

# ESSEX COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE • FALL 2016

It is hard to believe that we are already into the fall season and celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a Historical Society. We have had a busy year and greeted many people at our museum. People seem to be coming from further distances. This summer we had two ladies come visiting who now live in Germany but originally native to Essex. Some visitors tell us stories of when they went to school at the White School House where we are now housed. I have heard more than once about how the bathrooms were downstairs and tags used to hang on the wall, boys and girls. They both used the same bathroom so depending on which tag was up told who was using the facility. There was a chalkboard hanging on the wall over to your right and where the office is, well there used to be a furnace although it was not used at the time. Stories like these are interesting to listen to and keep our history alive.

We are welcoming back Sue Storey as our layout person for the ECHO. Some of you may remember that Sue was the layout person for the ECHO when Dick and Lucille Allen were our editors. Thanks to Sue for agreeing to come back and work with us.

We have had several interesting programs this year.

Our September program was Bill Torrey. He kept the audience laughing with his tales of growing up in Essex. Our annual meeting speaker was Hubie Norton talking about the Drury Brick Company. Hubie has done a lot of research on the Drury family and the brickyard.

We will be continuing the tradition of our Sing-A-Long with the children and community members. We start at the Essex Elementary School and walk down to the Common where we will sing with the Chorus from Founders Memorial School and then walk back to EES for refreshments.

We would like to thank the Town of Essex for helping to fund the Harriet Farnsworth Powell Historical Museum and the Essex Community Historical Society. Also much thanks to the volunteers who kept our museum open on Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoons, we could not have been open without your help and support.

Our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration will continue in 2017 with the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Museum opening in June.

Eva C. Clough, *President*



The Newsletter of the  
Essex Community Historical Society  
Essex and Essex Junction, Vermont

P.O.Box 8388  
Essex, Vermont 05451  
[essexcommunityhistoricalsociety@myfairpoint.net](mailto:essexcommunityhistoricalsociety@myfairpoint.net)

# AFTER THE CIVIL WAR ESSEX 150 YEARS AGO – 1866

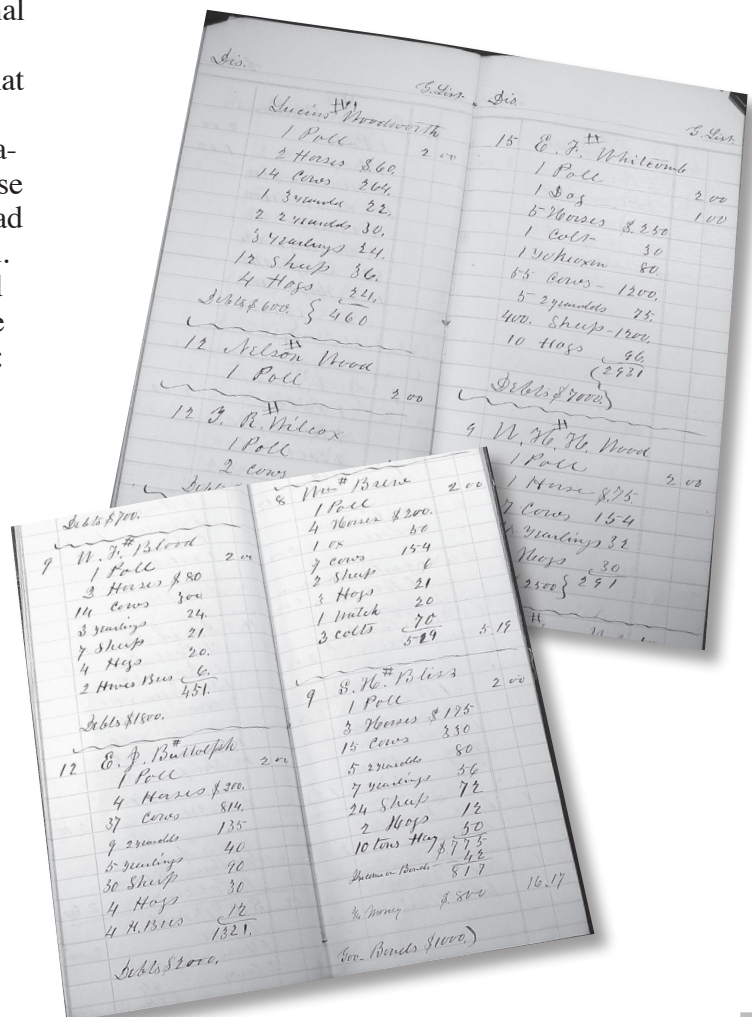
BY ALAN R. LUZZATTO

One year after the Civil War, the assassination of President Lincoln and the boys of Essex coming home things were beginning to calm down and life was returning to normal. One indication of the way things were can be found from the original ledger titled “List of Personal Property in the Town of Essex, Including Polls, April 1, 1866”. This wonderful document was discovered at the Waterbury Flea Market about 8 years ago and it has a permanent home with the Essex Community Historical Society. It provides an insight into the times of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Vermont as well as the residents of Essex after the Civil War.

This ledger lists every head of household in the Town as well as a listing of all of the personal property that they owned. The purpose of this was to determine one’s net personal worth so that the State of Vermont could tax it at 1 percent. There were three listers; A.B. Hurlbert, R.H. Davies and H.A. Castle who likely went from house to house and store to store to interview each head of the household to determine what they owned. The items that were considered for taxation and numbers reported during this year as well as the range of values placed upon each of them were:

- 78 Colt Horses - \$25-35**
- 1604 Cows - \$20-22**
- 354 Yearling Horses - \$6-8**
- 278 2 Year Old Horses - \$15**
- 434 Horses - \$40-100**
- 2806 Sheep - \$3-5**
- 60 Oxen - \$83-150**
- 351 Hogs - \$7-12**
- 110 Bee Hives - \$3**
- Government Bonds - \$16,700**
- Cash On Hand**
- Watches - \$10-50**
- Stores – Inventory on Hand**
- Hay - \$5 per Ton**
- Swarm of Bees - \$.60**
- 5 Merino Sheep - \$100**
- New/Improved Building – Varied**
- Carriage/Coach - \$75-100**

The items listed above were added up and matched against what the Head of the Household stated were his/her total indebtedness. If there was a positive value after the debts were subtracted the amount was multiplied by 1% (Bonds and cash were first discounted by 25-33%) and that became a part of what would be owed to the State. Also included in this Personal Tax ledger was the mandatory Poll Tax of \$2 that was owed by every male over the age of 21, as it was a prerequisite for voting and a mandatory tax of \$1 for every dog owned by the head of household. The Poll Tax was discontinued as a result of the 24th Amendment to the Constitution in 1964.





The total amount of Personal Property that was tabulated amounted to \$146,820, the total of debts \$74,616, for a net value of \$72,204. There was \$824 (412 adult males) in Poll Taxes collected and \$82 in taxes collected on dogs. Overall there were 432 households enumerated in this ledger. In 1860 the population of Essex was 1,906 and in 1870, 2,022 based upon the U.S. Census, so the approximate population of Essex in 1866 was about 1,950. Note the number in the far left column of each of the households. It is the number that corresponds to the school district that the household was in. In 1866 there were 15 different school districts in the Town of Essex.

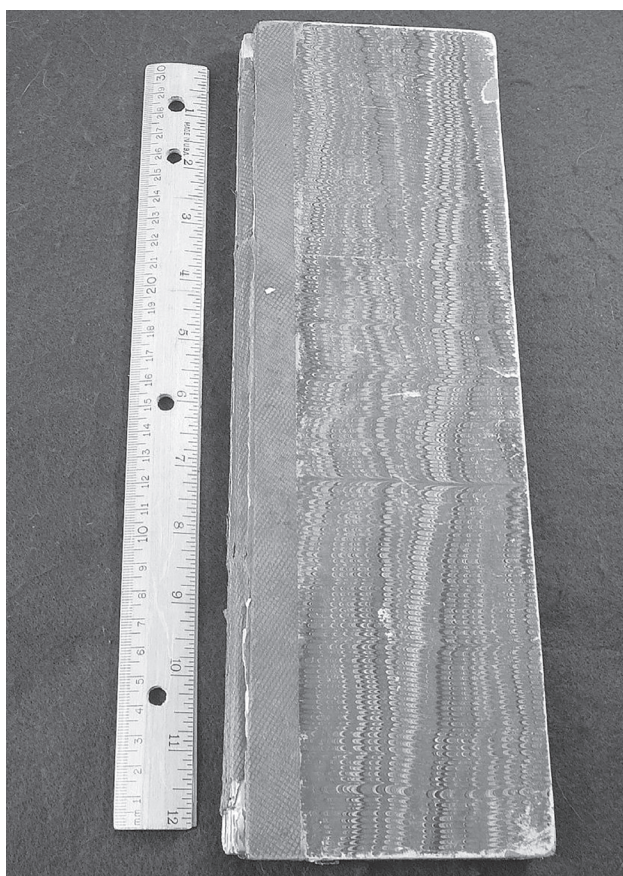
It is interesting to note that the great majority of households declared that they were in debt and owed nothing more than their Poll Tax or that they had a dog and owed \$1. Very few watches were noted (values up to \$100 each!) as well as

a limited number of dogs per household. Only 4-5 businesses could be determined from the ledger's descriptions, but I suspect that there were probably more. Just 3 farmers were taxed on their hay and there were several sheep ranches and the largest was E.F. Whitcomb with a herd of 400 head.

So it appears that the Essex Personal Property Tax amounted to \$722 in 1866, for an average payment by Essex taxpayers of just 37 cents each. I do not have information as to real property town

taxes that may have been collected for this year, but just to put this tax payment into perspective, the amount of tax monies that were collected for "Bounties" (payments made to citizens of the town as an incentive to enroll as a soldier during the Civil War) amounted to \$37,567, or about \$100 per taxpayer (\$20. Per year) per L.C. Butler's

accounting in *The Memorial Record of Essex, Vermont, 1866*.



<p>1 Samuel Taylor</p> <p>1 Poll 2.00</p> <p>2 Horses - \$100.</p> <p>4 Cattle 275.</p> <p>3 Yoke Oxen 400.</p> <p>1 Yoke Steer 100.</p> <p>10 Cows 220.</p> <p>6 2 year olds 90.</p> <p>6 Yearlings 48.</p> <p>43 Sheep 129.</p> <p>1 Hog 12.</p> <p>Subts \$1400.</p>	<p>2 2 year olds 90.</p> <p>4 Sheep 12.</p> <p>Subts \$500.</p>
<p>5 Wm. A. Tracy</p> <p>1 Poll 2.00</p> <p>1 Dog 1.00</p> <p>1 Horse \$75.</p> <p>6 Yoke Oxen 800.</p> <p>1 Yoke Steer 400.</p> <p>8 Cows 176.</p> <p>4 2 year olds 84.</p> <p>1 Yearling 8.</p> <p>70 Sheep 210.</p> <p>10 Hogs 90.</p> <p>150 Lbs Hay 750.</p> <p>Subts \$3000.</p>	<p>2 John Taylor &amp; Wife</p> <p>1 Poll 2.00</p> <p>1 Dog 1.00</p> <p>1 Horse \$50.</p> <p>1 Cow 22.</p> <p>4 Yearlings 32.</p> <p>Subts \$300.</p>
	<p>2 J. W. Tracy</p> <p>1 Poll 2.00</p>
	<p>Mrs. S. M. Tracy</p> <p>2 Horses \$150.</p> <p>7 Cows 154.</p> <p>3 Hogs 18.</p> <p>1/2 Money 100.</p> <p>Subts \$100.</p>



# ECHS OUTREACH TO ESSEX JUNCTION ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

By ALAN R. LUZZATTO



She grew up in Essex, is a local substitute teacher and loves our local history; Laurie Jordan, a long time ECHS member, was a perfect representative to share our village history with the second grade youngsters from Hiawatha School in Essex Jct. I tagged along as her assistant for a fun and interesting program.

This was the third year that Laurie arranged to meet and give walking tours to the children in the late spring. We met three groups from Chrissy Hultgren, Kim McVey and Mary Beth Funtow's classes on separate days at the Tarbox House at the corner of Park and South Streets. Claude Johnson, who grew up and lived in that house for over 70 years, was there to meet us. He shared some of his recollections of growing up in Essex Junction during his lifetime and included stories of his ancestors.

We then traveled north on Park Street towards the "Five Corners" and as we went along Laurie pointed out what to look for in an old building, noted the many businesses that were once in the center of town as well as the configuration of the "Five Corners" years ago. She did this via personal memories, historical comments of others such as

Harriet Powell and numerous pictures taken years ago that had been enlarged so that the children could see them easily. Family names such as Drury, Robinson, Teachout, Johnson, Stevens and Yandow were mentioned and their importance to the village noted.

We crossed the "Five Corners" and continued up Lincoln Street to pause by the Brownell Library and Lincoln Hall and took a right at Lincoln Lane to Railroad Avenue. We had the children sit at a grouping of park benches and Laurie continued with her village history, the Brownell Block, the corn canning factory and the importance of the trains to the development of the area. Laurie ended her program by relating how Essex Junction was named. In the early years train conductors would announce the next stop as "junction at Essex, junction at Essex". The idea caught on and our village became known as Essex Junction.

Our tour lasted a little more than an hour and both the children and the adults came away from this experience with a better understanding of the foundations and appearances of the village from its inception.





# THESE ARE THE FIRST MINUTES OF THE ECHS FROM 25 YEARS AGO...

## ESSEX COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

First Meeting--June 26, 1991

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### SUMMARY:

This occasion brought together twenty-three people interested in starting an active historical society for the entire Essex Community. Pat Schiedel, Essex Town Manager spoke on the status of the former White Schoolhouse, Don Vickers and Faye Soderburg spoke on the acquisitions from the Harriet Powell's estate and Dawn Andrews of Morrisville, spoke on the "how-to's and pitfalls" of historical societies she has known.

At the end of the evening, five committees and a steering committee were formed to lay the ground work for the historical society and museum.

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### WHITE SCHOOL:

The Essex Selectboard accepted ownership of the former White Schoolhouse building from the School Board by a 4 to 1 vote. They as a board, are interested in approving future renovation plans and will review plans for the museum's management.

### ACQUISITIONS:

Ron Clapp, Don Vickers and Faye Soderberg were able to acquire an outstanding amount of realia and artifacts for inclusion in the future museum. The monies (\$1500) which went unspent were turned over to Pat Schiedel by Don Vickers to be used at a later time for museum needs. All items are currently being stored in Essex Junction at a storage site.

### ORGANIZATION:

Dawn Andrews almost overwhelmed the group with the magnitude of the tasks at hand and the potential glitches which might lurk ahead. Her comments were most helpful and informative and inspired everyone to forge on. As a result, an Advisory Board was formed with representatives from each of the following five committees:

#### COLLECTION

Bonnie Clapp  
Camille Vickers  
Carol Ann Gregg  
Mary Tewarson

#### PROGRAMS

Jon Pringle  
Susan Overfield  
Penny Pillsbury  
Mary Tewarson

#### BYLAWS

Ann Harroun  
Faye Soderberg

#### MEMBERSHIP/FUNDRAISING

Kathy and Roger Dodge  
Jody Landon  
Mary Lou Marcussen

#### BUILDING

Don Vickers  
Dave Cough  
Harry Landon  
Ron Clapp

#### ADVISORY BOARD

Ann Harroun  
Harry Landon  
Jon Pringle  
Roger Dodge  
Camille Vickers  
Ron Clapp  
Susan Overfield, Recording Secretary

Names, addresses and phone numbers were taken from those attending so that they indeed might be considered as "Charter Members". The group agree to register with the Vermont Historical Society the name "Essex Community Historical Society."

The advisory committee will meet during the summer to lay the ground work for an early fall meeting open to everyone in the community who may wish to become involved.

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### ACTION TAKEN SINCE MEETING:

1. Membership dues paid to the Vermont Historical Society
2. Information requested and received from the Secretary of State's office concerning tax-exempt status and incorporation.
3. Memo sent to Selectboard regarding outcome of meeting

# THESE ARE THE FIRST MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

## ESSEX COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY Minutes of 10/1/91 Meeting

A bell originally from the Essex Classical Institute rang to herald the first meeting of the Essex Community Historical Society which was called to order at 7:30 p.m. at the Essex Elementary School. Moderator Don Vickers gave a brief overview of the Essex Classical Institute and a profile of the late Harriet Powell who was the driving force behind the newly formed Essex Community Historical Society. He noted that items from her estate would provide a nucleus for local memorabilia to be housed at the newly acquired White School which will be the Essex Community Museum. He also thanked Boy Scout Troop #676 for ringing the Classical Institute bell and Girl Scout Troop #378 for serving the refreshments.

Harry Landon presented a history of the Essex Community Bicentennial Committee formed in August of 1989 and explained its goal of an Essex Community Historical Society and turning the White School into a museum.

Ann Harroun presented the bylaws to the attendees and a motion was made to accept them as presented, seconded and so voted. She noted that copies are available at both Essex Town and Brownell Libraries.

Harry Landon presented the slate of officers and Board of Directors to the attendees and a motion was made to accept the slate as presented, seconded and so voted. The officers and Board of Directors are as follows:

President	Carole Ann Greig ✓	1 year term
Vice President	Harry Landon <sup>WVS</sup>	2 year term
Treasurer	George Ron Clapp ✓	3 year term
Secretary	Diane Scheidel	1 year term

### Board of Directors:

Nancy Bartlett ✓	2 year term
Cathy Dodge ✓	3 year term
Susan Overfield ✓	1 year term
Jon Pringle ✓	2 year term
Faye Soderberg ✓	3 year term
Camille Vickers	1 year term
Kathryn (Tommy) Whitcomb ✓	2 year term

Keynote speaker was Michael Sherman, Executive Director of the Vermont Historical Society who gave an overview of the State Historical Society which was founded in 1838. He noted that the Essex Community Historical Society was the 141st one formed in the state.

President Carole Ann Greig noted that the "spirit of this night is shared with Harriet Powell" and made a motion that the White School shall from this day forward be the "Harriet Farnsworth Powell Historical Museum". The motion was seconded and so voted. She also announced that the second annual meeting of the Essex Community Historical Society will be held on 10/1/92.

Camille Vickers spoke on the collection for the museum presently in storage and asked for loans and donations of additional items of area interest.

Ron Clapp noted that the museum is legally in the hands of the Town of Essex and that the goal is to have the museum functioning in the Spring of 1992.

He also stated that there has been some interest in the old railroad building off Towers Road and the one room schoolhouse on Chapin Rd. He also announced that the second annual meeting will be at a site to be determined in Essex Junction.

In closing, President Greig presented the following goals:

1. There will be a directors meeting in the museum before the bicentennial year is concluded.
2. A public meeting will be held in the museum in 1992.
3. Membership to be doubled in one year.
4. The Historical Society will weave a tapestry of past, present and future.

Moderator Don Vickers adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m. and invited attendees to enjoy refreshments, presented a door prize and requested members sign up for committees.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dee Scheidel



## THE 2016 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ESSEX COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Essex Community Historical Society Charter members.

Standing left to right: Sherry Norton, Bobbi Mudgett-Russell, Hubie Norton, Lucille Allen, Linda Bogardus, Faye Soderberg and Jody Landon. Sitting left to right: Barb Chapin, Jerry Fox and Bonnie Clapp. Left: Kathy Dodge, missing from the group photo.





# THE 2016 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ESSEX COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY





# ESSEX COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

October 2015 - September 2016

<b>REVENUE</b>				<b>ACCOUNT BALANCES 9/30/16</b>	
Dues	510.00			General Accounts	
Book sales	180.00			Checking	828.11
Mug Sales	40.00			Savings	647.71
Contributions	199.00			Town of Essex	1093.02
Town of Essex FY16 Budget**	1500.00			Restricted Accounts	
Town of Essex 25th Anniversary**	1000.00			CD -- TD Bank	4609.13
Tales and Treasures	1351.00			Tales and Treasures	0.00
Stevens Gravestone Restoration Fund	1600.16			25th anniversary	649.39
Interest income	12.37			Ron Clapp Memorial Fund	2513.50
Annual Fund Drive	370.00			Stevens Gravestone Restoration	3935.51
1805 Schoolhouse	50.00			1805 Schoolhouse Fund	577.00
Other				<b>Total Cash on Hand</b>	<b>14853.37</b>
Purple Hearts Reunited	138.00				
Central Vt RR Historical Society	55.00				
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>7005.53</b>				
<b>EXPENSE</b>					
Echo Newsletter	1443.05				
Postage	6.10				
Vermont Historical Society Dues	50.00				
25th Anniversary	350.61				
History Expo	83.00				
Sing-a-long	268.44				
Office supplies	87.68				
Collection	152.18				
Exhibits	184.42				
Grounds/Gardens	50.80				
Insurance	515.00				
Tales and Treasures	1453.86				
Secretary of State filing	50.00				
Advertising					
Other-- Arcadia (books)	263.08				
Purple Hearts Reunited	200.00				
Lincoln Hall Banner	123.00				
Website	74.70				
Front Porch Forum	50.00				
Stevens Gravestone	100.00				
Central Vt RR Historical Society	55.00				
Vt Trophy and Engraving	143.00				
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>5158.22</b>				
<b>**Bills submitted to Town for payment/ECHS does not have control over these funds</b>					



# THANK YOU

## TO OUR TALES AND TREASURES SPONSORS

TD Bank  
Ft Ethan Allen Industrial Park  
Paula DeMichele  
Full Circle Gardens  
Phoenix Books  
Sam's Scoop Shop  
Hannafords  
West Meadow Farm Gluten Free Bakery  
Ann Gray

## TO OUR TALES AND TREASURES SPEAKERS

Devin Colman  
Jerry Fox  
Hubie Norton  
Bill Torrey  
Green Mountain Gator Boys

## FOR DONATIONS TO THE ABRAM STEVENS' GRAVESTONE RESTORATION

American Legion Post 91  
The Patrick Foundation  
Town of Essex  
Anonymous Donor  
Rotary Club Charities of Essex, Inc.

## TO OUR WEB MASTER

Chuck Willard

AND, LAST, BUT NOT LEAST, TO OUR VOLUNTEERS WHO HELPED AT FAMILY DAY, AT THE HARRIET FARNSWORTH POWELL HISTORICAL MUSEUM, AT SPRING CLEAN UP AND AT THE ECHS EXHIBIT AT VERMONT HISTORY EXPO AND THE CHAMPLAIN VALLEY FAIR

Joe and Laurie Jordan  
Bob and Polly McEwing  
Tim Jerman  
Ann Gray  
Paula DeMichele  
Eva Clough  
Barb Chapin  
Ruth Ann Beers  
Mary Willard  
Russell and Denise Groll  
Art and Jan Kilmer  
Thad and Ellen Wolosinski  
Alan Luzzatto  
Mark and Iris Banks  
Linda Bogardus  
Shelly Marshal  
Essex Center United Methodist  
Church Members  
Carol Young  
Shirley Fortier  
Beth Balon  
Gina Carrera  
Ellen Pariseau



# Essex Community Historical Society Board Members 2016

**President: Eva Clough**  
**Vice President: Thad Wolosinski**  
**Secretary: Jan Kilmer**  
**Treasurer: Ann Gray**  
**Directors:**

**Barb Chapin (2016-19)**  
**Denise Groll (2016-19)**  
**Alan Luzzatto (2016-19)**

essexcommunityhistoricalsociety@myfairpoint.net

Please take a look at your address label. The expiration date of your membership is noted. You can use the form below to update your membership.



## Essex Community Historical Society

P.O. Box 8388 Essex, Vermont 05451

### Membership Form

**Please consider becoming a member or renewing your membership at this time.**  
**Or you can pass this on to someone who would like to become a member.**

**Your dues will help us add to our collection of Essex memorabilia, maintain the museum, publish the ECHO, and sponsor historical programs.**

\_\_\_\_\_ New member

\_\_\_\_\_ Renewal of membership

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Individual membership \$10.00

\_\_\_ Family membership \$15.00

\_\_\_ Senior membership (60 and over) \$5.00

\_\_\_ Lifetime: individual, married, civil union \$100.00

**Make checks payable to the Essex Community Historical Society.**

**Thank You.**





ESSEX COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O.BOX 8388

ESSEX, VERMONT 05451



*Essex Community  
Historical Society  
presents*



*The Annual Christmas Tree Lighting and Sing-a-Long*

Friday, December 2  
at Essex Elementary School  
6:15 pm  
Join us for the tree lighting,  
sing-a-long, and cookies  
afterwards!

