Keator descendant. The club headed into July with more than a dozen wins, including a nail-biting, come-from-behind June 21 win against the Vintage World Series champs, the Westfield Wheelmen of Massachusetts. The Nine is schedule to compete in the Vintage World Series in Massachusetts in late July.

"Our theme this year has been 'the best of the past is coming home again,'" said Roxbury Team Captain Rich Ellsworth, adding, "We've been playing locally for most of the season, traveling less, putting all our energies here at home for our local fans."



**PICTURE PERFECT** — Dress the part and you can be part of a panoramic community portrait on Saturday, August 30, in Roxbury's Kirkside Park, when hundreds of vintage ball players, suffragists, townsfolk and fashion divas of the Gilded Age will gather to say "cheese." It's an heirloom moment and prints will be offered for sale. Get in the picture by contacting the Roxbury Parks Department and find out how to get your bustle on! Photo courtesy of the Town of Roxbury.

On both Saturday and Sunday, August 30 and 31, visitors can come to Roxbury in true 19th century style via the Delaware and Ulster Railroad. "Railride into Yesteryear" brings you to Roxbury for several hours of "no mileage fun," where everything you need is



**CHILD'S PLAY** — The simplest pleasures and toys that kept 19th century children amused for hours still hold their charm for children today.

Photo courtesy of the Town of Roxbury.

within easy walking distance. Leave your parking and driving hassles at the Arkville train depot on Route 28 and in Roxbury, let the carriage be your "two horsepower" vehicle to a gentler state of mind.

## Capturing a Moment in Two Centuries

All the vintage teams will take part this year in the first-ever community portrait on Saturday, joined by all the Turn of the Century Day participants who are attired for the season—the 1898 season that is. Any volunteer or visitor who wants to be included in the panoramic shot is welcome as long as they are in period attire (which needn't be fancy, even villagers will represent the span from high fashion to aproned farmwives and workmen in dungarees). Special reserved baseline seating will be offered for the championship vintage games to those in period dress. Juliet Polska, professional costume designer for the HBO series *The Sopranos*, will be assisting the veteran costume team this year to ensure that anyone who would like to be a part of the 1898 scene can participate.

All Labor Day weekend, base ball will celebrate its "good old days," where the equipment is sparse, the action unrelenting and the players unpaid but for the reward of a good game and the crowd's huzzahs. As poet Walt Whitman would say, "Let us go forth awhile, and get better air in our lungs.... The game of ball is glorious." Visit [www.roxburyny.com](http://www.roxburyny.com) for information and updates or call 607 326 3722 to reserve your Railride ticket, house tour or silhouette portrait seating.