

**2024 Swanton Historical Society
Annual Report of the President and the Trustees**



Winter: During the winter we resumed an annual tradition at the Ron Kilburn Transportation Museum, “Holiday Trains”. This is always a good chance for our volunteers to open up the building to families with young children. We were open three days between Christmas and New Years and the community took advantage of our programming.

Spring: With the approaching warm weather we prepared the Depot for reopening and resuming regular hours. As the cold temperatures departed, the village proceeded with the much anticipated “Hotel Riv” demolition. The Historical Society teamed with students from MVU and used 3D cameras to electronically preserve the final condition of the building. After it came down the SHS organized a public forum where MVU students talked about receiving final tours of the interior. The “Riv” finally met its fate in April and the Historical Society was there to record the event.

Summer: The Historical Society Depot Museum was open all summer. Terry Tuck and Larry Rochon volunteered their time nearly every weekend between mid-May and late October.

Without them generously donating their time, the summer availability would not be such a success. With continued use of the Rec Trail we enjoyed another phenomenal season which brought a good number of travelers to our location on the west bank of the Missisquoi River. Heavy summer rains impacted the availability of the SHS Research and Archive Room in the basement of the library. There was enough water damage in the room to prompt a public discussion about the basement being the best place to display all of the artifacts from Swanton's History. Also, the library's interest in the space put the SHS volunteers in a difficult position. At present the SHS has been guaranteed use of the basement long term until a better home location can be investigated. Despite this situation, the Historical Society has enjoyed a bit of a youth movement over the last several months. Younger people have been increasingly fascinated with Swanton's history and graciously offered to serve on the SHS Board of Trustees. Some have filled terms of a year and departed, but their service is much appreciated. Others have become very active on the board and have expanded our volunteer hours at the Depot.

Fall: The SHS extended the summer hours through most of the fall. We are proud that the Depot and the walking bridge are such popular locations. As with all things that need to be preserved, we discovered that the old Missisquoi Bridge Toll House Building needed extensive repairs. Thanks to a generous bequest from the estates of two special brothers from Swanton, Don and Earl Taylor, funds became available for some urgent structural and cosmetic preservation. The Historical Society employed Steve and Sam Wunsch whose work maintained the historic accuracy of the structure and preserved it for future use. The Historical Society also hosted a series of talks by Fred Wiseman on Abenaki history, Native history, and model trains.

Officers: President, Jason Barney
Vice-President & Treasurer, Glen Gurwit
Secretary & Trustee, Mike Barkyoumb

Trustees: Caleb Ladieu (1st Term, ending in 2024)
Nick Brosseau (1st Term, ending in 2024)
Zoe Brosky (1st Term, ending in 2024)
Mike Barkyoumb (1st Term, ending 2025)
Heather Lavoie (1st Term, ending in 2025)
Cody Hemenway (1st Term, ending in 2025)
Bruce Spaulding (2nd Term, ending in 2026)
Mason Landry (1st Term, ending in 2026)
Rich Kelley (3rd Term, ending in 2026)
Ron Kilburn (Lifetime Trustee)
Jahnessa Ryea (Member at Large)

Curator/Membership Chair: Open

Volunteer Opportunities: If you are interested in volunteering with the Swanton Historical Society, please contact Jason Barney at Jason.Barney@mvsdschools.org

Once again we would like to thank Frances Hopkins for all of her hard work. Aside from Terry Tuck and Larry Rochon at the Depot, Fran is our primary volunteer. Much of our collection of ephemera and artifacts in the Research and Archive Room has been organized by her. She does exceptional work for the SHS.

Community Resources: The Ron F. Kilburn Transportation Museum hosts the Railroad Depot, the Missisquoi Bay Bridge Toll House, and the popular Walking Bridge across the Missisquoi River. It is located at 58 South River St. To request information about Swanton's history, please contact 1-802-370-4883 (Jason Barney) The Society also maintains a Research and Archive Room in the basement of the Swanton Public Library. This space is currently unavailable due to repairs on the building. Our facilities are fully accessible and open to the public by appointment. Visit our website at www.swantonhistoricalsociety.org

Swanton is a unique place. It has a long history. We have much to share and learn from each other. We welcome interested individuals to join our Society and help us preserve and appreciate this town's amazing heritage. I am proud of this area, and love the unique history of the region. I am honored to be a part of the Historical Society. We try to serve the community well and keep history alive.

Jason Barney
President