

ANNUAL REPORT — September, 2011

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.

Incorporated in 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, 2012
Betty White, Vice President	September, 2012
Judy Knapp, Treasurer	September, 2012
Elizabeth Schwartz, Secretary	September, 2012
Vivienne Adair	September, 2012
Bill Dodge	September, 2012
Terry Padilla	September, 2011
Harold Richardson	September, 2012
Cliff Mullen	September, 2011

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

Membership Status

The WHS currently has a total of 50 members, made up of: 5 Individual memberships and 45 Lifetime memberships. 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.

Annual dues of the members help to support the fiscal health of the WHS as we carry out 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 6 & 7 (not included on website)

Last Year's Activities & Projects (September, 2010 – August, 2011)

Financial Support & Fundraising:

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

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.
- An annual **Labor Day flea market and craft fair** was initiated this year with the valuable assistance of Leola Hovey-Russ to benefit the July Fourth fireworks display.

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:

- **Surprise Appreciation Dinner (Potluck) for Doug & Cathy Hull**, hosted by the WHS in the Church Annex: Sept. 23, 2010.
- **WHS Annual Meeting (Oct. 14, 2010) - Potluck Supper followed by Senator Bill Doyle** showing his film, "**Life in Washington County.**"

- **Love Light Tree Lighting Ceremony**, Sat., Dec. 4, 2010 - **Audrey Richardson** organized this 5th annual, very meaningful, event. Generous **donation of a tree (Betty & Brent White)** was much appreciated. Many lights were bought in memory of, or in honor of, loved ones. \$670 **was raised** from **134 names remembered/honored**. About 30-35 people attended. The **Sikora Family musicians** from Maple Corner gave an amazing performance again this year after the reading of names and lighting the tree. Refreshments were served.
- **WHS Children's Christmas Party**, Sun., Dec. 12, 2010 from 2-4 pm. - **Audrey Richardson** also organized this very successful event! **Bill Hoblit** made a superb Santa Claus. **Sandy Mann** provided delicious goodies. Santa arrived in his pick-up truck! Audrey planned some wonderful games/activities/crafts for the children. **Judy Lang** was the photographer - great photos; copies were made by Judy Knapp and given to the families.
- **Michele Hill**, Editor of *the grapevine* community newsletter, made a specific proposal for the WHS to become a **Fiscal Sponsor**, allowing *the grapevine* to use our non-profit status to get a **Bulk Mailing permit to be used by both organizations**. This means that the **WHS becomes fiscally responsible for *the grapevine***. Michele will continue to manage it, reporting to the WHS treasurer (Judy).

Renovation of the WHS building

One of our top priorities over the past year was the continued **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.

- Reproduction **schoolhouse lights for the first floor** classroom: **Vivienne Adair** found and worked with **Chad Wendel** of Wendel Electric. He used some of the fixtures being removed from the first floor to replace fixtures upstairs that weren't working. Energy efficient light bulbs were used in the schoolhouse lights. A **fixture for the newly redecorated entrance hall** was installed (previously no lighting there).
- **Blinds for front windows** are installed, to hide storage areas from the street. Vivienne selected and ordered these wooden blinds. They look very similar to the original blinds in old photographs of the building.
- **Vivienne** coordinated with **Keith Roy** on **painting the ceilings** in the **first floor classroom and east entry hall**, including the walls down to wainscoting
- **Vivienne and Audrey** then **Painted** non-stop! Wainscoting, window trim, shelving, etc. This involved moving lots of things out of the way first.
- **Town Meeting Lunch:** 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, beverage containers, silverware, condiments, etc.).
- **Memorial Day Program** (May 31, 2011) by **Linda Radtke & the VT Humanities Council** - "**Vermont Civil War Songbook**;" **David Book** offered some **letters from Worcester Civil War veterans**.

- **Ringing the bell** to celebrate **graduation of sixth 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!
- **Washington County History Fair, at VHS Pavilion Bldg.** (July 16, 2011) (There was no VT History Expo this year.) **Audrey** served on the organizing committee and **Cathy Hull** did her Millinery Shop exhibit, set up inside the building, for the History Fair.
- **4th of July Celebration** - WHS members (especially **Judy Knapp** - thanks, Judy!) 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 organized fundraising activities (Duck Race), and presented exhibits (**Audrey** set up **Cathy Hull's Millinery Shop exhibit** from the Washington County History Fair; **David Book** organized a display about **Worcester's covered bridge** over the North Branch, including information about its builder, Aro Phineas Slayton, blueprints, and pictures; and information about an artifact, **a clock belonging to Captain Lemeul Hutchinson of Worcester**, (donated by Norma Hutchinson Seery). The day ended with a fabulous fireworks show, thanks to **individual and business donors**. Also, **thank you to the Worcester Volunteer Fire Department** for again **putting up 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.
- **The WHS Collection of artifacts and documents** continues to expand. We gratefully acknowledge the generous **gift of significant collections** from **Doug & Cathy Hull**, and **Bill & Judy Peabody (Greta Peterson family belongings)**.
- **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. As Susan moves on to a new role as grandmother, **Michele Hill** is assuming website responsibilities. Our web page features upcoming events, information regarding membership, publications/merchandise offered by the Society, etc.
- **Community newsletter, *the grapevine***: WHS is a collaborating organization & Fiscal Sponsor. Judy Knapp represents the Society as a reporter, and 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.
- **Special Civil War Sesquicentennial event on the 4th of July: David Book** (our resident Civil War author and expert) is planning this with the **Vermont Hemlocks**, the only group in the state to provide an **authentic Civil War experience**, including 12-15 costumed re-enactors who would set up a realistic camp, participate in the parade, and demonstrate cooking, drills, and firing muskets & cannon. Also, there are several special

activities they can perform: a campfire sing, a roll call, and a children's activity using fake muskets. The Hemlocks would give demonstrations all afternoon and fire a cannon or two at night prior to the fireworks. We also are investigating the possibility of involving a cavalry element, a Lincoln impersonator, and a performance by Linda Radtke, who presented a program of Civil War songs for us back in May.

- **War Memorial project:** David Book knows there were 12 Civil War soldiers with Worcester ties who died during the war. Audrey checked with Veteran's Administration on all the other war veterans buried here; so far none from WWI have been identified. David and Mary Ann Powers will work on this, supported by Audrey, of course!
- WHS will continue working 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
- Vermont Flag
- Scanner