

Keeping Appraised

Newsletter of the Vermont State Archives & Records Administration

Office of the Vermont Secretary of State

On the Record: VSARA's Favorite Things

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The Vermont State Archives & Records Administration (VSARA) will celebrate our 10th anniversary from 5 PM to 7 PM on Thursday June 21 as part of an event entitled *Off the Record*. The event will be hosted by State Archivist Emeritus Gregory Sanford and State Archivist Tanya Marshall and will allow for an opportunity to casually share recollections of VSARA's creation. While much has changed in the past 10 years—VSARA now operates state-of-the-art facilities, has a firmly established statewide records and information management program for local and state records, routinely accessions born-digital archival records, and has diversified its services—its mission remains the same: to provide, protect, promote, and preserve Vermont public records.

As part of the event, a slideshow presentation, *On the Record: VSARA's Favorite Things* will be curated by Archivist Mariessa Dobrick. The slideshow will highlight a favorite record from each staff member. Together, VSARA employees have chosen a wide variety of records to share, including the state seal counter, court records,

resolutions, correspondence, photographs, proclamations, and more.

Records may have a personal connection. For example, Administrative Services Coordinator Nancie Austin-Bradley chose the 1961 Joint House Resolution declaring Robert Frost the Poet Laureate of Vermont because she had the honor of meeting the distinguished poet when she was six years old.

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Many staff members found selecting a single favorite record very difficult. State Archivist Emeritus Gregory Sanford reserved the right to change his mind before settling on the Vermont Rural Policy Committee's social security program for rural Vermont in 1944. He has previously reported on this set of records in a [November 2009 *Voices from the Vault*](#): "The report is not only remarkable in the scope of its recommendations but also offers insights into archival management and archives-based research."

Senior RIM Specialist Megan Wheaton-Book chose the collection of photographs taken by a former Weeks School resident. She appreciated the uplifting message that accompanied the collection—that a school that had once had so much terror and sadness became a refuge under Director Greenleaf's leadership.

The atmosphere of the event will be relaxed and improvised and there will be an open mic available to share some stories. Light refreshments will be provided. This celebration will also be open to the public. Please RSVP to sos.archives@vermont.gov. We hope to see you on June 21!

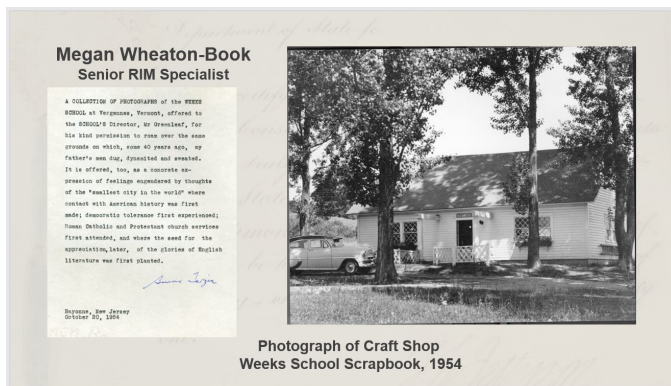


Exhibit slide showcasing Weeks School photographs, the favorite thing of Senior RIM Specialist Megan Wheaton-Book [courtesy of VSARA staff]

All Aboard: VSARA Releases Railroad Research Guide

Railroads shaped America, and in Vermont, we still see the evidence of the rise and fall of the rail industry in our culture, history, and transportation systems. Railroad research can be complex, as railways existed in both the worlds of



View down the tracks of the Central Vermont Railway in St. Albans, 1966. [courtesy of VSARA, series A-082]

government regulation and private enterprise. The Vermont State Archives and Records Administration has created a [research guide](#) to help researchers navigate the railroad records held by the Vermont State Archives. From incorporation records to agency minutes, maps to legislation, in photographs and governors' correspondence, researchers have access to a wide range of archival records that contain information about the rails and shed light on the industry in the state's history. The guide looks at nearly two dozen record series that touch on all branches of government that, when put together, can tell the story of the railroad in the State of Vermont.

Vermont History Day 2018: Recipients of the Award for Outstanding Use of Primary Resources



Second-place winner, Graeffn Anderson [courtesy of VT Historical Society staff]

In April, Vermont middle and high school students come together to share their exploration into historical topics at Vermont History Day. After researching their chosen issues, students share their research through a project that can be presented in a range of creative formats. Out of 300 students, forty-nine qualified for the National History Day competition in Maryland this June.

With this year's theme of "Conflict and Compromise in History," local professionals, historians, and teachers acting as judges selected two winners for the Outstanding Use of Primary Sources award, sponsored by the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration, Office of the Vermont Secretary of State. The second place prize went to Graeffn Anderson of Black River High School Middle School for his documentary, "Eugenics in Vermont"; the winners of first place were Jaime Atchinson and Emily Plasse of

Crossett Brook Middle School for their exhibit, "Flowers vs. Guns: Protesting the Vietnam War."

History Day is a unique opportunity for students to interact deeply with history and to foster a more profound understanding. Judges are often impressed with the students' knowledge, creativity, and enthusiasm. For more information about this program, please visit the website of the [Vermont Historical Society](#).



First-place winners Jaime Atchinson and Emily Plasse [courtesy of VT Historical Society staff]

Read All About It: Vermont Residents Have Free Online Access to State Newspapers

Through a partnership with Ancestry.com and its subsidiary, Newspapers.com, the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA) has added early Vermont newspapers to Newspapers.com, and they can be researched online for free by Vermont residents. Since January of this year, millions of pages from Vermont newspapers dating from the 1700s through 1922 have been digitized and are now available online through the MyVermont.gov state portal. MyVermont.gov accounts are free and can be created by visiting <https://secure.vermont.gov/myvermont/>; see our [Newspaper Research Guide](#) for more information.

In 2008, VSARA was one of the first states to negotiate free online access for archival public records digitized in collaboration with Ancestry.com, which does not charge the State of Vermont for its imaging and indexing services. In addition to early Vermont newspapers, free online access to certain Vermont

vital records and probate records is also available to Vermont residents after logging into their

MyVermont.gov account. For non-residents, online access to digitized records is available for free through VSARA's Reference Room and both Ancestry.com and Newspapers.com offer paid subscriptions that include these Vermont records along with many others.



Sampling of Vermont newspaper titles from over the decades [courtesy of VSARA staff]

Finding Treasure: Vermont Archivists Visit Bennington Probate Court



Bennington Civil and Probate Division courthouse. [courtesy of Vermont Judiciary]

On May 7th, VSARA archivist Sally Blanchard-O'Brien and Laura LaRosa of the Court Administrator's Office met with the staff of the Bennington Probate Division.

The group spent

the day in the vaults and rooms of the old courthouse basement, sorting through old books and boxes in search of archival records. Several historic probate cases were boxed up to be transferred into the Vermont State Archives, including cases of insolvency, commitments, and estates – even the famous case of the estate of Edward H. Everett, sometimes called the “Second Battle of Bennington,” which spanned from his death in 1929 into the 1940s. The group worked on records management tasks as well, organizing

materials from more recent cases, and preparing records for storage in the State Records Center. The Records Center provides secure storage for records that must be maintained but are no longer used frequently enough to store on-site, whereas records transferred to the State Archives have enduring value and are retained permanently for Vermont's citizens. All public agencies are responsible for effectively managing their records, and VSARA staff can assist agencies in the effective management, disposition, and retention of those records.

VSARA has set up additional courthouse visits in the coming months to facilitate the transfer of other archival court records into the custody of the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration. For help researching court records in the state archives, see our [online guide](#). For records management questions, including how to schedule records for transfer to the state archives, contact VSARA's Records and Information Management Specialists at sos.rim@vermont.gov.

Upcoming Events at VSARA

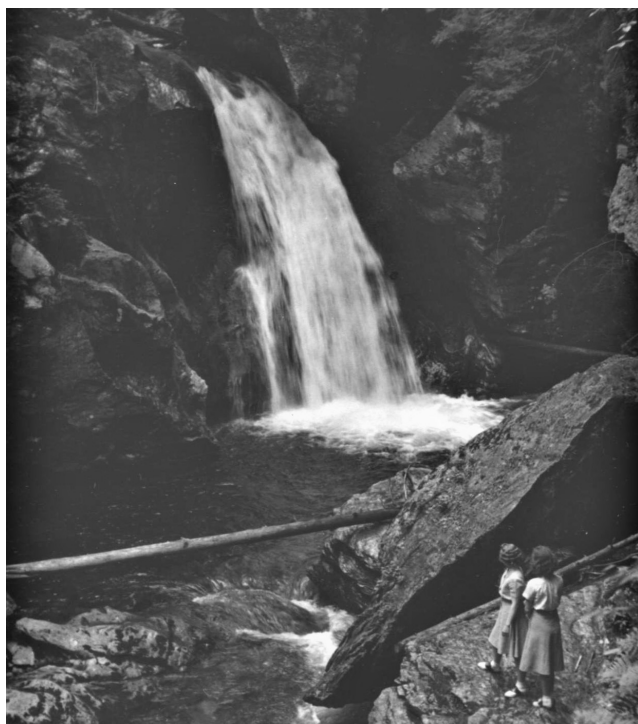
Off the Record:

10 Years of the Vermont State Archives & Records Administration

Thursday, June 21st, 5 PM

This year the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration celebrates its tenth year! Join us for discussion among friends of the Vermont State Archives & Records Administration moderated by State Archivist Emeritus Gregory Sanford. Step up to the open mic, enjoy some light refreshments, and celebrate VSARA! The event starts at 5 PM and is free and open to the public. Please RSVP to sos.archives@vermont.gov.

From the Vault



Two young women admire Bingham Falls in Stowe in the 1940s. This image was taken by Mac Derick, one of Vermont's earliest promotional photographers. He produced many images used by the state for recreational, development, and tourism purposes, including *Vermont Life* magazine. His images and many more can be found in the Department of Tourism and Marketing photographs, series [A-078](#).

On This Day in History

This issue remembers significant dates in the history of some of Vermont's most noteworthy buildings and institutions.

1996 (Jun. 18) - The St. Johnsbury Athenaeum is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Given to the citizens of St. Johnsbury in 1871 by Horace Fairbanks, the building is the town's public library, as well as America's oldest unaltered art gallery, as noted by *Time* magazine.

1926 (Jul. 26) - Robert Todd Lincoln, son of President Abraham Lincoln, dies at his summer home of Hildene in Manchester. After falling in love with Vermont during a visit to Manchester in the 1860s, he had vowed to build a summer home there, and completed it in the early 20th century.

2011 (Aug. 28) - Tropical Storm Irene hits Vermont, resulting in massive flooding and damage to the state. Vermont State Hospital is closed due to flooding, and would remain permanently so, after 120 years of operation.

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: sos.archives@vermont.gov

Visit our website!

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

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