



Newsletter

Colchester Vermont Historical Society

Summer 2020

Upcoming Events and Programs:

Please note: This year, the Annual Meeting and Barbecue may be rescheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please check our website and Facebook pages for updates. Parking, admission and refreshments are free at programs and meetings; donations are always appreciated. Hope to see you there!

♦ **Annual Meeting and Barbecue**
Monday, September 14, 6 p.m.
Historical Society Building
828 Main Street, Colchester



Members and invited guests enjoy this annual event for a look back over the past year and to plan events for next year. Bring a side dish to share. Always casual and fun!

Colchester Teen Thomas Buckley Wins at Vermont History Day



For the first time ever, Colchester has a winner at Vermont History Day. Thomas Buckley, a student at Colchester High School, entered the state-wide competition this spring with the support and

suggestions from his English teachers Megan Gagne and Jason Thime, as well as guidance counselor Robert Hall.

“Breaking Barriers in History” was the theme for this year’s Vermont History Day competition. Thomas chose to write and present a research paper about Margaret Chase Smith and was awarded Second Place in the category of Senior Historical Paper. According to Victoria Hughes, Museum and Education Manager for the Vermont Historical Society, Thomas was the first and only entrant from Colchester to ever participate in this prestigious statewide event. His paper, “Mrs. Smith Goes to Washington: Margaret Chase Smith and the Rise of McCarthyism” qualified Thomas for the next level of competition – National History Day – which occurred in mid-June. While Thomas did not win at the national event, he is not discouraged and plans to compete once again in 2021.

Thomas selected his topic after becoming intrigued with Margaret Chase Smith while working on a separate event. “I was struck by her acts of political courage,” said Thomas, “and she was one of the most influential women in Congress for her time.” Thomas said the most exciting aspect of participating in Vermont History Day was the research process, especially as he discovered more about Margaret Chase Smith and even found recorded tapes of her voice. In addition to his increased knowledge about Margaret Chase Smith, Thomas will always remember what he learned about the terrifying aspects of McCarthyism, and that a simple act of courage can have a lasting impact on society. Thomas felt challenged by the writing process but is grateful for the experience. “It was a lot of work,” he said. Submitted papers are required to be a certain length and must include a bibliography, citing primary and secondary sources.

The competition has two divisions based on school grade – Junior Division includes grades 6, 7, and 8; Senior Division includes grades 9, 10, 11, and 12. This year, there were 167 students from around Vermont submitting 113 projects. The students represented 28 schools and home schools across the state. Ninety-one of these students were presented with awards or ribbons by the Vermont Historical Society.

Seventy-eight volunteer judges from around Vermont were also a valuable part of the process of making Vermont History Day a significant learning opportunity. Their feedback and encouragement help the students become better historians. Participating judges from Colchester included Inge Schaefer and Bonnie Potter from the Colchester Historical Society as well as four professors from St. Michael's College.

The Colchester Historical Society is thrilled with Thomas's win at Vermont History Day and has awarded him a free one-year membership. The organization is eagerly hopeful that more local history teachers and students will become involved in the 2021 event. The theme will be "Communication in History: The Key to Understanding."

Information about Vermont History Day can be found on the Vermont Historical Society's [website](#). You can read Thomas Buckley's winning research paper [here](#).

Gardening Team Digs In



Every spring, the Colchester Historical Society Gardening Team plants beautiful flowers around our building at 828 Main Street. But first, the soil must be prepared, weeds are pulled, and watering hoses readied. After the planting, the volunteers spread mulch, then take turns watering over the summer months. Volunteer gardeners this year include Annette Mulcahy, Marlene Booth, Pam Loranger, Suzanne and Bob Furst, Clinton and Carol Reichard, Pat and Bob Carman, Roberta Overson, and Bonnie

Potter. Plants were generously donated by Claussen's Greenhouse.

In Case You Missed It on Facebook



While waiting in line at the busy Village Scoop for your favorite ice cream this summer, have you wondered about that beautiful old building?



On land purchased by the Town of Colchester from Neal and Bernice Carpenter, this school was built in 1930 at a cost of \$20,000, complete with running water and flush toilets. It was called the New Union School and later called the Paquette School, and even later was known simply as The White School. Eventually the Town sold it as private property and it serves both residential and commercial purposes.

On the Colchester Historical Society's Facebook page, the above posting was our most popular entry to date, with a reach of 3,168 people and 16 shares. Another popular post – reaching 2,880 people and 11 shares – was this one:



Max Wolcott delivered milk from the creamery on Main Street to local homes with his horse named "Bill." This photograph, courtesy of Eben Wolcott, was taken in the early 1940s. The creamery closed in 1955. From "Images of America – Colchester" by Inge Schaefer, Arcadia Publishing, 2003.

Don't miss postings like these! Be sure to "Like" and "Follow" our Facebook page, if you haven't already signed on. Search for Colchester Vermont Historical Society – otherwise, you may end up on the page for Colchester, Connecticut! We provide weekly postings of historical interest as well as information and updates about our programs and meetings. Hope to see you on Facebook!

What's Your COVID-19 Story?



For nearly two centuries, the Vermont Historical Society has collected and documented the lives of Vermonters, and they have continued to do so throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Colchester residents are encouraged to tell your stories, contribute your photographs, poems, and/or videos of your experiences through the COVID-19 crisis. What differences did you experience here in Colchester? What changed in your own home or business – new routines, new office setups, new hobbies, creative adaptations to family events and traditions? What are the worst and/or best things that happened?

Help put COVID-19 and how it affected you in the history books. Find [more information](#) about participating. The Vermont Historical Society would love to hear from you!

Plan Ahead to Visit Vermont Historic Sites This COVID Summer



The Old Constitution House, Windsor, Vermont.

Six Vermont State Historic Sites are tentatively scheduled to open for the 2020 season in July. Before you visit, please be sure to check out individual listings for days and hours of operation. Social distancing guidelines apply. Check <https://historicsites.vermont.gov> for updates.

Meanwhile, another option is to stay safe at home and enjoy several virtual tours by visiting this new [YouTube Channel](#).

Historical Society Membership

New members are always welcome and membership dues are very affordable. Please take a moment to [sign up](#) in support of Colchester's significant local history. There are also many interesting volunteer opportunities available.

News and Updates at Your Fingertips

On Facebook, be sure to "Like" and "Follow" [Colchester Vermont Historical Society](#). Also, visit the Colchester Historical Society's [website](#) to stay up to date on news and programs and to view fabulous vintage photos.

Colchester Historical Society Officers 2019-2020

President: Nancy Burke
Vice President: Bonnie Potter
Treasurer/Director/Webmaster: Bob Furst
Secretary: (vacancy)
Director: Carol Reichard
Newsletter and Facebook page by Bonnie Potter