



Preservation NEWS

COLLECT • RESEARCH • DOCUMENT • PRESERVE • EXHIBIT

Waterbury HISTORY CENTER GRAND RE-OPENING



PHOTOS COURTESY OF GORDON MILLER AND K. BORING

**The past has never felt so present.
Welcome back to Waterbury's story
in the refreshed History center.**



RYAN GEARY, EXHIBITS MANAGER

**THANK YOU
TO OUR GENEROUS
SPONSORS**

**Blackback Pub
Bridgeside Books
Revitalizing Waterbury
Udder Guys**



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The Waterbury Historical Society makes history visible in our community. By collecting, preserving, and sharing local artifacts and stories, the society seeks to educate and instill appreciation for our past and its relevance to our present and our future.

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Postings From the President This is a Call

The last eight months at the Historical Society have been a period of significant change and momentum. Chief among our efforts has been the redesign of the History Center. Thanks especially to the work of Vice President and Exhibits Manager Ryan, with invaluable support from Collections Manager Stacey and board members Laura and Joe, our exhibits are now fresher, more engaging, and more meaningful.

Ryan's research and Laura's graphic design help place artifacts within the larger stories they tell about Waterbury's past. Stacey's ongoing collections inventory uncovered objects and photographs that had remained packed away since the museum first moved into the space. Joe's careful financial stewardship ensured we could invest in new exhibit cases and frames to better showcase our collections.

I am proud to say that Waterbury's History Center now stands as an outstanding example of what a small local historical society can achieve in preserving and sharing the rich, complex, and fascinating history of its community. We continue to plan, dream, and evolve—because history itself is never static—but today we have something special to share, and we look forward to welcoming you through our doors.

At the same time, life changes and new opportunities have left vacancies on our board and committees, reducing the volunteer capacity that forms the foundation of everything we do. In the coming weeks, we will begin accepting nominations for board seats. Committees welcome new members year-round, and our special holiday weekend openings—

Independence Day, Labor Day, and Indigenous Peoples' Day weekends—will require volunteer history hosts to greet visitors and help share Waterbury's story. If you can contribute even a few hours of your time, we would love to hear from you. History matters.

Cheryl

To learn more about our volunteer opportunities and find your own way to help keep history alive visit waterburyhistoricalsociety.org/volunteer

Dr. Janes Patient Bedside Cards – Making History Accessible

by Steve Martin

I first volunteered to help out a few hours a week with the Waterbury Historical Society (WHS) in early January 2023. Generally, this would be in the winter months, with some time perhaps snuck in when weather or my schedule allowed in the summer.

I agreed to tackle scanning the bedside medical cards kept by Dr. Henry Janes during the Civil War and logging them into a spreadsheet with data we thought would be most helpful.

Each 3-1/2" x 5-3/8" Patient Card has a front and back side. Each card was scanned, both front and back. Even blank back sides were scanned for consistency and to assure nothing was omitted. Then a variety of data from the card was entered into the spreadsheet.

The information on the cards listed (among other things): Hospital Number; Name; Age; Nativity (or place and date of birth); Residence; Rank; Regiment; Diagnosis. In addition, many listed the date, place/battle, and what missile/weapon caused an injury.

Example of what one actual card revealed and included in the spreadsheet entry: *Isaac Godfrey, age 22, was an American whose residence was in Waterbury, VT. He was a Private in the 10th Vermont Regiment. On December 27, 1864, he was admitted to the hospital with a gunshot wound to the left leg. The wound was inflicted by a minnie ball on October 19, 1864, at Cedar Creek. His wound healed and he returned to duty on April 6, 1865, cured.*

There were 1,407 hospital cards in all, requiring 2,814 scans plus the associated spreadsheet entry for each. I began scanning and logging information in March of 2023. I scanned the last card in April of 2026. While time spent on each card varied significantly, my best estimate would be that I would probably scan and log 5-6 cards per hour. That would make the total time worked on the project somewhere around 260 hours.

continued on next page

WRECKS OF Waterbury

This NEW series reflects a switch to covering old motor vehicle crashes. Unfortunately, virtually all official files are long gone, along with any photos that might have existed. This new series will only include photographs when possible and will attempt to describe exactly where each crash took place.



Photo by Mark Bushnell

Intoxication and Broken Horse Harness Strap—Fatal

by Brian Lindner

Having said the above, we are going to start the new series instead with a story that doesn't involve a motor vehicle, and we don't know precisely where it happened!

Some time after 11pm on Thursday, July 1, 1915, George E. Blay (30) left the Frank Bickford (age unknown) home on Perry Hill headed downhill towards Waterbury Center in Blay's horse and wagon. They were accompanied by Bert Allen (age unknown). *The Waterbury Record* later reported, "The driver and owner of the rig, George Blay, is known to be a reckless driver when under the influence of alcohol."

At some point in the descent down the Perry Hill Road, the hold back strap on the leather harness snapped. This strap held the wagon back away from the horse creating an open space for the hind legs. When the strap broke, the wagon lurched forward striking the horse causing it to spook. The force of the bolting horse broke the thill, the strong wooden shaft pole that connected the horse to the wagon.

As the partially attached wagon was dragged down the right side of the road, Bickford and Allen were ejected, and both hit a barbed wire fence. Blay was tossed over the horse's head. The sharp fencing tore off one of Allen's ears. Bickford's jugular vein was torn open by a barb and he remained barely alive until bleeding to death just after Dr. S. L. Goodrich arrived on scene around 1am. Bickford was buried in the Hope Cemetery in Waterbury on the following Wednesday.

Blay was charged with being intoxicated while driving the wagon. He plead guilty and was fined \$10.

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Challenges Included:

- Developing a familiarity with 160-year-old handwritten script was common, different people had notably different styles and interpreting the information could be challenging.
- Some cards were faded from age and others had vast amounts of tiny, condensed writing that appeared more as scribbles than text (think about trying to read a doctor's prescription).
- Sometimes specific medical descriptions and terms were used. It was not uncommon for me to spend extra time researching terms online to try to determine exactly what the card was describing.
- Unusual writing conventions were encountered, and eventually recognized, like something in old script called a "long s," where a character resembling an "f" replaced one or both letters where a double s (ss) appeared in a word. Written using the long f convention, the word "missile" might appear more like "mifsile" when written in longhand script.
- Period and shorthand abbreviations were confusing at first, but soon became second nature. "GSW" appeared quite often when describing a gun-shot-wound. Partially disabled or otherwise afflicted soldiers were sometimes transferred to "VRC" where they performed light duty tasks in the Veteran Reserve Corps in order to free up an able-bodied soldier to be reassigned to serve in battle.

Note: The Waterbury Historical Society extends a huge thank you to Steve Martin for his dedication and efforts in accomplishing this important work over a period of three years. As WHS continues to process and catalog items in its collections, new avenues of exploration have emerged which could lead to collaboration with researchers and institutions in military, medical and Civil War history.

1,407 bedside cards
260+ hours
3 years
1 amazing volunteer

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

WORN HISTORY: CLOTHING AND IDENTITY ACROSS THE GENERATIONS

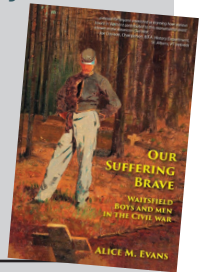
July 13 till mid-September
Steele Community Room

The WHS summer exhibit will display textile artifacts (clothing) from our collection as far back as the early 1800s.

HISTORIAN AND AUTHOR ALICE MAY EVANS

Saturday, July 25 • 1pm
Steele Community Room

Alice M. Evans will speak about her book and the brave soldiers of Waitsfield, Vermont that served during the Civil War.



POP-UP LIBRARY AND HISTORY PROGRAM

1st Wednesday of the month
12-1pm during lunch at the
Waterbury Senior Center

Each month WHS partners with the Waterbury Public Library to bring an item from the WHS collection to the Senior Center. The Library brings books related to the item. Please join us.

Upcoming Pop-Up Dates
July 1 • August 5 • September 2

WHS has committed to
opening the museum on
select weekends during
2026 from 11am-3pm.

July 4th: July 4-5

Labor Day: September 5-6

Indigenous Peoples: October 10-11

The History Center is looking for hosts. Hosts greet visitors and generally act as a presence in the exhibits to answer questions. No special knowledge or experience is necessary!

To "Sign Up" to be a host (2-hour shifts)
visit volunteersignup.org/PAR4P

Inside the Green Mountain Seminary

This article is the first in a series and will provide a glimpse into the Green Mountain Seminary building's "many lives" from a private school for religious instruction to various businesses and now public housing.

by Ann Turkle

In June of 2025, I moved into an apartment at the Green Mountain Seminary, a Downstreet Housing residence on Hollow Road in Waterbury Center, Vermont. It's that imposing structure you can glimpse from Route 100. In the past year, I've relished living with 15-foot-high ceilings, 12-foot-tall windows, and my first experience of inhabiting a genuinely historic building, registered as such in 1990. I've especially enjoyed reflecting on the hundreds of lives this building has touched and the many purposes it has served in its 157 years.

The educational institution was incorporated in 1862 in Lyndonville, Vermont, by the Free Will Baptists. The Baptists had an active community in Washington County, and this was a time of national religious awakening.

They moved their educational endeavors to Waterbury Center with the completion of the Seminary building, an ambitious, three-story Italianate structure that cost \$27,000 at the time to build. The institution opened here in 1869 as a seminary for young men and women. Male students were housed on the top floor, and classrooms and a larger space used for worship or a gymnasium were located on the lower two floors. Teachers and female students lived in the lodge just to the north of the main structure, visible in many of the early representations of the Seminary.



I have wondered what might have encouraged the Baptists to locate this large investment in young lives in the rural quiet of Waterbury Center. According to the school catalog, that was just the point. "It [the Seminary] is removed from the bustle and distraction of large commercial villages, is free from the haunts of vice and dissipation, or temptation to idleness, and is surrounded by natural scenery unsurpassed in its magnificence and grandeur," boasted the 1885-1886 catalog.

Elizabeth Colley, a young teacher from New Hampshire and later a well-known local suffragist, arrived in Waterbury Center in 1875 and took over operations of the Seminary from the Free Will Baptists. Colley served as teacher and principal of the school, broadening the school's purpose beyond general education and religious instruction.

Courses of study included "College Preparatory, Academical, Commercial, and Ladies' Full Course of Study," including languages, art, music, and "Common English." In 1881, Colley added the Minard Commercial School, which occupied two classrooms on the third floor.

Colley remained in her post until 1906, when the school closed. She continued as proprietor of the lodge, operating it as a boarding house until her death in 1925 at the age of 85. The Seminary building was acquired by the Town of Waterbury in 1913 to serve as a grade school. The Lodge burned down in 1938.

Many people in our community have stories about the GMS building. They tell me about practicing basketball in what was once the gymnasium, regretting the departure of the library branch, or running a business in the building.

I invite those of you who have memorable GMS connections to contact me for future articles.
Ann Turkle, acturkle@gmail.com.



Charles Bowles: Soldier, Preacher, Community Builder

by Ryan Geary

In the early 1800s, a Black Revolutionary War veteran rode horseback through Vermont's hill towns, preaching, visiting homes, and helping build community wherever he went. His name was Charles

Bowles, and part of his story survives in the collections of the Waterbury Historical Society.

Born in 1761, Bowles entered the Continental Army as a teenager and remained in service through the end of the Revolutionary War. Decades later, after settling in Huntington around 1815, he founded a Free Will Baptist church and began traveling widely across central Vermont. His route carried him again and again through the Winooski River valley, including regular visits to Waterbury. Like many itinerant ministers of his time, Bowles balanced this demanding circuit with family life, maintaining a household even as his work kept him constantly on the move.

We know this not only from later biographies, but from records preserved locally. The Free Will Baptist Quarterly Meeting minutes, held in the WHS collection, place Bowles directly in the religious and community life of the region. Many of these entries were written in his own hand while he served as clerk and secretary. In 1817, he noted how fast the movement was spreading, writing that "the work spread in many places... Hinesburg and Duxbury and many other places." By 1822, recording a meeting held in Waterbury, he described "a lively quickening time."

These gatherings brought together churches from Waterbury, Stowe, Rich-

continued on next page

mond, Middlesex, Duxbury, and Bolton. They were spaces where communities shared news, strengthened ties, and shaped the moral and social life of the region. That a Black minister held a leadership role within this network, and that his words were recorded and preserved, suggests that at least some members of these communities were open to ideas about equality and belonging that were far from universal at the time.

Bowles' presence in Waterbury also connects to the Butler family. Ezra Butler, a Revolutionary War veteran, minister, governor, congressman, and judge, was known to oppose slavery. When Bowles traveled through Waterbury, he was received by Ezra Butler, dining with him and, on at least one occasion, lodging in his home. How wonderful it must have been that decades later in a small Vermont town, these two veterans of the Revolution met again, their lives intersecting at the crossroads of faith and freedom.

The values reflected in these encounters did not end with that generation. Ezra Butler's son, Russel Butler, later became a member of the Vermont Anti-Slavery Society, and the Waterbury Historical Society preserves anti-slavery writings associated with him. His grandson, Dr. Henry Janes, carried forward a belief in knowledge, progress, and public good. Upon his death in 1915, Janes left his home to the Waterbury Public Library, writing that it was given in order to "promote a higher culture and an increasing intellectual and moral development among the people of Waterbury and surrounding towns."

Bowles' time in Vermont was only part of a much larger life. He later continued his ministry in New York, traveling and preaching until his death in 1843. His path carried him beyond the Winooski valley, but the records he left behind in Waterbury remain. Through the words he wrote in our own collection, we can still trace the movement of a life spent building connections between people and places.

**History Center and Museum
Open Mon.-Wed. and Fri.
8:30am-4:30pm.**

**In the restored Dr. Janes house at
the Waterbury Municipal Complex.**

**Free and open to the public.
Self-guided or by appointment.**

**Stop by and learn something new
about Waterbury's place in history!**

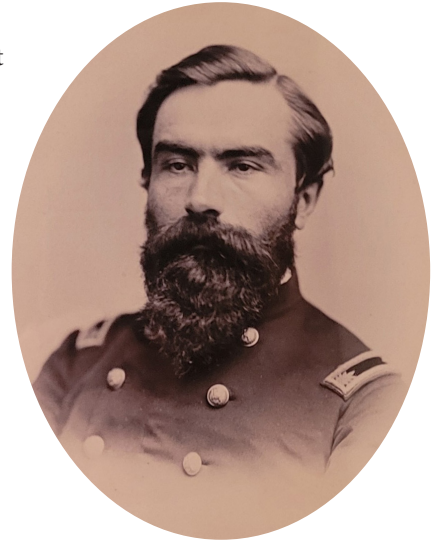
FOUND!

IN THE COLLECTION

by Stacey Askew, WHS Collections Manager

While assembling artifacts for the newly refreshed History Center, WHS Vice President Ryan Geary came across two unidentified photos in our collection (see below). Ryan observed resemblances between the familiar portrait of Dr. Henry Janes in uniform (right) which hangs at the foot of the stairs in the Janes House.

In the framed photo below the young man with his full beard and serious expression shares similarities to the one above it. According to the WHS PastPerfect online database, "This is a daguerreotype of an unknown man. It was found with the daguerreotype of William Butler." A daguerreotype was the first publicly available photographic process, invented in the 1830s. It produced a

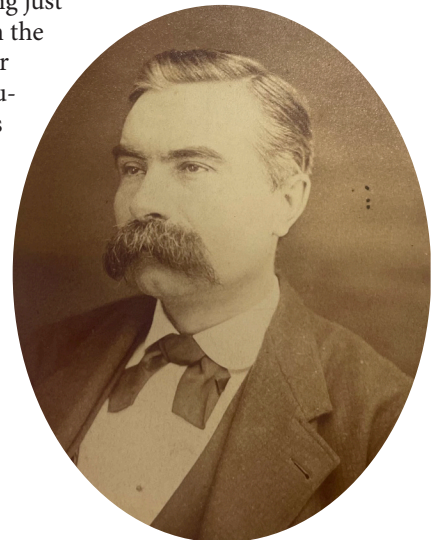


PHOTOS COURTESY OF WHS ARCHIVES

highly detailed, one-of-a-kind image directly onto a polished, silver-coated copper plate. Measuring just 3.5" x 4", this small keepsake would have been the right size to keep as a memento in a pocket, or possibly on a bureau. This specimen is in beautiful condition, the blue velvet facing the glass of the photograph still brilliant and plush.

The second unidentified photo (right) also shows similarities of features to the identified Dr. Janes in uniform.

What do you think, Waterbury history fans?
Could these unidentified photos be a
portrait of the Doctor as a young man?
Might you know something about
one of the photos or have a clue?
Please contact Stacey at
WaterburyCollectionsManager@gmail.com



Meet The HISTORY KEEPERS

History is both about the past and what is happening right now – and right now there is a group of dedicated people who work to collect, preserve, and share Waterbury's vibrant history for future generations. Waterbury Historical Society would like our readers and members to meet these wonderful folks and learn more about what draws them to the Waterbury story. Each issue of Preservation News will highlight a board member, a volunteer, or a staff member.

Name: Steve Martin

Career: Retired (28 years with Blodgett Oven Company in production management; 13 years with Butternut Mountain Farm in accounting).

Role with WHS: Volunteer - currently scanning Dr. Janes Civil War Bedside Patient Cards (see article on page 2).

Years lived in Waterbury: All my life. So far 71 years.

Waterbury Historical Society (WHS): Did you choose Waterbury or did it choose you?

Steve Martin (SM): It chose me. I attended grades 1-6 at Waterbury Elementary School and graduated with the first class to attend Harwood Union High School for all six grades (7-12) in 1972.

WHS: What about Waterbury keeps you here?

SM: I'm not sure how to best answer that. It becomes more difficult to stay as Vermont becomes more unaffordable every year. But this is where my memories are and I still feel a strong connection to the more traditional aspects of life here. On my father's side, I am fourth generation in Waterbury (my eldest son still lives here carrying on the fifth generation). On my mother's side, I have great-great grandparents in local cemeteries. I guess you can't shake the past.

WHS: What is your connection to WHS?

SM: My grandmother was a member and when I was young she tried to interest me in history, especially family history, but I wasn't interested. Once I retired, I began to understand and share her interest and wished I had spent more time learning from her in my younger years.



Steve Martin, with his dog Riley, who together search out shed moose antlers.

WHS: What about history interests you most?

SM: How people worked and lived before us. I had a Grand-Aunt and Grand-Uncle born about sixty years before me. He lost his right forearm in a dynamite accident in a local talc mine. They had thirteen children, but only six lived to see their first birthday. Knowing some of this puts some of our own problems in perspective.

WHS: If you could go back in time, what historical event would you want to see?

SM: The completion of the transcontinental railroad and the first trip across the country by rail.

WHS: What's the one-word people who know you best would use to describe you?

SM: Analytical.

WHS: If you could have a superpower, what would it be?

SM: Immunity to disease and sickness. I am a very poor patient.

WHS: As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

SM: A cowboy.

WHS: Are you a hunter or gatherer?

SM: Hunter, but not a very good one.

WHS: What would you like to see for the future of WHS?

SM: Continue as a volunteer organization. Adding some materials (stories, photos, news articles) from various time periods or events focused on "average" community members.

C. C. Warren: Farmer, Civic Leader, Musician and More

by R. W. Holibaugh

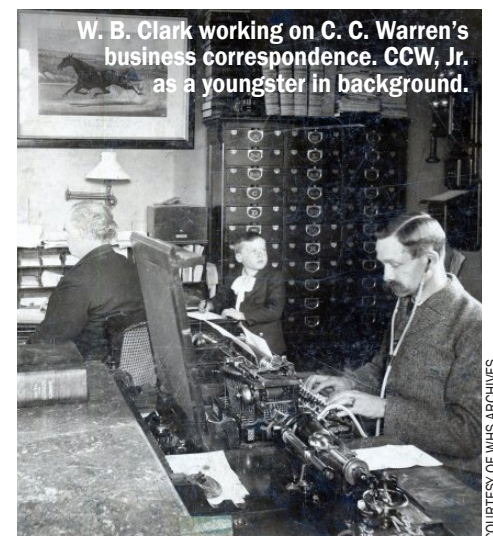
Charles Carlton Warren (1843-1928) was a fourth-generation dairy farmer in Hartland, Vermont. Each generation added to the family's wealth by increasing the acreage it used to support more livestock, thus, increasing its tanning business.

Given the presence of a militia in Windsor County, it's not surprising that Warren learned to play cornet in his youth. Hartland had a brass band as early as the 1850s with a number of accomplished cornetists in the area. Someone there must have given him his first lessons. His attendance at Kimball Union Academy in Meriden, New Hampshire in 1857 unfortunately provided no cornet study.

On April 17, 1863 at age 20, Warren enlisted in the 1st Brigade of Vermont Volunteers and ranked as a Musician in its band. Theodore Graham Lewis writes in his *History of Waterbury, Vermont, 1763-1915* that due to the discharge of the Civil War regimental bands by the U.S. Congress and because Warren had previously led the Hartland Brass Band, he "was offered [a] second leadership of the Vermont Brigade Band, Second Division, Sixth Army Corps, then being organized in Burlington ... He served in this capacity [for] three years."

While in Burlington, he became acquainted with George Dallas Sherman, founder of the Sherman Band and also a cornetist. In the *Barre Daily Times* obituary for Warren, it noted he "was under the direction of Sherman." When the Civil War ended, he mustered out of military service on June 29, 1865 and returned to his family home in Hartland.

continued on next page



W. B. Clark working on C. C. Warren's business correspondence. CCW, Jr. as a youngster in background.

COURTESY OF WHS ARCHIVES

continued from previous page

In 1868, the Warren tannery in Hartland was destroyed by fire. As careful, shrewd businessmen, the Warren father and son partnership had insurance. The insurance settlement money was used to lease an existing tannery available in Waterbury which manufactured “harnesses and rein leather.” When he married Ella F. McElroy of Middlesex on December 11, 1873, the marriage certificate listed CCW as a resident of Waterbury.

In his *History*, Lewis states that after settling in Waterbury, Warren “became the leader of the local cornet band and continued [as] leader for more than 15 years.” It may have been his savvy nature that led to the “Waterbury Cornet Band” becoming the “Waterbury Citizens’ Band” in 1886. Introducing a variety of instruments and musical styles, the name “Citizens” reflected cultural shifts toward broader musical tastes and community involvement.

With CCW’s business interests thriving, his secretaries were using his combination of ‘new’ technologies like the typewriter and phonograph (see photo at left) to cope with his volume of correspondence. This led to a need for increased staffing at the Waterbury post office. All of this activity

Waterbury Citizens’ Band marching in a parade ca. 1920s or 1930’s.



occurred while he continued to play cornet, leading the Band, and becoming Master at the Winooski Masonic Lodge.

The April 20, 1898 issue of the *Argus and Patriot* had a single line which may have marked a change in his involvement with music: “C. C. Warren had an accident with the thumb and one finger of his right hand while at his tannery.” Given the importance of right-hand fingers in cornet playing, the accident could have lessened his playing, but did not affect music instruction to his son, Charles Jr. (1888-1963), who became an accomplished cornetist in Waterbury and a soloist at Dartmouth College.

The combined talents of C. C. Warren and his son, whether leading the Waterbury Cornet Band, or giving fine performances of cornet music in celebrations, parades, concerts, churches, literary societies, etc. provided the community with more than 40 years of music and contributed to the social fabric and cultural history of Waterbury, Vermont.

DONATIONS

Annual Appeal donations and membership renewals from February 19 – May 31, 2026 are listed at right. WHS sends our appreciation to those who donated.

Whitney Aldrich & Wade Hodge
Bradley Ather
Monica Callan & Peter Holm
Fern Dimeglio (in memory of
L. Casey)
Rose Ann Farkas
Judy Foregger

Harold Grout
Elizabeth Hansen
Kerry & Linda Hurd
Joshua Lincoln
Randy & Diana Ricker
Kevin & Debbie Rogers
Meredith Rogers

F. Louise Teats
Thomas & Barbara Tomasi
Lisa Wernhoff
Sally Winings (in memory of
L. Casey)
Gordon & Theresa Wood
Bill Woodruff

Donations and Gift Form

Membership in the society and the quarterly newsletter are automatically included with your annual donation. ****NEW**** Your gift of \$100 or more comes with a token of our appreciation: a 12” x 13” tote bag emblazoned with the Waterbury Historical Society logo. Carry it with pride and help share your love of local history wherever you go!

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Donation Level: ☐ \$20 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$200 ☐ Other \$ _____

Newsletter Preference: ☐ Electronic ☐ Print ☐ No newsletter, just a donation

WHS is a volunteer-run 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
All donations are tax-deductible. waterburyhistoricalsociety.org

WaterburyHistoricalSociety@gmail.com

PAYMENT OPTIONS



- Scan the QR code
- Secure online payment:
waterburyhistoricalsociety.org/giving
- Mail a check payable to:
Waterbury Historical Society
PO Box 708, Waterbury, VT 05676

@waterburyhistoricalsocietyVT



*Thank you for your support of the
Waterbury Historical Society.*

Ghost Walk Honors Veterans of the Revolutionary War



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOE CAMARATTA

For a full list of Revolutionary War veterans buried in Waterbury cemeteries visit: WaterburyHistoricalSociety.org/ghostwalk



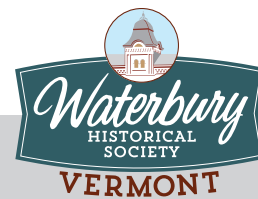
Presenters (L to R): Skip Flanders, Bryan Farnsworth, Ryan Geary and Bill April.

On May 25, WHS hosted its annual Memorial Day Remembrance Ceremony and Ghost Walk at Hope Cemetery in Waterbury. To honor America's 250th Anniversary, this year's Ghost Walk explored the key themes of *We the People* and *American Experiment* by focusing on seven veterans who fought in the Revolutionary War and are buried in Waterbury cemeteries.

Bill April spoke of the life of Simeon Carpenter.



Spectators learn about Zachariah Bassett.



We're looking for history keepers to join the historical society board!

As a board member, you'll help shape the future of our organization—planning events, guiding projects, supporting fundraising, and ensuring our local stories are preserved and shared for generations to come.

Call for Nominations

President (2-year term)

Treasurer (2-year term)

Board Member (3-year term)

Board Member (fill vacated 1-year term)

What's in Store

All terms begin January 1, 2027

Monthly board meetings

Collaborate with a great team

Submit your nomination by August 15.
Elections will take place at our Annual Meeting in October.

To learn more or express interest, send us an email at waterburyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com.

SUMMER PROGRAM
Historian and Author Alice May Evans
Saturday, July 25 • 1pm
Details on Page 3

PO Box 708, Waterbury, VT 05676

