

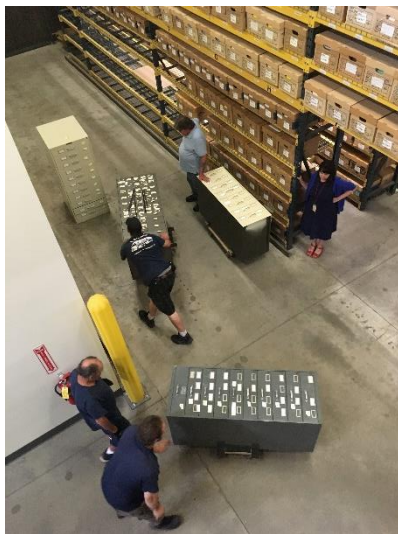
# Keeping Appraised

Newsletter of the Vermont State Archives & Records Administration

Office of the Vermont Secretary of State

## Vermont Newspapers Find New Home at VSARA

Vermont's microfilm newspaper collection has made the move from the Vermont Department of Libraries (DOL) to its new home at the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA). The collection was transferred this summer in an effort to enhance access and preservation of the publications. In the past, many researchers have traveled between VSARA's facility in Middlesex and DOL's location in Montpelier in order to access a wide range of public records and publications that address their research questions. This relocation means that researchers will now have access to newspapers that complement the



Newspaper microfilm cabinets arrive at VSARA on July 20. [Courtesy of VSARA staff]

public records available in VSARA's holdings in one location. This proximity will improve access for the public, provide a greater depth of potential for researchers, and foster a deeper awareness and appreciation of Vermont's historical record.

Newspapers can be a treasure trove for all types of research, and many inquiries begin with something spotted in a newspaper. There is an abundance of information for genealogists and family historians such as birth and death announcements, marriage announcements, legal notices around estates or court proceedings, military recruitment lists, organizational lists, and even local interest updates about who's visiting who. Court case coverage or estate notices can lead a researcher to the

many types of court records available in the Vermont State Archives. VSARA has civil, criminal, and probate court records for most Vermont counties up to about 1945. Vital announcements can give a genealogist clues that can be verified by the original vital records in the state registry. Other historians can find in-the-moment coverage of historical events, insight into cultural attitudes, and so much more – even newspaper advertisements can provide clues into the social and economic mores of the time. Business advertisements can be integrated with corporation and business records filed with the Secretary of State.

This is the most complete collection of Vermont newspapers on microfilm, dating from the 1780s to the present. VSARA is making arrangements for the digitization of all titles prior to 1923, which are in the public domain, and is investigating options for digitizing later issues. Currently, several titles are available online through the efforts of the Vermont Digital Newspaper Project. The titles are accessible on [Chronicling America](#) and span the years of 1836 -1922.

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Front page of the second issue of the *Vermont Daily Transcript*, 1868. [Courtesy of VSARA, series LIB-001]

## Vermont Welcomes Historical Records Program Coordinator



Historical Records Program Coordinator, Rachel Onuf. [Courtesy of VSARA staff]

This May, the Vermont State Historical Records Advisory Board (VHRAB) began a new initiative to improve public access to and engagement with Vermont historical records, and to encourage collaboration among Vermont historical records repositories.

The Vermont Historical Records Program is led by coordinator Rachel Onuf, who has previously worked as the Roving Archivist for Massachusetts. Rachel's

experience and VHRAB's guidance will help the program to achieve its goals of ensuring communication between repositories and information professionals, facilitating the processing of Vermont's historical records in a manner consistent with archival principles, increasing participation in historical records programming and outreach initiatives, and developing a technical assistance program for repositories. The program will focus on preparing a website and other materials to deliver information about Vermont historical records, offering workshops and training sessions, conducting site visits, and working with educators to develop curriculum based on primary sources.

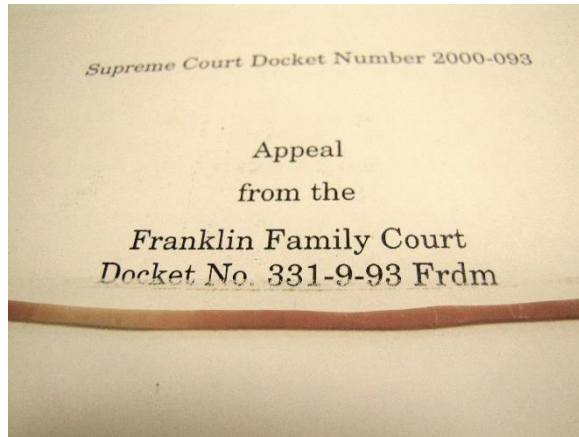
If you have any questions, ideas, or interest in the Vermont Historical Records Program, you can contact coordinator Rachel Onuf at 802-828-2204 or at [rachel.onuf@sec.state.vt.us](mailto:rachel.onuf@sec.state.vt.us).

## Records Beware: The Aging Rubber Band

Rubber bands are a seemingly innocuous way of bundling records together, but in actuality rubber bands and other elastics can be very damaging. If stored in the wrong conditions, particularly high heat, bands can deteriorate, blacken, and brittle, leaving stains and residue on the records.

The best practice is to remove bands before putting documents into long-term storage. However, there are steps you can take to mitigate the damage done if the bands have begun to decay. A band should be cut and lifted off the records, never pulled over the ends of documents as they could tear the edges of the pages. Some dried bands are so brittle that they can be brushed right off the paper. But if the band has adhered to the page, it should be gently scraped off with a micro-spatula, taking care to not tear the paper.

Related documents can still be kept together by grouping documents together within acid-free folders or polyester sleeves. For tutorials, diagrams, and other helpful information on the removal of fasteners from historic documents, please see Preservation Leaflet 7.8 from the



A rubber band caused damage to the text of this record. [Courtesy of VSARA staff]

Northeast Document Conservation Center: <https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/7.-conservation-procedures/7.8-removal-of-damaging-fasteners-from-historic-documents>.

## Upcoming Events at VSARA

### October is 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 is hosting and taking part in several events to celebrate.

#### **VSARA Open Houses**

Open houses offer the chance to view historic records, tour the State Archives' vaults, and hear stories straight out of the archives. This year features two lectures exploring current topics in an historic context. Doors open at 5 PM for exhibits and behind the scenes tours, and lectures follow at 6 PM.

**Tuesday Oct. 3—"The Archival Mirror: Reflections on Race and Ethnicity in Vermont" with former State Archivist, Gregory Sanford**

**Wednesday Oct. 11—"Lawyers, Opium and Rails: Exploring Vermont's Early Courts, Drug Abuse, and Railroads" with author Gary Shattuck**

#### **Vermont Historical Records Advisory Board Events**

The Vermont Historical Records Advisory Board (VHRAB) coordinates grants and programs to support Vermont's archival institutions. The board is sponsoring several lectures around the state this year:

**Wednesday Oct. 18 – "1964: A Watershed Year in Vermont Political and Cultural History" with Deborah Lee Luskin. Vermont History Center, Barre, 6:30 PM.**

**Wednesday Oct. 25—"The Cultural Transformation of Vermont in the 1930's" with Dona Brown. UVM Special Collections, Burlington, 5:30 PM.**

#### **Live Twitter Events**

##### **Wednesday, Oct. 4 – Ask an Archivist Day**

Have questions about records? Curious about what archivists do all day? Take this opportunity to engage with your friendly local archivists! We will answer your questions throughout the day, just use the tag #AskAnArchivist or #AskAVTArchivist.

##### **Tuesday, Oct. 10 – Electronic Records Day**

Electronic Records Day is observed every year on 10/10 to promote awareness about the important role electronic records play in our world. Follow us on Twitter all day as we celebrate with tips and facts.

## On This Day in History

These dates remember significant moments in Vermont's governmental history, including flags, constitutions, and birthdays!

**1933 (Sep. 28)** – Madeline Kunin, Vermont's first woman governor, is born on this date in Switzerland.

**1790 (Oct. 22)** – The Vermont General Assembly calls a convention to deliberate on whether the state should ratify the United States Constitution and join the Union. Vermont would become the 14<sup>th</sup> state five months later.

**1862 (Nov. 25)** – A legislative act is passed establishing the state coat of arms and state seal. The state flag in its current state would not be adopted until 1923.

## 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](mailto:archives@sec.state.vt.us)

#### **Visit our website!**

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

**Find us on Twitter:** [@VTStateArchives](https://twitter.com/VTStateArchives)