

Keeping Appraised

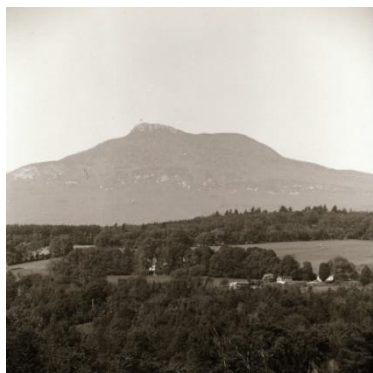
Newsletter of the Vermont State Archives & Records Administration

Office of the Vermont Secretary of State

Vermont State Archives to Celebrate Archives Month

October marks American Archives Month, an effort by organizations and repositories around the nation to highlight the importance of records with enduring value. The Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA) will be hosting and participating in a number of activities showcasing historical topics of interest and the value of archival records.

Wednesday, October 14th, Brian Lindner will be giving a talk on the history of the Camel's Hump bomber crash of 1944. The presentation will begin at 6:00 pm and will be accompanied by an old-fashioned slideshow and actual wreckage from the crash site. Come early, between 5:00 and 6:00 pm, for behind-the-scenes tours of the State Archives' vaults.



Camel's Hump looms in the distance.
[courtesy of VSARA, series A-078]

Just in time for Halloween, VSARA will be presenting "Governing the Supernatural: The State of Vermont takes on Spiritualists, Mediums, and the Uncanny".

The exhibit, curated by VSARA archivists,

will be available for view between 5:00 and 6:00 pm, along with tours of the State Archives' vaults. At 6:00 pm, researcher Jason Smiley will give speak on the Eddy Family, Vermont's own spirit mediums. The family became world-renowned for their alleged ability to generate full-bodied spirit materializations of the departed. Mr. Smiley has been researching the Eddy family for several years, and his presentation makes use of a variety of historic records.

These programs provide an opportunity for people to get a glimpse of the wide range of research that is possible using archival records. VSARA's holdings help to illuminate an unusual and tragic air disaster, a prominent and mysterious Vermont family, and the actions of a series of notorious early Vermont criminals. But these stories are just the tip of the iceberg – the State Archives vaults are always available to researchers interested in delving into Vermont's history for themselves.

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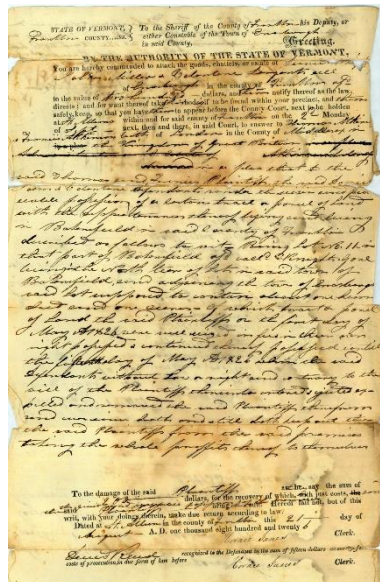
Thirty Years as an Archivist

The Center for Research on Vermont, part of the University of Vermont, recently completed a short video spotlighting an interview with Gregory Sanford and his thirty years' experience as the former State Archivist of Vermont. The interview not only sheds light on Gregory's

impressive career, but eloquently explains why archivists do what they do. The video can be accessed through the Center's website, under Vermont Stories: http://www.uvm.edu/~crvt/?Page=video.html&SM=video_submenu.html

Court Records at the Vermont State Archives

In 2011, the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration was awarded a grant from the National



Atkinsons vs. Wright, Miller, & Sergents, 1826 [courtesy of VSARA, series FRCC-003]

Historical Publications and Records Commission to preserve and provide access to archival court records. Since the end of the project in 2014, VSARA has built upon its success by continuing to acquire court records and make the available for research.

This past August, VSARA acquired several sets of court records from Orange County, including chancery records

from 1850-1883 and probate records from the Bradford and Randolph districts, spanning from 1787 to the early

20th century. They will be processed and available to researchers in the near future.

Current processing projects include probate case files from the Marlboro and Westminster districts, both in Windham County. These records are currently available for research, but will soon be better organized for easier use and access. Staff archivists are also working on processing case files from Essex County, up to 1945.

Recently completed projects include case files from Addison County Court (1788-1960), Addison Chancery Court (1800-1951), Addison Supreme Court (1871-1949), Essex Chancery Court (1840-1962), Essex Supreme Court (1815-1970), and Essex Probate District record books (1791-1855). These records have been fully processed and are available for research.

Court records offer a wealth of information. They document the lives and experiences of a diverse cross-section of society. Courts are forums in which individuals assert their rights, defend their actions, and argue their interests. The resulting interplay provides important insights about the people, their society, and their values at particular times and places in American history.

VSARA Website Highlights

This summer, July 1st marked the fifteenth anniversary of the date Vermont's Civil Union law went into effect. The anniversary arrived shortly on the heels of this year's Supreme Court decision effectively legalizing gay marriage in all of the fifty states. To read more about the history of and to see a selection of records related to civil unions and the legalization of gay marriage in Vermont, visit our website: <https://www.sec.state.vt.us/archives-records/state-archives/exhibits/spotlight-on-records.aspx>.

In addition to the governors' inaugural and farewell addresses on our website, we have recently added a selection of budget messages and state of the state addresses. Governors delivered budget messages separate from inaugurals starting in 1941, and budget messages have been presented nearly every legislative session since. State of the state addresses began in 1970, shortly after the General Assembly began regularly

meeting for an adjourned session each biennium. These addresses have been delivered each adjourned session, at the midpoint of the gubernatorial term.



Message in support of civil unions sent to Governor Dean [courtesy of VSARA, series A-187]

To view these addresses, visit our website: <https://www.sec.state.vt.us/archives-records/state-archives/government-history/governors-addresses/budget-state-of-state-addresses.aspx>. At this time, these addresses have not been transcribed and are not searchable.

Upcoming Events

Archives Month Open Houses—October 14 & 28, 5 pm

Join us in October for two open houses celebrating American Archives Month! Exhibits, lectures, and behind-the-scenes tours of the State Archives' vaults help to celebrate and promote the use and value of archival records. For more information, see the feature on [page 1](#).

Vermont's Artistic Criminals Lecture – Saturday, October 10, 2 pm

Counterfeiting and forgery were among the first organized crimes in America. VSARA archivist Mariessa Dobrick researched legislative records, court records, correspondence, investigation files, and prison records to tell the stories of these artistic criminals and their crimes. The lecture will be held at the Vermont Historical Society History Center in Barre on Saturday, October 10 at 2:00 PM. For more information on counterfeiting and forgery in Vermont, please visit our website: <https://www.sec.state.vt.us/archives-records/state-archives/exhibits/spotlight-on-records.aspx>

Vermont History Day Teacher Workshop—October 19

Spend a day with the staff of the Vermont Historical Society and tour the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration to learn how you can make Vermont History Day a successful learning experience for your students. For more details visit: www.vermonthistory.org/historyday.

From the Vault



Few things evoke autumn like freshly picked apples. This image, part of the Department of Tourism and Marketing photograph collection (A-087) was taken for a *Vermont Life Magazine* story in September of 1958, at the Wright Orchards in Middlebury.

On This Day in History

These autumnal dates in Vermont's history take a look back at the founding documents of Vermont, historic floods, and the evolution of broadcasting in the state.

1924 (Oct. 10) – Vermont's first radio broadcast was made from Burlington by WCAX, a station at the University of Vermont. It was later purchased and changed to a television station. Its first television broadcast was thirty years after its first radio broadcast.

1927 (Nov. 4) – The end of Vermont's famous, disastrous flood. An unusually wet October and early November storms brought a deluge of rain and rising waters to Vermont's towns, causing terrible destruction.

1777 (Dec. 24) – At Vermont's second constitutional convention, Ira Allen's drafted preamble is adopted as part of the state's constitution.

Contact Us

Have research questions?

Contact the VSARA Reference Room!

1078 US Route 2, Middlesex
Montpelier, VT 05633-7701
Phone: (802) 828-2308
Fax: (802) 828-3710

Email: archives@sec.state.vt.us

Visit our website!

<http://www.sec.state.vt.us/archives-records/state-archives>