



# Newsletter

Colchester Vermont Historical Society

Autumn 2020

## Upcoming Events and Programs



*Not a Colchester photo, but one taken during the Spanish Flu pandemic in California circa 1920, an indication that history, does, indeed, repeat itself*

Please note: because of the current COVID-19 health pandemic and associated precautions, the Colchester Historical Society's officers and program committee have decided not to host any in-person meetings before March 2021.

The committee has several program ideas in mind, but we are interested to know if *you* have any ideas or requests, especially for a program that could be conducted via the Zoom video conferencing application. The committee hopes to meet in January to put a plan and schedule together for 2021.

Please email Bob Furst with your program ideas at [bobfurst@comcast.net](mailto:bobfurst@comcast.net).

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*"History takes time.  
History makes memory."  
- Gertrude Stein,  
American novelist, poet,  
playwright and art collector*

## Historical Society Membership

### Become a Member

Treasurer Bob Furst reminds current and lapsed members that annual dues are now due.

What -- not a member yet? New members are always welcome and membership dues are very inexpensive. A single membership is only \$5; family membership is \$10; single lifetime membership is \$100. Please take a moment today to [sign up](#) in support of Colchester's significant local history. There are also many interesting volunteer opportunities available.

Please send your form and payment to:

Bob Furst, Treasurer  
Colchester Vermont Historical Society  
245 Bluebird Drive  
Colchester, VT 05446

## Currently in the Works

Plans and work are actively underway to provide some additional Colchester historical resources:



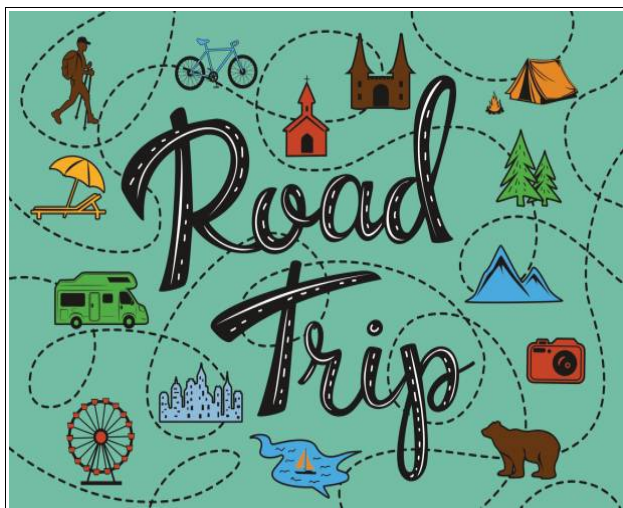
◆ **A video tour of the Parsonage.** Colchester Historical Society volunteers are partnering with Lake Champlain Access Television to create a video tour of

one of Colchester's prominent historic buildings – the Parsonage on Main Street. The Parsonage was built in 1899 and was originally affiliated with the building next door, the Meeting House, which was once a Baptist Church. Over the years, the Parsonage served as the residence for several pastors and their families.

Eventually, that church merged with the First Congregational Church of Christ and later became the United Church of Colchester. In 1989, the Parsonage became the property of the Town of Colchester. While none of the furnishings are original to the home, Historical Society members have furnished it with period pieces and restored much of the interior. It's at the Parsonage where the Historical Society maintains its business office and holds most of its programs and meetings.

The Colchester Historical Society hopes this new video tour will provide a nice opportunity for people to “visit” the Parsonage and learn more about its role in our local history.

◆ **A self-guided driving tour of local historical sites**



You probably already have seen most of Colchester's local historical sites. Or have you? During this health pandemic time when people are eager for something interesting to do – but safely – we're hoping a self-guided driving tour of several local historical sites will provide an opportunity to get out and enjoy, but also to have fun and to learn.

Stay tuned for news about when these tours will be launched and available to you on our website.

## **Paddlewheel Wreckage Found**



*One of the paddlewheels from the Phoenix  
(Photo courtesy of Gary Lefebvre)*

Local diver Gary Lefebvre recently discovered paddlewheel wreckage off Colchester Shoal in Lake Champlain. Chris Sabick, director of research and archaeology at the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, identified the wreckage as the remains from an early steamboat, the *Phoenix*. The steamboat caught fire and sank 201 years ago.

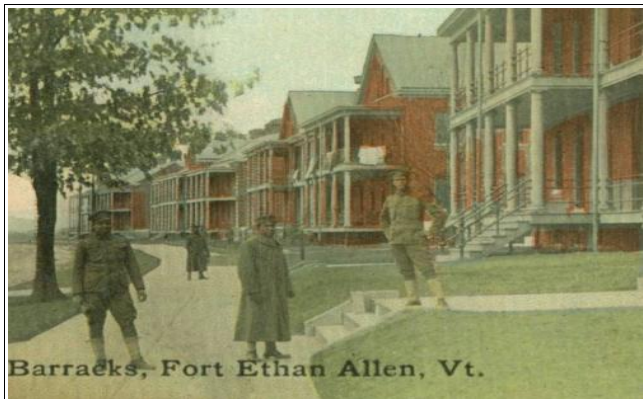
Read the full story and view the photographs in the [Colchester Sun](#).

We hope to have Gary as a speaker at one of our Historical Society programs in 2021.

## **Veterans Day, Wednesday, November 11 Remembering All Who Served**





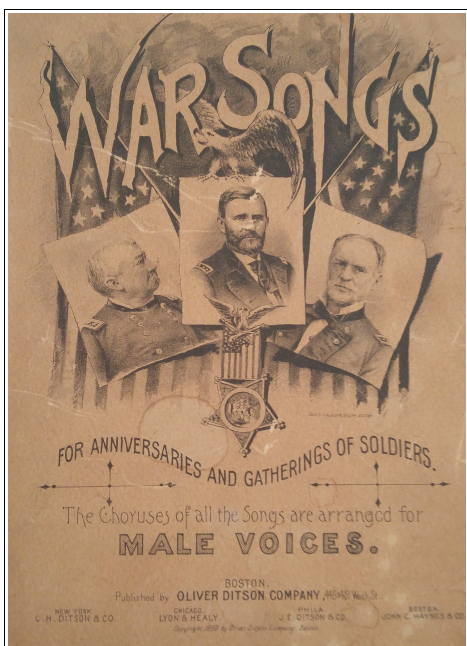


*Buffalo Soldiers, 1909 – 1913*



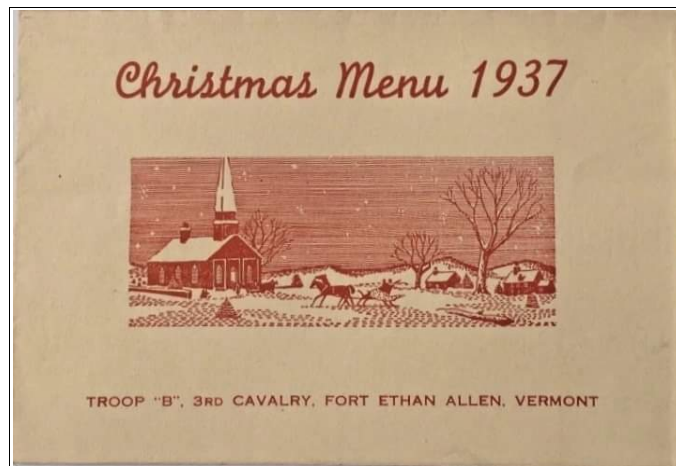
*U.S. Cavalry, 1917, at Fort Ethan Allen*

For more historic photos of Fort Ethan Allen, please visit our [photo gallery](#).



*From 1877, one of the songbooks owned by the Historical Society*

## An Image of Christmas Past



The Christmas menu at Fort Ethan Allen in 1937 offered oyster stew and crackers, celery hearts, sweet pickles, roast Vermont turkey, oyster dressing, canned sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, and creamed peas. For dessert, chocolate layer cake, orange layer cake, blueberry pie, apple pie, assorted chocolate candies, ice cream, bananas, oranges, apples, and mixed nuts. Later, coffee and beer were offered – even cigarettes and cigars!



## News and Updates at Your Fingertips

On Facebook, be sure to “Like” and “Follow” [Colchester Vermont Historical Society](#). Visit the Colchester Historical Society's [website](#) to stay up to date on news and programs and to view some fabulous vintage photographs.

## 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