



VT 250 LiveHistory

On February 4, MHS participated in the VT 250 LiveHistory event that invited the community to explore local Revolutionary-era history through an interactive, self-guided tour through the library. Visitors and students from several area schools encountered costumed reenactors portraying historical figures, followed clues, and completed missions as part of the history-themed scavenger hunt. The reenactors regaled their audience with fascinating stories about daily life during the Revolutionary period. “Our students really enjoyed the LiveHistory event,” said Burr and Burton Academy Social Studies Department Chair John Graf. “The reenactors’ efforts to bring local figures to life made the experience both engaging and entertaining. It was a great opportunity for students to see how our rich local history is intertwined with the larger historical events we explore in our classes.”



FROM OUR COLLECTIONS MANAGER:



BETHANY MARSFELDER

Looking through the MHS archives not long after I started in my position, I discovered another young woman charged with the care and keeping of the Manchester Historical Society—one of its founding members, in fact.



In the journals and the records of Sarah Cleghorn, dutifully kept from 1898 until 1924, I found a young woman who was very much like myself: a poet, a dreamer, and storyteller who sought to preserve Manchester history by saving clippings from (and frequently editorializing) the *Manchester Journal*.

Though I was impressed by how much she accomplished, I was particularly charmed and validated by her lamentation of how she “carelessly and stupidly lost the *Journal* of March 25th,” among several other similar mishaps over her twenty-year tenure as “the Journalist.” A little spark of humanity and personality in the annals of history goes a long way into making history itself more accessible, and I can understand the pain she must have felt at losing part of the town’s story.

I found myself in the archives in another way, too. I lost my father very suddenly on July 10 last year, so it was a particular joy and honor to discover that the 1988 *Burtonian* was dedicated to him. If it wasn’t in the archives, I never would have known, and the fact that he was changing lives and making a difference even back then, ten years before I was even born, brings me comfort and makes me feel closer to him. Teaching always was his lifeblood and his students meant the world to him, so seeing that reflected in the archives means everything.

It is an enormous honor and privilege to be the first MHS collections manager and to help tell the stories of Manchester and its people.



Our New Film Digitizer

MHS has dozens of 8mm film reels in our archives, so it was particularly gratifying to be able to purchase a Kodak REELS Film Digitizer this winter. The compact machine allows us to transpose the films to digital format and safely store them in our online database. It was very exciting to see the films come to life, and we were thrilled to be able to share some of them on our social media. Thanks to our many supporters who made this purchase possible.



ON FEBRUARY 12, Shawn Harrington and Bill Badger presented a talk on the history of how an original railroad line turned into a modern-day rail trail at the Bennington County Courthouse in Manchester Village. This was the first time MHS has given a presentation in the courthouse and it was the perfect location for our collaboration with Green Mountain Academy for Lifelong Learning. We look forward to giving more presentations in one of Manchester's oldest landmark buildings.



IN MEMORIAM

Winifred Aboff
1935–2025

Lilly Albertson
1933–2026

Georgia LaBatt
1945–2026

Peter Henry
1942–2025

Joan Rizio
1940–2025

Jerilyn Witt
1945–2025

1897 LEGACY SOCIETY

Be remembered for what you value most.

A simple bequest of whatever size that you include in your will is one of the most everlasting gifts you can make. A bequest to the Manchester Historical Society reflects your love of history and the importance you place on the preservation of the past and education for the future.

We are so grateful to the lovers of history and supporters of MHS who have included us in their estate plans.

Michael Heinel

Sharron and Frank Kropa

Lyman Orton and Janice Izzi

Barbara and Mike Powers

Ruth Stewart

Frederica and Mark Templeton



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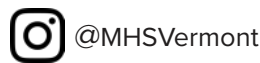
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May 1–3 Renowned documentary and film maker Ken Burns will be headlining the *2026 Lincoln Forum Symposium at Hildene*.

June 7 Southern Vermont Arts Center grand opening of their new addition to their campus housing *For the Love of Vermont: The Lyman Orton Collection*.
Visit svac.org for more information.

The Manchester Historical Society, located in the lower level of the Manchester Community Library, is open Monday–Friday 10 am–4 pm and by appointment.

You can always find more interesting history and up-to-the-minute MHS happenings on social media. Ask us a question about local history and we'll do our best to find an answer.



FREE SELF-GUIDED AUDIO TOUR

THE APP INCLUDES:
Information on 20 Historic Sites in Manchester.
Give it a try and let us know what you think!

Focus your camera on the QR code and then click the link.



or find it on your desktop at <https://www.manchesterhistoricalsocietyvt.org/walking-tour>

The mission of the Manchester Historical Society is to collect, preserve, interpret and present the story of Manchester through the research collection, exhibitions, programs, and publications.

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