



## **Dear Stewart-Swift Research Center friends and supporters,**

We are excited to bring to you this inaugural edition of the Sheldon Museum's Stewart-Swift Research Center quarterly newsletter and to share news about our collections, activities and future projects.

Thank you for your support and interest in our fabulous archives!

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating effect on many museums and archives across the country. The Sheldon's Research Center was very fortunate to be awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) CARES grant to support its staff and to hire a project assistant, Taylor Rossini. During the last year, we have worked tirelessly, mostly remotely, to develop our new archives website to better showcase our holdings, create new research tools, continue to answer research inquiries, and to preserve our unique collections.

We are looking forward to 2021 when we will celebrate the bicentennial of the August 15, 1821 birth of Henry L. Sheldon, our Museum's founder and collector extraordinaire, through exhibits and programming (details forthcoming). We will also continue working on providing greater digital access to the Research Center's collections.

Please read below a few tidbits about the Research Center work and collections, visit our [website](#), and share your ideas and comments.

Have a safe, joyful, and healthy holiday and all the best for the New Year!

Ho! Ho! Ho!

~Eva, Taylor and Lucinda

**Eva Garcelon-Hart**, Archivist  
**Taylor Rossini**, Archives Project Assistant  
**Lucinda Cockrell**, Research Center Committee Chair



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## 2020 In a Flash

- Spring: We designed a new website to showcase our collections. Check out our extensive materials [here](#).
- June: Research Center received an NEH CARES award for the project “Archives Alive: Building Primary Source Collections During Covid-19 at the Henry Sheldon Museum, Vermont.” Read more [here](#).
- Spring/Fall: Our staff and RC Committee members published several articles based on our extraordinary collections, which you can explore [here](#).
- Summer: We mounted a long-overdue information sign and honored our benefactress, Jessica Swift (1871-1982), with a commemorative plaque on the Research Center building facade. Listen to the 1975 interview with Miss Swift about by-gone Middlebury [here](#).
- Fall/Winter: We implemented digital preservation procedures to ensure that our digital collections will be safe (thanks to a 2018 NEH Preservation Assistance Grant for Smaller Institutions.)

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## Christmases Past

Read a brief history of Christmas in lieu of our seasonal exhibit and enjoy the beautiful holiday cards from our historical ephemera collection.

[Read more](#)



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## Recent Acquisitions

- *By the Wand of Some Magician: Embracing Modernity in Mid-Nineteenth Century Vermont*; by Gary G. Shattuck, The University of Vermont, Center for Research on Vermont (2020).
- *A History of the Village of North Ferrisburgh, Vermont, 1762-2019*, by Jean Richardson, The Ferrisburgh Historical Society (2020).

- Family letters, deeds, insurance policies, ledgers, photographs and other materials related to the Nash, Jewett and Swett families.
- Ephemera found recently in the ceiling of a house on South Street in Middlebury, including the artistic wallpaper advertisement here.



- Theatre Programs: *Middlebury Campus*, *Bristol Colonial Theatre*, and *Vergennes Theatre*, 1950-1955.

- Correspondence of the Stewart, Swift, Allen, and other local families, 1850s - 1940s.
- Joseph Battell's death certificate issued by District of Columbia, August 7, 2015.
- Swift–Stewart–Battell Music Collection. This unique collection consists of 574 pieces of original and published music from Jessica Stewart Swift, Emma Battell, Philip Battell, and their families dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> through early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## Collections Care and Preservation

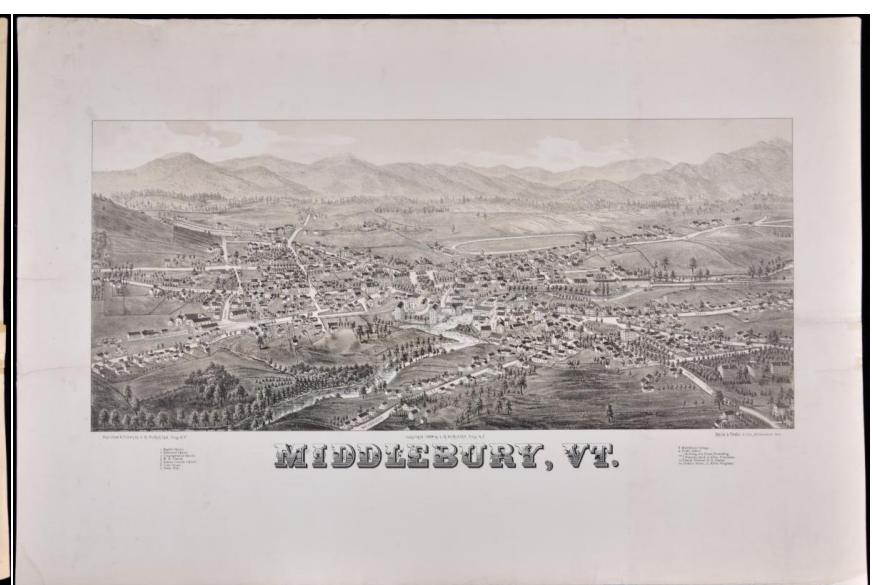
We installed a state-of-the-art environmental control system in the main Research Center archival storage area replacing the outdated and insufficient system – our unique and rare collections are safe now!

Conserved/Restored:

- *United States Hotel, Larrabee's Point, VT*, 1861 - steel engraving.
- *A Chart of Daniel's Visions*, William Miller, 1843 - hand-colored lithograph.
- Joseph Battell, c. 1890 - photographic portrait (cristoleum).
- 24 baseball posters, c. 1880s-1910.
- *Middlebury, VT*, L.R. Burleigh, 1886 - bird's-eye view lithograph (two copies).



Before



After

## Anecdotes from the Archives

**IMPORTANT DISCOVERY BY A CLAIRVOYANT.** Dr. B. of Paris, is a gallant practitioner, cultivating with equal success the art of healing and pleasing—which caused one of his friends to say that he was possessed of the love of science and the science of love. A while since the doctor was called to administer his potions to a sempstress, when he discovered that she was of a neuolymphatic temperament, that is to say, particularly susceptible of magnetic influences.

No later than a week since the doctor confided his young and charming wife to a sure friend, and after dinner repaired to the sempstress's domicile, when, after a few passes, he put his patient into a comfortable sleep.

Hardly had the young girl succumbed to the influence of the magnetic fluid, when the man of petitions leaned over her fading lips and covered them with kisses of fifty years ripening—then he seized with a fit of scientific ardor, he sought to study the effects of his salutation upon the somnambulist, and demanded of her in a most serious tone;

“What course have I just pursued with you?”

“Exactly what your friend is just about

to pursue with your wife,” replied the artless young girl, momentarily endowed with second sight.

The doctor did not wait to hear it repeated. Without stopping even to awake his subject, he made all speed possible for home to interrupt his friend's attention to his wife. Whether or no he arrived in time is not stated. *Boston Bee,*

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## **Thank you to the Stewart-Swift Research Center's donors and supporters!**

Your continued support will help preserve our collections, and to implement public programming and a special exhibit celebrating the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Henry Sheldon's birth and highlighting Research Center collections.

**Learn more about giving opportunities**

here

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[View in browser](#)



Henry Sheldon Museum  
of Vermont History