



NEW HAMPSHIRE
humanities

CONNECTING PEOPLE AND IDEAS • WINTER 2025

Engage!

CROSSROADS *Change in Rural America*

Smithsonian's *Museum on Main Street* explores
change in New England communities

Inside

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FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Claremont, like many New Hampshire communities, has seen ups and downs. From the boom of industry in the 19th century to its fading in the 20th, repeated and ongoing efforts to revitalize their downtown, and – according to founding NHH director, Steve Taylor (more on Steve, page 4) – missing the chance to name their region of New Hampshire. Steve's new program, "Upper Valley? How a Newspaper War Created a Virtual State in Western New Hampshire & Eastern Vermont," examines how the *Valley News*, based in Lebanon and serving what they called "the Upper Valley," overtook Claremont's *Daily Eagle* and its coverage of the "Twin State Valley." Today, the term "Upper Valley" is widely used, while "Twin State" is rarely mentioned.

Like most communities in New Hampshire, Claremont adapts to the changes it faces, which is why I'm pleased they were the first New Hampshire community to host the exhibition *Crossroads: Change in Rural America* (see article at right). Anchoring New Hampshire's Sullivan County, the second least populated county of the state, Claremont continues to grow its community, supporting music programs and graveyard walks, repurposing its old mill buildings, and opening a new visitors center. River Valley Community Center, with its partners at the Claremont Opera House and Claremont Maker Space, brought its community together around this new exhibition to talk about the changes Claremont has seen and how the town will think about the future.

For the last 50 years, New Hampshire Humanities has been in *your* communities, exploring the big questions that bring together Granite Staters from the smallest villages to the largest (by NH standards) metropolitan areas. To kick off our work around the state for the next 50 years, we'll be tackling this question of change itself. Starting in Claremont and now moving on with the *Crossroads* exhibition stopping next in Jefferson and



Michael Haley Goldman, Executive Director

Plymouth, we'll consider themes of change and persistence, identity and place, and how change is the one sure thing that our communities have seen over the last 100 years.

Building on the exhibition, you'll find great discussions on change in our communities throughout our programming for 2025. Our *Perspectives* book groups will explore texts like *Gather* by Vermont author Kenneth M. Cadow. The novel explores issues around community, rural life, and resilience and will be available to reading groups across the state. Our *Humanities to Go* speakers bureau will highlight programs that also explore these issues, such as Plymouth State Professor Abby Goode's presentation on how different concepts of 'sustainability' have influenced our ideas about rural areas in the United States. The program, *Sustainability: An American Literary History*, is already available to libraries, historical societies, and other cultural organizations across New Hampshire. Additionally, a new program in partnership with NH Community Development Finance Authority will bring community discussions to community centers around the state.

Please join us as we ask big questions about how are communities will continue to change throughout 2025 and into the future.

Michael Haley Goldman, Executive Director
mhaleygoldman@nhhumanities.org

We welcome your feedback about New Hampshire Humanities and our work. If you'd like to share your thoughts on a program you've attended, share an idea for a program, or submit a humanities-related article for our quarterly *Engage!* newsletter, please contact us about guidelines at info@nhhumanities.org. We sincerely thank you for your support!





What does “rural America” mean?

New Hampshire & Vermont Humanities partner to bring Smithsonian exhibit to six towns

What do you think of when you hear the word “rural”? What is your connection to land, community, and place? How has your small town – or your perception of it – changed over the course of your life? Communities across New Hampshire and Vermont have been grappling with these questions for years, and now have an opportunity to explore them with a stunning traveling exhibit from the Smithsonian.

Crossroads: Change in Rural America is a collaborative effort between state humanities councils, the Smithsonian’s *Museum on Main Street* program, and local cultural institutions. New Hampshire Humanities has teamed up with Vermont Humanities to facilitate this traveling Smithsonian exhibit to six small towns across the two states over the next year. Each host town shows the exhibit for six weeks in their own space, before carefully packing it up and transporting it to the next recipient.

Designed specifically for rural settings, the *Museum on Main Street* program creates exhibits that can be efficiently assembled or disassembled by a small team within a day. These exhibits pair the high quality expected of the Smithsonian with the distinctive charm of small towns. Host sites - usually a museum, historical society, or other local institution – collaborate with partner organizations to add their own flair to the exhibit by providing additional public programming, making each visit a unique experience. Upcoming activities hosted in New Hampshire include an oral history recording project with area students, an art installation by local artisans and crafters, and an intergenerational

discussion about life in a rural college town. The first location of the Northeast tour, at the St. Albans Museum in picturesque St. Albans, Vermont, featured the exhibit nestled among historical artifacts of rural life like wooden butter churns and antique maple sugaring equipment, as well as black and white photos of St. Albans at its industrial height. What could be a more ideal setting for an exhibit that explores how we perceive, deal with, and adapt to change in rural spaces?

Each host site will have to interpret the big questions this exhibit poses through their own lens, reflecting their own distinct challenges, resources, and quirks. **“The *Crossroads* exhibition provides the opportunity for smaller towns to not only shine as hosts of this highly esteemed Smithsonian exhibit, but to highlight their own histories and community members, to tell the story of how they continue to face the changes of the last one hundred years in America,”** said Michael Haley Goldman, executive director of New Hampshire Humanities.



Crossroads: Change in Rural America not only brings national attention to the unique experiences of rural Americans but also sparks important, and sometimes challenging, conversations about our relationship with rurality. As the exhibit travels across New Hampshire and Vermont, it will offer an opportunity for reflection and dialogue. Don’t miss the chance to visit a *Crossroads* exhibit in 2025 and engage with your community about what “rural” truly means in today’s world. 🌈

TOUR DATES:

Feb. 8 – March 23, 2025 • Chandler Center for the Arts • Randolph, VT
March 29 – May 11, 2025 • Jefferson Historical Society • Jefferson, NH

May 31 - July 12, 2025 • Museum of the White Mountains • Plymouth, NH
July 19 - Aug. 31, 2025 • Old Stone House Museum • Brownington, VT

On the Shoulders of Giants: Celebrating Leadership

As we conclude New Hampshire Humanities year-long 50th anniversary, we look back on some of the leaders who played a critical role in advancing the public humanities in the Granite State.



By Dr. Kathy (Smith) Mathis, based on interviews by Marcia Schmidt Blaine, Chair, NHH Board of Directors

Steve Taylor

Executive Director (1974–1977)

In the era of The Great Society, President Johnson and his Congress created the National Endowments for the Humanities and the Arts, which ushered in a federal and state partnership meant to nurture coast-to-coast public classrooms without walls. Like many a grand and risky idea, the partnership took time to catch on, and it almost foundered in the wake of political machinations and changes in state leadership. It wasn't until the 1970s during the Nixon administration when the state programs were set free from state control, enabling the federal Endowments to fund grant programs run by a national system of nonprofits.

A key aspect of the new initiative was for each state's organizers to build its program around discussion of the most pressing public issues in the state, based on citizen concerns. In early summer 1972 the Endowment chose New Hampshire to take up the challenge. Five key people got the ball rolling: Jim Ewing, publisher of the *Keene Sentinel*; Martha Scott, a League of Women Voters activist; Nancy Deane, a UNH academic dean; Charles Wood, a Dartmouth historian; and Tom Gerber, editor of the *Concord Monitor*. This group designated Ewing to be its chair pro tem, charged with finding a staff person to organize and implement the program. Ewing called Steve Taylor, a freelance writer who was also managing a fledgling farm enterprise in Meriden Village. Taylor had

worked in daily newspapers in New Hampshire, including eight years as managing editor of one of the papers Ewing co-owned, the *Valley News* in West Lebanon, but had left the business to, as he said, "recharge his batteries."

Taylor signed on as a part-time, no-benefits, no-job-description staffer. With Ewing, Taylor set to work sketching out a strategy to sample public opinion on New Hampshire's major public issues. Ewing kept his fellow committee members informed of his and Taylor's deliberations, while a program officer at the Endowment monitored their progress. Asked years later why he got involved in such a vague and ill-defined undertaking, Taylor told an interviewer that it seemed like "an interesting challenge to get people to agree to take part in what seemed like an almost mystical enterprise."

He approached it as the newspaper reporter he once had been, organizing "listening sessions." He called on school principals, librarians, old friends in journalism, businesspeople and an array of others—some he knew, others he cold-called—to get names of people who might be willing to come to a village hall, church basement, or library and talk.

[Continue reading online at nhhumanities.org/Taylor.](http://nhhumanities.org/Taylor)



Charlie Bickford

Executive Director (1987–2001)

Pluck. Charlie Bickford had it in spades. When he asked people for money, it was as if he was doing them a favor. He always said that "people give to people," and because Charlie had become the face of the public humanities in New Hampshire, they gave. The confidence to ask, as donors to nonprofits know, stems from an irresistible product, and the life of the mind, while fairly intangible, was so fecund and alive in Charlie's mind, that he convinced others that life without literature, without history, without the study of religion, archaeology, art, and the classics was a bereft life.

Under Charlie's tutelage, the New Hampshire Humanities grew to be one of the most respected institutions in the state. His vision ran from intuiting and freeing peoples' talents to hiring staff who made the connections necessary to implement bodacious ideas that no one had thought of before.

He could pick out a winner every time. Charlie saw the promise in Ken Burns, for example, before he became a

household name. He visited with Ken six months before *The Civil War* series was out (Charlie had already helped fund *Hands to Work, Hearts of God*, Ken's documentary on the Shakers). Charlie asked if Ken would speak at the NHH annual dinner. The keynote would be Lynne Cheney, wife of Dick Cheney and executive director of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Ken would be the secondary "salad" speaker because Charlie was worried that people wouldn't show up for a little-known local filmmaker. As fate would have it, *The Civil War* series was released a few weeks before the annual dinner and, suddenly, the event sold out and 800 people were jammed into the armory at the Manchester Radisson. The NHH annual dinner became the must-attend event of the fall in New Hampshire, featuring speakers such as Desmond Tutu (on his 80th birthday), Walter Issacson, Salman Rushdie, Doris Kearns Goodwin, and many others.



Continued on p. 4, Bickford

Deborah Watrous

Executive Director (2004–2017)

It was mission-centered work that Debbie Watrous wanted, so in 1990, when a position opened for a development director at the NH Humanities Council (as it was known then), she applied. Charlie Bickford's executive office was on the second floor, but the burnished mahogany desk that he sat behind looked as if it belonged in a spacious corner office on the twelfth floor of a swanky high-rise. (When Charlie retired, he left the desk, and Debbie used it for her entire tenure when she became executive director in 2004). In the office was an elegant glass coffee table, covered with an aromatic display of food that Charlie's wife Barbara, a gourmet cook, had prepared for the interview. But Watrous was too nervous to eat – three board members were also there to grill her. The first question at the interview: "What are the humanities?" was one she had prepped for. She must have answered well, because the next day she got the job.



During Debbie's first year, Charlie and the board decided to plan an annual dinner. It was her first big gig. The date happened to be two weeks after *The Civil War* series aired on PBS. Ken Burns - who up until then was a local filmmaker

without much name recognition – had already agreed to speak at the event. Neither Charlie nor Debbie could have been more dazzled by what happened. The documentary series became a national sensation and the annual dinner sold out. The Manchester Radisson was the only event venue able to handle the 800 guests. Following the dinner, Watrous sent a fundraising letter enclosing the heartfelt Civil War missive written by Major Sullivan Ballou. In the letter, he tells his wife Sarah that he believes he will die, but that they will be reunited in the next life. The letter was found in his trunk after he was killed, never sent. Burns signed the appeal letter and the money poured in.

Watrous proved to be so talented and innovative as a fundraiser that she was soon made associate director, overseeing financial strategies and staff performance. Hers was the voice of reason, not only shepherding the organization's fundraising, but helping to manage staff egos, program design, and implementation. Like Charlie, she could encourage creativity in others because she was creative herself. There was no zero-sum game with Debbie. Everyone shared in the successes and everyone knew there were more to come. The "Council" was on a roll.

Several years and projects later, there was a shake-up in leadership. Program director Kathy Smith (now Mathis) left in 2000, after 12 years of writing successful grant awards and designing and delivering statewide projects. Charlie retired in 2001 and Watrous left to be development director at NHTI. Given all the staff changes, the organization struggled, as any organization does during a time of transition.

[Continue reading online at nhhumanities.org/Watrous.](https://nhhumanities.org/Watrous)

Bickford, continued

Charlie trusted his staff enough to let them loose to create and encourage genius in others. The result was multi-year statewide projects funded by private and federal grants that ran the gamut from the National Science Foundation to the Henry Luce Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

In the many fruitful years before lock downs and Zoom calls, NHH did something that few organizations could pull off: face-to-face meetings that brought people of diverse opinions and backgrounds together to talk about pressing issues of the day, like the history of the Second Amendment and Constitutional legal interpretations handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court. Heavy hitters came to New Hampshire (Sir Arthur Penrose, Stephen J. Gould, Daniel Dennett, for example) to talk about the brain, the mind, artificial intelligence, and human meaning. Armed with texts and group moderators, citizens across the state gathered to talk with civility about the role of religion in politics and public life. There were no right answers but there was a lot of community wisdom.

Of course, no one could do such work alone. And that is where another supercharged talent of Charlie's was brought to bear in developing "Connecting people with ideas," a powerful, lived tagline. Collaboration was key to the success of programming.

Charlie's staff cultivated and invested in symbiotic partnerships with universities/colleges, foundations, local groups (libraries, museums, historical societies) and community scholars with great ideas that needed a little organizational support. The symbiosis built upon itself, creating audience appeal. For example, *The Many Faces of God*, a study of world religions, looked not only at founding philosophies and sacred texts, but included performances of Indian dance music, Tibetan sand painting, calligraphy, and Oriental flower arranging. The practice of beliefs was another way into the life of the spirit.

Charlie's legacy is one he shared with others by putting NHH on the map, cultivating powerful boards and partners, and opening the door to conversations where people turned to one another out of pure interest. He brought a deep sense of purpose, a knowledge of team building, his fiscal 6th sense, and his collegial good humor to institutions of learning that grew from obscurity to respect, from irrelevance to significance and popularity.

Over the course of Dr. Bickford's 18-year tenure, NHH received an unprecedented number of national awards for exemplary public projects in all areas of the humanities.

[Continue reading online at nhhumanities.org/Bickford.](https://nhhumanities.org/Bickford)

SISTERS OF THE EARTH

By Susan Bartlett, *Connections* Facilitator and *Connections* Program Manager (2012-2017)

What is our safe place, our sanctuary? Which memories of this place offer us a sense of peace and solace? Can we carry this place within our hearts when our world is fraught with conflict and uncertainty? **Can we create a sanctuary for each other with our words?**

The young women sat writing around a table at the Barbara Harris Center in Greenfield, NH, finding their memories of safety in a treasured place. This July, five Palestinian citizens of Israel and five Jewish teens from Israel and the Creating Friendships for Peace (CFP) program spent two weeks at the Harris Center, learning about peacebuilding, leadership, conflict resolution, and communication before joining host families in mixed pairs for a week-long homestay. Readings and discussions with the New Hampshire Humanities (NHH) *Connections* program, and teens from Souhegan High School, presented these young women with opportunities for deeper reflection, for looking at our place in the world and finding common ground in stories.



International and New Hampshire students came together in a unique collaboration between *Connections* and *Creating Friendships for Peace*.

provides safe community space where the teens can lift words off a page, play with their meaning, and convey a sense of the worlds they live in and their place in it.”

The young women stirred in their seats, there were quiet conversations in Arabic, English, and Hebrew, some light laughter. Then, instructed to “write your piece in wherever it seems to fit,” each stood and added a line or two to our group poem on large sticky newsprint:

**That certain smell I will never forget, it will
always be stuck in my head
With the sound of nothing but the wind
Gold is my hideaway.**

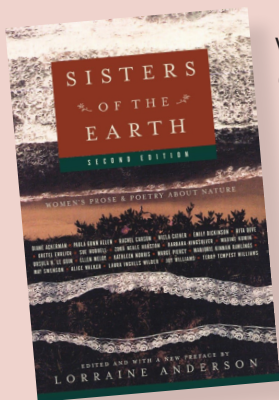
**There was a big glass window, I could see
Queen’s Park full of life,
It is my special place that I would go to when I
am confused, sad and happy
It was very colorful, there was green, yellow
and brown**

**My house is the place I run away to when I feel
stress and sad
The small garden next to my house where all
the neighbors would meet
The smell of all the Friday cooking from the
houses in the street**

**My paradise, where I could drift and dream
and just be
My school because I have fun with my friends
there and a lot of good memories
Grapes grow in the front yard**

Allowing myself to be at peace with joy.

Literature invites us to cultivate our higher humanity, to see ourselves in the other, the other in ourselves, and to join the timeless community of the written word. “Gold is my hideaway.” What is yours? 🍷



In one of these stories, “Beginning with a Place,” from the book *Sisters of the Earth: Women’s Prose & Poetry About Nature*, author Valerie Andrews describes a grove of birch trees that she returned to as a child to feel “the steady rhythmic heartbeat of the earth.” Later in life she reflects on how she continued to carry that early connection: “The whole earth lives within us, and in every moment, we are both its creators and discoverers.

We only need to reawaken all these early memories.” The young women were subdued as they read and talked about Andrews’ place of peace. Could they relate to her reflections in this time of war? What was their own special place? They wrote quietly.

Founded during The Troubles in Northern Ireland in 1981, CFP has “evolved into a month-long U.S. residency program... in combination with a robust teen program in the divided communities. CFP begins with friendship to create an experience of tolerance, leadership development, and discovery of self and community responsibility.” The NHH *Connections* - CFP partnership enriches the teens’ understanding of their new friends and offers New Hampshire participants insight into the complexities of crafting peace in conflict zones. Says CFP director, Betsy Small, “*Connections*



19th-century painting by Philipp Foltz depicting the Athenian politician Pericles delivering his famous funeral oration in front of the Assembly.

Calendar

NEW HAMPSHIRE HUMANITIES
EVENTS FROM JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2025

1/6 | PEMBROKE | 7:00 PM

Why Democracy?

Presented by Josh Duclos
Pembroke Town Library, 313 Pembroke Street
Contact: Pembroke Historical Society, 603-566-1031

new

1/12 | BARTLETT | 2:00 PM

Yankee Ingenuity: Stories of Headstrong and Resourceful People

Presented by Jo Radner
Bartlett Historical Society & Museum, 13 School Street
Contact: Phil Franklin, 603-374-5023

1/8 | NEWMARKET | 3:30 PM

History and Mystery: A Genealogy Starter Guide

Presented by Erin Moulton
Newmarket Public Library, 1 Elm Street
Contact: 603-659-5311

1/8 | LOUDON | 6:30 PM

Poor Houses and Town Farms: The Hard Row for Paupers

Presented by Steve Taylor
Community Building, 29 South Village Road
Contact: Loudon Historical Society & Museum, 603-783-0307

1/13 | STRATHAM | 7:00 PM (VIRTUAL)

African American Soldiers and Sailors of NH During the American Revolution

Presented by Glenn Knoblock
Hosted by the Stratham Historical Society
Contact: 603-601-7441

new

1/15 | LINCOLN | 6:00 PM

Contra Dancing In New Hampshire: Then & Now

Presented by Dudley Laufman
Lincoln Public Library, 22 Church Street
Contact: Lincoln Public Library, 603-745-8159

1/15 | LISBON | 7:00 PM

Late In Arriving, How Electricity Changed Rural New Hampshire Life

Presented by Steve Taylor
Lisbon Area Historical Society Museum, 9 Depot Street
Contact: 603-838-2003

new

1/9 | MOULTONBOROUGH | 7:00 PM

The Connecticut: New England's Great River

Presented by Adair D. Mulligan
Loon Center, 183 Lees Mills Road
Contact: Lakes Region Chapter NH Audubon, 603-279-3454

1/9 | NEW BOSTON | 7:00 PM

Redcoats & Rebels: New Hampshire and the American Revolution

Presented by Mary Adams
New Boston Community Church, 2 Meetinghouse Hill Road
Contact: Lisa Rothman, 603-487-3867

new

1/16 | MEREDITH | 6:30 PM

The Old Man: His Life and Legacy

Presented by Inez McDermott
Meredith Public Library, 91 Main Street
Contact: Erin Apostolos, 603-279-4303

new

1/11 | SANDOWN | 11:00 AM

Moved and Secoded: Town Meeting in New Hampshire

Presented by Rebecca Rule
Sandown Public Library, 305 Main Street
Contact: Sandown Public Library, 603-887-3428

1/16 | MADISON | 7:00 PM (VIRTUAL)

Late In Arriving, How Electricity Changed Rural New Hampshire Life

Presented by Steve Taylor
Contact: Friends of the Madison Library, 603-367-8545

new

1/11 | NORTH CONWAY | 1:00 PM

NH Abolitionist Nathaniel Peabody Rogers

Presented by Rebecca R. Noel
Pope Memorial Library, 2719 White Mtn. Hwy.
Contact: 603-356-2961

1/18 | RICHMOND | 1:00 PM

12,000 Years Ago in the Granite State

Presented by Robert Goodby
Veterans Hall, 105 Old Homestead Highway
Contact: Richmond Hist. Society, 603-585-9106

1/11 | CHESTERFIELD | 1:30 PM

Oil, Ice, and Bone; Arctic Whaler Nathaniel Ransom

Presented by Helen H. Frink
Chesterfield Public Library, 524 Route 63
Contact: 603-363-4621

1/21 | GOFFSTOWN | 6:00 PM

A Taste of the Old Country in the New: Franco-Americans of Manchester

Presented by Robert B. Perreault
Goffstown Public Library, 2 High Street
Contact: 603-497-2102

1/22 | MADBURY | 6:00 PM

History and Mystery: A Genealogy Starter Guide

Presented by Erin Moulton
Madbury Public Library, 11 Town Hall Road
Contact: 603-743-1400

new

1/23 | GREENVILLE | 7:00 PM

Saturday Morning Cartoons: Bugs Bunny, Bullwinkle, and Big Business in the 1960s

Presented by Margo Burns
Chamberlin Free Public Library, 46 Main St.
Contact: 603-878-1105

1/24 | CONCORD | 5:00 PM (VIRTUAL)

Humanities@Home: Rethinking the U.S. National Parks

Presented by Abby Goode
Hosted by New Hampshire Humanities
Contact: programs@nhhumanities.org

1/29 | PORTSMOUTH | 2:30 PM

Contra Dancing In NH: Then and Now

Presented by Dudley Laufman
Wentworth Senior Living, 346 Pleasant Street
Contact: 603-570-7795

1/29 | FRANCESTOWN | 7:00 PM

The Old Man: His Life and Legacy

Presented by Inez McDermott
Francestown Town Hall, 2 New Boston Road
Contact: G.H. Bixby Memorial Library, 603-546-2730

new

1/30 | NEW BOSTON | 6:00 PM (VIRTUAL)

Ethical Aspects of Converging Technologies: Some New Challenges in an Era of AI Chatbots

Presented by Herman T. Tavani
Contact: Whipple Free Library, 603-487-3391

new

1/31 | STRAFFORD | 6:00 PM

Fierce Females: Women in Art

Presented by Jane Oneail
Hill Library, 1151 Parker Mountain Road
Contact: Hill Library, 603-664-2800

2/5 | LEE | 6:00 PM

New England's Colonial Meetinghouses and Their Impact on American Society

Presented by Paul Wainwright
Lee Public Library, 9 Mast Road
Contact: Lee Historical Society, 603-659-2626

2/2 | PORTSMOUTH | 2:00 PM
Elinor Williams Hooker Tea Talks 2025: Things They Carried: An African Philosophy on War, Surviving Enslavement and Citizenship
Presented by the Black Heritage Trail of NH
Portsmouth Public Library, 175 Parrott Ave.
Contact: gina@blackheritagetrailnh.org

2/3 | GREENLAND | 6:00 PM **new**
Norman Rockwell: Inclusion, Exclusion & Representing America
Presented by Jane Oneail
Weeks Public Library, 36 Post Road
Contact: Kelly Nahas, 603-436-8548

2/4 | MOULTONBOROUGH | 6:00 PM
Harnessing History: On the Trail of New Hampshire's State Dog, the Chinook
Presented by Bob C. Cottrell
Moultonborough Public Library, 4 Holland St.
Contact: 603-476-8895

2/5 | LEE | 6:00 PM
New England's Colonial Meetinghouses and Their Impact on American Society
Presented by Paul Wainwright
Lee Public Library, 9 Mast Road
Contact: Lee Public Library, 603-659-2626

2/6 | NASHUA | 1:30 PM
Benedict Arnold, Patriot (and Traitor)
Presented by George R. Morrison
The Huntington at Nashua, 55 Kent Lane
Contact: 603-821-1235

2/8 | RANDOLPH, VT | 9:00 AM
Museum on Main Street – Crossroads: Change in Rural America
Presented by the Chandler Center for the Arts
71 N Main St, Randolph VT
Contact: director@chandler-arts.org

2/9 | PORTSMOUTH | 2:00 PM
Elinor Williams Hooker Tea Talks 2025: Hopes and Impediments: War and Strategies for Belonging
Presented by the Black Heritage Trail of NH
Portsmouth Public Library, 175 Parrott Ave.
Contact: gina@blackheritagetrailnh.org

2/11 | PLAISTOW | 6:00 PM **new**
How the Working-Class Home Became Modern, 1900-1940
Presented by Thomas Hubka
Plaistow Public Library, 85 Main Street
Contact: Plaistow Hist. Society, 603-382-6011

2/11 | DUNBARTON | 6:30 PM **new**
Covered Bridges of NH - Past and Present
Presented by Kim Varney Chandler
Dunbarton Public Library, 1004 School Street
Contact: 603-774-3546

2/12 | NOTTINGHAM | 10:00 AM
The History of Gym Class
Presented by Rebecca R. Noel
Blaisdell Memorial Library, 129 Stage Road
Contact: 603-679-8484

2/12 | AUBURN | 6:30 PM
Family, Memory, Place: Writing Family Stories
Presented by Maura MacNeil
Griffin Free Public Library, 22 Hooksett Road
Contact: 603-483-5374

2/13 | RYE | 1:00 PM **new**
Jonathan Harrington - 19th Century Magician
Presented by Andrew Pinard
Rye Congregational Church, 580 Washington Rd.
Contact: Dyana Martin, 603-964-6281

2/13 | PEMBROKE | 7:00 PM
Vanished Veterans: An Illustrated Introduction to NH's Civil War Monuments and Memorials
Presented by George R. Morrison
Pembroke Town Library, 313 Pembroke Street
Contact: Sarah Hyland, 603-566-1031

2/15 | SEABROOK | 10:30 AM **new**
History & Mystery: A Genealogy Starter Guide
Presented by Erin Moulton
Seabrook Library, 25 Liberty Lane
Contact: Seabrook Library, 603-474-2044

2/16 | PORTSMOUTH | 2:00 PM
Elinor Williams Hooker Tea Talks 2025: The Great Migration: Military Service and the Shaping of a Diversified New Hampshire
Presented by the Black Heritage Trail of NH
Portsmouth Public Library, 175 Parrott Ave.
Contact: gina@blackheritagetrailnh.org

2/18 | CONCORD | 5:00 PM
Rosie's Mom: Forgotten Women of the First World War
Presented by Carrie Brown
Woman's Club of Concord, 44 Pleasant Street
Contact: 603-225-3622

2/18 | STRATHAM | 6:30 PM (VIRTUAL) **new**
Augustus Saint-Gaudens and the Cornish Colony
Presented by Inez McDermott
Contact: Tricia Ryden, 603-772-4346

2/19 | AUBURN | 6:00 PM
Music in My Pockets: Family Fun in Folk Music
Presented by Jeff Warner
Griffin Free Public Library, 22 Hooksett Road
Contact: 603-483-5374

2/20 | HANOVER | 3:00 PM
New Hampshire on Skis
Presented by E. John B. Allen
Kendal at Hanover, Gathering Room
86 Cummings Road
Contact: Kendal at Hanover, 603-277-9194

2/20 | MEREDITH | 6:30 PM **new**
The Beginner's Guide to Cemetery Sleuthing
Presented by Erin Moulton
Meredith Public Library, 91 Main Street
Contact: 603-279-4303

2/20 | RYE | 6:30 PM **new**
Norman Rockwell: Inclusion, Exclusion & Representing America
Presented by Jane Oneail
Rye Public Library, 581 Washington Road
Contact: Rye Public Library, 603-964-8401

2/21 | ENFIELD | 4:00 PM
That Reminds Me of A Story
Presented by Rebecca Rule
Chosen Vale Performance Center, 410 NH Rte. 4A
Contact: Maddie Dusseault, 603-632-4346

2/22 | CONCORD | 2:00 PM
Abolitionists of Noyes Academy
Presented by Dan Billin
Concord Public Library, 45 Green Street
Contact: 603-225-8670

2/23 | PORTSMOUTH | 2:00 PM
Elinor Williams Hooker Tea Talks 2025: Eyes on the Prize: Protests, Movements & the Road Ahead
Presented by the Black Heritage Trail of NH
Portsmouth Public Library, 175 Parrott Ave.
Contact: gina@blackheritagetrailnh.org

2/23 | WESTMORELAND | 4:00 PM **new**
Covered Bridges of NH - Past and Present
Presented by Kim Varney Chandler
Westmoreland Town Hall, 780 Route 63
Contact: Patti Seymour, 617-417-9240

2/23 | JACKSON | 4:00 PM
Unlaunch'd Voices: An Evening with Walt Whitman
Presented by Stephen J. Collins
Whitney Community Center
16 Black Mountain Road
Contact: Greg Marsello, 401-824-6815 2/25 |

PLAISTOW | 6:00 PM
Songs of Emigration: Storytelling Through Traditional Irish Music
Presented by Jordan Tirrell-Wysocki
Plaistow Public Library, 85 Main Street
Contact: Jennifer O'Connor, 603-832-6011

2/26 | WINDHAM | 1:00 PM
Music in My Pockets: Family Fun in Folk Music
Presented by Jeff Warner
Nesmith Library, 8 Fellows Road
Contact: Nesmith Library, 603-432-7154



New Humanities to Go programs available to book!

Through *Humanities to Go*, our statewide speakers bureau, nonprofit organizations and community groups can offer high quality cultural programming to the public, like the events on this calendar. To learn about hosting these or any of our other current *Humanities to Go* programs, please visit nhhumanities.org/HTG.

- **How a Newspaper War Created a Virtual State in Western New Hampshire and Eastern Vermont** (Steve Taylor)
- **Why Democracy?** (Josh Duclos)
- **Ernest Harold Baynes: New Hampshire's Own Doctor Doolittle** (Mary Kronenwetter)
- **The Beginner's Guide to Cemetery Sleuthing** (Erin E. Moulton)
- **Augustus Saint-Gaudens and the Cornish Colony** (Inez McDermott)
- **Last of the Granite State Rattlesnakes** (Dan Billin)
- **Rethinking the U.S. National Parks** (Abby Goode)
- **Redcoats and Rebels: New Hampshire and the American Revolution** (Mary Adams)

Humanities to Go is supported by

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Thank you for a “Wicked” successful Annual Celebration!

Gregory Maguire: Confessions of a Wicked Writer

On Wednesday, October 16 at the Tupelo Music Hall in a rare public appearance, celebrated author Gregory Maguire, known for his best-selling novel *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*, joined Jaed Coffin, associate professor of creative writing at UNH and author, for an intimate, profound, and rollicking onstage conversation that left the audience captivated. Filled with profound insights and humor, we gained a rare glimpse into the mind of one of today’s most celebrated authors.

By returning us to Frank L. Baum’s Land of Oz, Maguire taps into powerful imagery and mythology to upend our assumptions about good and evil, political power, and personal strength. His magical storytelling explores contemporary issues ranging from the deeply personal – living as an outsider – to the global as individuals struggle in the face of authoritarianism and political control.



Alan F. Rumrill (center) receiving the Lifetime Achievement in the Humanities Award from Michael Haley Goldman (L) and Maren Tirabassi (R).

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the 2024 Excellence in the Humanities Award to Alan F. Rumrill, the outgoing executive director of the Historical Society of Cheshire County. After 41 years of dedicated service, Rumrill’s contributions to preserving and sharing local history have left an indelible mark on the people of New Hampshire. His work will continue to inspire future generations of historians and researchers, ensuring his legacy endures for years to come.

As we reflect on the success of the 2024 annual celebration, we look forward to revealing some exciting surprises for next year’s event. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the sponsors, ticket purchasers, and partners who helped make this evening unforgettable. Special thanks to NHPBS for their generous support, particularly in the recording and production of the event.

NH PBS New Hampshire Humanities is thrilled to announce that through our partnership with NHPBS, the interview with Gregory Maguire and Jaed Coffin will be broadcast at varying times from January 9-31. Don’t miss this captivating conversation! We’ll share the schedule by email and on our website, and you can learn more at www.nhpbs.org. Thank you, NHPBS!



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“People in our communities are eager and enthusiastic about events such as this one. There's a hunger for events that are intellectually stimulating and offer new and varied perspectives... The Annual Celebration reinforced our sense that the humanities are crucial to a civil, functional society.” ~ Annual Celebration attendee



BETH A. SALERNO, PH.D. joined New Hampshire Humanities this past fall, her 24th year in New Hampshire. As Interim Program Director, she works

collaboratively with partners on major NHH community grant applications and on NHH and community programming related to broad annual themes. Along with the programming staff, she examines program efficiency and effectiveness, ensuring high-quality programming for New Hampshire's many audiences. Having grown up on Long Island in New York State, Beth misses the beach. She earned a Ph.D. in History from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and taught Women's History, New England History, Environmental History, Public History and other humanities courses for two decades at Saint Anselm College. She enjoys hiking, kayaking, science fiction and fantasy novels, and trying to eat as close to 100% locally as possible.



LARISSA STRIGA joined New Hampshire Humanities in October. As the Development Coordinator, Larissa supports

the development team, manages the organization's database system, and works together with the NHH team to fund and support statewide programs that inspire curiosity, foster civil dialogue, and explore big questions. Larissa is an experienced nonprofit professional with a graduate certificate in nonprofit management and a master's degree in organizational leadership from Southern New Hampshire University. She is an AmeriCorps VISTA alum who values lifelong learning, community, and kindness. Larissa and her husband live in Concord and enjoy the city's many trails and vibrant downtown.

Thank you to our generous Connections funders



Connections adult book discussion program brings the best of children's, young adult, and adult literature to more than 500 adult learners each year. Connections works in partnership with adult basic education and ESOL classes, refugee resettlement organizations, services for adults with developmental disabilities, and state and county prisons. Participants are both native English speakers and new Americans. Connections aims to provide quality books and stimulating discussions that promote English language skills, cultivate conversations about ideas, reinforce family literacy, support a culture of reading, and encourage civic engagement. The following foundations and corporations have provided the Connections program with critical support this past year:

- Bank of America
- Bar Harbor Bank & Trust
- Citizens Charitable Foundation
- NHC Henry Lord Scholarship
- Dollar General Literacy Foundation
- Ella F. Anderson Trust
- Eversource
- Mascoma Bank
- M&T Bank
- Northeast Delta Dental

For more information, visit www.nhhumanities.org/Connections.

Thank you, Annual Partners

We are grateful for the support of our partners who help sustain the work of New Hampshire Humanities by providing year-round support:

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Thank you to the **NH Charitable Foundation's Neil & Louise Tillotson Fund** for its support of Humanities to Go programming in Coos County, making public humanities more accessible in northern New Hampshire. Read about this special initiative in our Spring *Engage!*

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Turn your passion for the humanities into impact for all Granite Staters!

Do you have a passion for the humanities and believe opportunities for lifelong learning should be available in every corner of the state? New Hampshire Humanities is seeking candidates for its Board of Directors. If you have a dedication to public service and commitment to cultural enrichment for Granite Staters, contact Michael Haley Goldman, Executive Director, at mhaleygoldman@nhhumanities.org to learn more.

In the humanities, we stress the importance of multiple points of view. Only by considering different ideas can we assess our values and challenge our beliefs. As we celebrate our 50th year, please make a gift to help New Hampshire Humanities continue to gather Granite Staters together – no matter what – to ask vital questions about the complex world we live in, think critically about the challenging issues facing our society, and share the stories that make us human.



Thank you for making a gift to help expand civic knowledge, strengthen communities, and build the state’s cultural capital for decades to come!

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Scan the QR code to link to our secure, online donation form.

Please return to New Hampshire Humanities, 117 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH 03301. To learn about other ways to give, contact Sarah Chaffee, Director of Development, at 603-224-4071, ext. 113 or schaffee@nhhumanities.org.



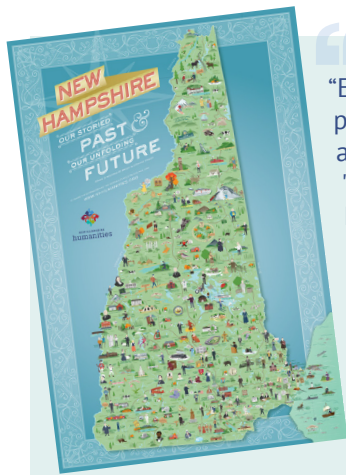
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“ In winter
all the singing is in
the tops of the trees
where the wind-bird
with its white eyes
shoves and pushes
among the branches.”

~Mary Oliver



“ Each year my class
participates in
a project called
“The Great Mail
Race,” where we
mail letters to
an elementary
school in each
state. Students
share information
about their
school, town, and
state. In return,

we share information about our school,
town, and state. My students use the New
Hampshire Humanities map to locate and
identify cool locations to share. We just
discovered the interactive tool on the
New Hampshire Humanities website that
provides further information on the items
they include. We love using it!”

- Kate Washburn, Grade 3 teacher at Wells
Memorial School in Harrisville, NH

(To view or purchase the map, go to
www.nhhumanities.org/about/nh-humanities-map.)

For 50 years, New Hampshire Humanities has been connecting
people and **ideas** by funding and supporting
statewide programs that inspire **curiosity**, foster civil
dialogue and explore **big questions!**



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