

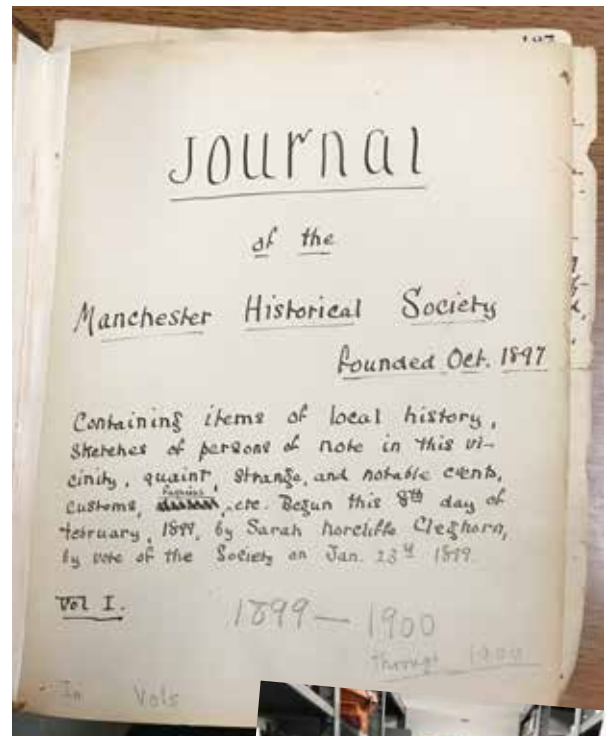
It's Tedious Work and We Love Doing It!

Like many historical societies across the country, the Manchester Historical Society was founded in the last decade of the 19th century by local community leaders who wanted to celebrate their hometown's significance, growth and potential. As outlined in their original mission statement, the initial focus was on collecting and conserving "scattered bits of history," marking "places of historic interest," recording events to "portray the life of the town," and providing "a convenient and reliable source of information."

The creation of the Manchester's first historical society sparked a general interest in recording the events and people of the past as well as an effort to preserve the "relics" held by many of the oldest residents.

Mrs. J.D. Way presented MHS with its first such relic, a powderhorn picked up in the field on the southwest side of Main Street (Route 7) where local historians believed Seth Warner camped with his soldiers the night before the Battle of Bennington. Another relic of war, found just south of Dellwood Cemetery, was a cannon ball thought to have dated from the time of the War of 1812.

The science of preservation was not as sophisticated as it is today and the items collected over the next one hundred years were kept either in people's homes or in the Mark Skinner Library. That so much has come down to us in relatively good condition



First page of the MHS minute book, 1897

is thanks to successive generations recognizing the importance of doing their

best to preserve what they had inherited. Many of the earliest "relics" are still in our collection and have been joined by hundreds of others that now safely reside in the MHS room in the Manchester Community Library. (continued p. 2)

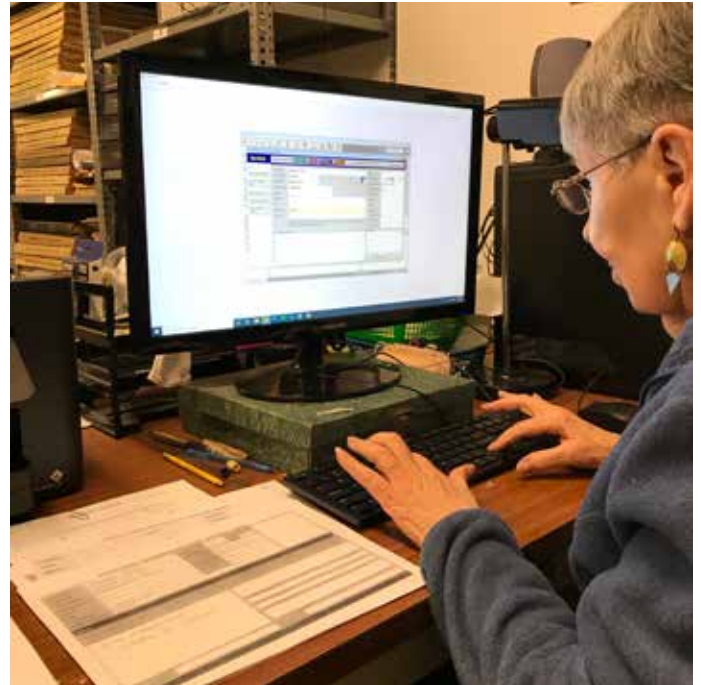


We Love Doing It! *(continued from p. 1)*

Last year, we received and catalogued over 50 gifts, with the help of our Friday volunteers Helen Gawlik, Luise Hughes, Flo Ewasko, and Mike diMonda. We are incredibly grateful for their devoted assistance.

We thought you might like to see how we process gifts to the collection today. Here are the steps we take when we accession and catalogue every gift to the collection we receive.

Since the advent of computers, the recording methods have improved but it is still a detailed and lengthy process to make sure we understand the item, can describe it for future generations, and store it in the best possible way.



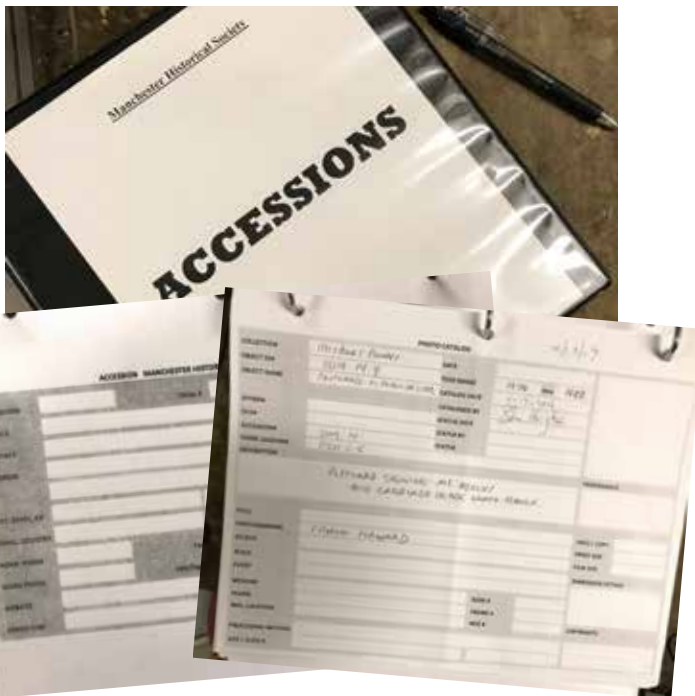
Flo Ewasko, one of our Friday volunteers, is hard at work entering data into the PastPerfect software that digitally catalogues our collection.

Cataloguing

Once the paperwork is completed, we enter all the information into a specialized software called PastPerfect, which is used by many major archives and museums in the US. This is a painstaking job and one that must be done with care because our ability to find any particular item in the future depends on making sure all the entries are accurate. We also include a photograph in the record.

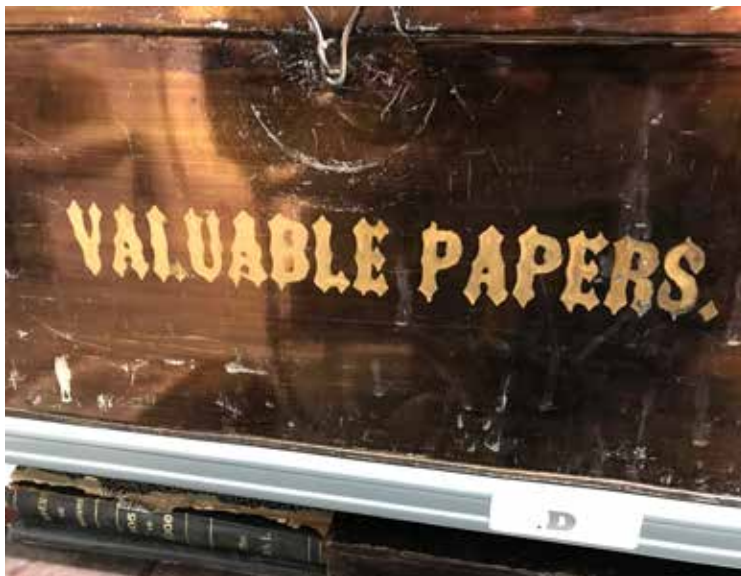
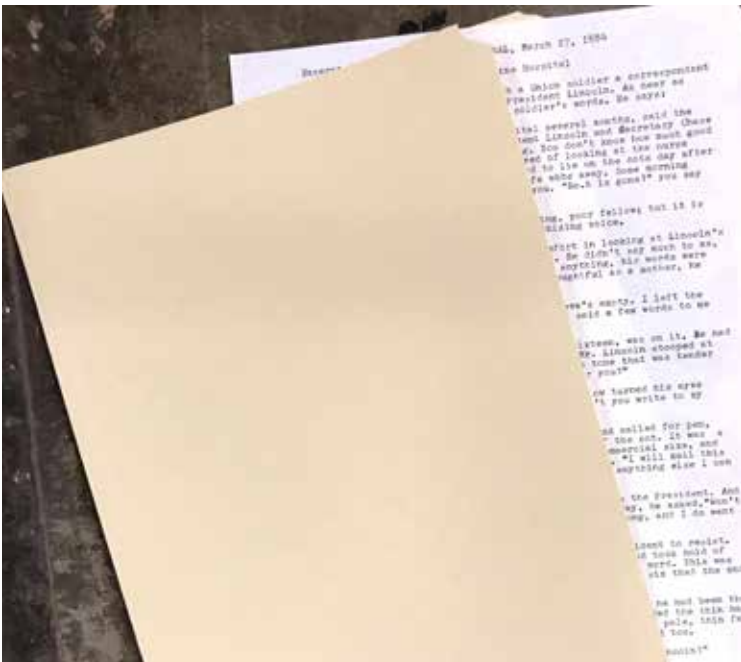
Shelving

After the item has been entered into the online catalogue and given a location code, the item is put into preservation quality mylar sleeves (for photographs), file folders, before being stored in protective boxes made from acid- and lignin-free 60 point board with a pH of 8.5 and buffered with 3 percent calcium carbonate.



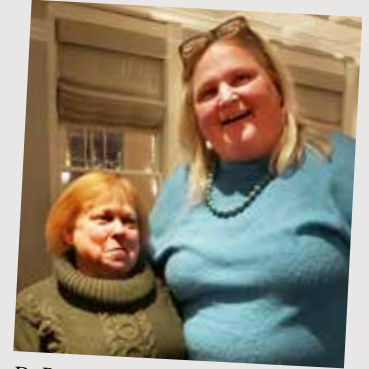
Accessioning

When we receive a gift, we immediately give it an accession number that begins with the current year followed by its place in the year's gifts. For example, the first gift in 2020 received the number 2020.01 We record the donor's contact information and a brief description of the item. Then we fill out another more detailed worksheet depending on whether it is an object, photograph, archive (paper document), or book. We are careful to include as much information about the item as possible.



Exceptional Service Awards

MHS posthumously honored two important contributors at our annual Exceptional Service Award on January 29 at the Equinox. The late MHS curator Mary Hard Bort and the late Albert “Herbie” Wessner were recognized for their outstanding service to the Manchester Historical Society and to the preservation of Manchester’s history.



D. Bort (left), daughter of the late Mary Hard Bort with Kim Rizio, MHS Vice President

MARY HARD BORT was president and curator of MHS for over 30 years until her death in 2005. She began her association with MHS in 1975 when she returned to Manchester with family. A descendent of the Hard family (which included the poet, publisher and Johnny Appleseed Bookstore owner Walter R. Hard), she devoted untold hours to researching and recording the history of Manchester from every available resource she could find. Her favorite articles for the *Manchester Journal* were collected in *Manchester: Memories of a Mountain Valley* (2005), which is still in print.

ALBERT “HERBIE” WESSNER was a proud graduate of Burr and Burton Seminary and Reich American Auctioneer’s School in Mason City, Iowa. He was an auctioneer, antiques dealer, and the foremost collector of local historical items and stories in the area. He singlehandedly saved more local history than anyone before him. His auctions, flea markets and surplus store were an institution. Herb was an active supporter of the Warm the Children program which provides new winter clothing for the children of needy families.

MHS is very proud to honor two very dedicated lovers of history and grateful to them for all they did to enrich the historical record of Manchester.

New to the Collection

How amazing is this! On the 57th anniversary of poet Robert Frost's death in 1963, we received this framed photograph from the family of Sarah Given Larson of Frost and Manchester's Walter R. Hard. According to the inscription on the back, the image was taken on September 23, 1962. It's a priceless record of two great poets who called Vermont home and we are thrilled to have this valuable addition to the MHS collection.



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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 Board Member

MHS is happy to announce that Laura Heinel has joined the board of directors as the new treasurer. Laura is well-known for her bookkeeping abilities as she has worked in the area for many years. Laura is also treasurer for BART Adaptive Sports and is on the Komen committee for the VT/NH walk. She and her husband Jim (who is a descendent of Manchester's original Heinel family) raised their three sons in the Manchester area and today they enjoy being a host family for international students at Long Trail School. "We are delighted that Laura has joined us as our new treasurer as we look to the future with renewed energy," said Vice President Kim Rizio. "She will be a great addition to our board with her experience and excellent skills. We are greatly indebted to her predecessor, Deb McPherson, who retired last fall after five years as treasurer, for her dedication to MHS."

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

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