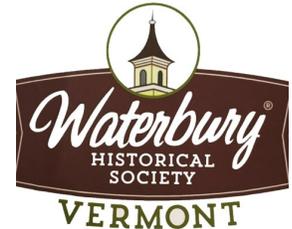


WATERBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



FALL/WINTER 2021

Volume 22, Numbers 3/4

Quarterly Programming Returns With Annual Picnic

Recent Presentations Include Bryan Farm and Vermont Women in the Civil War

After a year of waiting and uncertainty, the Program Committee jumped back into action last summer to resume the in-person historical presentations for the Waterbury community. Both the summer potluck picnic at Bryan Farm and October's presentation about Vermont women during the Civil War were well-attended and received with enthusiasm. Look inside for information about January's program!



**Top: Mark Tuft describes the features of the historic Bryan Farmhouse at the annual potluck picnic in July.
Bottom: Historian Howard Coffin wraps up his presentation about Vermont women during the Civil War in the Steele Community Room during the October meeting.**

WHS Holds Elections at Annual Meeting

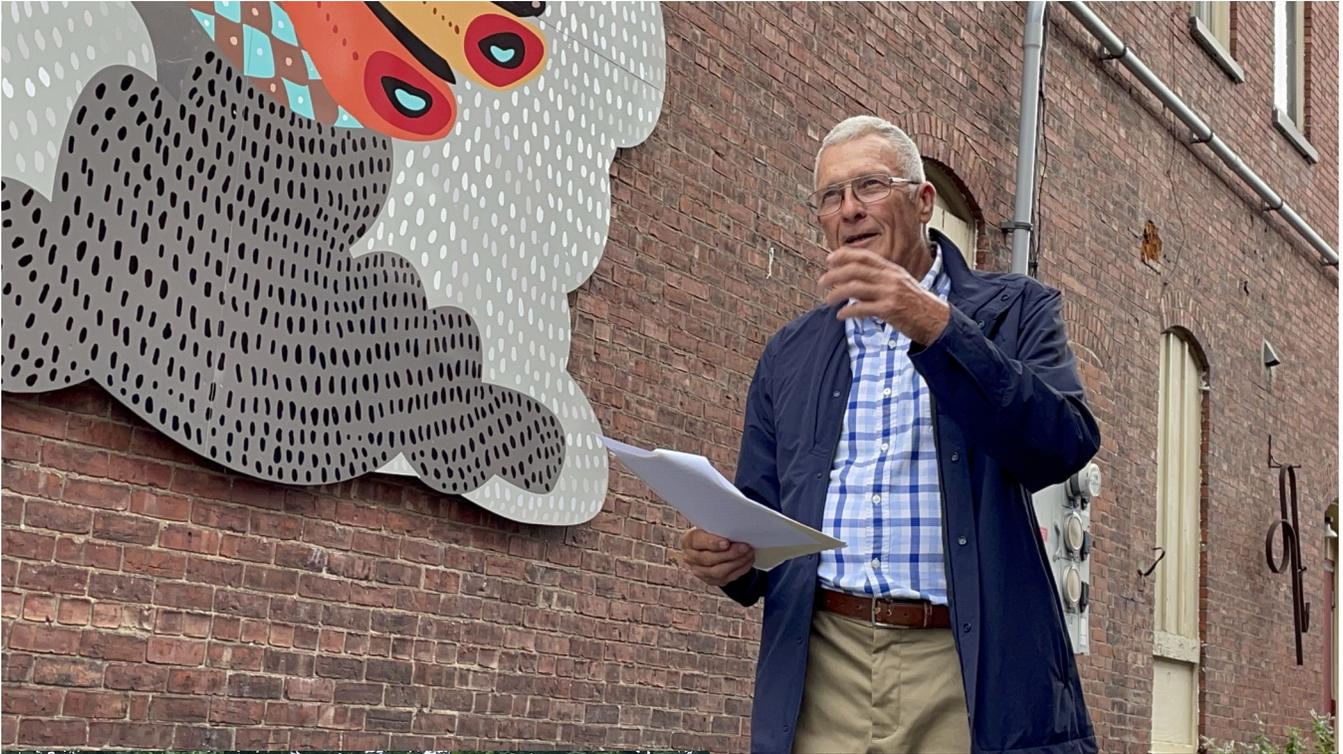
The Waterbury Historical Society held its first in-person business meeting in a year and a half at the October 27 program in the Steele Community Room.

President Cheryl Casey moderated the meeting, presenting an agenda that primarily reviewed the activities and finances of the previous year to date, the budget for 2022, and the slate of nominees for open or expiring terms on the Board of Directors.

In addition to passing the budget, members voted in Anne Imhoff to the Board, re-elected Grace Sweet as Secretary and Paul Willard as Treasurer, and elected Jill Chase as the next Vice President. Thank you to Jim Walton for having served two terms as VP!

In This Issue

- Celebrating Waterbury Revitalization
- Commemorating Tropical Storm Irene
- Featured Farm
- Pandemic Perspectives, Part 2
- Upcoming program
- New history book



Above: Skip Flanders explains building facades as he stands in the alley off Stowe Street, next to the newly-unveiled Phoenix Rising artwork. Left: Brian Lindner shows historic postcards of the Waterbury Inn, which stood on Park Row from 1865 until it burned in 1953.



WHS Hosts Events During Town Weekend of Celebration

As part of the August weekend commemorating the 10th anniversary of Tropical Storm Irene and celebrating the conclusion of the Main Street reconstruction project, WHS proudly collaborated with event organizers Revitalizing Waterbury to offer historic walking tours of the Stowe Street businesses and the buildings bordering Rusty Parker Park.

Skip Flanders and Brian Lindner, both longtime members of WHS and well-respected for their extensive knowledge of Waterbury history, partnered on conducting the tours. Pooling their considerable resources, Mr. Flanders and Mr. Lindner shared stories spanning over a century about the buildings and colorful personages that have lent those parts of town their character. About a dozen people attended each tour, the Park in the late morning and Stowe Street in early afternoon.

WHS also premiered a short documentary about the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene in Waterbury in the Steele Community Room. It played on a loop throughout the day.

New Members

Jay Cohen
Willsboro Point, NY

Judy Foregger
Waterbury Center, VT

Gary & Deborah Hough
Waterbury, VT

Randy Hough
Duxbury, VT

Kendell Stafford
Waterbury, VT

General Donations

UP TO \$200:

Joanne Bohannan-Ather

Jay Cohen

Friends of the
Waterbury Reservoir

Luther & Cathy Leake

Queen Esther Chapter 7

Mark Tuft

Gordy & Theresa Wood
(Newsletter)

UP TO \$500:

Mr. & Mrs. Wulff

In Memory... The following gifts were received in memory and celebration of beloved WHS members who have recently passed:

In memory of Jack Carter

UP TO \$200:

Jeffery & Susan Amestoy

Barbara Blauvelt

Forest Bowman

John & Sara Burczy

James & Susan Carter

Michael & Sheila Carter

Anthony & Janet Diblasi

John Dumville

Ron & Carolyn Fox

Christopher & Nancy Graff

UP TO \$500:

251 Club of Vermont

Marty & Sue Johansen

Robert & Betty Jones

Gregory Light

Brian Lindner

Dennis & Barbara Maloney

Wilbur & Marlene McAllister

Duncan & Belle McDougall

Harry & Claire Nelson

Nancy Patterson

Lisa Wernhoff

Paul & Jane Willard

UP TO \$2500

Elaine Beal

In memory of Calvin Dow

UP TO \$200:

Andrea Mosbacher

Bob & Dianne Yamin

In memory of Joan Pecor

UP TO \$200:

Chris & Robin Pecor-Brunell

Join our Program Committee

Be a part of sharing the
Waterbury history that excites
and inspires you!

Contact waterburyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com
for more information and to sign up today.

Pandemic Perspectives Part 2: Waterbury Youth Share Lessons, Experiences from year of COVID

Stella Mauro, age 10:

Dear Future Self,

Always be grateful for everything you have, and don't be focused on what you don't have, or how your life isn't perfect. When you do start to think about everything you don't have, remind yourself that in some way you have life easy and you do have everything you need. Realize that you are always going to be safe, and healthy.

If you ever live through another global pandemic remember to stock up on food and especially toilet paper and paper towels because you should have seen what the aisle in the store looked like. They had zip zero nothing. Everything was sold out. We couldn't get toilet paper and paper towels for days.

If there is another global pandemic, remember to help those in need, help those who are less fortunate than you. Remember those who live on the streets, or who struggle to put food on the table. Remember those who are less fortunate because of their skin color, and if they do try to stand up for their rights, will get hurt, and maybe killed. Last, be not least, the people on the front lines are working 24 hours a day every day, saving people who are in need.

You might think that this global pandemic was the worst thing, but really it wasn't that bad. I spent more time at home with my happy family, I got a dog, and I didn't even realize that I had it so so much easier than most of the people in the world. When you think about the bad things, you should realize that people have it so much harder than you do.

Sincerely, Past Stella

Nate Conyers, age 13:

2020 was a weird year to say the least. While it had ups and downs, I think it is a unique experience we will never forget. Throughout the year there were good times and bad times.

One of the hardest parts of this challenging time was not being able to gather with our church family. Ever since we went into lockdown we have been remotely live streaming our service. It had become such a norm to see our church family every week on Sundays and not having that aspect of community was and still is very hard. Another very hard thing to deal with is not being able to see our family in person because they are in the southern part of the U.S. We usually get to see our family at least once a year and sometimes twice. We are hoping to see them soon but it has been hard to be isolated from our friends and family.

While Covid has taken its toll on everyone, I still do think I have gained some very valuable experiences. For example I am in a program called Civil Air Patrol, which is the U.S Air Force Civilian Auxiliary. Over these remote times I have found Civil Air Patrol to be a way for me to enrich myself. During quarantine I have also found a new sense of motivation to succeed in school and do the best I can.

I think if we had not gone into quarantine, I would not have gained these new skills to help me succeed in life. While there are some very sad things happening during this pandemic, I think when we come out of it, we will all have gained some new important life skills.

Editor's Note:

As part of the new book project on Waterbury in the 21st century, the book editors put out a call for students' responses to the following prompt:

How will you describe this time to future generations? What important aspects of this experience should be remembered and shared?

SUBMIT CONTENT

We welcome your letters, articles, photos, and creative writing pieces about Waterbury and its history. To submit, email the editor at communitymgr.whs@gmail.com or send by post to:

Dr. Cheryl Casey, 1389 Kneeland Flats Rd., Waterbury Center, VT 05677.

Quarterly submission deadlines: February 15, May 15, August 15, and November 15

Featured Farm:

The Idyllic Ripley Farm at the Top of the Hill

By Pauline Ripley Lemery

Raymond Ira Dyas Ripley was born in Nappan, Nova Scotia in 1905, one of fourteen children. Dyas was the name of the doctor who attended his birth. The doctor said that if the parents would include Dyas in the baby's name he would buy Raymond a new suit of clothes when he was of age. They did and he did.

Raymond and his friend, Lionel Cousins, both went to Worcester, MA, to find work at the age of 16. They lived for a time with Ray's sister, Amy Osborne, and her husband, James. Amy and James' son, Fred, whom some might remember, was a baby at the time. They worked in a watch factory in Waltham and a wire mill in Worcester, but their dream was to buy a farm in the U.S. Later, they spent some time living on a small farm in Cambridge, VT, that belonged to Amy Osborne's in-laws.

The boys made several trips back to Nova Scotia by train to visit family. Lionel was sweet on Raymond's sister, Thelma. She had a friend from Amherst, N.S., Agnes Gray, who became Ray's wife. The two girls came by train to Burlington in February 1927. The boys picked them up and took them back to Cambridge. They had to wait three days before they could be married on February 17, 1927.

In the spring of 1927, the two couples bought the 200 acre Gillette farm (where Eva Gillette, Walter Woodard's wife, grew up). Following the devastating flood of 1927, Lionel and Ray went over Middlesex Notch to get flour from Montpelier for the people in Waterbury. The two families lived together until each had two children.

In 1931, during the Depression, Ray and Agnes bought the 200-acre farm at the top of the hill for \$3000 from E.J. Purvee. Lionel sold his farm to Edgar Wood after World War II.

The Ripley property extended south to where John Buck's house is today. The farm was originally a part of the Silas Loomis farm at the top of Loomis Hill. The Ripleys milked about 25 cows, had two horses and some pigs, and tapped about 2500 sugar maple trees. They cut wood and raised corn and beans for the Demeritt Canning Co. in Waterbury. Ray worked on the roads, and in the muddy springtime Ray would drag a stone boat loaded with stones to smooth out the road from his place to the Abair's. Ray also worked as a carpenter.

There was no electricity on the hill until about 1944, so they cut ice from the pond to cool the milk and for food refrigeration. They stored ice by covering it with sawdust. The family used a horse and sleigh in the winter because they did not plow the roads; rather, the road crew used a large roller, which took about four horses to pull, to pack the snow down.

Ray and Agnes had seven children: Pauline Lemery, Stanley Ripley, Pearl Metayer, Howard Ripley, Lorraine Luce Calkins, Fredrick Ripley, and Jacqueline Cole Beitzel. The two loving parents provided land on which their children could build homes if they wanted, and three did, along with two granddaughters, Sara Ripley Arpino and Darla Ripley, and a nephew, Fred Osborne.

In 1971, the barn on the property burned down. Ray and Agnes owned the farm until 1972. The Ripleys sold 100 acres of the farm to A. Weiss in 1972, who sold 100 acres to Douglas Hiller and wife Suzanne from VA. They built a home and a sugar house and live there and in VA enjoying a bit of both worlds.

Ray and Agnes sold the farmhouse and the remainder of the lot to their daughter, Lorraine, and her husband, Walter Luce. Lorraine and Walter sold in 1988 to Bruce Amsted and Karen Szisley, who sold to John Wolff and wife, Laurie Berryman, in 1997.

After Ray and Agnes sold their home and farmland, they retired and went to Florida to visit Ray's sister, Thelma, and his old friend Lionel Cousins in

Bradenton. They bought a home so they could spend winters in FL and summers back in VT. Their daughter, Jackie, lived in Ft. Myers.

Ray's son, Howard, was the road foreman in Waterbury for many years. In 2000, Howard counted 85 mailboxes on Ripley Road and the side roads. There are many descendants of the Ripley family in the area, including Lemerys, Sweets, Metayers, Kellets, Arpinos, Rivers, Woodruffs and Kenyons.

I, Pauline Ripley Lemery, the oldest of the family, feel that no one could have enjoyed life any more than I have living on the farm. We had our chores to do, but we had time to roam the mountain. My father took us on berry picking trips and we'd go fishing. We didn't ever say, "I'm bored." And I'm glad I could raise my family in very much the same way.



The Ripley Farmhouse



New History Book In Press for 2022 Release

The Waterbury Historical Society is pleased to announce that our New History Book project has been submitted for review to our publisher, The History Press. Many thanks to all the contributors and volunteers who spent time writing, reviewing, and editing. The book, *A New Century in Waterbury, Vermont: Stories of Resilience, Growth, and Community*, is scheduled to be published in early 2022. Stay tuned for more information about a launch party to celebrate!

NEXT MEETING AND PROGRAM

January 26, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
Steele Community Room
28 North Main Street, Waterbury

Don Fields and His Pony Boys—A Presentation by Skip Flanders

Join us for this free program featuring the story of Vermont musical legends Don Fields and His Pony Boys, one of the premier country bands of the 1930s, '40s, and '50s.

At this time, we are requiring that attendees remain masked, regardless of vaccination status. Thank you in advance for your consideration and cooperation.

Pandemic Perspectives

Continued from page 4

Cora Binkerd, age 10

Covid can't be that bad right?

WRONG,

Covid sucked,

And it still does,

We had to wear masks

We had to social distance

But worse of all

People died.

Masks

Hard to play sports with,

Hard to talk with,

Hard to see facial expressions with,

Suffocating things.

Social distancing

Hard to hear people,

Hard to show people things,

Hard to congratulate someone with a high five or a fist

bump,

6 feet away.

People dying

Sorry for them and their families,

Sorry that they had to go through it,

Sorry that you had pain,

Sadness.

We worked together

Scientists got the vaccine,

People were wearing their masks,

People were standing 6 feet away,

We put our heads together.

We will get through this together

It has been a rough year,

With many bad things,

But we will get through this together.





WATERBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY HISTORY CENTER

The History Center is open **Monday—Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Located on the second floor of the Municipal Building in the renovated Dr. Janes house, the museum is free and open to the public. The Historical Society's vast collections rotate through the exhibits, which are carefully assembled by our Curator. Stop by and learn something new about Waterbury's place in Vermont and national history!

History Center donations are

**TEMPORARILY
SUSPENDED**

We regret the inconvenience
and hope to start accepting
items again soon.

We are unable to accept donations at this time. The pandemic shutdown significantly slowed our work in sorting, cataloging and digitizing the many artifacts, photographs, and papers that Waterbury residents and businesses have graciously asked us to preserve. WHS faces an additional challenge with the sudden loss of our beloved and talented Curator, Jack Carter.

The Historical Society respectfully asks for your patience, and that you hold on to your items until we are better positioned to give them the care and attention that they deserve.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support of Waterbury Historical Society!



Donations Welcome - We are a community organization that deeply appreciates the support and interest of our community. You can donate by check to the PO Box below.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

\$10 per person

\$15 per family (couple and children under 18)

\$5 new first time members **special price!**

(Memberships run by calendar year.)

Please help the Historical Society GO GREEN!

Contact us to opt for email-only delivery. Benefits include cost-saving, paper-saving, and a newsletter in color!



waterburyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

www.waterburyhistoricalsociety.org

FB: [@waterburyhistoricalsocietyVT](https://www.facebook.com/waterburyhistoricalsocietyVT)

Waterbury Historical Society, Inc.

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Waterbury, VT 05676-0708

About Us

Board of Directors— Jan Gendreau, Bill Woodruff, Anne Imhoff

President— Cheryl Casey

Vice President— Jim Walton

Secretary— Grace Sweet

Treasurer— Paul Willard

Interim Curator— Jan Gendreau

Office Manager— LeeAnne Viens

Cataloguer— Sandy Hough

Program Committee— Betty Jones, Josette Metayer, Betsy Ayers Shapiro, Skip Flanders

Outreach Education Committee— Jane Willard, Grace Sweet, Skip Flanders, Margo Sayah

Newsletter Editor & Facebook Community Manager— Cheryl Casey

Webmaster— Paul Willard

PLACE
STAMP
HERE