

# HISTORY

CONNECTIONS

Vermont Historical Society News and Notes | Winter 2019 | Volume 14 | Number 1

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VOLUME 14 - Number 1

*History Connections* is published  
by the Vermont Historical Society.

The Vermont Historical Society engages both Vermonters and “Vermonters at Heart” in the exploration of our state’s rich heritage. Our purpose is to reach a broad audience through our outstanding collections, statewide outreach and dynamic programming. We believe that an understanding of the past changes lives and builds better communities.

Executive Director: Steve Perkins  
Printing: Accura Printing

## Vermont History Museum & Store

The Pavilion Building, next to  
the State House  
109 State Street, Montpelier, VT  
Tuesday–Saturday 10am to 4pm  
(802) 828-2291

Families: \$20; Adults: \$7  
Students, children, seniors: \$5  
Members & children under 6: Free  
Student school groups: Free

## Vermont History Center

60 Washington St. Suite 1, Barre, VT  
(802) 479-8500

Tuesday–Friday & Second Saturdays  
9am to 4pm

Wednesday Evenings (Library Only)  
4pm - 8pm

Library admission:  
Non-members: \$7  
Members and students: Free  
(802) 479-8509

[www.vermonthistory.org](http://www.vermonthistory.org)

[info@vermonthistory.org](mailto:info@vermonthistory.org)

cover:

Exode des paysans devant l'ennemi  
(grande guerre 1940), c. 1945

Emile-Joseph Porphyre Pinchon (1871-1953)  
Paris, France  
Oil, mat board, wood  
*Merci Train Collection, 1964.63.182*

# Director's Note

by Steve Perkins

Thank you to all of our wonderful members who attended Vermont Historical Society’s annual meeting at the end of September. As in years past, we said goodbye to dedicated trustees as their terms expired and welcomed a new class of individuals with a passion for telling Vermont’s story.

Board members are an integral part of Vermont Historical Society and its operations. Their guidance helps craft strategic priorities, provides policy oversight, and drives the stewardship program that sustains VHS through donated revenue. Congratulations to John Conlon, Penrose Jackson, Steve Kidder, Mike McRaith, Anna Noonan, and Gary Shattuck on your election and congratulations to Bill Wilson and Jim Reardon on reelection.

This year we also said goodbye to Diane Campbell and Mary Rogstad who both retired with a combined sixty-four years-of-service! We wish them a very happy retirement as they spend time with family and friends. This means that you will see new faces when you next visit us.

Jessie Dall joined the staff as the Operations and Membership Assistant. You will find Jessie staffing the front desk at the Vermont History Center in Barre and on the phone answering any questions you may have about your membership. Jessie is a trained art historian and worked previously for VHS as an educator and most recently supported programs at Northern Vermont University.

Teresa Greene will join the staff in early December as Collections Manager. The Collections Manager takes care of the tens-of-thousands of objects in our museum collection. Teresa will be found most days working in the climate-controlled vaults under the Vermont History Center. Teresa has worked in collections management and curatorial capacities at a number of museums in the mid-Atlantic and the south. Most recently, she served as the curator of textiles at the Charleston Museum in South Carolina. We look forward to welcoming Teresa to Vermont.

I am very excited to work with and learn from our new trustees and new staff members.

Steve Perkins  
Executive Director

# IN THE GALLERIES

## History Center Exhibits

- *Icons, Oddities & Wonders*  
Through September 2020
- *Myths & Legends of the Connecticut River*  
Through April 2020

## History Museum Special Exhibits

- Local History Gallery: *Norman Rockwell's Arlington: America's Home Town*  
Through January 2020
- Calder Gallery: *The History of the Long Trail*  
Through April 2020
- National Life Gallery: *The Vermont Brand*  
Through January 2020

The Connecticut River runs from Canada to the Atlantic Ocean, and the communities on its banks have varied and interesting stories to tell. The Vermont Historical Society opened “Myths and Legends of the Connecticut River” on November 1, 2019 at the Vermont History Center in Barre. The exhibit, on loan from the Connecticut River Museum, highlights the vivid personalities, local legends, wildlife, and traditions of towns from Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire – and of course, Vermont.

Open through May 1, 2020 at the Vermont History Center. Contact Amanda Kay Gustin, Public Program Manager, at [amanda.gustin@vermonthistory.org](mailto:amanda.gustin@vermonthistory.org) with any questions.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<b>Nov. 21</b> 12pm	<b>Third Thursday: When the Irish Invaded Canada</b> History Museum, Montpelier   Speaker: Christopher Klein
<b>Dec. 14 - 1pm</b>	<b>Children's Vermont History Story Hour</b>   History Museum, Montpelier
<b>Dec. 19</b> 12pm	<b>Third Thursday: Burlington Brewing: A History of Craft Beer in the Queen City</b> History Museum, Montpelier   Speakers: Adam Krakowski & Jeff Baker
<b>Jan. 16</b> 12pm	<b>Third Thursday: Vermont's Lucy Terry Prince: Black Mother of the Republic</b> History Museum, Montpelier   Speaker: Mary Louise Kete
<b>Feb. 20</b> 12pm	<b>Third Thursday: The Rev. George S. Brown, Missionary to Africa and First African American Methodist Pastor in Vermont</b> UVM, Burlington   Speaker: Pat Thompson
<b>Mar. 19</b> 12pm	<b>Third Thursday: Women's Suffrage in Vermont</b> UVM, Burlington   Speakers: Lyn Blackwell & Rachel Onuf

## LIBRARY WINTER BREAK

The library will be closed for its winter work break from Monday, January 13, through Friday, January 31. We will reopen with our regular hours on Tuesday, February 4. We will not be responding to reference inquiries during this time so we can process some of the great collections that have come in during the past year. Thank you for your understanding.



# ICONS & ODDITIES

by Amanda Kay Gustin

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## Staff Favorites from the VHS Collections

The Vermont Historical Society's collections number in the tens of thousands of objects, and we are only able to exhibit a small percentage of them at any given time. That means that there are some extraordinary pieces of history that rarely fit into a display. So how do we make sure they get the attention they deserve?

The Vermont History Center in Barre, home to our research library, collections, and administrative offices, houses the weirdest and most wonderful artifacts from Vermont history within the ICONS, ODDITIES AND WONDERS exhibit gallery.

The artifacts, and their unique stories, change every year in September. This year, we are featuring objects personally selected by staff members. The assignment was to select an object or grouping of objects from the collection that spoke to them and to write a label explaining its importance to them personally and to Vermont.

We invite you to get to know these extraordinary objects from our collection and the wonderful staff that care for them. Admission to the History Center exhibits is free. Exhibit hours: Monday- Friday, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm.



## MARJORIE STRONG

Assistant Librarian

chose a collection of items related to artist Gayleen Aiken. Aiken was an only child who grew up and lived in Barre, and began creating art at an early age. She invented a family of twenty-four cousins, giving them rich backstories, and much of her art focuses on depictions of them and their imagined activities and relationships. Included in the collection on display are a series of letters with sketches and artistic statements. Aiken's work is considered a pre-eminent example of "outsider art," which is art created by individuals who have little or no formal training or contact with the mainstream art world. She has been collected by both the Rockefeller Museum of Folk Art and the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

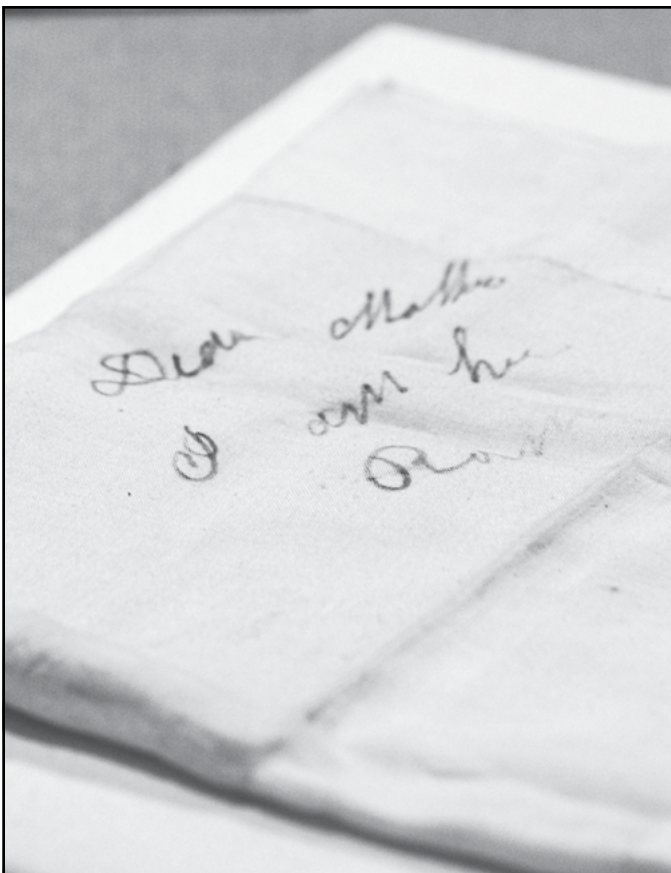


## JOHN GROSVENOR

Director of Finance & Operations

chose two figurines dressed and posed as contra dancers. He lives in Cabot, where contra dances are major social events, and both the actions and the details on the figurines appealed to him as a slice of the Vermont he knows and loves. The figurines were made by Lucy Pfeiffer of Montpelier, who spent decades making dozens of similar figures representing different places and time periods.

continued on next page >>



## LAURA ROONEY

### Program Assistant

is fascinated by the macabre side of history, and chose a handkerchief with faint writing on it: “Dear Mother, I am here...” The handkerchief comes to us from Putnamville, where it was owned by Mary Jane Wright. Mrs. Wright’s son Prentiss died in the early 1880s, and in 1886 she attended a séance with medium Mary Conner Whitney. During the séance, as Mrs. Wright’s daughter Anna later reported, the writing on the handkerchief spontaneously appeared, written “without visible hands.” The family believed it to be a message from Prentiss, and kept the handkerchief for nearly a century before donating it to the Vermont Historical Society.



## VICTORIA HUGHES

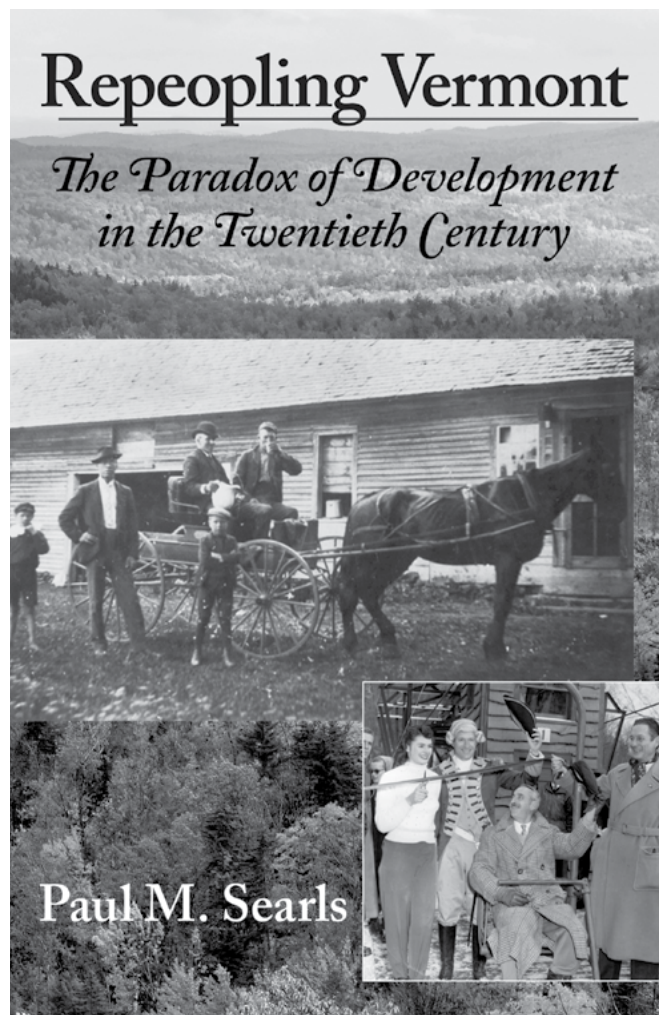
### Museum & Education Manager

uses maps in her work with school groups, and while researching a program came across an 1831 map of Vermont drawn by Ann Little. The map, of a type commonly called a “schoolgirl map,” represents a 19th century philosophy of education. By copying the map, Ann learned geography and practiced both her art skills and penmanship. The map itself is a true masterpiece, intricately drawn and colored, and documents a specific moment in Vermont history – county boundaries and town names have changed several times since she created it. Today, Victoria uses the map in her school programs, and visitors can see the original in the gallery.

# COMMUNITY DISCUSSIONS EXPLORE THEMES IN VHS'S NEWEST BOOK by Amanda Kay Gustin

Development, and how to balance changes to the natural landscape with changes to the human one, has been a theme in Vermont history since before statehood. This summer, VHS traveled around the state to host a series of conversations in partnership with the VT Department of Libraries (VTLIB) asking communities to reflect on their past and share their visions for the future. Paul Searls, Northern Vermont University professor, and author of VHS's newest publication, *Repeopling Vermont: The Paradox of Development in the 20th Century*, gives audiences a grounding in the twentieth century twists and turns – and VHS and VTLIB staff facilitate the conversation about the twenty-first century. Support from the Vermont Humanities Council and Northern Vermont University made these programs possible, with dozens of locations in every corner of the state from July to December.

If you are interested in hosting a program in your community, please contact Amanda Kay Gustin, Public Program Manager, at [amanda.gustin@vermonthistory.org](mailto:amanda.gustin@vermonthistory.org).



## LEARNING & SHARING IN BURLINGTON by Eileen Corcoran

Every seven years, the annual New England Museum Association (NEMA) Conference comes to Vermont. The largest annual regional gathering of museums in the country provides a great opportunity for networking, learning, and sharing with colleagues from around New England.

VHS was well represented at this year's conference. Eileen Corcoran co-presented a session with other Vermont colleagues on marketing for small museums. Tori Hart and Kate Olney co-presented a session with a colleague from the Fleming Museum on growing annual fund donations. Victoria Hughes co-presented a session with colleagues from NY on engaging new communities with

history museums. And Amanda Gustin co-presented with the Vermont Humanities Council and Vermont Folklife Center on our Before Your Time podcast. VHS also hosted an off-site session which brought conference-goers to the History Museum in Montpelier to learn about our community exhibit programs and visit our *Freedom & Unity* exhibit.

VHS also provided scholarships to the conference, thanks to contributions from the Alan Weiss Fund, to make it possible for our local historical society and museum colleagues to attend. We were happy to be able to encourage and support the greater historical society community in joining us at this outstanding event.

# CONGRATS MARY & DIANE!

We said goodbye this Fall to two long-term staff members: Mary Labate Rogstad and Diane Campbell (*pictured right*). Mary was VHS's very first Registrar and held that position for 40 years, stewarding the collections through multiple moves, floods, and expansions. Diane worked at VHS for 24 years in a variety of capacities, most recently as Office Manager. A huge thank you to Diane & Mary for their dedication to VHS through the years, we will miss you.



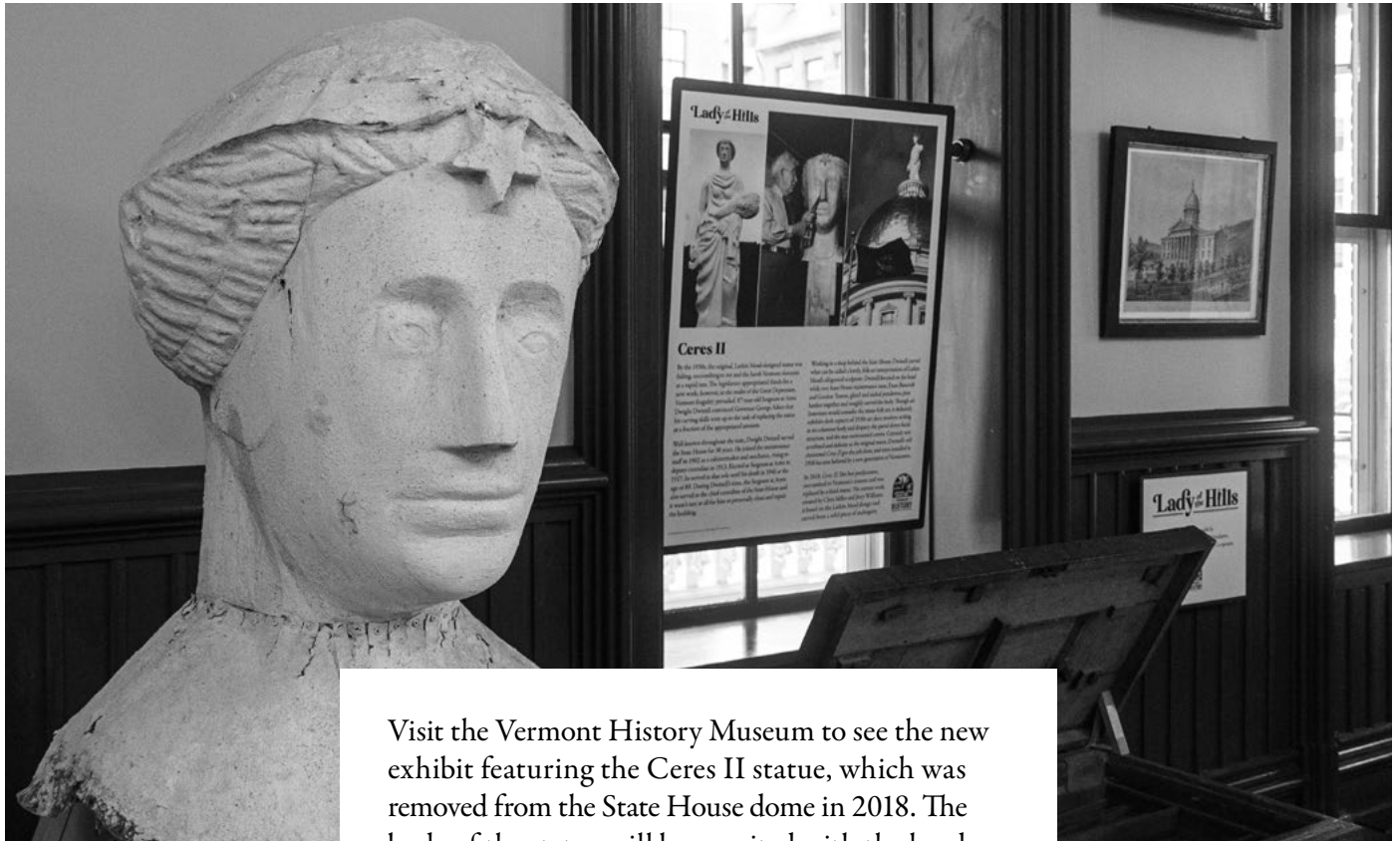
# THANK YOU, AMERICORPS!



We were thrilled to have a group from Americorps National Civilian Community Corps at the History Center this fall to work on cleaning, glazing, and painting some of the 200 historic windows on the building. Thank you also to our Barre community for helping to house the team.



# NEW AT THE MUSEUM



Visit the Vermont History Museum to see the new exhibit featuring the Ceres II statue, which was removed from the State House dome in 2018. The body of the statue will be reunited with the head after additional conservation work. 19th century landscape paintings and portraits fill the walls around the statue in the renovated Snelling Room meeting space.





## 2019 ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS

Every year the Vermont Historical Society presents the League of Local Historical Societies & Museums Achievement Awards. These awards recognize the exceptional work being done by individuals and community heritage organizations throughout the state to collect, preserve and share Vermont's rich history. They were presented in September this year at our 181st Annual Meeting.

### **BIG HEAVY WORLD** *(above left)*

Award of Excellence in Exhibitions & Public Programs  
for their exhibit *Vermont Music Far & Wide*

### **STOWE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Award of Excellence in Exhibitions & Public Programs  
For the *Brownsville 1850-1950 & Now: A Walk Through History and the Current Landscape* project

### **BRADFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Award of Merit in Exhibitions & Public Programs  
For the exhibit *Philip Ross Hastings - Through His Lens*  
with special recognition for Diane Smarro

### **BRIDGEWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Award of Merit in Publications  
For the Bridgewater Historical Society Newsletter

### **FAIR HAVEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY** *(above right)*

Award of Merit in Publications  
for the book *Fair Haven Memories*

### **INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

Lt. Col Mark C. Biron  
of the Island Pond Historical Society

Nancy Stanley Magnant  
of the Franklin Historical Society

Rita Martel  
of the Winooski Historical Society

## HATHAWAY AWARD WINNER

The Richard O. Hathaway Award was presented this year to Rick Winston for his book *Red Scare in the Green Mountains: Vermont in the McCarthy Era 1948-1960*. The book explores some forgotten history as we see how a small, rural "rock-ribbed Republican" state with a historically libertarian streak handled the hysteria of the time. Winston gathers together stories in nine essays which explore everything from a high-profile academic firing, to controversies involving left-leaning summer residents, to a conservative senator who helped take down Joseph McCarthy. The Hathaway award is presented annually to an individual, group or organization recognized as making an outstanding contribution to the field of Vermont history.

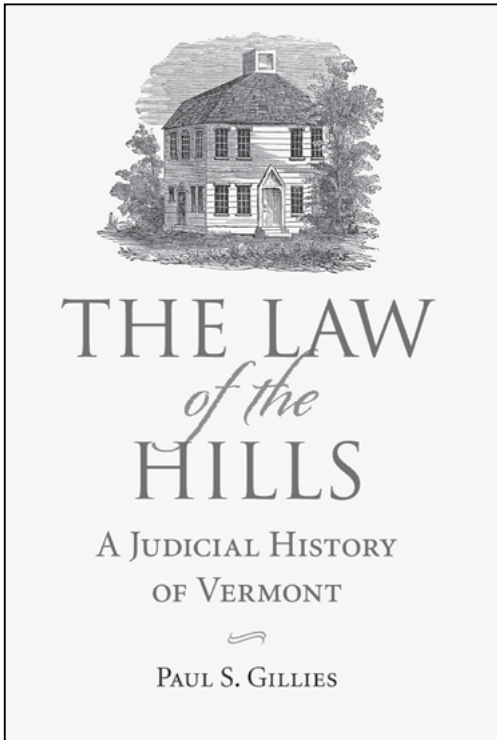
# MYSTERY PHOTO

Last issue's mystery photo failed to generate any possible identifications from our readers. Perhaps this building looks too similar to many homes in Vermont towns to stand out in people's minds.



This issue's mystery photograph was taken by W. H. Atwood of Quechee, VT. Based on the crucifix on the roof peak and the attire of the men in front of the building, it looks like this might be an early Catholic church rectory. Does anyone know where it was located? If so, please contact VHS Librarian Paul Carnahan at [paul.carnahan@vermonthistory.org](mailto:paul.carnahan@vermonthistory.org) or (802) 479-8508.

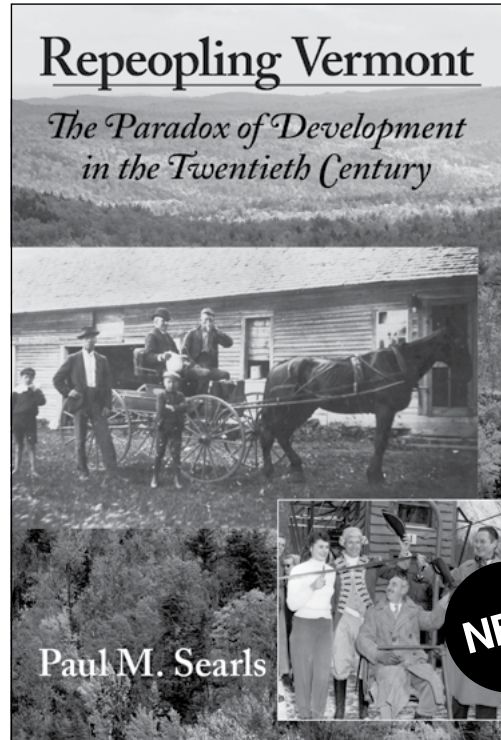
# VHS 2019 BOOK LIST



**The Law of the Hills:  
A Judicial History of Vermont  
by Paul S. Gillies**

The first general history of the judicial branch in Vermont, from the tempestuous early days when Ethan Allen roared at the judges and mobs took over the courts through its evolution during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and into the 21<sup>st</sup>.

*Paperback, 313 pages. 2019. \$24.95*



**Repeopling Vermont: The Paradox of  
Development in the Twentieth Century  
by Paul M. Searls**

At the turn of the 20th century, Vermont’s overwhelmingly rural character was both a distressing problem to be solved and the state’s greatest asset. Searls illuminates the tension between progress and preservation in the last century and how these forces continue to shape Vermont today.

*Paperback, 216 pages. 2019. \$22.95*

## Featured VHS Publications

**Almost Utopia by Rebecca Lepkoff**

Photographs of native Vermonters and newcomers in the summer of 1950 in Jamaica, Vermont, just before paved roads and postwar development altered the community’s character forever.

*Paperback, 109 pages. 2008. \$32.00*

**A Very Fine Appearance: The Vermont Civil War  
Photographs of George Houghton  
by Donald Wickman**

Stunning photographs and excerpts from soldiers’ diaries capture the very marrow of Vermonters’ infantry experience during the Civil War.

*Hardcover, 250 pages. 2011. \$29.95*

*Paperback, 250 pages. 2011. \$22.95*

## Other Great Publications in our Store .....

### **Vermont...Who Knew? by Robert F. Wilson**

Join the author as he roams through the state, selecting unusual events, museums, and individuals to profile, or at least mention. With a forward by U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders.

*Paperback, 228 pages. 2019. \$18.95*

### **Tales From the Edge of the Woods by Willem Lange**

Eighteen reminiscences from the well-known North Country writer and VPR radio commentator about life in our unique corner of the world.

*Paperback, 114 pages. 2016. \$14.95*

### **On Whitcomb Hill: Land, House, and History in Rural Vermont by E.J. Myers**

The author explores how the historical, ethical, and spiritual aspects of owning his property inspire a sense of stewardship, not only of his ten acres, but of the wider world.

*Paperback, 251 pages. 2019. \$16.95*

### **Coming of Age: My Journey to the Eighties by Madeleine May Kunin**

In the author's newest book the topic is aging, but she looks well beyond the physical tolls and explores the emotional ones as well. And she has had an extraordinary life: governor, ambassador, feminist, wife, mother, professor, poet, and much, much more.

*Hardcover, 200 pages. 2018. \$21.95*

**More great titles available online at**  
*[vermonthistory.org/shop](http://vermonthistory.org/shop)*

### **We Are As Gods by Kate Daloz**

At the dawn of the 1970s, waves of hopeful idealists abandoned the city and headed for the country, convinced that a better life awaited. This book sheds light on one generation's determination to change their own lives, and, in the process, change the world.

*Hardcover, 384 pages. 2016. \$26.99*

### **Backroads and Byways of Vermont: Drives, Day Trips and Weekend Excursions by Christina Tree, Lisa Halvorsen, and Pat Goudy O'Brien**

Drives that take you to every corner of the state, with recommendations for lodging, dining, walks and swimming holes. Clear navigation, easy to read maps and numerous photos make this guidebook a must-have resource.

*Paperback, 244 pages. 2018. \$21.95*

### **Red Scare in the Green Mountains by Rick Winston**

#### **WINNER OF THE 2019 HATHAWAY AWARD**

Rick Winston explores some forgotten history as we see how this small, rural, "rock-ribbed Republican" state with a historically libertarian streak handled the hysteria of the anti-Communist fear known as the "Red Scare."

*Paperback, 149 pages. 2018. \$16.95*

### **Vermont Confidential: Tales of True Crime from the Heart of Vermont and Beyond... by Paul Heller.**

A collection of Paul Heller's historical essays in which murder, mystery and mayhem feature prominently.

*Paperback, 195 pages. 2019. \$15.00*

## New For Young Readers .....

### **Salamander Sky by Katy Farber, Illustrations by Meg Sodano**

A little girl and her mother go out on a rainy spring night to help the salamanders cross a busy road safely in this celebration of one of spring's magical natural events.

*Hardcover, 32 pages. 2018. \$17.95*

### **The Champlain Monster written and illustrated by Jeff Danziger**

A young boy and his sister discover the secret of the Lake Champlain monster, but decide to keep the secret to themselves in this magical tale.

*Paperback, 96 pages. 2019. \$24.95*

# BOOKSTORE ORDER FORM

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<i>Order Total</i>	<i>Shipping</i>
\$1.00 - \$35.99.....	\$4.95
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\$76.00 - \$100.00.....	\$9.95

*For orders over \$100.00 please call for a quote.*

Orders are shipped via USPS; please call for a quote if you need expedited shipping!

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Less 15% membership discount \_\_\_\_\_

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Vermont residents add 6% sales tax \_\_\_\_\_

Residents of Brandon, Burlington, Colchester, Dover, Killington, Manchester, Middlebury, Rutland Town, South Burlington, St. Albans Town, Stratton, Williston, Winhall & Wilmington please add 1% local tax

**TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED** \_\_\_\_\_

If tax exempt, please give exemption number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Make Checks Payable to the Vermont Historical Society**

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Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**If you would like to become a member or renew your membership to get 15% off merchandise, please go online to [vermonthistory.org/donate](http://vermonthistory.org/donate) or call Jessie Dall at (802) 479-8503.**

# MAKE HISTORY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

Become a permanent part of the Vermont Historical Society by having your name or another special person's name engraved on a brick or paver in our Remembrance Courtyard. The Courtyard is located at the entrance of the historic Spaulding School on 60 Washington Street, in the heart of Barre, Vermont.

Proceeds will be used to preserve and operate the Vermont History Center building. To order online, please visit [vermonthistory.org/Buy-Brick](http://vermonthistory.org/Buy-Brick). For more information, please contact Tori Hart at (802) 479-8516.



## YOUR ENGRAVED STORY:

- \$175.00** - 4" x 8" Brick  
15 characters per line, up to 3 lines.
- \$350.00** - 8" x 8" Brick  
20 characters per line, up to 6 lines.
- \$2,000.00** - 16.5" x 16.5" Granite  
30 characters per line, up to 6 lines.

## GIFT A TAX-FREE ROLLOVER GIFT THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

*Forced to take a required minimum distribution (RMD) from your IRA before the end of the year?*

Consider donating all or part of your RMD (up to \$100,000 per individual) to the Vermont Historical Society this holiday season. Learn how the charitable IRA rollover provision can help you support your area of interest at the Vermont Historical Society by visiting [vermonthistory.org/Charitable-IRA](http://vermonthistory.org/Charitable-IRA) or contact Kate at (802) 479-8525.

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## IN MEMORIAM

We mourn the loss of Virginia "Ginger" Trepto Baker, former long-time Assistant Treasurer of the Vermont Historical Society. Ginger began working at the VHS straight out of high school in 1969 and retired after 37 years in 2006, only to return in an interim role the following year. Her title of "Assistant Treasurer" belied her central role in operations, financial and otherwise, at the VHS; today the position is called "Director of Finance and Operations." Ginger brought us into the computer age in the 1980s and through the process of renovating our building in Barre in the early 2000s. She worked under eight directors and was for most of her career our institutional memory. Ginger died at her home in Hyde Park, Vermont, on May 6, 2019, at age 67.





**Vermont Historical Society**  
60 Washington St. Suite 1  
Barre, Vermont 05641-4209

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**SAVE THE DATE**

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# VERMONT EATS

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**THE ITALIAN EXPERIENCE IN BARRE**

**Saturday, March 28, 2020**

**5PM – Cocktail Hour | 6PM - Dinner & Presentation**

**Old Labor Hall, Barre, VT**

Come celebrate Vermont's Italian cuisine and the cultural  
and geographical elements that influenced it.

Tickets will be available for purchase on February 14, 2020. For more information,  
please visit our events calendar at [vermonthistory.org/Calendar](http://vermonthistory.org/Calendar).