



# Newsletter

Colchester Vermont Historical Society

Summer 2021

## Colchester Log Schoolhouse is Now Open!



(Above) exterior of schoolhouse.  
(Left) a small chimney bookshelf.

Yes! After a long Covid pandemic year, the Log Schoolhouse has reopened for the summer.

Located at Airport Park near the recreation path, the [Colchester Log Schoolhouse](#) functions as a visitor information center, interpretive venue for schools, and a museum for displaying Colchester history. The Log Schoolhouse is open for visitors Fridays – Mondays, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Parking and admission are free, but donations are always appreciated. Unvaccinated folks are strongly encouraged to wear a mask.

This little museum is a wonderful volunteer opportunity, and hours are very flexible. To volunteer and to find out more, please contact Carol Reichard at 802-497-3036.

## Lively & Local Exhibit Update

And, speaking of the Log Schoolhouse, the Colchester Historical Society is participating in a special exhibit at the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier this summer and fall. "Lively & Local" has been so popular that the July 31 end date has been extended to October 30. It features displays from several Vermont local historical societies, and we are proud that the Colchester Log Schoolhouse is one of them.

The exhibit is open to the public during regular museum hours (normally Tuesdays - Saturdays, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.). *Historical Society members are admitted free of charge. Simply show your membership card.* Otherwise, there is an admission charge for the museum, which includes the Local History Gallery. Fees are: adults: \$7; families: \$20; seniors, students, and children: \$5.

Visit the [Vermont History Museum](#) website to learn more and for directions and parking information.

## Gardening Volunteers Beautify the Grounds



*Pictured, left to right, are: Annette and Tom Mulcahy, Carol Reichard, Pat Carman, and Clinton Reichard. Other volunteers not in the photo were: Bob and Suzanne Furst, Bob Carman and Bonnie Potter. Additional volunteers Lisa Halvorsen and Roberta Overson have joined the effort to help keep the flowers watered throughout the summer months.*

On a hot, sunny morning in May, Historical Society volunteers – all over the age of 70 – worked to beautify the grounds at The Parsonage on Main Street, headquarters for our organization. The soil was prepped, weeds pulled, and beautiful annuals were planted, fertilized, watered, and mulched.

This photo and story received great publicity. It was published on Facebook pages, in the Town Newsletter, and in the *Colchester Sun*.

## Founders Hall Comes Down

Despite the efforts of many, it just could not be saved. Founders Hall, once an 1860 farmhouse, served as the entire school for St. Michael's College for many years. This building housed a chapel, dormitory, library, dining hall, classroom, gymnasium, and administrative offices.

For more of the story, please visit the video presentation by Eva Sollberger for [Seven Days](#).



(Top photo) Founders Hall was built in 1903 and the brick exterior was added just a few years later. It was the original building for St. Michael's College.  
(Bottom photo) Founders Hall bell tower just before the building was torn down. The bell tower has been saved for restoration and will serve as a memorial.

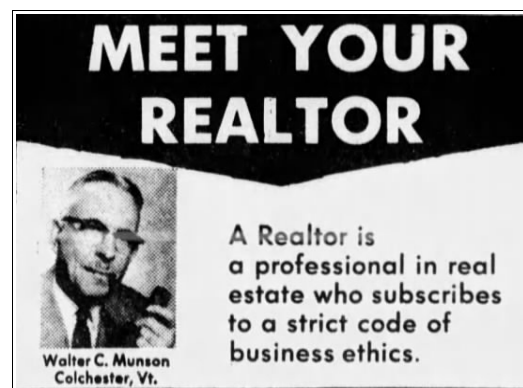
## Recent Acquisitions



(Top photo) One of Walter Munson's realty signs and (bottom photo) a plaque awarded to him by the Vermont Board of Realtors.

Thanks to an anonymous donor, the Historical Society has acquired these items from the days of Walter Cobb Munson's career as an active local realtor.

Walter was born in 1902 and was the last of the seven generations of his family to live at the beautiful Munson farm located on the corner of Route 7 and Bay Road. He farmed for half of his working life, then became a realtor. He married Alice Donovan Munson (d. 1961), then later Rebecca Alexander Munson (d. 2012). An avid hunter and fisherman, Walter wrote and published his memoir, *75 Years of Hunting & Fishing*. He passed away in 2000 in his late 90s and is buried in the Munson Family Cemetery here in Colchester.



One of Walter C. Munson's newspaper ads.



## Historic Milestone: 50 Years of July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade

This year marked Colchester's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its annual Fourth of July parade. The Grand Marshal for 2021 was Inge Schaefer (sorry, couldn't catch her for a photo). Inge is a local historian and author of two books, *Images of America – Colchester* (Arcadia Publishing, 2003) and *Chronicles of Colchester* (The History Press, 2009). She also serves as a judge for Vermont History Day, a student competition hosted by the Vermont Historical Society. Inge was one of the original founders of Colchester's July 4 parade, now organized and hosted by Colchester Parks and Recreation.

*Colchester Police Department's Color Guard led the parade.*



*Vermont Governor Phil Scott and Senator Dick Mazza.*



*A sizeable number of folks from Lone Pine Campground decorated their golf carts in patriotic style.*



*Thank you, Colchester Rescue!*



*A big smile from the bowling-pin mascot for Spare Time Entertainment.*



*Vintage vehicles are always a parade treat.  
This one is a Dodge Power Wagon.*



## About Colchester Pond

In her book *Colchester Vermont From Ice-Cap to Interstate*, author Ruth Wright theorized that Colchester Pond may have been scraped out by the huge southern-moving glacier that covered our area millions of years ago. In more recent centuries, the property was used as farmland, and the pond once served as a water supply for Colchester Village. It also was once the site of a Boy Scout cabin for use by the local troop. In 1960, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as a flood-control measure, installed a dam that blocked the only outflow from the pond, nearly doubling the pond's size. This effort created a wetland on the southern tip and submerged trees and stumps in other areas around the pond.



*The former Boy Scout cabin at Colchester Pond.*

Colchester Pond is a warm body of water with a maximum depth of 45 feet. The northern and eastern shores are surrounded by hills, and therefore, have steep slopes and cliffs that plunge towards the bottom of the pond. This is where the deepest and coldest water of the pond can be found. The eastern and southern shores of the pond have gradual slopes and are bordered by fields and marshes. These sides have shallow water that warms quickly and supports an abundant amount of submerged vegetation. Colchester Pond is supplied by seasonal run-off from the surrounding basin. The main species of fish in the pond are northern pike, smallmouth bass, white perch, and bluegill.

Today, Colchester Pond is a public-access area managed by the Winooski Valley Park District and is a great place for canoeing, fishing, nature trips, hiking, and even swimming. The pond measures a mile in length and covers 182 acres, about a quarter of this park's property. The woodsy hiking trail is approximately three miles around the perimeter, and hikers must stay on the designated

trails. The site is home to an abundant amount of wildlife and plants.

### Sources:

- *Images of America – Colchester* by Inge Schaefer (Arcadia Publishing, 2003)
- *Colchester Vermont From Ice-Cap to Interstate* by Ruth Wright (Queen City Printers, Inc., 1963)
- <https://www.wvpd.org/colchester-pond>



*Colchester Pond*

### Special Note:

Colchester Pond is just one of many local Colchester historical sites to check out as part of our newly created Self-Guided Driving Tour. No lines, no rush, no fee. Get started [here](#) and enjoy!

## News and Updates at Your Fingertips

On Facebook, be sure to “Like” [Colchester Vermont Historical Society](#), and 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 2020-2021

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