

Johnson Historical Society Meeting
14 January 2026 at 9AM
Holcomb House

Present: Dick Simays, Kelly Vandorn, Linda Jones, Mary Jean Smith, Alice Whiting, Mike Dunham, and Lois Frey.
Guest: Dean West, Linda Benezra.

President Dick Simays called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. There were no additions to the agenda.

Secretary's Report: **It was made, seconded and approved to accept the 10 December 2025 minutes as printed.**

Treasurer's Report: Kelly Vandorn reported there was nothing new to report.

Administrative Items:

Holcomb House Hosting: 1.25.2026 at 1 PM Linda Jones, 2.13.2026 at 9 AM Mary Jean Smith. On Saturday 2.21.2026 at 2 PM at Jenna's House (117 St John's Road) *River Memories: Exploring Settlement Patterns on Waterways in Vermont* by Alan Beroizheimer will be co-hosted with the Johnson Library, the lead sponsor of the event. The Holcomb House will not be open on Sunday, 22 February 2026; but may be opened by appointment anytime, contact any JHS Trustee.

Social media: Linda Jones is doing extensive research on the next JHS newsletter with plans to have it ready soon. Facebook posts continue to receive many "likes." Look for a new one soon.

Standing Committee Reports:

***Buildings, Grounds, and Facilities:**

The final step for getting Fire Marshall approval to use the upstairs requires only the installation of a smoke detector, which Dick Simays anticipates receiving soon. Once installed photographs of the completed projects will be sent to the Fire Marshall who has already completed a site visit.

***Collections & Program Development:** Mary Jean Smith reported she has spoken again with Barbara Collins about the Ruth Mould art collection and will follow-up after 23 January 2026 for next steps.

Programs: Linda Jones reported the Program Committee will meet soon to plan programs for March, April, and May 2026.

Lois Frey reported that the program scheduled at the Manor for December was canceled with the new date for a JHS visit set for 24 March 2026.

***Revenue Development:** No new project activity; however, there will be homemade pie at Town Meeting on March 3rd.

***Membership:** Alice Whiting reported that 39 responses have been received to date from the membership letter with its annual update (mailed to 125 members.) Membership options include multi-year opportunities, so a response is not always needed. Folks who did not receive a letter and would like to learn more should contact Alice.

Town Report preparation: Lois Frey prepared the annual report, sent it to all JHS Trustees for review, then emailed it to Rosemary Audibert and Susan Tinker by the 31 December 2025 deadline.

Water heater replacement: Mike Dunham has located a used water heater which is a less expensive option for the project. All agreed it was a good option, as long as, it can be installed no later than June 30, 2026. Mike will complete the follow-up needed.

East wall insulation project: With the East wall insulation project being a priority, Dick Simays solicited bids from three vendors and has received one bid to date. A second company has visited the site with the expectation of submitting a bid. Mike Dunham said he would follow up with the Selectboard at their next meeting to keep the project moving.

***Acquisitions:**

Dick Simays shared items that were delivered by Charles Lusk to be donated to JHS by the Stowe Historical Society including: a copy of the History of Johnson; news articles from the 1989 County Courier; a picture of a Johnson Mill, identified as the Waterman Mill; Johnson's Plot map dated August 1945; a blueprint of Sterling dated 1916.

Eric Osgood donated six Town of Sterling commemorative envelopes.

The Andrus Family donated a History of Johnson book, 7 pictures, 3 postcards, and 2 newspaper clippings.

***Other:**

Mike Dunham will take care of removing the holiday greens in his truck. Thank you, Mike.

Following discussion about the \$20,000 allotment by the Selectboard for the Holcomb House roof, all agreed it was a Selectboard decision to decide when the roof should be replaced or painted.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned

Minutes recorded by Lois Frey, Recording Secretary.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, 11 February 2026 at 9 AM at the Holcomb House.