



VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2024

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## OUR MISSION

The Vermont Historical Society engages both Vermonters and “Vermonters at heart” in the exploration of our state’s rich heritage. Our purpose is to reach a broad audience through our outstanding collections, statewide outreach, and dynamic programming. We believe that an understanding of the past changes lives and builds better communities.

## OUR VISION

Through its rich collections, dynamic programming, effective outreach, and resolute leadership, the Vermont Historical Society endeavors to preserve the past, inform the present, and promote Vermont’s shared legacy to the future.

## OUR PROMISE

*To Connect You To Vermont’s Story*



## DIRECTOR

Stephen Perkins

## NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

11 (full-time) 6 (part-time)

## GOVERNANCE

24 elected trustees

## MEMBERSHIP

1800

## FY2019 BUDGET

\$1,908,821

## ENDOWMENT

\$2,187,186

## REGION OF SERVICES

Statewide



## PROCESS

In the spring of 2018, staff and board members interviewed stakeholders (*members, donors, local societies, partners, etc.*) regarding Strengths, Opportunities, and Aspirations for the Vermont Historical Society over the next five to ten years. The content of these interviews created the thematic groupings and topics investigated through a day long planning retreat including Board, Staff, and key stakeholders representing groups statewide.

The July planning retreat built upon the strengths and opportunities identified through the stakeholder interview process and identified four areas of work that would be developed into strategic goals. These areas included: access to collections, engaging new and existing audiences, providing meaningful support to local societies, and making sure the study of Vermont history remains in our schools.

Staff and management refined the topic areas into goal statements and broad strategies with Board of Trustee approval in October of 2018. Staff with content area specialties created sub-strategies with metrics and draft workplans. The final strategic plan, presented below, was approved by the Vermont Historical Society Board of Trustees on January 25, 2019.

## Vermont Historical Society

60 Washington St. Suite 1

Barre, VT 05641

(802) 479-8500

[info@vermonthistory.org](mailto:info@vermonthistory.org)

[vermonthistory.org](http://vermonthistory.org)



## DID YOU KNOW?

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We preserve and interpret over

# 50,000

catalogued books and serials

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# 30,000

photographs, broadsides, maps, manuscripts, ephemera, films, and audio materials

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# 20,000

items in our object collection

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## STRATEGIC GOALS & SUMMARIZED STRATEGIES

**1.** Provide Vermonters and Vermonters-at-heart the resources to access Vermont's rich historical collections from anywhere in the world.

### 1.1 - Museum objects and Library holdings cataloged and made available online

#### 1.1.1. WEBSITE REDEVELOPMENT

Over two years migrate VHS website to modern platform including current branding, streamlined content delivery, and ease of navigation.

#### 1.1.2. MUSEUM OBJECTS

Inventory, assess, and catalog textile collection. Identify items for deaccession and create collecting plan to fill collection "holes."

#### 1.1.3. LIBRARY HOLDINGS

Catalog complete MSS and MSC document groupings (3070 collections) into modern OPAC. Continue to retrospectively convert book holdings at a rate of 750 per year.

### 1.2 - Scans and transcriptions of broadsides, key documents, photographs available online

#### 1.2.1. WEBSITE REDEVELOPMENT (SEE 1.1.1)

#### 1.2.2. SCANNING

Scan, describe, transcribe, and organize 100 collection items into Digital Vermont platform per year.

### 1.3 - Use Digital Vermont to assemble statewide catalog

#### 1.3.1. PLATFORM DEVELOPMENT

Select appropriate digital asset management system to run the Digital Vermont platform. Design interface to match new website (see 1.1.1). Rebuild navigation system to reflect platform goals and content.

#### 1.3.2. LOCAL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT/TRAINING

Design engagement and training materials for local societies to use Digital Vermont platform. Test materials and protocols with 20 local societies.



## DID YOU KNOW?

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Each year, we have

# 6,000

field trip visitors

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# 1,500

students utilizing history  
lending kits

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# 300

students participating in  
Vermont History Day

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**2.** We will recognize and support local history efforts; understanding that local societies are an integral part of sharing and preserving Vermont's story.

### 2.1 - Ongoing professional development

#### 2.1.1. WORKSHOP DEPLOYMENT

Undertake six-month guided listening session at local societies to determine need. Plan appropriate number and types of workshops or other training tools to deploy statewide.

#### 2.1.2. LLHSM ANNUAL MEETING DEVELOPMENT

Design the LLHSM conference to meet local societies' needs, as determined through listening sessions (see 2.1.1), for professional development, fellowship, and featuring their annual work.

### 2.2 - Vermont History App – Local History Guide

#### 2.2.1. APP DEVELOPMENT

Develop, design, and deploy an enhanced digital statewide guide to history with a focus on local society resources.

### 2.2 - Grants to Local Societies

#### 2.3.1. GRANT FUNDING AND PROCEDURES

Determine grant needs for local societies, develop application criteria, and build fund.



## DID YOU KNOW?

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Last year,

# 12,152

people visited the  
Vermont History Museum

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We have over

# 5,400

followers on Facebook

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**3.** Vermonters will increase their knowledge of our state's past and understand how their unique experience impacts and shapes this ongoing narrative. Guests will enrich their visit through deeper understanding of Vermont and its people.

### 3.1 - Programming and Special Events

#### 3.1.1. HISTORICAL LITERACY

Plan and execute statewide poll to determine interest in, and knowledge of, Vermont history. Use results to establish baseline knowledge and design program approach (both regular and targeted programming).

#### 3.1.2. DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

Continue to produce and develop podcasts, digital video, live streams, and participatory content promoting "citizen history."

#### 3.1.3. SPECIAL EVENTS

In partnership with Collections, Development, and outside organizations, organize special events around ongoing research topics, fundraising needs, and in response to special needs.

### 3.2 - Exhibits

#### 3.2.1. VHC EXHIBIT

Mount full-gallery, VHS-produced exhibit in 2020 with attendant program outreach. Assess efficacy of full-gallery exhibitions in this physical location, plan for next three years appropriately. Icons and Oddities exhibit reinstalled yearly.

#### 3.2.2. TRAVELLING EXHIBIT

Produce panelized exhibits of topics that would be of broad interest to local societies and libraries state-wide. Exhibits debut in Calder Gallery. Develop and deploy rental program.

#### 3.2.3. LOCAL GALLERY EXHIBIT

Engage local societies and small museums in mounting exhibits in the Local History Gallery, approximately two-per-year.

### 3.3 - Hours and Access

#### 3.3.1. PUBLIC HOURS

Assess use of physical resources, exhibit program, and Library program. Build staffing structure such that all public services (VHM, Leahy Library, and VHC Galleries) have identical hours.



## 4. To build resilient and connected communities, students will understand Vermont's history and its place in the broader world.

### 4.1 - Vermont History in Curriculum

#### 4.1.1. STATEWIDE NEEDS SURVEY AND PUBLICATION

Survey teachers, school librarians, and curriculum directors statewide to understand resources needed to better support the teaching of Vermont history. Pending results of the survey, develop resources to meet needs.

#### 4.1.2. HISTORY EXPLORER DIGITAL RESOURCE

In conjunction with the website redevelopment project, assess, redesign, and add content to the Vermont History Explorer Digital resource.

#### 4.1.3. CHANGING FACE OF STATE STANDARDS

Actively participate in State-led implementation of C3 Framework for Social Studies Standards by providing resources for educators and advocating for the inclusion of Vermont history in Global Citizenship curriculum. Continue to advocate for Vermont history inclusion in standards through existing NPO education advocacy groups. Develop an approach for awareness of local and state history as components of Personalized Learning Plans and Flexible Pathways in education.

### 4.2 - Outside School Opportunities

#### 4.2.1. GROW AND DEVELOP HISTORY DAY

Continue to increase interest and participation in Vermont History Day. Engage more teachers in utilizing this program as a teaching tool. Use this premier program to build awareness of Vermont history in education.

#### 4.2.1. CONNECT TO LOCAL LIBRARIES

Assess opportunities to partner with the Vermont Department of Libraries and local libraries to increase state-wide outreach focused on Vermont history education.

### 4.3 - VHS Programs for Schools

#### 4.3.1. SELF-GUIDED MUSEUM TOUR

Upon completion of Freedom & Unity exhibit upgrades, update self-guided tour program for free-of-charge school visit use.

#### 4.3.2. MUSEUM VISIT ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

Develop and deploy fee-for-service enrichment programs offered on-site at the Museum as an option in conjunction with the free tour program.

#### 4.3.3. MAINTAIN CURRICULUM LENDING KITS

Maintain and continue to update existing curriculum lending kits available for use in schools, libraries, and other educational institutions.

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