

Preservation Education

APPRECIATION REPORT VOLUME 8 NUMBER 3

AUTUMN 2020



Manchester Elementary Middle School September 2020

Photo by Shawn Harrington

Someday This Will All Be A Memory

Individual memories will fade with time as our lives eventually resume a more sociable pattern, free of coronavirus fears. But the collective memory of this historic pandemic will live on at the Manchester Historical Society, thanks to you.

Our profound gratitude to every one of you for your generosity and your confidence during this anxious time. Your financial support helped keep our mission on track and gave us much-appreciated encouragement.

When the outbreak of Covid-19 began in March 2020, we wondered how the last pandemic, in 1918, had affected our community. We found there was precious little evidence saved and not much to gather from the newspapers. We knew we could not let that happen this time and, with your support, we have been working these last eight

months to be certain our collection will be filled with ample evidence of how our community coped with the devastating virus that has upended lives of people all over the world. Artifacts, documents and photographs will be available to future generations.

Under the quarantine rules, our ability to share Manchester's history now relies chiefly on social media. Many of you have joined us there and your participation has been greatly enriched our knowledge and enjoyment of local history.

Our archive in the Manchester Community Library was closed until late September, when we were once again able to visit the collection and continue work on processing and cataloging. Despite the lockdown, we continued to receive gifts to the collection and we thank everyone who took the time to make sure we received some very fine gifts.







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GIFTS TO THE COLLECTION

Despite the fact that we were closed for seven months of our fiscal year, we received a number of wonderful gifts to the collection.

Sean and Patty Breen
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courtesy of Ruth Stewart
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Special Thanks to GNAT-TV for their partnership in the production of the MHS short films on historical topics, which are available on our website manchesterhistoricalsocietyvt.org and on GNAT-TV's website under TimeStamp.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of our annual report. Errors do happen, however, so let us know if there are any mistakes or omissions by calling us at 802.549.5482 or by email: info@manchesterhistoricalsocietyvt.org.

In Memoriam

We celebrate the lives of three exceptional women who gave their time and support to MHS in important ways. We offer our deepest sympathies to their families.

Barbara Brewster 1934-2020

Barbara and her husband Charles lived for many years in Manchester Center. Barbara was the well-known proprietor of Brewster Antiques in Manchester Center which she ran successfully for several decades. She was a tireless supporter of MHS and was a member of the Board of Directors from 1997 to 2004.

Patricia Dupree 1926-2020

In 1949 Pat and her husband Don bought what had been the Manchester Poor Farm on River Road, renaming it River Meadow Farm. Pat worked for the George F. Markey Insurance and Real Estate Agency, and Don for Swezey Lumber. Pat became a licensed real estate broker in 1965, and she was also a licensed insurance agent for Nationwide Insurance Company. She was the MHS treasurer for many years and a dedicated supporter and regular attendant of MHS programs over many years.

Margaret Ellis 1929-2020

Maggie Ellis and her husband Homer were well-loved Manchester residents, moving here in the 1950s. In addition to caring for her family, Maggie gave her time to many local nonprofits. An avid reader all her life, she accepted the invitation of Burr and Burton Seminary to become the school's first full-time librarian in 1966. By the time she retired in 1991, the library had grown into a spacious two-story modern facility. Most important for history, Maggie also collected all the historical documents, photographs, books, and assorted ephemera she found at the school and carefully saved it all. Her invaluable work formed the basis of the current BBA archives. She was a generous supporter of MHS over the years and always let us know she believed in what we were doing.



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The mission of the
Manchester Historical Society
is to collect, preserve,
interpret and present the
story of Manchester through
the research collection,
exhibitions, programs,
and publications.

NEW BOOK PROJECT UNDERWAY:

A History of Manchester 1761-2021

This coming year we will be working on an updated history of Manchester that will include information from the previous history completed in 1961 and incorporate new information from 1961 through 2021. Curator Shawn Harrington will lead the team of writers and researchers who will be spending the next year compiling a complete, up-to-date history of Manchester.

The first comprehensive history, *Manchester Vermont, A Pleasant Land Among the Mountains*, written by Edwin Bigelow and Nancy Otis, was published in 1961, in time for the town's bicentennial celebration. Much of their research will be included in this new volume with material added where we have made recent discoveries. Additional chapters covering the years 1962-2021 will be researched and written, bringing the story of our community up to date. A second volume is planned to cover the stories of the individuals and families who lived and worked in Manchester, making it the place it is today. Both volumes will include photographs.

This new history will benefit greatly from the store of information MHS has collected since 1961, especially during the last six years. Our plan is to interview people who have memories of what was happening in Manchester during that time. Together with our research into documents and newspapers, these interviews will help us describe and understand how Manchester evolved over the past five decades and how the community met the various economic and social challenges of changing times.

We are excited about this undertaking and looking forward to the process of learning about the recent history of Manchester and sharing it with all of you.

Thank you to our 2019-2020 CORPORATE SPONSORS for their interest in Manchester's history and their generous support.

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