

History Connections

Vermont Historical Society

News & Notes

Spring 2010 / Volume #4 / Number 3



Vermont Historical Society
60 Washington Street
Barre, Vermont 05641-4209

Inside This Issue

- Vermont History Expo Returns for 2010!
- Planning for the Future of Vermont's Past
- 2010 Vermont History Day
- First Female Pages Found
- VHS Awarded Preservation Assistance Grant
- Accepting Nominations for the Richard O. Hathaway Award
- Grant for History Center Bell Tower
- Society Publishes New Book about Shelburne Farms

Public WiFi at
History Center!



Vermont History Expo Returns for 2010!

Expo is back! The Vermont History Expo returns to its "home" at the Tunbridge Fairgrounds to celebrate its 10th run. To celebrate this milestone, recognition will be awarded to 25 local historical societies that have participated in the event each year, such as the Guilford, Highgate, Waterbury and Hubbardton Historical Societies, as well as the State Historic Sites.

For 2010, the Expo explores the land, nature, communes and good old Vermont common values with its timely theme, "Back to the Land Again: Vermont Heritage Ways for Today." In keeping with the "green revolution" and Vermonters' growing desire to return to traditional ways, the History Expo will present exhibits and demonstrations which remind us that Vermonters have a rich history of awareness of our use of the land through agriculture and conservation practices. Historically, Vermonters have regarded our working landscape as our key asset.

In addition to fresh history exhibits from local communities,

visitors will enjoy local foods, heritage breed animal demonstrations including horse- and oxen-driven plowing and pulling, a variety of live music, traditional craft/trade demonstrations, hands-on activities such as butter-making, weaving and woodworking, exhibits by museums and cultural heritage organizations, food growing and preparation tips, authors of new Vermont books and history presentations by scholars and experts. As always, we'll have Clara's games for children, parades on both days, reenactments and encampments.

Our fun and lively country-style auction will be on Saturday this year. We've planned an irresistible auction with generous donations from all over the state for folks to bid on, including Vermont-made items and lovely "inn and entertainment" packages. There is sure to be something for everyone!

Visitors have labeled the Expo in many different ways: "History's Country Fair" or "Vermont's Family Reunion." For the people who attend the Vermont History Expo and participate in all of its wonderful offerings, the Expo gives a fun and unforgettable history lesson. *Tickets: \$10 non-members, \$20 families, \$6 members if pre-ordered in advance. Tickets are good for both days. For more details, please visit www.vermonthistory/expo.* 





Spring 2010
Volume #4 / Number 3

History Connections is published four times a year 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: Mark S. Hudson
Editor: Mark Collier
Printing: Stillwater Graphics

Vermont History Center
60 Washington Street, Barre, VT
802-479-8500

Administrative Offices & Store:
Monday–Friday 9am to 4pm

Library
Tuesday–Friday 9am to 4pm
Wednesday 9am to 8pm
Second Saturday each month
9am to 4pm
802-479-8509

Library admission:
Non-members: \$5
Members and students: Free

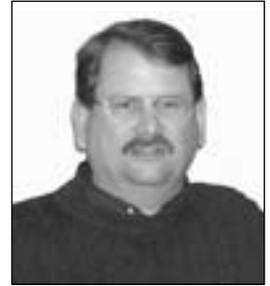
Museum & Store
Pavilion Building
109 State Street, Montpelier, VT
Tuesday–Saturday 10am to 4pm
802-828-2291

Museum admission:
Families: \$12; Adults: \$5
Students, children, seniors: \$3
Members & children under 6: Free
Student school groups: Free
802-828-2180

www.vermonthistory.org
vhs-info@state.vt.us

From the Director

Planning for the Future of Vermont's Past



It has been no surprise to me that Vermonters cherish their heritage and do all that they can to preserve it. This has been revealed to me through my work with the staff and volunteers at the Historical Society, through my travels around the state, and through my contact with local historical societies in communities throughout Vermont. In recent months I have gained an even deeper appreciation of the value of Vermont's heritage through my involvement with two statewide initiatives.

At the invitation of Governor Douglas, I have been privileged to serve on a committee charged with making recommendations about the management of the state's heritage resources. We began to refer to our group as Heritage Stewardship Vermont: The Governor's Study Committee on Resource Management, a name that reflected the breadth of our interest.

Crucial to our study has been an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. While this examination revealed serious challenges, the most poignant revelation for me was the recognition of how Vermont's heritage resources define the distinctive character of the state. Its working landscape, iconic villages and towns, and vibrant heritage organizations are critical to the "Vermont Brand." Accompanying this analysis was an exploration of heritage stewardship models employed in other states. From the mega-agencies, most commonly in the Midwest, to the smaller hybrid structures of the Northeast, we found a surprising diversity in the way each state cares for its heritage resources.

As this study is drawing to a close, we are synthesizing all of this information into a set of recommendations that will strengthen the sustainability of Vermont's heritage resources. My appreciation is extended to the Governor for inviting me to participate in this study and to the committee members for advancing my understanding of our common roles as stewards of Vermont's heritage.

At the same time, I have been thrilled to play a leadership role in the planning for Vermont's commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War. Alongside historians and colleagues from over a dozen heritage organizations, we have been meeting since September. Our efforts to date have focused upon the creation of a Vermont Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission and the identification of historical themes for each year of the five-year commemoration. Additional planning efforts will focus upon the development of statewide events, coordination of community events and promotion of all of these activities.

Coming to Vermont from a region of the country where many of the Civil War's major battles were waged, it has been a pleasant surprise for me to realize the importance of the Civil War to Vermonters. Through the work of many historians who have worked tirelessly to document Vermont's Civil War experience, these stories of bravery and sacrifice have unfolded before me. I look forward to the Vermont Historical Society playing a critical role the Sesquicentennial commemoration.

Both of these experiences have been enriching. I have attained new perspectives on the importance of the work we do at the Historical Society, while also envisioning new opportunities for collaboration with our heritage partners throughout the state.

Mark S. Hudson
Executive Director

Welcome Kathleen!

Kathleen D'Aquila recently moved to central Vermont from Stamford, Connecticut. In May 2009, she graduated from the Cooperstown Graduate Program in History Museum Studies and received a Bachelor's degree in History from James Madison University. In Connecticut, she worked at the Fairfield Museum and History Center, Stepping Stones Museum for Children, and the Bruce Museum.

We welcome Kathleen D'Aquila to the education staff as the Museum and Outreach Educator. Kathleen brings to us her experience and knowledge as a museum educator with her previous work in Connecticut museums. She will be coordinating the visitor programs at the VHS Museum and managing our History Helpers, who are the tour guides for school groups. She is very excited to work with visiting school groups and looks forward to National History Day!



Kathleen D'Aquila

2010 Vermont History Day

On March 27th, over 100 enthusiastic junior historians descended on Spaulding High School in Barre to participate in another fun and informative Vermont History Day. This year's coordination of middle and high school students and their projects was shared by education department team members Victoria Hughes and Kathleen D'Aquila. They were joined by VHS staff, trustees and assorted volunteers to admit and direct students, parents and teachers; judge entries of written papers, table-top exhibits, performances, documentaries and websites; and feed the hard-working judges!

The theme this year was "Innovation in History." The wide range of entry subjects included maple sugaring, eugenics, Blodgett Ovens and the Vermont interstate. Awards were bestowed and 39 students were chosen for the opportunity to compete nationally in Washington, DC in June. We wish them all the best!



Evan Myers (left) placed first in the junior division with his performance of "The Telescope – Bringing Reality into Focus."

Museum

Milk Bottle Collection Donated

When Linda and Donald Kaiser of Waterbury offered last year to donate a milk bottle collection to VHS, we jumped. Surprisingly, the museum only had three milk bottles in its collection. The donation of over 50 bottles fills a gap that helps to illustrate an important period in Vermont's history, the era of home milk delivery. We are sure many of you have memories of skimming the cream off the top of the bottle or cursing when the milk froze and the bottle broke before you could get to it on a cold

winter morning. Do you remember the name of your milkman? Most of the bottles date from the 1940s and 1950s with applied color labels identifying the numerous dairies from around the state. Over 20 dairies are represented from all corners of the state, including Ethan Allen Creamery of Essex Junction, Estey's Dairy of Springfield, Lewis Dairy of Newport, Booth Brothers of Barre, and H.E. Johnson of Rutland. Thanks Linda and Donald.



First Female Pages Found

The Vermont Historical Society “grapevine” got right to work after the publication of the last issue of *History Connections*. In it we said that we were curious about the whereabouts of the first female pages at the Vermont Legislature, Dianne Kearns and Lea Sikora. It turns out that these two women have not wandered far from their Green Mountain roots.

Dianne Kearns had a career as a newspaper reporter, covering the Vermont and New Hampshire State Houses for United Press International, the *Concord (NH) Monitor* and the Associated Press. She went on to become an editor at the *Keene (NH) Sentinel* and will receive her law degree in May from Vermont Law School. She lives in Walpole, New

Hampshire, where her husband, Dayton Duncan, co-produces documentary films with Ken Burns.

Lea Sikora was one of the first women to graduate from Dartmouth College. She actively took up marathon running and qualified for the first US Women’s Olympic Marathon Trials in 1984, became a Nike athlete in 1986, and finished 15th in the 1988 Olympic trials. At age 46 she matriculated to medical school. Although she did not complete the M.D. degree, she earned two medical degrees and works at Baystate Medical Center. She lives in West Stockbridge, Massachusetts, with her husband, a cardiologist.

Thanks to members Anthony Otis, Allen Gilbert and Mary Rogstad for helping us locate these interesting Vermonters. 

VHS Awarded Preservation Assistance Grant

The Vermont Historical Society was recently awarded a Preservation Assistance Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to assist in the care of oversized paper items in the library’s collections. This project was designated a “We the People” project as part of the NEH’s initiative to “encourage and strengthen the teaching, study, and understanding of American history and culture.”

The library’s project has two parts. The first part was completed in March when conservator M.J. Davis of Newark, Vermont, came to the Leahy Library and conducted a day-long survey of the library’s oversized maps, broadsides, and manuscripts. During the day, Ms. Davis also worked with librarians Paul Carnahan and Marjorie Strong to refolder and sleeve some of the more vulnerable and valuable flat paper items in the library’s collections. Receiving special attention were the library’s largest maps, largest broadsides, and Civil War rosters. Ms. Davis will write a report on her visit, suggesting strategies for further enhancing the library’s care of items in this challenging group of materials.

The second part of the project will be a workshop for local historical societies on the care and handling of oversized paper items. This half-day workshop will be

conducted by Ms. Davis and held at the Vermont History Center on Monday, July 12th. There will be limited enrollment for this workshop, so watch the VHS local societies e-newsletter and web site for details. 



*VHS Assistant Librarian Marjorie Strong works with paper conservator M.J. Davis to assess the library’s large format collection, a “We the People” project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.**

*Any views, findings conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

More History at Your Home Computer

It’s worth checking our web site regularly to see what’s new, as we are working to make more of our collections available online. Most recently, we’ve added:

Archives of all Vermont History articles since 2000 and our most popular articles before 2000: vermonthistory.org/journal

Photos of artifacts from the Harold G. Rugg Collection: vermonthistory.org/rugg

Images from glass plate negatives created by W. C. Sawyer of Essex, Vermont, and Los Angeles, California, ca. 1890 -1905: vermonthistory.org/image

Transcriptions of library resources for genealogists: vermonthistory.org/generesources



Library Interns Celebrate GMC

Micah Rose and David Sterngold, sophomores from Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, spent part of their spring break at the Leahy Library researching and assembling a small exhibit on the history of the Long Trail. Micah and David's exhibit was shown at the Vermont State House on March 11th and at a reception that evening in honor of the Green Mountain Club on the exact day the club was founded 100 years ago. The exhibit drew on the extensive archives of the GMC that are at the VHS and featured an early map of the Long Trail with photographs of different shelters and landmarks along the trail.

The exercise motivated the library staff to create a small exhibit of their own commemorating the GMC's 100th anniversary. The Leahy Library display case now features artifacts from the early days of the club, including founder James P. Taylor's first map of the proposed Long Trail, dated 1910, and a letter from president Taylor to secretary E.L. Ingalls encouraging him to call a meeting of the new governing council. On October 13, 1910, seven months after the formation of the club, Taylor wrote to Ingalls, "It is high time that we have

a meeting of the Council of the Green Mountain Club." The exhibit also includes printed ephemera promoting the hiking trail and photographs of the "Three Musketeers," the three young women who hiked the length of the trail by themselves in 1927.

The exhibit will remain on display at the Vermont History Center through the end of June.



David Sterngold and Micah Rose, from Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, at the Leahy Library with their exhibit on the history of the Long Trail.

Publications & Fellowships

Accepting Nominations for the Richard O. Hathaway Award

The annual Hathaway Award goes to an individual who is recognized as making an outstanding contribution to the field of Vermont history. Projects include, but are not limited to, publications, exhibits, works of art, documentary films, radio programs, web sites, and dramatic works. The candidate's work must have been completed, published, released or presented during the previous calendar year.

The Hathaway Award was created to stimulate outstanding work in the field of Vermont history. It is dedicated to the memory of Richard O. Hathaway, whose lifelong work teaching Vermont history was an inspiration to his colleagues and to the many students he taught and mentored, both inside and outside academia.

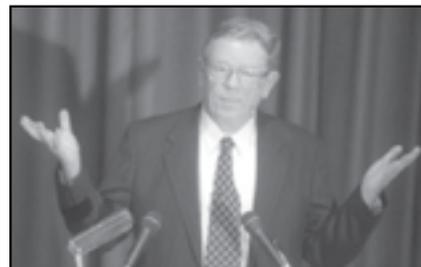
Who Can Apply?

Individuals may apply themselves or be nominated by someone else. Applications are due at the Vermont Historical Society by July 15th. The award will be presented at the Society's annual meeting. The winner of the award will receive \$1,000. Applications will be judged according to the following criteria:

- *informs and enlightens the audience about Vermont history;*
- *creatively conceived and skillfully produced;*

- *historically accurate and well-researched;*
- *reaches a popular, preferably wide and diverse, audience; and*
- *helps to preserve or document Vermont history.*

For more information about the award, a list of past winners or the application, contact Diane Campbell at 802-479-8503, or go to www.vermonthistory.org/hathaway.



Richard O. Hathaway

"What I do has a kind of housebroken prophetic nature about it. . .

If you want to be weepy-dreepy about it, you could say I'm clothing the naked, feeding the hungry."

--Richard O. Hathaway

Membership News

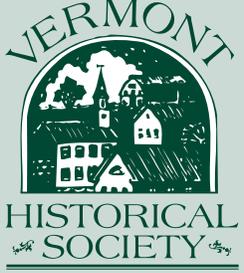
As always, our top priority is to preserve Vermont history and bring it to people in all corners of the state.

We truly appreciate our members' support of our work and of our state and community heritage. In turn, we try to keep members' dues as affordable as possible. At the same time, however, we need to be fiscally responsible and cover our expenses.

At this time, even though we have tailored our budget to be as frugal as possible, we need to increase our dues levels for the first time in a number of years. The new dues levels will be as follows:

- Institutional Members: \$50.00
 - Senior Members: \$40.00
 - Individual Members: \$45.00
 - Household Members: \$55.00
- (Upper membership dues levels will remain the same.)

The increases will begin at the start of our next fiscal year: July 1, 2010. With the increased dues, we will be able to maintain our current level of membership benefits for the foreseeable future. We thank all members in advance for their understanding, and we want to again express our gratitude for your support. 



Each of Us
Leaves a Legacy

*Please include Vermont Historical Society in your estate plan or will and bring Vermont's heritage to future generations.
Contact Jane Campbell,
(802) 479-8516
or jane.campbell@state.vt.us.*

Grant for History Center Bell Tower

Governor Douglas came to the Vermont History Center in Barre to announce this year's grant awards from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, including a \$12,843 grant to the Vermont Historical Society to help repair and preserve the historic bell tower of the Vermont History Center, aka "Old Spaulding School." He wished us luck in sharing Vermont's past with "lovers of history in our state and beyond."

The Governor remarked that with 42 applicants and only 19 grants, there wasn't enough money to go around, but that there is clearly significant interest in preserving the historical landmarks of our state.

Mark Hudson, VHS executive director, closed the presentation by thanking the governor and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. He noted that this grant is "part of an ongoing effort to preserve this building," and said "We are faced with a challenge, but "it is a challenge that we embrace." 



Governor Douglas announced the grant at the Vermont History Center.



Mark Collier

Mark Collier recently joined the VHS Development Department as Marketing and Community Relations Coordinator. Collier comes to the Vermont Historical Society with 18 years of experience in advertising, marketing and public relations for clients such as Schonbek, Benjamin Moore and the US Air Force. In his free time, Mark enjoys mountain biking, art and photography.



Greg Gove

Greg Gove recently joined the Vermont Historical Society as the Facilities Manager. Greg comes to The Vermont Historical Society with 10 years of experience in the HVAC field. Greg Graduated from Johnson State College with a BA in Business Management in 2005. In his free time, Greg enjoys hunting and fishing.

Society Publishes New Book about Shelburne Farms

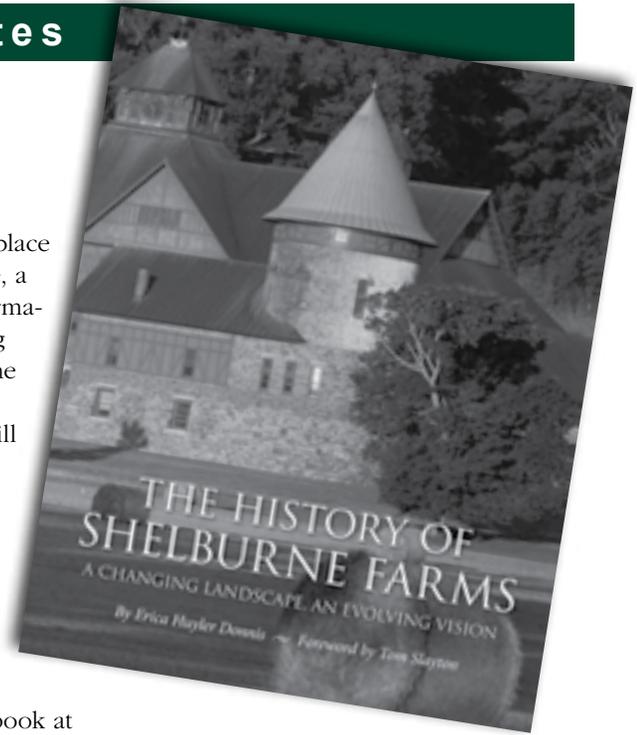
The Vermont Historical Society and Shelburne Farms have co-published a brand new book, *The History of Shelburne Farms: A Changing Landscape, An Evolving Vision*. The author, Erica Huyler Donnis, worked as curator of collections at Shelburne Farms from 1998 to 2002.

Many of you have probably visited Shelburne Farms, but you may not be aware of its fascinating history. This book describes how the magnificent estate created by Seward and Lila Webb in the 1880s—intended to showcase their wealth but also to lead the way in improving agriculture in Vermont and the nation—has become a world-class leader in the movement for sustainability education, currently stewarded by a nonprofit organization that Webb family descendants established in 1972.

Novelist and writer-in-residence at Middlebury College, Julia Alvarez, sums up the book this way: “Shelburne Farms: No other place I know combines such stunning natural beauty with a quiet groundswell of visionary commitment to stewardship and planetary thinking and doing. Here, at last, is the story of its remarkable evolution from an estate bought with

great wealth, to a place returned to service, a locus for a transformative way of tending and attending to the land. A journey in hope, this book will inspire readers to do what the best literature does, according to the poet Rilke: change our lives.”

Author Erica Donnis will be talking about the book at the Vermont History Expo. Come and hear her at the Author’s Tent, Sunday June 11th at 11 am. The book will be available in mid-May from VHS, Shelburne Farms, and at your local bookstore. Filled with wonderful photographs, the paperback edition lists for \$34.95, and a limited number of cloth copies are priced at \$44.95. 



Upcoming Events

Now through July 3

Museum Exhibit Extended: “To Life! A Celebration of Vermont Jewish Women.” This historic exhibit celebrates the stories of 20 Jewish Vermont women from all walks of life, ages 12 to 101. Tues.-Sat., 10am – 4pm., Vermont History Museum, 109 State Street, Montpelier.

June 12 & 13

Vermont Days — The Vermont History Museum will be open free of charge to everyone as part of the statewide celebration of parks and attractions. 109 State Street, next to the State House, Montpelier, 10am – 4pm.

June 26 & 27

Vermont History Expo — “Vermont’s Family Reunion” returns to the Tunbridge Fairgrounds with Back to the Land, Again! Vermont Heritage Ways for Today. www.vermonthistory.org/expo. Sat & Sun 10pm – 5pm.

July 12

Care and Handling of Over-Sized Materials Workshop — with conservator M.J. Davis for local historical societies. Enrollment limited. Time and registration process to be announced via e-newsletter.

July 24

Barre Heritage Festival — In conjunction with the annual Barre Heritage Festival, we will be featuring Barre’s French heritage with entertainment, exhibits and children’s games. Free tours of the History Center, too! 60 Washington St. Barre. 11am – 3pm.

August 7

Coolidge Days — Come visit the VHS booth and join Governor Jim Douglas and other dignitaries to celebrate the grand opening of the new President Calvin Coolidge Museum & Education Center. Activities include wagon rides, chicken barbecue, sheep shearing, old-time fiddling, traditional Vermont craft demonstrations, and children’s activities. 10am – 4pm.

August 14

Windham County History Fair — Come visit the VHS booth and Step back in time: vintage exhibits by the county’s historical societies, demonstrations, village walking tours, crafters, food and live music. Supports the Museum of the Historical Society of Windham County. Historic Newfane Common, Newfane. Free.

Don’t forget to visit us on Facebook for more news and announcements!



Vermont Historical Society
60 Washington Street
Barre, Vermont 05641-4209

Return Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Barre, VT
Permit #32

Mystery Photo

Last issue's mystery photo did not produce any positive identifications, so that beautiful Vermont country scene still remains a mystery.

This issue's mystery photo comes from a postcard sent to a woman in Washington, Vermont. The church looks very much like the Universalist Church in Washington, but there are some important differences. The postmark is light and illegible. So we are left with the question: Where is this church?

If you know, please contact VHS librarian Paul Carnahan at paul.carnahan@state.vt.us or (802) 479-8508. 

Check www.vermonthistory.org for more photos, articles and library transcriptions.

