



COLCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY
50 YEAR HISTORY

CAROL AND CLINTON REICHARD
JUNE 9, 2025

COLCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESIDENTS

1975	Walter Munson led the first meeting until a President was chosen
1976	Vernon Krause
1977	Marguerite Moulton
1978	Valerie Krause
1979-1981	Kenneth Degree
1981-1982	Norman Beaudin
1982-1985	Ruth Morgan
1985-1988	Clinton Reichard
1988-1991	Jerry Sweeney
1991-1994	Andre Morin
1994-1997	Clinton Reichard
1997-2000	Suzanne Furst
2000-2002	Eben Wolcott
2002	Suzanne Furst (V/Pres/Pres 2002)
2002-2005	Carol Reichard
2005-2009	Carmen Brunelle
2009-2012	Coralie Magoon
2012-2017	Clinton Reichard
2017-2019	Nancy Burke
2019-	Bonnie Potter

COLCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY TREASURERS

1975-1978	Mary Simpers
1978-1987	Marguerite Moulton
1987-1988	Bruce Towne
1988-1997	Ruth Morgan
1997-2007	Pat Carman
2007-	Bob Furst

COLCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY SECRETARIES

1975	James J. Lowe
1975-1980	Valerie Krause
1980-1984	Adelaide Button
1984-1988	Carol Reichard
1988-1990	Maureen Dakin/Christy Cross
1990-1996	Carlene Landry
1996-2010	Joyce Sweeney
2010-2017	Nancy Burke
2017-2019	Coralie Magoon

COVID YEARS

Various Acting Secretaries: Suzanne Furst, Bonnie Potter
2025 Pat Carman

COLCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY FACTS

- 1975 January 8 Founded in the Ira Allen Room of the Burnham Memorial Library
Walter Munson led the meeting; Lillian Baker Carlisle served as Advisor for the formation of the Society as she did for Williston and Richmond and many others after.
First Officers: President – Walter Munson Vice President – Fred Atwood
Secretary – Valerie Krause Treasurer – Mary Simpers
Florence Robbins – 1st Honorary Member for her donations
- 1978 Ken Degree wrote first Newsletters “Colchester’s Past”
- 1981 First House Tour – Alta White’s (First Post Office) and Dr. H. Clinton and Carol Reichard’s
- 1983 Fort Ethan Allen book given to society through Norman Krause; was in a fire; very badly damaged.
Ken Degree gave us his book to publish
- 1984 Speaker fees were \$5 – for gas mainly; Membership dues were \$2.
- 1986 Kevin Graffagnino was a speaker on “Victorian Age”
Second House Tour – Reichard; John and Barbara Sowles; Martha and Larry Scanlon; Carolyn Yarnall;
Walter and Becky Munson (Walter had an arrowhead dated from 9000 B.C.)
Speaker fees were raised to \$10.
- 1987 Clinton Reichard as President wrote to the Selectboard expressing the Society’s support of the Town purchasing the Baptist Church property, Becky Munson suggested making a Friendship Quilt.
- 1988 Society fought the changing of the Town Seal from a cow to a modern insignia of some kind. Carol Reichard took pictures of Colchester Barns which Kathy Towne drew for notecards for the Society to sell as a Fundraiser. We sponsored the Roberts Bros. Circus as a Fundraiser, also.
- 1989 We finished needlework squares for the Friendship Quilt in time for the State Bicentennial
- 1991 The Historical Society led the efforts for the Town’s celebration of the State Bicentennial; held a State Charter Day celebration on June 7, 1991 – Gov. Richard Snelling attended; school children provided music entertainment on the Village Green lawn; the Historical Marker in front of the Meetinghouse was installed - wording by Richard Whittemore, society member.
Clinton Reichard led negotiations with the town for the use of the Baptist Church Parsonage for our Historical Society home, since the town now owned the property. Town Manager, David Timmons and Selectboard member, William MacLeay were key supporters of our having the property as our home. Architectural Conservation assessment was done by UVM of the building.
Carol Reichard submitted papers to the Federal Government for our 501c3 Tax Exempt status which we in turn received.
- 1992 We received Temporary Use and Occupancy papers for the use of the Parsonage; now the real work began to clean the property inside and out for our use; weekly work parties were held with everyone participating
- 1993 We received a Lease from the Town for use at \$1/mo. from 1993-1997. President, Andre Morin, made Clinton Reichard Chairman of the Parsonage Project; a Shower was held for the Parsonage to equip it with house work tools and kitchen tools.
- 1994 T. Michael Brown, Town employee, lived in the Parsonage for 9 mo. and did some restoration of woodwork Upstairs.
- 1995 Senator Richard Mazza gave us \$3000 for lead removal and repainting of the outside.
- 1996 Senator Mazza gave another \$2000, and town gave us \$5000 for painting and renovations; we paid to paint the outside for \$6,865; we gave the Winooski Valley Land Trust money to help in the purchase of land at Colchester Pond. Senator Mazza bought us a flag to hang on the house with appropriate number of stars for the time of the building of the Parsonage – 1899 – 45 stars.
- 1997 Thanks to the frugality of our Past Treasurers, our treasury had \$16,724.63!! very helpful for writing matching grants in the future; we received \$260 from the Coates Family 100th Anniversary celebration on their Island; Charlie Thompson designed and built our sign that hangs on the front of the Parsonage.
- 1998 Town Manager, Mitch Berkowitz, another supporter of our society, lived in it with his wife until they found a home in Colchester; during that time he did a substantial amount of work upstairs; we also, needed another lease with the town while he lived there.

- 1999 After the Colchester Community Chorus went on a singing tour of England in 1998, a friendship developed between the then Mayor, David and Nancy Cannon, and our town assisted by the Reichards who became close friends with them. As a result, thereafter for several years, David and Nancy came for our major town celebrations like the 250th Town Celebration and the 400th Anniversary of the Discovery of Lake Champlain bringing other mayors and many documents of mutual admiration with them. Claire Boisvert presented a donation of oil paintings commissioned by Mrs. Webb of the Shelburne Museum to commemorate the Discovery of Lake Champlain; an unknown artist who lived at the foot of Lincoln Gap painted them.
- 2000 Clinton Reichard had discussions with the town concerning our interest in the fact that the Meetinghouse renovations were destroying some historical aspects of the building including putting very cheap lighting in the front. They agreed the Historical Society could research and buy appropriate lighting for the front. We took Tom and Georgene Raub's Lighthouse replica to the 1st Vermont History Expo in Tunbridge. Brick sidewalks were installed by Town and Historical Society members. Clinton had the Town put in lights along the sidewalks that were on timers. 25th Anniversary of the Historical Society was celebrated. Ken Degree's book was finally printed – 18 years after it was given to us-much work and proof reading was done by Inge Schaefer and Maureen Dakin with Carol Reichard posting Ken's map numbers to the house identities on the chapter maps. It was ready for distribution in 2001. One Room Log Schoolhouse discovered in the Angela MacDonald home on Spaulding's East Shore. President, Eben Wolcott helped the Society purchase the rights to it with donations by town citizens, the State Tourism Department, the historical society, State itself, among others amounting to \$10,000. He, also, shepherded the transfer of the Schoolhouse to a temporary location next to the Old Town Office.
- 2001 President, Suzanne Furst, led a small delegation to a hearing of the Institutions Committee to request \$20,000 for fixing the roof, putting in a new heating system, and adding a handicapped bathroom to the Parsonage. Thanks to our Senator Mazza, we received an additional \$30,000 making our total request mushroom to \$50,000 which was presented in person to the Society by then Governor Howard Dean. Charlie Thompson started a website for the Society on the Town's site. Senator Mazza also got us \$20,000 to preserve and protect the Schoolhouse while in storage.
- 2002 President, Carol Reichard, started Family History Days – Coates, Fitzgerald, Wolcott, Porter, Severance. She did this because the Selectboard requested we have open at least once beside our regular meeting Times.
- 2003 President, Carol Reichard, formed a new Log Schoolhouse Committee made up of Town, School District, and Historical Society members, to research a permanent home for the Schoolhouse.
- 2004 Business Plan for the Schoolhouse was drawn up and submitted to the Selectboard; School was given placement at Airport Park; Chris Cole was hired as Project Manager with Tom Mulcahy as Historical Society Project Manager in conjunction with Chris Cole. Colchester Architect, Rebecca Arnold was key to the project, Carol Reichard was Committee Chair, Suzanne Furst was Renovations Chair, Pat Carman was Chief Financial Officer. Governor, James Douglas, presented a check for \$20,000 from the State. Guy Nichols, a former student at the one room school, became a benefactor of the schoolhouse for years after its opening, giving \$1000 a year. Senator Mazza remained our chief benefactor throughout the years.
- 2005 Federal VTrans Grant of \$147,000 with a 20% local match started the restoration of the Schoolhouse; Senator Mazza got us \$10,000 from Coca-Cola. Eventually it turned into a \$350,000 project. Gladys Severance took a display of the Veterinary Hospital at Fort Ethan Allen being transformed into the Elley Long Music Center to the Vermont History Expo in Tunbridge, our second exhibit there.
- 2006 Clinton Reichard started spearheading the renovations to the Parsonage with the funds received from the State Grant which was written by Inge Schaefer and Maureen Dakin; handicapped bathroom and kitchen were done with help from Bob Wible; refinishing of floors upstairs and downstairs were done; an Open House was held. The schoolhouse was moved to Airport Park early Sunday morning, October 8th. Schoolhouse renovations began in earnest.
- 2007 May 19, 2007 Governor Douglas returned for the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Schoolhouse Opening

- 2009 Society and Tom Mulcahy each received an Award of Excellence from the League of Local Historical Societies for the Schoolhouse Restoration; we received a Service of Excellence Award from the Town which stated that “The Foundation of any great organization is rooted in service.”
Town Celebrated the 400th anniversary of the Discovery of Lake Champlain which welcomed the former Mayor of Colchester, England once again.
Carol Reichard made a detailed list of the inventories at the Log Schoolhouse and the Parsonage when the Town offered to include both under their insurance policy
- 2010 The Log Schoolhouse received the Chittenden County Historical Society Preservation Award.
- 2011 Clinton Reichard as Parsonage Chair, started the renovations of the upstairs. Lee Verchereau, plasterer friend of the Reichards, donated some of his services to replastering the ceilings upstairs.
- 2013 Mayor of Colchester, England, arrived again for the town’s 250th Celebration; our Society held a Walking Tour of the Village and Tea as our special contribution to the celebration.
- 2016 Department of Buildings and General Services of the State gave us a \$5000 grant toward energy efficient climate control replacement of heating system, repair of porches, and exterior painting
Charlie Thompson refurbished the sign he made for us originally.
- 2017 Bonnie Potter set up a Facebook Page for us.
- 2018 Bonnie Potter started writing a Newsletter on line for us seasonally.
Tom Raub had a banner made for us to hang at the Schoolhouse and anywhere we went for displaying our Society activities.
- COVID 19 took over everything!! We met on ZOOM occasionally
- 2020 In May the Town tore down the Barn behind the Parsonage/Historical Society with the intent of increasing parking for the town buildings on the Village Green.
The Parsonage brochure was printed. Log Schoolhouse Brochure was printed also by the Town.
Bonnie Potter, President, received an Award of Merit from the Vermont Historical Society for her Self-Guided Driving Tour of Colchester which she put together during COVID.

Present Day President, Bonnie Potter is keeping the Colchester Historical Society front and center in many publications through her tireless efforts with regard to publicity for our activities.

Bob Furst continues to refresh our website and keep our financial records in order while inputting all our acquisitions inventory into a computer program.