WHY HISTORY IS SO IMPORTANT
Vermont History Day 2017
Lilacs have bloomed, days are warming up, and the Paul Sample Mural has debuted in its new home. As I reflect on the physical changes to our place-based experience, I look forward to crafting outreach programming that starts to touch each-and-every community in Vermont.

Over the coming year. You will see a lot of us – staff, board members, and volunteers – at fairs and festivals state-wide. We are also partnering with breweries, wineries, and local pubs to mount a pub trivia tour. This tour will encourage an expanded audience to engage in Vermont history and culture in a fun and light-hearted way.

We look forward to working with our partners at Vermont's 191 local societies to produce fascinating, story-driven exhibits in the new Local History Gallery at the Vermont History Museum on a regular and rotating basis. Looking ahead to 2018, we plan on fostering regional history fairs, focused around the existing State-sponsored Vermont Days Weekend in June. Ideally we will bring the excitement and engagement of Expo without the need for extensive travel.

On the digital front we will introduce our new podcast program and continue to grow digitalvermont.org, a web platform that allows local societies to catalog and present their amazing collections to both the casual viewing public and researchers worldwide.

In addition to all of these initiatives, we continue to provide technical, governance, and logistical support to history organizations, marketing support for local programming through our Local History enews and calendar, and speakers for events statewide.

To facilitate all of these initiatives, the Board of Trustees of the Vermont Historical Society voted to suspend Vermont History Expo. Expo was an amazing program and over it's almost-20-year run saw thousands of visitors to the Tunbridge festival site. We aim to build on that excitement and provide diverse, engaging, and relevant programming that appeals to new and existing audiences throughout the state by meeting them in their own back yards. I can't wait to get started!

How do you cover thousands of years of history spanning the over 9,600 square miles of our state? You don’t. But one of the best features of the recent renovations at the museum will help us expand the story we do tell. Our new Local History Gallery will feature rotating exhibits created by Vermont's over 190 local historical societies and museums. Information for exhibiting organizations is available on our website, or contact Eileen Corcoran at eileen.corcoran@vermonthistory.org, or (802) 479-8522 to discuss a project.
We had a great time in Montpelier at our first Roaring Twenties Party! It was a night of authentic twenties era food, drink and dance in the newly renovated Vermont History Museum.

A huge thank you to Mad River Distillers, Bon Temps Gourmet, Just For Kicks and The Mad Taco for making this event one for the history books. See event photos at https://www.flickr.com/photos/vermonthistory

ROARING TWENTIES PARTY

In April 2018, the Vermont Historical Society will open its newest exhibition: “Anything for Speed: Automobile Racing in Vermont.” From the opening days of the twentieth century, to the cutting-edge mechanical marvels of today, racing in Vermont has been a way of life for over a century.

If you have any memories, photographs, objects, memorabilia, or connections to share, please reach out to Amanda Gustin at amanda.gustin@vermonthistory.org.

Other Upcoming Exhibitions

In September 2017, the objects in our “Icons and Oddities” gallery at the History Center in Barre will turn over, and we’ll bring out new treasures from our collections to share with the public.

In November 2017, we’ll premiere the first of a series of new exhibitions in the Jacqueline Calder Corridor Gallery at the Vermont History Museum. “Everywhere a Sign” will focus on signs throughout Vermont history: how they were used, what information they shared, and how they shed light on past ways of life and communication.

January 2018 will see the first exhibition of the new year at the History Center, as we replace “Freaks, Radicals, and Hippies: Counterculture in 1970s Vermont” with a planned exhibition in partnership with the Vermont Granite Museum titled “The Art of Granite.”
THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY

Not long ago I attended my first Vermont History Day and spoke to some students about why they felt that learning about history was important. I knew that it was going to be an interesting conversation because Vermont’s history, in particular, is filled with vibrant stories, traditions and a strong sense of identity and character.

History sometimes gets a bad rap though. It gets written off as a list of meaningless facts and dates that can put someone to sleep in a matter of minutes. Facts and dates are information, but certainly not knowledge or understanding. At History Day, students find new ways of reevaluating known sources and other critical skills that are essential to a successful and productive life in the 21st century.

The awards ceremony was particularly inspiring. Some of the honorees left the stage with tears of joy in their eyes having qualified for the National History Day Contest in Washington, DC along with half a million other students from all over America.

To the right are a few of the insights the students shared with me throughout the day which I feel crystalize perfectly why learning about history is so very important.

Matt Johnson
Print Media & Public Relations Coordinator
THE MORE YOU KNOW ABOUT THE PAST, THE MORE YOU KNOW ABOUT PREVIOUSNESS.

LEARNING ABOUT THE PAST HELPS US MAKE GOOD CHOICES RIGHT NOW.

THINGS DONE IN THE WAY THAT EVERYTHING IS DONE TODAY

THINGS DONE IN HISTORY CHANGES THE WAY THAT EVERYTHING IS DONE TODAY
Last issue’s mystery photo remains a mystery. No one has identified this mill!

This issue’s photograph is more modern than our usual mystery photographs. It came with a group of photographs of the Walloomsac Inn in Bennington, so this building may be in southwestern Vermont or a neighboring area. It appears to be a rustic ski lodge or residence. It is hard to file this photograph without knowing where this building is located! If you recognize this unusual building, please contact VHS librarian Paul Carnahan at 802-479-8508 or at paul.carnahan@vermonthistory.org.

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HATHAWAY AWARD

Nominations Due July 15 for the Hathaway Award

The Richard O. Hathaway Award is presented annually to an individual, group or organization recognized as making an outstanding contribution to the field of Vermont history. Projects may include, but are not limited to, publications, exhibits, works of art, documentary films, radio programs, websites, and dramatic works.

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. Guidelines and application details are available on the VHS website.
I grew up in Brattleboro in a family that embraces history. My father took us to visit historic sites and architectural landmarks; my grandmother filled notebooks with genealogical research; my sister received a degree in museum education. I went away to Swarthmore College and majored in U.S. history. When I returned home, two of the first things I did was write a history of the church I had grown up in and curate an exhibit on the history of the Connecticut River that was in my back yard.

My wife Eve, our infant daughter Rachel, and I moved to Montpelier in the summer of 1990 so that I could take the Librarian’s position at the Vermont Historical Society. I had first encountered the VHS through its journal that came to our house when I was growing up. In the 1980s I used the library while researching my two post-college projects. It seemed like a job that would be a perfect fit for my interests and training, and it was!

I enjoy living in Montpelier where I have been involved in many community-related activities over the years. I am especially drawn to projects that involve the downtown, bridges and buildings, art installations, and of course history!

Hi Everyone!

I am your Director of Development at the Vermont Historical Society and I lead a team of four hard-working staff members.

What I love most about my role at the VHS is that I get to travel around and see parts of Vermont that I never even knew existed! There is never a dull moment while traveling the back roads. For example, who knew there were bird houses and dinosaurs in South Hero! The people I meet and the stories I hear are equally amazing. I learn not just about others, but about my own heritage while helping people fulfill their philanthropic goals.

Born and raised in Berlin, Vermont, I have always found that I cannot live without the four seasons of this beautiful state. I have always been active in the outdoor hobbies so when I am not in the office you can find me enjoying the landscape by hiking, fishing, 4-wheeling, or waterskiing with my husband and two children.
On Friday, November 17, Las Vegas is coming to the Vermont History Center with drinks, food – and games of chance.

Dressing up is encouraged, with a 1950s theme for both décor and libations.