

HISTORY

CONNECTIONS

The Future of our History



Collections
Highlights

4

The Future of
our History

8

VHS 2020
Book List

12



Vermont Historical Society News and Notes | Winter 2020 | Volume 15 | Number 1



VERMONT
HISTORY

VOLUME 15 - 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
Wednesday–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

Library admission:
Open by appointment only. Please call
or email to schedule your visit.
library@vermonthistory.org
(802) 479-8509

www.vermonthistory.org

info@vermonthistory.org

COVER:

The first female governor of Vermont,
Madeleine Kunin, is sworn in for the
second time in 1987. Rod Clarke, UPI.

Director's Note

by Steve Perkins

Since joining the Vermont Historical Society in 2015, I have challenged myself with the question, “What is the role of a historical society in today’s Vermont?” The organizational structure and articles of incorporation are predominantly a 19th-century invention with little change in a near 200-year existence. In some ways this steadfastness shows the resilience and societal need for our work; in others it questions how we move into a more modern consideration of our leadership role. These concerns are not mutually exclusive and are a paradigm we must leverage to be relevant to our present reality.

Throughout the Vermont Historical Society’s existence, the study of and presentation of history has changed markedly. Scholars accelerated the diversification of story and promoted multiple perspectives in studying and teaching our history during the last quarter of the 20th century. This primarily academic movement started to take public face with large segments of society pushing for educational change over the last few years. The Abenaki community, and later the Black Lives Matter movement, have made real inroads in state-wide recognition and legislative direction that reinforce how perspective in history is essential.

In his 1893* work, *Pudd’nhead Wilson*, Mark Twain wrote, “The very ink with which all history is written is merely fluid prejudice.” Though this is a pretty sweeping statement that many modern historians would contest, it gets at a crucial point: history is written by a person, and people bring their perspectives and inherent prejudices to the table. The best way to mitigate a single viewpoint dominating the conversation is with a diversity of experiences and stories. This issue of *Connections* explores some of the ways Vermont Historical Society is working now to best share all of Vermont’s story.

Steve Perkins
Executive Director

* *Pudd’nhead Wilson* was published serially in 1893 before arriving in book form in 1894.

IN THE GALLERIES

History Museum Special Exhibits

- *When Women Lead: Governor Madeleine Kunin of Vermont*
Through January 2021
- *WPA prints from the T.W. Wood Gallery*
Through March 2021



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Visit our calendar at vermonthistory.org for full event listings and to learn more!

November 24 7 pm -8:30 pm	Fall Cooking Class: Dairy (Sponsored by Cabot Creamery Cooperative) Virtual: Zoom
December 17 12 pm	Third Thursday: The Devil's Cabinet Virtual: Zoom Speaker: Jason Smiley
January 6 7 pm	Vermont Trivia: Geography & Place Names Virtual: Zoom
January 13 7 pm	Vermont Trivia: Famous Vermonters Virtual: Zoom
January 20 7 pm	Vermont Trivia: Cultures Virtual: Zoom
January 27 7 pm	Vermont Trivia: Miscellany Virtual: Zoom
February 3rd 7 pm	Vermont Trivia Championship Virtual: Zoom



WPA PRINTS FROM THE T. W. WOOD GALLERY

The Vermont History Museum is pleased to host selections from the T.W. Wood Gallery's collection of WPA prints.

The T.W. Wood Gallery is the repository for Vermont's portion of the Federal WPA collection. In addition to a variety of laborers, over 40,000 artists and other talented workers were employed through the WPA for

art, music, theatre, and literature projects. The gallery celebrates its 125th Anniversary as an art institution with a series of exhibits featuring the permanent collection, including this exhibit at the Vermont History Museum.

WPA Prints from the T.W. Wood Gallery is on view until March 24, 2021.

VHS RECEIVES CARES ACT GRANT

The Vermont Historical Society was honored to receive one of the 317 CARES Act economic stabilization grants funded through the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for the project *Preserving and Expanding Access to Vermont's History*. The \$133,512 award administered between July 1 – December 31, 2020, will retain eight staff members working to produce digital records for online access to VHS's museum and library collections.

The NEH received more than 2,300 eligible applications from cultural organizations for this highly competitive grant. Approximately 14 percent of the applicants obtained funding. 5 Vermont institutions, including VHS, were among the recipients.

Preserving and Expanding Access to Vermont's History has been made possible in part by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities: Exploring the human endeavor.

Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this press release do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



Assistant Librarian Marjorie Strong works to create cataloging records, making collections more accessible to the public.

COLLECTIONS HIGHLIGHT

by Teresa Greene

Despite its plain appearance, this shirt is a historical treasure! The Vermont Historical Society has an extensive costume collection, and like many others, our collection primarily represents extravagant clothing worn by the wealthy. Those pieces, not subject to labor and the elements, are more likely to last. It is uncommon for work clothes to survive a decade, let alone two centuries, but this shirt has done just that. Not only are extant examples rare—especially in near perfect condition—written descriptions of everyday garments are also hard to come by. The tendency to only record what was deemed noteworthy often limits descriptions of similar garments to simply “a shirt.”

Shirt, 1800-1820
Worn in Guilford, VT

Gift of Fay Drake Knicely, #1992.29



This heavy woolen shirt, perfect for working through Vermont winters, is equivalent to a modern size large. It fits loosely with a standing collar and tight, buttoned cuffs. Its length, standard for the early nineteenth century, reaches the wearer's knees. Shirts were worn as undergarments during this period, worn tucked into breeches or trousers and under a waistcoat and coat.

The shirt is of a thick, twill-woven wool. The vertical warp yarns alternate between blue and white, giving the fabric an overall light blue color when combined with the blue horizontal weft yarns. The large buttons are turned wood with brass center posts. Aside from the collar placket, the shirt is unlined (and very scratchy). Using a common shortcut in historical clothing that generates less waste and eliminates the need for seam finishes, the fabric is woven to the shirt's overall width.

The Future of our History

By Steve Perkins

History has great power. The stories we choose to tell, the interpretation and analysis of events, and the experiences we opt to elevate or ignore can have the ability to enfranchise and disenfranchise entire segments of our society. Our history defines our communities and how we choose to present that history impacts all citizens. Americans have understood this power for a very long time. The original role of early historical societies, Vermont included, was to create a foundational narrative. Those looking to legitimize the United States on the world stage needed an epic story with heroes, villains, and a point-of-view that celebrated, or at least did not denigrate, the white-anglo-male dominant culture. On the national stage, George Washington and his inability to tell a lie grew to mythic proportions. Closer to home, Ethan Allen became a flawless and virtuous leader of our future state's downtrodden residents against the villainous and conniving New Yorkers.

The study of history has come a long way, but as a product of humanity is still susceptible to political will, direction by a dominant culture, inherent bias, and, more than ever, the influence of those holding the purse strings.

Throughout the 20th century we learned our history from textbooks given to us at school, an institution our society values to produce knowledgeable and critical-thinking community members. Unfortunately, content was often selected for less-noble reasons. For example,

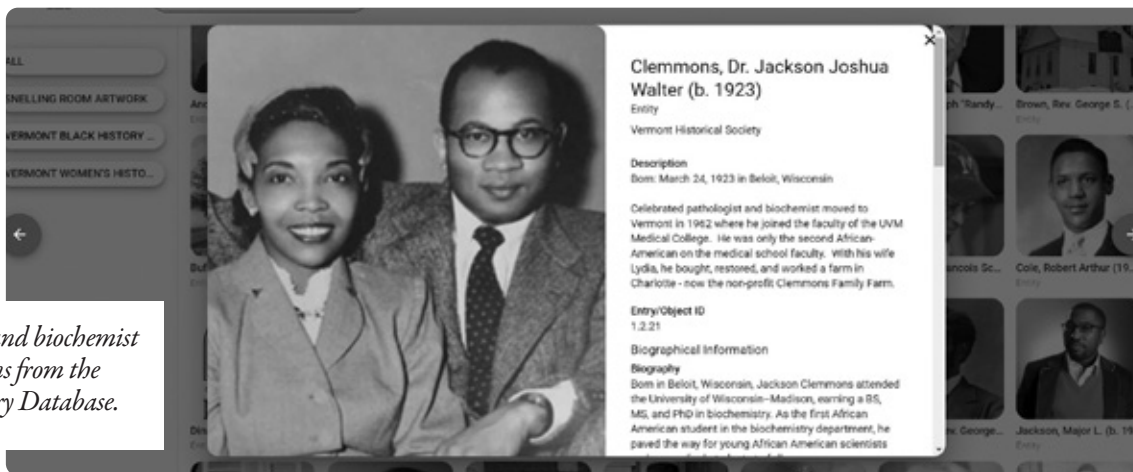
politically appointed boards of non-educators and non-historians in large states, such as Texas, determined which textbooks were allowed in their schools. The Texas school system was large and the list of approved texts small, so many publishers framed their textbooks to Texas board standards to gain access to this lucrative market. As a result, history textbooks used in Vermont schools generally reflected the topics and view-points deemed important by the Texas board of education. This example illustrates the power of a dominant group to influence the teaching and presentation of "facts" to generations of American children.

Today, most Vermont educators have the freedom to choose the texts for their students. Instead of content, they teach historian's skills – how to identify a primary and secondary source, the ability to think critically about events and movements, how to judge bias, and, most importantly, a yearning to explore our past as it relates to our present. As you can imagine, our students, our life-long learners, and our community need diverse resources to apply these skills to our own Vermont history.

As a long-established institution, the Vermont Historical Society has produced a tremendous amount of historical resources. That being said, we recognize a lack of diversity of voices in the totality of this scholarship. In its more modern incarnation, the Vermont Historical Society has made efforts to gather diverse stories and source documents and artifacts; however, we have much progress to make and are on a journey without a fixed endpoint. This past year's events have deeply affected all of us and starkly illustrate the need for historical understanding and diverse stories in our program and scholarship. The following paragraphs outline long-term and short-term projects and programs of the Vermont Historical Society that will help fill gaps in understanding and celebrating Vermont's history.

In 2003 the Vermont History Museum debuted an award-winning exhibition entitled *Freedom & Unity*, an immersive experience to take the viewer from the retreat of the glaciers in the last ice age to the present. It was a tremendous step forward regarding inclusion, yet some of the exhibition was left incomplete or truncated. Reinstallation of portions of the exhibit, reframing perspective, decolonizing text, including more diverse stories, and exploring nuanced issues of Vermont's past are all part of an ongoing project to redevelop the exhibit since 2016. We look to have galleries that present early 20th-century Vermont updated by year's end. As visitors enter our space, we ask them to "be a historian" - what do they see, what don't they see, and what

Profile of pathologist and biochemist Dr. Jackson Clemmons from the Vermont Black History Database.



Profile of Vermont Suffragist Clarina Howard Nichols from the Vermont Women's History Database



they would add? We ask them to answer some of these questions through an interactive photo booth, posting their images within the exhibit.

In 2005 we partnered with the Vermont Commission on Women to present the Vermont Women's History Database. This interactive product serves as a clearinghouse for biographical information on influential Vermont women and includes over 150 detailed entries. Development of a similar platform exploring Black Vermont History - providing further information and resources on Black Vermonters and events - began this year.

Vermont Historical Society has a long publishing tradition in our academic journal, *Vermont History*, and our traditional book publication. The journal is always looking for submissions and we welcome the opportunity to work with scholars of all levels and backgrounds to see their works published. Our 2014 publication, *The Problem of Slavery in Early Vermont*, and our new printing of *Discovering Black Vermont* have

Visit both databases at <https://vermonthistory.org/databases>

been great sellers. We recently converted both publications into eBooks for broader distribution.

Our education platform, Vermont History Explorer, is in the midst of a structural rebuild and will provide grade-appropriate resources to students and teachers throughout Vermont. Our public programs and web, video, and TV presentations continue to look to showcase unheard voices.

These projects and programs are a few examples of our approach to providing historical resources and context to today's world. Are we missing voices? Certainly. Can we do better? Absolutely. Your support as a member, your advice as a colleague, and your voice as a Vermonter is essential to help us grow and meet a societal need for diverse and honest history.

INTERN SPOTLIGHT



REHANA
NAZERALI-RUDDY

is a History major at Smith College and an alum of Montpelier High School. During her 120-hour summer internship Rehana created walking tours of Montpelier, including audio recordings and photographs, to help people explore local history outside or remotely. Additionally, she collated information on Black Vermonters from decennial census records and collected resources for the Vermont History Explorer website, which is currently under redesign. Rehana returned in the fall for an extended internship and presented at the League of Local Historical Societies and Museums conference. She loves to connect with people and places through history and is grateful for the opportunity to do so in Montpelier!



HANNAH
KIRKPATRICK

Program intern, Hannah Kirkpatrick, is a senior in the College of Arts and Sciences at UVM majoring in History and double minoring in Music and Reporting & Documentary Storytelling. She recently began the Accelerated Master's Program in History and expects to complete her BA and MA in 2021 and 2022, respectively.

Since June, Hannah assisted with editing the Before Your Time podcast and VHS collections videos.

Hannah loves hiking, climbing, and skiing. She is the treasurer for Chicks on Sticks VT, a coalition of female skiers and riders who advocate for inclusivity and accessibility in the outdoors. She was first drawn to video production by ski movies and documentaries on other outdoor sports.

STAYING CONNECTED

WITH HISTORY LEARNERS by Victoria Hughes

Every school year the Vermont History Museum hosts around 5,000 students, teachers, and chaperones as part of class field trips to Montpelier. Unfortunately, we will not see those numbers this year. Schools with on-site learners are keeping to the classrooms and field trips to the Vermont State House and Vermont Supreme Court, closed until further notice, are on hold.

Despite these changes the Vermont Historical Society is still serving students and educators across the state. Laura Rooney, VHS program assistant, worked with Vermont Art Online to create a 360° virtual tour of the Vermont History Museum. Students can view the exhibit's highlights, move from room to room, and follow links to learn more. You can "visit" the *Freedom and Unity* exhibit and other Vermont museums at vermontartonline.org/virtualexhibits.

For a deeper dive into Vermont history, students can participate in virtual versions of Hands-On History workshops, which usually occur in the museum classroom. Students still investigate primary sources, like maps and census records, but they do so safely through the screen in new distance learning workshops.

Our History for Homeschoolers classes are continuing with three options for families. A small number of students participate in monthly, in-person classes at the museum. Limited enrollment gives us space to spread out while still engaging with each

other and the exhibits. Through monthly Zoom classes we extend our reach, providing interactive lessons and group discussions virtually. The third option, an "At-Home" series, provides lessons and materials for homeschool educators and parents to use on their timeline. With these expanded options we doubled the number of participating families while interacting in comfortable and safe ways for all involved.

The Vermont History Day state contest remains on the schedule for next April. Although we are unsure how the day will look, there will be a platform for students to present their projects, share their work with judges, and win prizes!

We are excited to reach old friends and new audiences through all our education programs. Throughout the year we will collect information and build on lessons learned to make the most of the opportunities created by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Students in Karen Thomson's 4th-grade class at Maple Street School (Manchester) used materials from our Schooling in Vermont history lending kit to turn their outdoor classroom into a one-room schoolhouse for an engaging, hands-on, in-person lesson.

MYSTERY PHOTO



This issue's mystery photo depicts a side road in a mill village. A waterfall in front of a bridge or mill is seen at the extreme left of the image. Please contact VHS Librarian Paul Carnahan if you can identify the location of this image at paul.carnahan@vermonthistory.org or (802)479-8508.

No one identified last issue's mystery photo, so we will provide identifications of both mystery photos in the next issue.

2020 LLHSM ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

These awards recognize the exceptional work done by individuals and community heritage organizations throughout the state to collect, preserve, and share Vermont's rich history. Though customarily presented at our fall LLHSM Conference, Steve and Eileen traveled the state to hand out awards individually this year. What a great way to spend some beautiful Fall days! Congratulations to all our winners.

You can learn more about this year's projects and history heroes at <https://vermonthistory.org/achievement-awards>.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION & COLLECTIONS CARE

Award of Excellence

Barre Historical Society
with special recognition to Carolyn Shapiro
For the Rise Up Bakery project

Hardwick Historical Society
For the Angell Room Storage project

EXHIBITIONS & PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Award of Excellence

Norwich Historical Society
For the Podcast Driving Tours program

Waterbury Historical Society
For the video project: *Waterbury Women - Stories & Inspiration*

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Betty Barnouw
of the Fair Haven Historical Society

Lorraine Lavertu Hussey
of the Hardwick Historical Society

Marilyn W. Maxwell
of the Island Pond Historical Society

Charles Nye
of the Highgate Historical Society

Karen Yaggy
of the Richmond Historical Society

CATE FELLOWSHIP WINNER

The Weston A. Cate Jr. research fellowship was awarded to Michael Antonucci of Keene State College for his project, *'And striplings wit and beauty's sneer: Identity and Vision in the Literary Culture of Early Guildford, Vermont.*

The project examines work by poets and writers - all citizens of Guilford - in the days of the early Republic. Including both celebrated literary figures and lesser known early Vermont writers, the project will investigate circumstances and conditions promoting the development of a diverse literary culture in

Guilford and intends to expand the scope of conversations around literary production in Vermont. It will also contextualize the work of America's first African-American poet, Lucy Terry Prince.

The Weston A. Cate Jr. fellowship supports research on any aspect of Vermont history for one calendar year and is open to all individuals. The grantee will complete research and writing on the proposed topic within that year and produce a final product, such as an essay or article. The fellowship is presented bi-annually.



Tis The Season...

Share Your Love of Vermont History

Share your love of Vermont history with your friends and family by gifting them a Vermont Historical Society membership this holiday season. Individual memberships are just \$60 and family memberships start at \$100. Each membership level comes with a year of benefits, including:

- Free admission to the Vermont History Museum
- Unlimited free use of the Leahy Library
- 15% discount on Museum store and online booklist purchases
- Discounts on programs and workshops
- Subscription to semi-annual journal, *Vermont History*, and *History Connections* newsletter

To gift a membership and support the mission of the Vermont Historical Society, please visit www.vermonthistory.org/membership or call (802) 479-8500.

Take a Tax Break & Give Back this Holiday Season

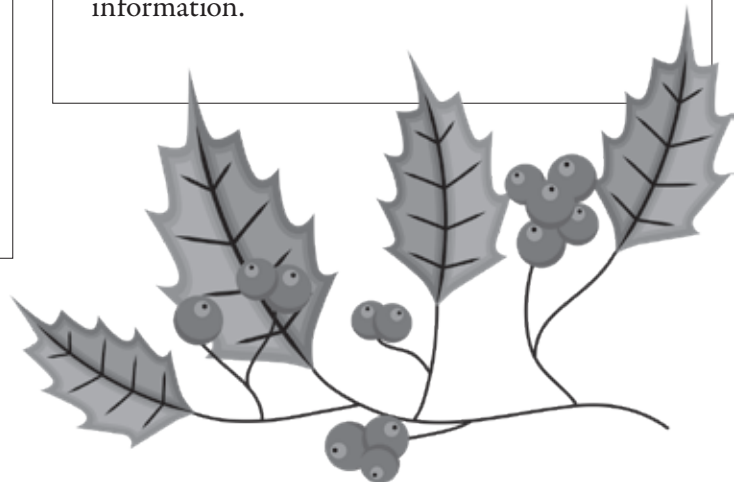
Help the Vermont Historical Society preserve the past and inform the present all while achieving tax advantages.

The CARES Act allows individuals who do not itemize to claim an above-the-line deduction up to \$300 on cash contributions made in 2020.

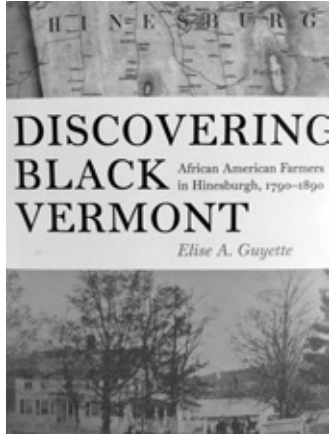
For those who do itemize, the CARES Act allows you to give up to 100% of your Adjusted Gross Income (up from 60%).

To make a donation, please visit www.vermonthistory.org/donate or call Tori at (802) 479-8516.

Consult with your tax advisor for more information.



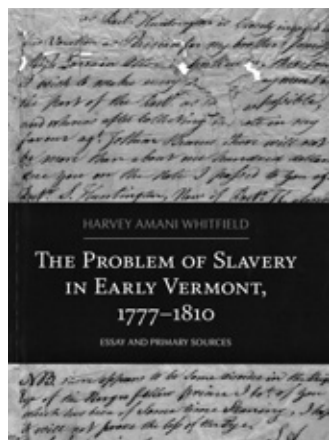
VHS 2020 BOOK LIST.....



Discovering Black Vermont: African American Farmers in Hinesburgh, 1790-1890 By Elise A. Guyette

An impressive work of historical recovery, *Discovering Black Vermont* tells the story of three generations of free Black Americans attempting to build a life and community in northern Vermont in the years following statehood. By piecing together tax and estate records, journals, diaries, and the like, the author recovers what is essentially a lost world and establishes a framework for using primary sources to document a forgotten past. Initially published in 2010, the Vermont Historical Society reprinted this book in 2020.

Paperback, 213 pages. 2020. \$22.95



The Problem of Slavery in Early Vermont, 1770-1810 By Harvey Amani Whitfield

Vermonters have always been proud that their state was the first to outlaw slavery in its constitution—but is that what really happened? *The Problem of Slavery in Early Vermont* deconstructs this narrative through a collection of 31 documents, including laws, bills of sale, a probate record, and runaway slave ads, forcing us to squarely consider the most profound questions about what freedom actually meant for Black Americans in Vermont well into the nineteenth century.

Paperback, 140 pages. 2014. \$19.95

Featured VHS Publications

The Rebel and the Tory By John J. Duffy, H. Nicholas Muller III, and Gary G. Shattuck

The Rebel and the Tory shines a fresh light on Vermont’s long-accepted origin story, which remained static for about 200 years. The Ejectment Trials of 1770, when settlers and leaders of the New Hampshire Grants turned from petitions and court proceedings to violent resistance against legitimate New York authority, are considered a critical inflection point by many historians, but historians have never read the transcripts of the Ejectment Trials—until now. The authors also restore Philip Skene, a principal player scheming with Ethan Allen and other revolutionaries to create a new colony with the capacity to resolve the Grants controversy, to his rightful place at the center of Vermont’s founding.

Paperback, 327 pages. 2020. \$22.95

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

Other Great Publications

Fairbanks: The Family That Created an Industry, Built a Thriving Town, Endowed it with Cultural Institutions, and Led the State of Vermont By Dan Swainbank

A history of the family that is synonymous with St. Johnsbury, Vermont.

Paperback, 189 pages. 2019. \$19.95

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 also 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.

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 191st Company, The Civilian Conservation Corps.: April 1939 – April 1940, A Year in the Life of a CCC Recruit By George Galo

Armed only with the clothes on his back and the five dollars his mother had given him, a young man leaves his home in Proctor to report to the CCC camp in Waterbury, Vermont, for a year of service. A day-to-day record of a unique time and place in the history of America and of Vermont.

Paperback, 45 pages. 1997. \$9.95.

Orville's Revenge: The Anatomy of a Suicide By Stephen B. Martin

A real-life murder mystery, *Orville's Revenge* outlines the facts and controversies surrounding the disappearance and death of Orville A. Gibson in 1958.

Paperback. 248 pages. 2014. \$10.00

The Dewey Boy by Earline V. Marsh, illustrations By Stellan P. Wollmar

George Perrin Dewey became America's only six-star Admiral of the Navy. This is a tale of the boy who became the famous man. During eight-year-old George's summer stay on a farm in rural Vermont he learns about responsibility, honesty, and life on a farm while encountering a mishap or two.

Paperback, 84 pages. 2012. \$12.95

More great titles available online at vermonthistory.org/shop

BOOKSTORE ORDER FORM

Quantity	Item	Price
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

POSTAGE & HANDLING

<i>Order Total</i>	<i>Shipping</i>
\$1.00 - \$35.99.....	\$4.95
\$36.00 - \$50.99.....	\$5.95
\$51.00 - \$75.99.....	\$7.95
\$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!

SUBTOTAL _____

Less 15% membership discount _____

Plus postage & handling (*see left*) _____

SUBTOTAL _____

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

Name _____ Phone () _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mastercard VISA Discover AMEX Card Number _____

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/membership or call Jessie Dall at (802) 479-8500.



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

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

Preserve the Past to Inform the Future

Do you want to make a significant gift to transform the work of the Vermont Historical Society for generations to come?

You can do it today – with a legacy gift through your will.

- Costs you nothing during your lifetime.
- Preserves your savings and cash flow
- Can be changed or revoked as needed.
- Allows you to be more generous than you ever thought possible.
- Easy to arrange. A simple paragraph added to your will is all it takes.

For more information, please contact:
Tori Hart, Director of Development
(802) 479-8516 | tori.hart@vermonthistory.org

vermonthistory.org/legacy-circle

