

WATERBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



SUMMER 2022

Volume 23, Number 2

Spring Program Features Don Fields Collection Display, Live Fiddle Music

After pandemic circumstances forced a postponement of its program about Don Fields and His Pony Boys in January, the historical society made a foot-stomping good time at its spring program, held at St. Leo's Hall on April 30.

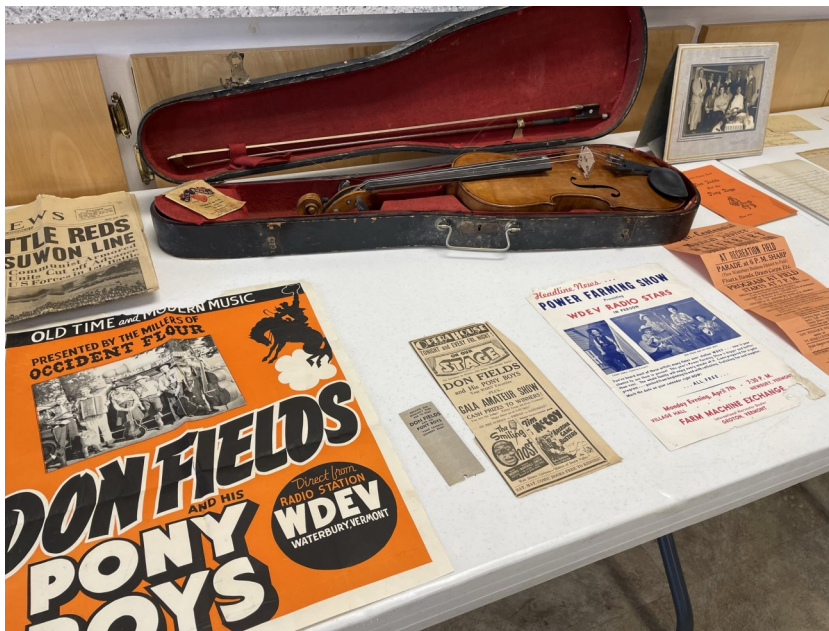
The program, attended by over 50 people, featured a presentation by Skip Flanders that included a projection of newspaper clippings, photographs, and posters pertaining to Fields' long career and community member. Flanders presented the information and anecdotes chronologically to show how Don Fields and His Pony Boys evolved within the larger contexts of barn dances and radio entertainment.

After Flanders spoke and addressed some questions and anecdotes told by a few who knew Don Fields personally, the audience was treated to a live performance of traditional tunes by Martin Davis and Ed Lemery on fiddle and Joe Gagnon on guitar.

The historical society also set out a display of papers and artifacts from its collection on Don Fields and His Pony Boys. Two of Fields' fiddles were among the items on display.



**One of Don Fields' fiddles, on display at the spring program.
Photo by Cheryl Casey for WHS.**



The spring program featured an exhibit of some of the items in the historical society's collection of Don Fields and His Pony Boys artifacts and documents.

Photo by Cheryl Casey for WHS.

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Scholarship In Memory of WHS Member Supports Students With Disabilities

By Cheryl Casey

Editor's Note: This story has been updated from its original version, which was first published in the [Waterbury Roundabout](#) on June 4, 2022.

A new scholarship has been created by the family and friends of longtime Waterbury resident, Historical Society member, and financial advisor, John D. Sherman, who passed away earlier this year.

The scholarship to be awarded annually would support the educational pursuits of low-income Vermont students who have been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis or a physical disability.

Friends and family of Sherman say their goal is to establish a fund of \$20,000 to draw from each year in order to award a \$4,000 scholarship. Qualifications are broad to encompass applicants bound for college or other post-secondary education and younger students in tuition programs who meet the criteria.

Applicants also are asked to describe, in 400 to 600 words, how their “creativity and upbeat spirit” have helped them persevere “through your disability or other hardships in order to get to this point in your education,” according to the essay topic posted on the website [Bold.org](#), which manages the scholarship.

Close friend Brenda Caforia-Weeber, of Waterbury, had the idea for the scholarship in the days before Sherman’s passing on Feb. 17. “I couldn’t think of a better way to honor John, the very special person we know and love,” she said.

Caforia-Weeber and Sherman’s spouse, Natalie, pitched the idea to him. Natalie Sherman recalled how, even with his energy waning, her husband gave thoughtful consideration to the proposal, “nodding and thinking,” before embracing the idea.

With Sherman’s blessing, the two women set to work. “To me it was overwhelming,” Natalie confessed, “but Brenda said we can work together on this.”

Caforia-Weeber, whose expertise is in project management, recruited Sherman’s colleague Mark Perry and lawyer Michelle Anderson – both Waterbury residents and friends of the Shermans – to round out the team.

In writing the scholarship specifications and essay topic, they sought to ensure that the qualities and values that most defined Sherman remained at the core of the scholarship’s purpose: optimism, kindness, generosity, helping others, and learning.

Education played a significant role in shaping Sherman’s sense of self and purpose. In particular, Sherman cherished the experience of attending high school abroad, at Battisborough International School in southwest England.

All these years later, the impact seems to have gone both ways. Former Battisborough Headmaster Tony Fiddian-Green recently reached out to Natalie Sherman by email to express his condolences, having heard through the alumni grapevine about Sherman’s death. Fiddian-Green recalled a teenage Sherman “always so well turned out...pushing himself beyond his comfort zone.” He closed, “I am pleased to remember such a firm friend.”

After returning stateside to attend Johnson State College and

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John Sherman.
Courtesy photo.

In Memory... The following contributors have donated in memory and celebration of beloved WHS members who have passed:

In memory of Jack Carter

Chuck Kletecka & Robert Dostis, \$50

Donations... The following contributors have given in support of various functions and initiatives of the society:

Anonymous—general donation

Queen Esther Chapter 7—general donation

Carol Cook—general donation

Dale Smeltzer—general donation

Sidnia Gordon—general donation

Chad Ummel & Cheryl Casey—general donation

Don & Cecile Phillips—general donation

Gordon & Teresa Wood—Annual appeal, newsletter

Thank you for sustaining us!

History Book Listed in Publisher's National Recommendations

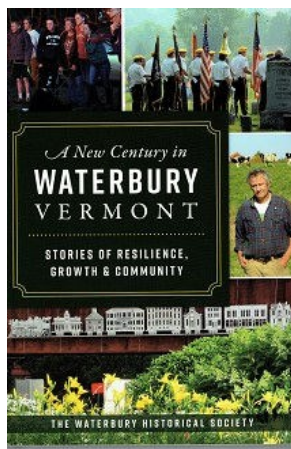
Waterbury Historical Society's new book, *A New Century in Waterbury, Vermont: Stories of Resilience, Growth, and Community*, was recently featured as a "Sales Representatives' Pick" by the publisher, Arcadia Publishing/The History Press.

The list of recommendations included topics in the histories of Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Nebraska, and New Mexico.

One other Vermont book made the list: *Vermont Firsts and Other Claims to Fame* (2020), by Richard B. Smith, host of the public television series *History Where it Happened* and trustee of the Vermont Historical Society.

We are in good company!

A New Century in Waterbury, Vermont is available for purchase (\$25) by contacting waterburyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com or stopping by the Town Offices during business hours (Mon.—Fri., 8am—4pm).



SEEKING NOMINATIONS

Are you interested in leading the history of Waterbury into the future? Submit your name to the annual ballot!

We are currently taking nominations for the following Board positions:

- President (2-yr. term)
- Treasurer (2-yr. term)
- Member-at-large (3-yr. term)

Voting takes place at our annual meeting in October. All positions begin January 1, 2023. For more information and submit a candidate, please email Secretary Grace Sweet, gwbtsweet@gmail.com

Memorial Scholarship For Students With Disabilities

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the University of Vermont for a business degree and a minor in film studies, Sherman began his career as a financial advisor in the Waterbury area. "He helped people create real and lasting wealth, pouring his heart and soul into it," said Perry. "It was his passion."

His kindness and affability were as much his trademarks as his expertise. "I never heard him say an unkind word," Caforia-Weeber recalled, "and he helped us and so many others financially."

Sherman married the love of his life, Natalie, in 2009. The following year, he was diagnosed with progressive relapsing MS.

"John was so positive in the face of obstacles," Natalie Sherman said. "Everyone has things to overcome – it's not like he's special in that regard – but he was driven to succeed for the good of others, not just him."

Perry said that spirit came through. "He had limitations, but he could work, and he loved it," he said.

Although Sherman was forced to retire in 2020 after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, his positive outlook and sense of humor never dampened. As he fought both MS and cancer, friends began calling him "Sherman Tank."

"What an inspiration," Perry declared.

A celebration of John Sherman's life was held on Sunday, June 26, at 1 p.m. in Rusty Parker Memorial Park in Waterbury.

Detailed information about the scholarship and how to both apply for consideration and contribute to the fund can be found online at bold.org/scholarships/john-d-sherman-scholarship/. The application deadline is Aug. 1 with an award announced by Sept. 1.

RECENT EVENTS

IN PHOTOS



Top: American Legion Post 59 Color Guard salutes the flag at the annual Memorial Day Remembrance Ceremony. Bottom: Co-Editor-in-Chief Laura Parette and society president Cheryl Casey autograph books outside Bridgeside Books on Stowe Street for Independent Bookstores Day.

SUBMIT CONTENT

To submit a letter to the editor, stories, or photos for an upcoming issue, 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




SUMMER PROGRAM

Featuring:
Vermont's Own 40th Army Band

August 6, 2022, 3:00 PM
Rusty Parker Park*

Serving Ben & Jerry's!

*This event is free and open to the public. Rain venue: Brookside School Gym.

WE'RE HIRING!

The Waterbury Historical Society seeks a **part-time collections manager** to catalog and maintain its collection of artifacts, photographs, historical documents, and other items. The Collections Manager is a contracted employee of the Town of Waterbury at a rate of **\$20.00 per hour, for a maximum of 20 hours per week**.

PRIMARY DUTIES INCLUDE

- Oversee the organization, cataloging, and storage of all current and new items in the collection according to industry best practices, under the guidance of the Board of Directors.
- Supervise cataloguers, and general volunteers in the record-keeping, organization, and care of the collection.
- Develop and maintain documentation for deeds of gift, loans of collection items, and hosting of temporary exhibits.
- Attend monthly board meetings and report to the Board of Directors.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS INCLUDE

- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail
- Strong research, interpretive, and writing skills.
- Knowledge of and comfort with computer technology for online searches, document creation and management, photographing, scanning, and uploading.

For a full job description and instructions on how to apply, please go to our website at waterburyhistoricalsociety.org

Featured Organization:

Green Mountain Community Christian and Missionary Alliance Church

By Bill Carter

The history of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church in the Waterbury/Duxbury area began in February 1978 when the Waterbury Advent Christian Church, located at 1144 Waterbury-Stowe Road (Colbyville) was purchased by the Christian and Missionary Alliance and became the Waterbury Church of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (WAC).

The first twenty years of the twenty-first century has seen a number of significant changes. In Waitsfield, a sister church, the Mad River Valley Church of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (MRCAC) was worshipping in Founders Hall, Our Lady of the Snows, Catholic Church and did not have a full-time pastor. Late in the year of 2003 discussions concerning a merger of WAC and MRVAC began which led to MRVAC discontinuing regular services and attending services at WAC as of January 25, 2004. On August 12, 2004, the two churches merged and became the Green Mountain Community Christian and Missionary Alliance Church (GMCAC).

Due to an increase in attendance, GMCAC began holding two Sunday morning services on November 7, 2004. The sanctuary was remodeled and a search began for a new location to worship so we could go back to one service on Sundays in October 2005.

On February 9, 2006, the Dillingham Grange #281, located at 4987 Vermont Route 100, Duxbury, Vermont was purchased, to be remodeled as our new church building. The church building in Colbyville was sold on June 15, 2007. GMCAC began worshipping at Crossett Brook Middle School on June 17, 2007, and renovations to the Dillingham Grange were pushed forward. In June of 2007, Pastor David Rinehart retired, having delayed his retirement to guide us through the merger and into the beginning of renovations.

Renovations completed on the Dillingham Grange building, Pastor David Rinehart was invited back to preach on the first Sunday GMCAC began regular worship services at our new location, Palm Sunday of 2008.

On May 25, 2008, Pastor Paul Collins was called to be our Pastor. In service to the community, space in the basement was made available to the Duxbury Elf Shelf (food shelf) beginning in June 2017.

As is true with many houses of worship, 2020 has been a year of struggle due to the pandemic, being



closed several weeks and then opening while observing restrictions. We want to assist the Lord in transforming people into fully devoted followers of Christ.

Remembering the Hidden and Hard to Reach

This year's Cemetery Ghost Walk, which happens annually following a Memorial Day remembrance ceremony, took a different approach. Instead of focusing on a group of people in a single cemetery, organizer Jan Gendreau and presenters Lawrence Dennis, Skip Flanders, Amy Kinsell, and Brian Lindner spoke to a small crowd from the platform of the train station about the legacies of those resting in some of Waterbury's out-of-the-way, hard to reach, and even long-forgotten burial grounds.

Dennis described the Demeritt Cemetery on Blush Hill Road. Records show 11 family members buried

there on what is currently private property. Flanders talked about the Vermont State Hospital cemetery, now on Ice Center grounds, and listed all of those unclaimed patients who were buried there between 1891 and 1912. Kinsell focused on the Johnson family cemetery, where 33 family members are recorded as buried. It can be seen from mile marker 61 on I-89. Finally, Lindner spoke of the cemeteries dotting Ricker Mountain. Life in this farming and sawmill settlement was a hardscrabble one. Younger generations eventually left the orchards, stone walls, and family cemeteries behind. Little River State Park maintains hiking trails through the area.



WATERBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY HISTORY CENTER

The History Center is open **Monday—Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Located in the renovated Dr. Janes house at the municipal complex, 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**

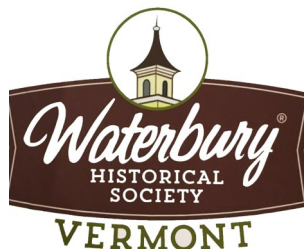
We regret the inconvenience
and hope to start accepting
items again soon.

We are unable to accept donations at this time. The pandemic shutdown significantly slowed our work in sorting, cataloguing 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 WHS!



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)

(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 and Instagram: @waterburyhistoryvt

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About Us

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

President— Cheryl Casey

Vice President— Jill Chase

Secretary— Grace Sweet

Treasurer— Paul Willard

Interim Curator— Jan Gendreau

Collections Manager— *vacancy*

Cataloguer— Sandy Hough

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

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

Newsletter Editor & Social Media Manager— Cheryl Casey

Webmaster— Paul Willard

PLACE
STAMP
HERE