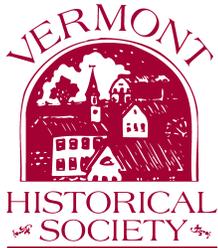


# History Connections

Vermont Historical Society

News & Notes

Fall 2011 / Volume #6 / Number 1



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

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If you're not getting the e-news, please subscribe at:

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Subscribe and start getting advance notice about events, additions to the collections and other historical news!

Public WiFi at  
History Center!



## Interns and volunteers hone professional skills at the VHS

Volunteers are an important element of the workforce at the Vermont Historical Society. Our volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds and provide us with a variety of skills. Sometimes those volunteers and interns are young people who are just beginning their careers in an historical institution. In those instances, the Vermont Historical Society provides real world experiences in the profession and, in turn, the volunteers and interns help us accomplish our goals.

This fall we have five volunteers/interns working in three departments, honing their professional skills in hopes of advancing their careers. Three are working in the library, one in the marketing department, and one in the education and public programming department. The three library volunteers are Aidan Sammis, Jenne Greaves, and Sarah Costa; all three are in various stages of their library training.



*VHS interns and volunteers (L to R): Samantha Bellinger, Jacqueline Batten, Jenne Greaves, and Sarah Costa. (Inset): Aidan Sammis.*

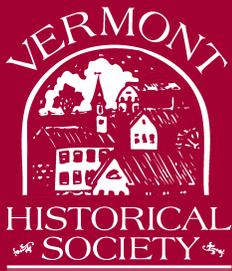
Aidan Sammis comes to us from Marlboro College where he worked in the library after receiving a BA from that institution in 2005. Although he didn't have a library degree, Aidan performed increasingly complex types of cataloging for the college. At the VHS, Aidan is creating computer-readable catalog records for broadsides. Because many of our

*continued on page 6—*

## Become a member of the VHS Team!

The Vermont History Center is expanding its offerings in Barre and so we are in need of more excellent volunteers for 2012. If you like to greet people and help them find their way to our new exhibits, our research library and the new Archeology Center, then we have a place for you! If you have an interest in more extensive knowledge of our exhibits and giving tours, we welcome you as well.

The VHS treats all of our volunteers as valued members of our team, and twice a year, they are treated to events that are convivial and fun, too! Other volunteer opportunities exist at the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier and for the Vermont History Expo at the Tunbridge Fairgrounds in June. We encourage RSVP members to contact us. For more information, please contact Diane Campbell at 479-8503 or [diane.campbell@state.vt.us](mailto:diane.campbell@state.vt.us).



Fall 2011

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*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: Julie Nelson  
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  
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[www.vermonthistory.org](http://www.vermonthistory.org)  
[vhs-info@state.vt.us](mailto:vhs-info@state.vt.us)

## From the Director

### A response to Irene

As Vermont continues to recover from the devastation brought by Tropical Storm Irene, our thoughts remain with our members and friends whose lives have been disrupted by this historic event. We watched with horror and disbelief as the Mount Tabor/Danby Historical Society's Millbrook House was swept away and the covered bridge in Bartonsville washed down the Williams River. From towns throughout the Green Mountain State we heard the tragic stories of loss, hardship, isolation, and heartache.

Amid this historic event we also have seen the amazing resilience of Vermonters, the strong spirit of community, and a bold determination to overcome this tragedy, just as we did in 1927. The resolute response to Irene gives us one more reason to be proud to be Vermonters. Likewise, I am proud of the role the Vermont Historical Society played in assessing the impact upon cultural organizations and our efforts to render assistance to those who were affected by the floodwaters.

Soon after the storm had passed, we began communicating with local heritage organizations through our League of Local Historical Societies and Museums network and the tireless efforts of our curator, Jackie Calder. The Vermont Cultural Heritage & Art Recovery Team (VCHART), organized under Jackie's leadership, stood ready to respond as needed. The information we assembled from the state's heritage organizations proved critical to the work of a Vermont task force that was assessing the condition of the state's historic and cultural resources.

Through our own networks and the regional media, VHS provided practical information to individuals and families whose keepsakes and heirlooms had been damaged. Our Vermont History Explorer website delivered ideas and information to classrooms throughout Vermont to consider, "How can studying the flood of 1927 help us think about the flooding in 2011?" Through various initiatives we are seeking to document



this historic event for future generations.

Curiously, Irene struck as the VHS staff was finalizing work on a comprehensive emergency plan for the

organization. We were fortunate to have endured this disaster without a deleterious impact upon our buildings, collections or programs. From Irene, we have learned a great deal that will inform our ongoing efforts to be prepared for emergencies.

As we move forward, VHS will continue to facilitate emergency response among the state's cultural organizations through VCHART, the League of Local Historical Societies and Museums, and the encouragement of emergency planning within communities statewide. We also will remain a trusted source of information and lend a helping hand where it is needed.

Mark S. Hudson  
Executive Director

**From Irene, we have learned a great deal that will inform our ongoing efforts to be prepared for emergencies.**



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**June 16 & 17, 2012**

Contact Tess Taylor for more information at (802) 479-8505 or [tess.taylor@state.vt.us](mailto:tess.taylor@state.vt.us)

### Historic partnership



Through an extraordinary partnership with the State of Vermont, the Vermont History Center will soon be the new home of the Vermont Archeology Heritage Center. Currently located in a South Burlington commercial space, the Archeology Heritage Center holds more than half of the state's extensive collection of archeological specimens and other materials recovered from Vermont archeological sites in the last thirty-five years. The collection includes hundreds of thousands of stone and ceramic artifacts, field notes, photographs and other related documentation, and archeological reports summarizing decades of studies by archeologists. The collections span 12,000 years of Vermont history. The Archeology Heritage Center is managed by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation (DHP), in cooperation with the VT Agency of Transportation.

In May 2011, the Vermont legislature appropriated \$400,000 to the Vermont Department of Buildings and General Services, on behalf of the DHP, to fund renovations at the History Center and provide a new home for the state's archeological collections. As one legislator summarized, "The collections will receive better care, be more accessible to the public, and cost the state less." Designs for the renovation of the space are nearing completion and construction work will begin early next year, in anticipation of transferring the collection by summer.

The Archeology Heritage Center will be operated cooperatively by personnel from the VHS and the DHP. Located adjacent to the Leahy Library, the archeology collections will supplement the vast historical resources already accessible to researchers. "This partnership will not only benefit the State of Vermont and the VHS, but also will provide many advantages for researchers who will now have access to all of these Vermont history research materials under one roof," said VHS executive director Mark Hudson.

The Archeology Center also includes space for small exhibits using the archeology collection to help tell stories of Vermont's ancient and more recent past. "Joining the resources of the Archeology Heritage Center with those of the Vermont Historical Society makes a lot of sense and will open new opportunities for public programming and service to the people of Vermont," predicted Giovanna Peebles, Vermont's State Historic Preservation Officer and State Archeologist.

**The Vermont Archeology Heritage Center at the Vermont History Center in summer 2012!**

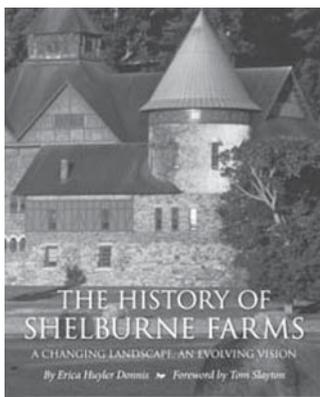
### Construction begins!



Southgate Steeplejacks of Barre was awarded the bid as general contractor for the bell tower restoration project at the Vermont History Center on Washington Street in Barre. Part of the \$900,000 capital campaign funding will repair essential architectural elements for historic preservation and safety.

Stabilization of the Vermont History Center bell tower is supported in part by a grant from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and a State of Vermont, Division of Historic Preservation grant.

Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior or the Division of Historica Preservation. The Vermont Historical Society does not discriminate against any person in regard to their race, color, sexual orientation, national origin, disabilities, religion, age, or sex.



### We've got a winner!

Historic New England awarded its 17th annual Book Prize to *The History of Shelburne Farms: A Changing Landscape, An Evolving Vision* by Erica Huyler Donniss.

Co-published by the Vermont Historical Society and Shelburne Farms, the book chronicles the history of Shelburne Farms and its transformation from a collection of farms to a model agricultural estate to a leader in conservation education, demonstrating the stewardship of natural and agricultural resources. Author Erica Huyler Donniss, who served as curator of collections at Shelburne Farms from 1998 to 2002, is now an independent historian and museum consultant.

Available online  
[www.vermonthistory.org/store](http://www.vermonthistory.org/store)

## Plowing the Past: Vermont's Agricultural History



*Charles Fish moderated a panel discussion about Vermont's agricultural fairs. The panel included fair veterans Lucien Paquette, Rupert Chamberlain and Euclid Farnham.*



*Mary Ann Chaffee presented a special plaque to outgoing board president Sarah Dopp. Sarah has served in many capacities for 21 years at VHS.*



*Sarah Dopp presented The VHS President's Award to Donna Bister, Priscilla D. Hatch, Richard Cleveland and Carolyn Wakefield Fernandez. The Vermont Historical Society's 2011 President's Award was given in recognition for their meticulous and detailed work to document historic Vermont quilts as well as their participation in the Vermont Quilt Search Team and the Vermont Quilt Festival.*

**A daylong celebration  
of Vermont's  
beauty and bounty!**



*The 2011 Richard O. Hathaway Award was presented by Tom Slayton to Elise Guyette for her project: Discovering Black Vermont: African American Farmers in Hinesburgh, 1790 - 1890.*

*Laura Warren was elected Vermont Historical Society's board president. She is the District Operations Manager for KeyBank's Vermont District in Burlington.*



## Famous Vermonter Royall Tyler made a guest appearance at UVM



Photography by intern Samantha Bellinger

On October 13, the Vermont Historical Society's collection of Royall Tyler family artifacts were on display at UVM in Burlington during a talk by Dr. Marilyn Blackwell and VHS Curator Jackie Calder about the mysterious and fascinating man who was a lawyer and Vermont Supreme Court Justice. He was best known for writing *The Contrast*, the first American play to be performed professionally. The University of Vermont named the Royall Tyler Theatre in his honor.

**We are grateful to Alan Weiss (see page 7) for being a VHS Technogiver! Now we only need a few more this year!**

### Be a Technogiver!

**Y**ou have a new way to help with collections care, education programs, fundraising, and graphic design! Many things we do rely on computers—to keep up with technology, we replace three to four computers each year.



A gift of \$800 will make you an official VHS Technogiver and will buy a new computer for VHS. You'll receive a Technogiver certificate, and we'll take care of giving the computer its updates, software and the usual amount of complaining when it doesn't read our minds! To become a Technogiver, please contact Jane Campbell at (802) 479-8516 or [jane.campbell@state.vt.us](mailto:jane.campbell@state.vt.us). Thank you!

## Don't miss the circus (poster) at VHC



*This very rare circus poster was acquired by the Vermont Historical Society when the building next to Studio Place Arts in Barre was being demolished. Two close-ups are shown here.*

*The poster was for the Forepaugh (4Paw) Circus which traveled throughout Vermont and the rest of the United States and abroad from 1879 until the early 1900s. You can see it at the Vermont History Center in Barre.*



## Agricultural murals grace the museum

*Grace Brigham's work can now be seen at the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier! These agricultural murals are on exhibit courtesy of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Farm Show and the Tunbridge World's Fair.*



Interns . . . Continued from page 1—

collections are now accessible through our online library catalog, these important resources are “hidden” from public view until cataloged. Living in Wolcott, Vermont, Aidan is considering his career options, which may include the library profession.

Jenne Greaves is a student in the Archives Management program at Simmons College in Boston. At the VHS, she has started processing two small collections: one concerning the writing of a history of Goddard College and the other the letters of folk artist Gayleen Aiken. Jenne has a BFA in Studio Arts from Rochester Institute of Technology and works as a baker at Manghi’s Bread in Montpelier.

The third young professional working in the library is Sarah Costa, who has a Masters in Library Science from the University of Illinois and a BA from the University of Chicago. She followed her husband back to Washington, Vermont, where they are renovating the family’s farmhouse. When not swinging a hammer, Sarah is volunteering at the Aldrich Library, Central Vermont Adult Basic Education, and the VHS. To keep her library skills fresh and develop some new ones, Sarah is working on our ongoing “XMSC project” to catalog oversized account books.

Jacqueline Batten lives in Plainfield and is working on the Vermont Women’s History Project database, updating entry information and photos of Vermont women. She graduated from Smith College with a degree in American studies and economics. Jackie comes to the VHS team with knowledge of database work and a wide range of interest and skills, including a healthy interest in women’s history. “The ever-evolving role of the VWHP as promoter and narrator of women’s history informs my enthusiasm to contribute to this project,” says Jackie.

Our marketing and outreach intern is Samantha Bellinger. She hails from Shelburne and is a student at Skidmore College, where she is pursuing her MA in arts administration. Samantha joins the VHS for the fall semester to learn the challenges of non-profit marketing. Samantha also works part-time for the Shelburne Museum for the education and rental event departments, and she volunteers as Vice President of Planning for Vermont Young Professionals, where she oversees the planning and scheduling of events.

Library closed in January

The Leahy Library will be closed for two weeks to give the staff an opportunity to catch up on processing. This year the library will be closed from January 23 through February 3. This two-week hiatus, while not sufficient to eliminate the library’s backlogs, is annually an important time for the librarians to whittle away at the piles of processing that develop throughout the year. The library will reopen on Tuesday, February 7, with its usual hours.

Important Wentworth document discovered!

This year, and during the next three years, many Vermont towns are celebrating the 250th anniversaries of their charters from Benning Wentworth, the colonial governor of New Hampshire. These charters put Wentworth in conflict with the colony of New York and gave rise to unrest in the so-called New Hampshire Grants, leading ultimately to Vermont’s declaration of independence in 1777.

This fall, we uncovered an important, little-known document that illustrates the conflicts which gave rise to Vermont. Volunteer Aidan Sammis is working on a project to catalog previously cataloged broadsides that do not appear in our online catalog (see story page 1). One broadside in this group of early, flat paper items stands out — a 1764 proclamation from Benning Wentworth urging his grantees to be diligent in asserting their rights and encouraging them to be “industrious in clearing and cultivating their lands.”

This document is the result of a political struggle that occurred 247 years ago on this land we now know as Vermont. New York Lieutenant Governor Cadwallader Colden had issued his own proclamation, dated December 28, 1763, stating that New York officers should exercise their authority as far west as the Connecticut River.

On March 13, 1764, Benning Wentworth issued his response, the proclamation that we have in our library. In it Wentworth asserts that New York’s claims to the area east of the line extended north from the boundaries of Connecticut and Massachusetts are “obsolete.” He points out that New York had never settled any town in the area between New Hampshire and New York and argues that this practice thus injured the interests of the Crown. He scoffs at Colden’s “pretended right of jurisdiction” and encourages his settlers to continue their development of the land.

Wentworth’s words offered only brief comfort to the New Hampshire settlers. Four months later, King George III issued his own Order in Council, declaring the western banks of the Connecticut River to be the boundary between his two squabbling colonies.

Although the text of Benning Wentworth’s 1764 proclamation has been long known to historians, many did not notice that we had the actual document in our collection. Now that this important document has been cataloged in our online catalog, it is ready to be rediscovered and admired by present and future generations of historians.



To see a larger version of this document, visit: [www.vermonthhistory.org/wentworth](http://www.vermonthhistory.org/wentworth)

*Consider future generations*

### In Alan Weiss' own words . . .

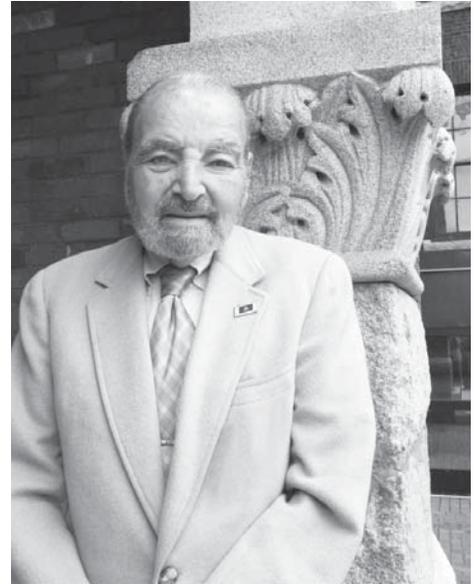
**I** was a history teacher and had a great love for civics and U.S. history. I taught at Northfield High School for a number of years, and I became part of the Northfield Historical Society and was president for a good number of years.

I realized the importance of collections, maintaining them and making them available. I have also had major interest in historical societies and been involved with the Vermont Historical Society. Then I saw the VHS newsletter notice about buying a computer, and I thought "that makes sense," and so I did that.

Then, I thought that with the few assets I've managed to accumulate, "What better way to use them than for an organization that will be here forever, that will be here permanently and that meets the tenets of preserving, collecting and utilization." As I was changing my estate plan, I decided I would like to support that going forward. You [VHS] do great things!

Based upon my experience, I heartily wish other like-minded folks will include VHS in their wills.

We are very grateful to Alan for his generous gift of preserving history for future generations. If you would like more information about including VHS in your will or estate plan, please contact Jane Campbell at (802) 479-8516 or [jane.campbell@state.vt.us](mailto:jane.campbell@state.vt.us) for information.



**"What better way to use 'your assets' than for an organization that will be here forever . . ."**



Each of Us  
Leaves a Legacy

*When you include the Vermont Historical Society in your estate plan or will, you bring Vermont's heritage to future generations.*

*For more information, please contact Jane Campbell,  
(802) 479-8516 or [jane.campbell@state.vt.us](mailto:jane.campbell@state.vt.us).*

### You are being challenged!

**If you give an additional gift—  
or join as a new member—  
your donation will be matched**

***dollar-for-dollar!***



A generous group of our trustees have pledged \$4,000 if we can raise a matching \$4,000 of "new dollars" by December 31st.

**Please call Diane Campbell  
at (802) 479-8503 if you can help.**



### Give the gift of HISTORY!

**Give a VHS membership:**

- free library & museum admission
- free subscription to *Vermont History*
- 15% discount on store purchases!

**Other gift ideas for history lovers:**

- Stop in to the store in Montpelier
- Shop online, it's easy!

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

## Winter events *not to be missed!*

All winter events are free and open to the public!



### Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 16, 2012

Vermont History Center in Barre . . . . . 12:00 noon

Vermont History Museum in Montpelier . . . 7:00 pm

Author Elise Guyette will talk about the research for her book *Discovering Black Vermont: African American Farmers in Hinesburgh 1790–1890*. This 2011 Richard O. Hathaway award-winning book follows the lives of three generations of free blacks trying to build a life in northern Vermont in the years following statehood.



### Farmers' Night

February 8, 2012

State House in Montpelier . . . . . 7:30 pm

Celebrating the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Morrill Land-Grant Act, the Vermont Historical Society partners with the Justin Morrill Homestead for an evening with Senator Morrill and friends. Music of the era will be featured.



### Women's History Month

March 14, 2012

At the Vermont History Museum and the State House in Montpelier

*Please call for times.*

The Vermont Historical Society will be partners again with the Vermont Commission on Women to gather information about women attorneys in Vermont for the Vermont Women's History database and to celebrate the Commission's publication, *Legal Rights of Women in Vermont*, now being edited for its 6th edition.

**For more information, contact Tess Taylor at [tess.taylor@state.vt.us](mailto:tess.taylor@state.vt.us) or call (802) 479-8505**



Be sure to  
**SAVE THE DATE**

You won't want to miss it!



**June 16 & 17, 2012**

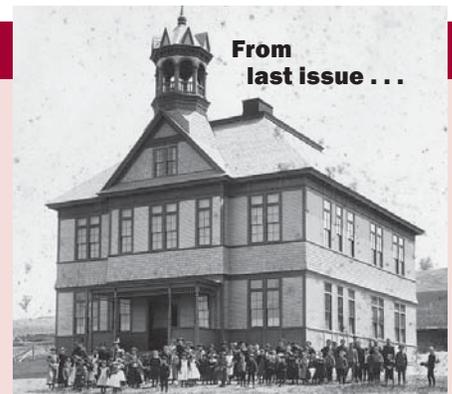
Contact Tess Taylor for more information at (802) 479-8505 or [tess.taylor@state.vt.us](mailto:tess.taylor@state.vt.us)

## Mystery Photo

**D**espite our initial doubts, it turns out that last issue's mystery photo was indeed taken just down the road from us in South Barre. Barre Town selectboard member Jack Mitchell contacted us to identify the photo, as did Shirley Ann Gray Clark who used to live next to this school building. She remembers that caretaker Otto George used to let the kids ring the bell in that magnificent cupola. The Barre school building was demolished when Barre Town built a

consolidated elementary school in 1966. The site is now home to the South Barre Fire Department.

Many people commented on the similarity of the cupola on the South Barre building with the one on the former South Royalton Graded and High School building, now Debevoise Hall at Vermont Law School. The later building was designed by Montpelier architect (and mayor) George H. Guernsey and was constructed in 1892, the same year as the South



From last issue . . .

Barre building was built. Although it is not known if Guernsey designed the South Barre school building, it is a possibility.



Do you recognize this?

This issue's mystery photograph is a village in winter. If anyone recognizes this scene, please contact the VHS Librarian Paul Carnahan at [paul.carnahan@state.vt.us](mailto:paul.carnahan@state.vt.us) or at (802) 479-8508. To see a larger version of this photo and to see the South Royalton and South Barre schools compared, go to our web site <http://www.vermonthistory.org/mystery>.