



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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A Brief History of Raggedy Ann™

Strong National Museum of Play® invites you to celebrate the iconic mop top's 95th birthday with an official Raggedy Ann birthday party on Friday, July 9 and a chance to meet the famous doll or her brother, Raggedy Andy, every day from July 9 through September 6 (Labor Day). In addition, the museum invites you to share your memories of Raggedy Ann in a digital Raggedy Ann Scrapbook (www.museumofplay.org/raggedy-ann/scrapbook).

- In 1915, cartoonist, illustrator, and storyteller Johnny Gruelle gave his daughter, Marcella, a gift: a long-forgotten rag doll that had been stored in an attic. Gruelle drew a new face on the doll and called her Raggedy Ann.
- Gruelle sent a hand-drawn illustration of Raggedy Ann to the U.S. Patent Office and was awarded a patent dated September 7, 1915.
- In 1920, Raggedy Andy joined his sister in her adventures.
- The Raggedy Ann doll was originally a brunette but in the early 1930s the manufacturer of the dolls at that time, the Georgene Novelty Company, solicited design ideas from the public—who decided she'd look better as a redhead!
- In 95 years, Raggedy Ann has inspired dozens of books, animated television specials (some directed by legendary animator Chuck Jones), animated feature and short films, a Broadway musical—and many variations on the original rag doll design.
- In 2002, Raggedy Ann was inducted into the National Toy Hall of Fame®. In 2007, she was joined by her brother, Raggedy Andy.
- Raggedy Ann and Andy were always more than dolls—they were characters who came alive in Gruelle's books (and those penned by other authors after Gruelle's death), beloved for their kindness, loyalty, and sense of adventure.
- The "Raggedys" have also been the subject of a variety of myths and legends—most notably that of the candy heart. Many stories have circulated that the original Raggedy Ann dolls featured a sewn-in candy heart (as did the Raggedy Ann of the storybooks) that would endure even trips



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2—Raggedy Ann History

through the washer. Gruelle's son, Worth, told of being sent to a candy store to buy the hearts. Yet no original doll with a sewn-in candy heart was ever found. However, the first manufacturer of the dolls, the Volland Company, *did* sew a thick pressed-cardboard heart inside each doll, which could be easily felt when hugged. Later on, the Georgene Novelty Company changed this to a heart printed on the chest and bearing the words "I Love You"; today, this heart is embroidered on each doll.

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Strong National Museum of Play®, located in downtown Rochester, New York, is the only museum in the world devoted solely to the study of play as it illuminates American culture.

Museum Hours:

Monday–Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.;
Sunday, noon to 5 p.m.

Admission Fees:

General Admission (does not include admission to *Dancing Wings Butterfly Garden*®):
Adults \$11; Seniors \$10; Children (2–15) \$9; Children younger than two free; Strong members free.

Admission to *Dancing Wings Butterfly Garden*®:

General Admission fee plus \$1.50 for members, \$3 for nonmembers; Children under 2 free. Entry is by timed ticket only. Please call 585-263-2700 to reserve and purchase tickets.

Parking: Free parking is available at the museum for all guests on a first-come, first-served basis. Please note that, on high visitation days, the museum lot may reach capacity early in the day. If space is not available on site at the time of your visit, you will be directed to additional parking at neighboring municipal garages (fees may apply).