

ANNUAL REPORT – September, 2010

Worcester, Vermont Historical Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 329
Worcester, VT 05682

The purpose of the Worcester Historical Society (WHS) is to conserve the unique story of Worcester's past through education, preservation, and restoration for the benefit of our posterity. The Society's resources, collections, and archives will be used to communicate the historical and cultural legacy of Worcester and to maintain and foster our community's heritage.

The WHS was incorporated in November, 2001.

The WHS meets at the Worcester Village School (now the WHS office and meeting facility) the 2nd Thursday of every month, at 7:00 p.m. The public is always welcome to attend.

Organizational

The Board is made up of nine Directors, elected by the Membership. Each Director serves for a two-year term, with staggering terms. The Board appoints its Officers annually.

The present nine Directors, appointed Officers, and their respective terms, are:

	<u>Term Expires</u>
J. David Book, President	September, 2011
Betty White, Vice President	September, 2010
Judy Knapp, Treasurer	September, 2011
Elizabeth Schwartz, Secretary	September, 2011
Vivienne Adair	September, 2011
Bill Dodge	September, 2010
Terry Padilla	September, 2010
Harold Richardson	September, 2010
Cliff Mullen	September, 2010

After this year's Annual Meeting, the Membership will be asked to elect five Directors. The Nominating Committee of the Board will present its recommendations at the Annual Meeting.

Membership Status

The WHS currently has a total of 75 members, made up of: 20 Individual memberships; 9 Family memberships; 45 Lifetime memberships; and 1 Honorary membership. Most Individual, and all Family, memberships are due for renewal; **please renew your membership as soon as possible!** The Board tries to promote membership at all WHS programs, and many Town functions, including Town Meeting.

It is with sadness that we note the passing of Lifetime member **Frances Shonio**.

Annual dues of the members help to support the fiscal health of the WHS as we carry on our mission. The dues structure is as follows:

<u>Membership Type</u>	<u>Annual Dues (cover July 1 – June 30)</u>
Individual	\$10
Family	\$20
Life (individual only)	\$100
Business	\$100
Sponsor	\$500*
Patron	\$1000*
Benefactor	\$5000*

*** Includes a lifetime membership and special recognition at the Annual Meeting.**

Memberships may also be given as gifts.

Donations made in Memory of loved ones make very meaningful contributions to the Society.

Treasurer's Report

Please see pages 7 & 8. (not included on website)

Last Year's Activities & Projects (September, 2009 – August, 2010)

Financial Support & Fundraising:

- We are grateful for the strong support of the WHS and our efforts to renovate, and maintain, the Village School. A permanent budget item of **\$2,000 from the Town of Worcester** was approved on Town Meeting Day.

Significant Fundraisers (discussed further under Projects & Programs section):

- **Town Meeting Lunch:** WHS served the meal on Town Meeting Day as a fundraiser. This was made possible through the very generous support of **Gretchen Saries** and **Greg Labarthe** of Bon Temps Gourmet.
- **Love Light Tree** during the holidays.
- **Holiday Market** in December.
- **Valentine card** fundraiser.
- **The 4th of July: Chicken Barbecue.**
- **Book Sale-** Organized by Worcester residents **Ellen Maxon** and **Jane Ralph.**

Projects & Programs:

WHS continues to sponsor special programs and projects, to foster interest and offer information about the history of the town of Worcester. Over the past year, these included:

- **The WHS Annual Meeting** (Sept. 26, 2009)- was **held in conjunction with the Town Hall Reopening celebration**. Many WHS Board Members and members were involved with, and attending, the Town Hall event. History-oriented programs were built into the celebration: unveiling of the painted theater curtain (on loan from the Middlesex Historical Society), sharing of memories of the Town Hall (led by Audrey Richardson), and a supper provided by the Worcester Community Kitchen. (WHS supplied the produce for tossed salads.)
- **Love Light Tree Lighting Ceremony** (Sat., Dec. 5, 2009): Once again, **Audrey Richardson** organized this 4th annual, very meaningful, event. Generous donation of a tree (Audrey & Jim Richardson) was much appreciated. Many lights were bought in memory of, or in honor of, loved ones. **The Sikora Family musicians** of Maple Corner performed inside after the reading of names and lighting the tree. Refreshments were served.
- **Holiday Open House** (Sat., Dec. 12, 2009): Audrey suggested opening the building on the Sat. after Love Lights so that more people could see and appreciate the decorations and exhibits of vintage toys, after so much work was put into them. Opened in the morning for people going by on their way to the transfer station with coffee and homemade donuts, etc. She also lined up a **Santa for the kids** from ~1-2:30. Unlike the morning Open House, Santa's visit was well attended!
- **Holiday Craft Fair (Fundraiser for Fireworks) at Town Hall** (Sun., Dec 13, 2009): The WHS provided baked goods, coffee, etc. to sell for a nominal price (going toward Fireworks). Booth space & table rental fees were the main source of funds, plus a little from refreshments. **Thanks to Regina Thompson** for initiating this event.
- The 4th annual **Valentine Fundraiser** was successful once again. **Elaine Ladd Purpel** generously allowed us to scan Valentine postcards from the gorgeous collection of vintage cards which belonged to her mother, **Edna Ladd**, beloved Worcester teacher and long-time resident. Valentines were sent to friends, family, and former Worcester residents near and far. These efforts paid off as WHS received many **donations** in return.
- **Renovation of the WHS building**
One of our top priorities over the past year was the renovation of **the Worcester Village School** (also known as the White School).
The ultimate goal of the renovations is to expand the role of the WHS building as a resource to the citizens of our town by utilizing it as the home of the Worcester Historical Society, where we can store our growing collection, and make that collection available to the public, for research, and through exhibits and programs.
- **Grant for Insulating the Building (\$10,770- our share was 10% of this)- from VT Community Climate Change Program.** **Vivienne Adair** wrote the grant application, and headed up this project. The contractor selected (from three bids) was **Robert Miller**. The work was done in Jan-Feb., 2010. The attic was air-sealed and enough cellulose was installed to reach an R-60 rating. The basement

- stone foundation was foamed to both insulate and stop air infiltration. Infrared analysis showed that areas identified in the audit were improved. (Old rock wool insulation in the walls proved quite effective!) Vivienne took photos and did an **article about the project for *the grapevine***, and **did displays at Town Meeting, 4th of July**, and will do one at the **WHS 2010 Annual meeting** (a condition of the Grant).
- **Electrical Work** - Part was covered by the Insulation Grant. **Chad Wendel** of Wendel Electric did the electrical work needed in the attic for the Grant (loose wires in the attic). He also fixed the stairwell light, exit lights, and disconnected the heaters in the upstairs closets (fire hazards). He **wouldn't charge** us for this work- said it was **his contribution to WHS!**
 - **Funds remaining** from the **Community Climate Change Program Grant** were allowed to be used toward **fixing (re-glazing) the windows**. Vivienne coordinated with **Robert Miller** to do the work (as specified by preservation contractor Sally Fishburne, who did previous window restoration in our building).
 - Reproduction **Schoolhouse Lights for the first floor** classroom: Vivienne found suitable styles that we approved. She is working with **Chad Wendel**. He suggested using some of the fixtures being removed from first floor to replace fixtures upstairs that aren't working. Energy efficient light bulbs will be used in the schoolhouse lights. A **fixture for the newly redecorated entrance hall** will also be ordered and installed (currently no lighting there).
 - **Flooring- Harold Richardson** led this project; he and Mike Lee installed new **tiles in the entryway** and the stairwell **landing**. The old tile was cracked and crumbling.
 - **Redecorating the West entrance-** led by **Audrey Richardson**, with help from other members. Fresh paint and new curtains complement the new tile flooring in our entryway.
 - **Blinds for Front Windows-** to hide storage areas from the street. Vivienne selected (with Board approval) and ordered these wooden blinds. They look very similar to the original blinds in old photographs of the building.
 - **Town Meeting Lunch:** Members of the WHS hosted the lunch at Town Meeting in March, with the entrees generously prepared and donated by **Bon Temps Gourmet (Gretchen Saries & Greg Labarthe)**, as a fundraiser for the Society. Thanks also to **The North Branch Grange** (for use of their coffee urn and beverage containers, silverware, condiments, etc.) and **Price Chopper** on the Barre-Montpelier Rd. for a gift card donation.
 - **Ringing the bell** to celebrate **graduation of 6th graders**: a tradition on the final day of school. All Doty students gathered on the front lawn of the Village School as the members of the graduating 6th grade class each took a turn ringing the bell!
 - **Vermont History Expo-** **Cathy and Doug Hull** once again put together a fantastic exhibit. Topic: **Utility quilts (using old clothing), aprons, etc. : Everyday Sewing**.
 - **4th of July Celebration & Chicken Barbecue:** WHS members played an integral role in organizing and orchestrating Worcester's 4th of July Celebration; the 4th of July Committee has been a subcommittee of the WHS for the past several years. During the day, the Society served the traditional **chicken barbecue** (as a fundraiser),

organized other fundraising activities (Duck Race), and presented exhibits (“**Dick & Bill Dodge's vintage toy collection; The Hulls' Utility Quilts & Everyday Sewing** exhibit from **the VT History Expo.**; items from the **Maxham Store**). **Bob Martin** loaned us **David Maxham's old bicycle** for display in our building on the 4th of July. The day ended with a fabulous fireworks show, thanks in large part to: **Suzanne Mancinelli**, who organized the annual **Mud Season Market and Community Day** in Doty Gym on April 10th to **help fund the Fireworks** (WHS donated Publications I,II, III, and one Lifetime membership as part of the Silent Auction fundraiser), **Regina Thompson**, who organized the **Holiday Craft Fair (proceeds going to Fireworks)**, and to all other **individual and business donors**. Also, **thank you to the Worcester Volunteer Fire Department** for **erecting and taking down our flags** that line Worcester Village Road; they have been doing this since our Bicentennial, and we would like to recognize them. **New flags** were **donated by Bernie Harriman and Bob & Donna Alexander**.

- **Worcester Cemetery Inventory-** by Tim Senter (who has a degree in history, and experience in historic preservation). Doug and Cathy Hull funded Tim to work up to 25 hours. David Book oversaw the project (using the Cabot format): plot and record all the info. on the headstones, then index by last name. Results were shown on the 4th of July at the Worcester Methodist Church.
- The WHS building had "**Open Hours**" on three Sunday afternoons in July; sadly, the results were no better than Saturday morning Open Hours tried in previous years- no visitors came.
- **Book Sale** (Aug. 7-8, 2010)- to benefit the WHS was very successful. Thanks so much to **Ellen Maxon and Jane Ralph** of Worcester for choosing us as beneficiary of this year's sale.!
- **Gordon Cole** made a beautiful **card** (using Worcester photos he took) that **he made and sent (on behalf of the WHS) to his cousin, Raymond Witham**, who recently **turned 100!** WHS President David Book presented a **certificate commemorating the occasion** when Mr. Witham was in town **for the Witham Reunion on Aug. 14, 2010**.
- **The WHS website** (www.worcestervthistoricalsociety.org) continues to be an important communication tool. Many thanks to Susan Premo for creating, and maintaining, a web presence for the Worcester Historical Society. Our web page features upcoming events, information regarding membership, Publications/merchandise offered by the Society, etc.
- **The WHS Collection of artifacts and documents** continues to expand. We gratefully acknowledge the generous gift of a **family heirloom quilt**. This Spool Pattern scrappy quilt made by Jessie Pratt (circa 1920-1930), from an old Worcester family, is a significant piece of Worcester history. It was given by Earlene Forbes, Dolly Richardson, Dot Davy, Jessie Davy Lacombe, and little Lily Lacombe (her daughters, granddaughter, and great granddaughter.)
- **Community newsletter, “the grapevine”:** WHS is a collaborating organization, and Judy Knapp represents The Society as a reporter. WHS member Michele Hill is the Editor.

Things to watch for

Committees made up of Directors and interested community members will continue their work on **publications, archiving, programs, genealogy, oral history, facilities & grounds, & fundraising**. Here are some things to watch for:

- Look for **more programs** presented by WHS, during the coming year.
- WHS will take on the **project of doing a new Worcester phone directory**.
- **Archiving** of historical photographs, documents, and artifacts will continue. We need help in this process – please let us know if you are interested!
- **Restoration** work at the Village School. **Chimney repairs** targeted.
- **WHS Village School building: Open by appointment**, for now.
- Continued development and utilization of our **WHS website**: visit us at www.worcestervthistoricalsociety.org
- **Membership drive**: The WHS Board will continue to make an active effort to increase the membership of the Society. We count on members for financial support, but even more, to support the many projects and activities the WHS is undertaking in support of our mission, to communicate the historical and cultural legacy of Worcester, to maintain and foster our community's heritage. We welcome your support!

WHS Wish List

The following items are on our Wish List – please let us know if you would like to **contribute or donate!**

- LCD Projector
- National Register of Historic Places Plaque (it would be nice to get one for the Town Hall too)
- Vermont Flag
- Computer equipment (including scanner)