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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.

TravelStorysGPS Walking Tour of Manchester

(continued from front page)

close to the site. Because the tour is also available on your computer, anyone can take the tour remotely from the comfort of their home.

Our tour included 20 sites: 11 in Manchester Village, 7 in Manchester Center, and 2 in Manchester Depot. You can begin the walking tour at whichever site you would like. Each narration is approximately 2 minutes long. Because each site is one story, you do not have to go in any particular order.

Curator Shawn Harrington researched and wrote the text. He also chose all the photographs from the MHS collection. He and Board member Katy McNabb did the audio with the expert technical help of Burr and Burton Academy music teacher Neil Freebern. We hope you will give the tour a try and let us know what you think!

Exceptional Service Awards 2022

The MHS Board of Directors inaugurated the Exceptional Service Award in 2017 to permanently acknowledge supporters who deserve public recognition for their contributions to the preservation of Manchester's history. The award honorees for 2022 will be announced at our August meeting. Their names will be inscribed on the plaque that hangs outside our archives at the Manchester Community Library.

You can always find more interesting history and up-to-the-minute MHS happenings on social media. Ask us a question about local history and we'll do our best to find an answer.



Thank you to our 2020-2021 CORPORATE SPONSORS for their interest in Manchester's history and their generous support.

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1897 SOCIETY



PROPRIETORS CIRCLE



UNION CLUB



TravelStorysGPS Walking Tour of Manchester **LAUNCHES THIS SUMMER**

MADE POSSIBLE BY THE GENEROSITY OF OUR SUPPORTERS

We had been searching for several years for a free and easily accessible way to bring the history of notable places in Manchester to a wider audience. This year we found the perfect partner: TravelStorysGPS.

We are so pleased to have their deep professional experience help us to put together a fun and informative exploration of our town's historical highlights. Combining photographs, text, and voice narration, our self-guided walking tour of Manchester will have a soft launch in late July.

Based in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, TravelStorys has hundreds of tours from all over the country available on their website for travelers and virtual travelers. Their self-guided audio tours are based on GPS, short for global positioning system. It's a 24-satellite navigation system that uses multiple satellite signals to find a receiver's position on earth. This means that as you are walking the tour, the audio for each location launches automatically once you get

continued page on last page



The creation of our TravelStorys walking tour is a good example of how we turn our supporters' donations into more historical knowledge for our community and beyond. Our local history is unique and it's an important part of what makes our community a wonderful place to live. We would so appreciate your partnership in our work. To give easily online go to www.manchesterhistoricalsocietyvt.org/Support *Thank you!*

Stranger Things in Early Manchester



This marker came about as a result of collaboration with the Vermont Folklife Center. It was funded by a grant from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation through their Legends & Lore Marker Grant Program. We thank them for their generosity. Dedication will take place on Saturday, August 6, at 11 am with Dr. Andy Kolovos, MLS associate director and archivist at Vermont Folklife Center, on hand.

Judge John S. Pettibone (1786-1872) in his “Early History of Manchester” manuscript, written around 1860, tells a remarkable story from Manchester’s past. In Part II, he writes about the strange tale of Rachel Harris, first wife of Captain Burton, who died in 1790.

She was, to use the words of one who was well acquainted with her, ‘a fine, healthy, beautiful girl.’ Not long after they were married she went into a decline and after a year or so she died of consumption. Capt. Burton after a year or more married Hulda Powel, daughter of Esquire Powel by his first wife. Hulda was a very healthy, good-looking girl, not as handsome as his first wife.

She became ill soon after they were married and when she was in the last stages of consumption, a strange infatuation took possession of the minds of the connections and friends of the family. They were induced to believe that if the vitals of the first wife could be consumed by being burned in a charcoal fire it would effect a cure of the sick second wife.



Rachel Burton’s gravestone was carved and signed by Zerubbabel Collins (1733-1797), who was one of the most talented carvers of his time. Originally from Connecticut, he moved to Vermont in 1778 and began to carve in white marble. Many of his beautiful stones may be seen in the graveyards in Shaftsbury and Bennington. These elaborately carved marble stones also found their way into upstate New York and can be found in abundance around the Albany area.

Such was the strange delusion that they dis-interred the first wife who had been buried about three years. They took out the liver, heart, and lungs, what remained of them, and burned them to ashes on the blacksmith’s forge of Jacob Mead.

Timothy Mead officiated at the altar in the sacrifice to the Demon Vampire who it was believed was still sucking the blood of the then living wife of Captain Burton. It was the month of February and good sleighing. Such was the excitement that from five hundred to one thousand people were present. This account was furnished me by an eye witness of the transaction.

Judge Pettibone's manuscript was given to the Vermont Historical Society in 1929 by Mrs. Loveland Munson. Her husband, Judge Loveland Munson, had received it from the Pettibone family. To read the full manuscript, please visit <https://vermonthistory.org/journal/misc/EarlyHistoryOfManchester.pdf>

John S. Pettibone was one of the sons of Samuel Pettibone, a Revolutionary War veteran who purchased the farm of Samuel Rose in Manchester after it was confiscated when Rose turned Tory during the Revolution. A Middlebury College graduate, John was an officer during the War of 1812, represented Manchester in the Vermont legislature, and served as Judge of Probate.

According to Andy Kolovos, associate director and archivist of the Vermont Folklife Center, in the late 18th and early 19th centuries a vampire panic spread throughout New England. Vermont was not immune - both Woodstock (1830) and Manchester (1792) were caught up in it. "The vampire of folklore is pretty different from the vampire of contemporary books and movies, so we're not talking Dracula, Buffy or Twilight here," he explained. "The folkloric vampire was frequently someone who recently died, often of a disease like tuberculosis, and, at a time before the germ theory of disease was widely accepted, then became a supernatural scapegoat for continued illness and death in the community."



The Mystery of the London Plane Tree

Going through the *Manchester Journal* photo archives, I came across a photograph from May 1987 of Village Trustee Paul Wheeler and others from Bartlett Tree Experts planting a London plane tree seedling next to the courthouse in the Village, which had come from Ellis Island, the famous site where immigrants arrived in New York City.

Naturally, I was curious! So I went to the courthouse to see if the little seedling had survived. There was a tree that seemed to match the description (via Google pictures) of a London plane tree... but I wanted to be sure, so I got in touch with well-known local arborist Alan Calfee. He confirmed that it was indeed a London plane tree and was amazed that the little seedling had survived so well in Manchester.

We don't know how this seedling got to Manchester, but it is interesting to have this small connection to the Statue of Liberty right here in town.

— SHAWN HARRINGTON

