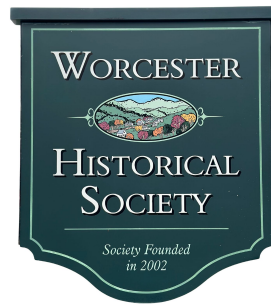


# Worcester Historical Society NEWSLETTER & ANNUAL REPORT



**FREE!**  
**Two for one!**  
**FALL 2024**

## A VAUDEVILLE PERSPECTIVE

On Friday evening, September 27 at 7:00, the Worcester Town Hall will be the scene of a fascinating presentation and performance of a retired Vaudeville artist, R.W. Bacon: a man with local roots. This illustrated lecture, with digitally projected graphics and audio and video clips interspersed with live performance segments, interprets the heyday of American Vaudeville from 1880-1930. The presenter is an accomplished juggler, comic dancer, and jazz banjoist and has cousins who reside in Worcester. This event is appropriate for children age 10 and older. Admission is by donation.



## ANNUAL MEETING & PROGRAM

Unless we have a heating system installed by October 25, our Annual Meeting will take place on that date in the Town Hall at 6:30 PM. Following a brief business meeting, we will view the pictures of Calais Road's historical treasures that were first viewed during the Voices program on July 4th. We will not use the script but will attempt to point out subtle details and, with your help, identify as many people as we can.

## HUGE OPPORTUNITY



The Worcester Historical Society needs your help! We are excited to share that an anonymous donor has generously offered to match up to \$5,000 of community contributions to fund the installation of a heating system that will allow us to operate year round. This will let us offer a space for public meetings and properly maintain and showcase this historic landmark and our growing collection.

To unlock this match, we need to raise \$5,000 by November 1, 2024. Your support is crucial, and we would greatly appreciate any contribution you can make to help us reach our goal. Mail your check to the Worcester Historical Society, P.O. Box 329, Worcester, VT 05682 with "Matching fund" in the memo field. You may also send your donation through [PayPal](#).

For more information, please call David Book at 802-223-5625. Your contribution will not be published, but will be acknowledged for taxation purposes. Many thanks for considering a donation to support this exciting opportunity.

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# A BRIEF LOOK AT THE YEAR

From April through September, the Worcester Historical Society was on the front line in presenting events and programs that *several thousand* people attended! Large crowds attended the Eclipse Party in April held on the Ladd Field with displays interpreting the rare complete solar eclipse; the second Worcester Arts Festival featuring 34 exhibitors and 14 presenters in early June; and the always-popular July Fourth celebration including the parade, games on the field, food vendors, the duck race, Voices` and more, all capped off with a spectacular fireworks display at dusk.

Two illustrated lectures co-sponsored by Vermont Humanities Council touched on two very different topics, "The History of Food," presented by author Rebecca Rupp, and "Finding Jesse: A Fugitive from Slavery in Vermont," presented by Jane Williamson, retired director of Rokeby Museum. We experienced by far our most popular concert of the decade featuring former Elmore entertainer Jon Gailmor, who regaled a large outdoor audience on a warm evening in early August in the shade of the building. Unforgettable!

Just so we couldn't be accused of slacking off, we also sponsored five Saturday open houses, three new exhibits: "Technology in Worcester," the vintage photographs of Worcester and its residents contributed by Pamela Barnett, and Antique Aprons, which was premiered at our Spring Tea held at the Methodist Church. Just to keep up the tradition, we directed our fifth/sixth graders in placing flags for Memorial Day, opened the building for the bell-ringing ceremony celebrating sixth grade graduation, and presented the Douglas Hull Community Service Award to the Sixth graders for volunteer work at the community lunch. We assisted in the purchase of new flags for the village thoroughfare and

opened the building for the bell-ringing ceremony celebrating sixth grade graduation, and presented the Douglas Hull Community Service Award to the Sixth graders for volunteer work at the community lunch. We assisted in the purchase of new flags for the village thoroughfare and contributed to heating the church annex for our local handcrafts group.

Walt Bador moved our restored outhouse back to its original position, but onto a concrete block foundation where it will be opened to viewers next spring after landscaping. Bob Martin provided signage for the project.

We wrote three grants to support the purchase and installation of a heating system. Despite excellent and well-supported applications endorsed by multiple local organizations and our legislator, those were not successful; thus, our appeal for tangible community support.

In the midst of uncertainty about whether our local elementary school will stay open, we also launched a YouTube channel and produced a series of short videos about "[Doty Memorial School: The Heartbeat of Worcester.](#)"

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## THANKS TO JUDY KNAPP

We expressed appreciation for the commitment and contributions of Judy Knapp as Worcester Historical Society treasurer and director of the Love Lights initiative. Audrey Richardson and Marla Edson will continue this December tradition to light the tree that brings us all such joy during winter months.

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## REMEMBERING GORDON COLE

We acknowledge the passing of Gordon Cole, 96, a founding board member of the WHS. His beautiful photography of local environs and his love for Worcester's history remain his legacy.



[facebook.com/WHSVT/](https://www.facebook.com/WHSVT/)

*If you received a paper copy of this newsletter and have an email address we could use instead, please email Julia Hewitt: [juliamhewitt@icloud.com](mailto:juliamhewitt@icloud.com). Thanks!*

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