

Johnson Historical Society Meeting
13 May 2026 at 9AM
Holcomb House

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

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

Secretary's Report: **It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the 8 April 2026 minutes as printed.**

Treasurer's Report: Kelly Vandorn reported the checkbook balance is \$40,246.27. There was a review of the in lieu of rent item in the budget. It was noted that the item may need adjustment and the agreement with the Selectboard is due to be updated for the next budget cycle.

Election of Officers: Dick Simays reported that Alice Whiting chose not to continue as the Membership Secretary. **The slate of officers who accepted nomination are President, Dick Simays; Vice President, Mary Jean Smith, Recording Secretary, Lois Frey, and Treasurer, Kelly Vandorn.** Following discussion, Linda Jones accepted the nomination for Membership Secretary and is willing to work with Alice for the transition. **With the addition of Membership Secretary, Linda Jones to the slate of officers proposed, it was moved, seconded and approved to accept the slate of officers as presented.**

Administrative Items:

Holcomb House Hosting: The Holcomb House will be closed May 24, 2026 (Memorial Day weekend.) It will be opened for the program scheduled about the Johnson Plot Cemetery on 5.17.2026 at 1 PM to 3:00 PM with Kelly Vandorn coordinating.

Holcomb House Schule for June will be 6.12.2026 from 9 AM to noon Mike Dunham and 6.28.2026 from 1:00 to 3 PM Linda Jones and for July 7.10.2026 from 9 AM to noon Mary Jean Smith and 7.26.2026 from 1:00 PM to 3 PM Lois Frey with John Sutherland.

Social media: Linda Jones reports to expect a new Facebook post in time for Memorial Day featuring Town Parades. Linda also reported that the next JHS newsletter is ready to go to Dedra Dolan for layout. Mary Jean Smith reported she had added some Vermont Electric Coop pictures and an article about Red Hooper, from her mother's donation to JHS, to the JHS Facebook page.

Standing Committee Reports:

*Buildings, Grounds, and Facilities: Mary Jean Smith led the discussion about what is needed to ready the upstairs for display use as well as storage. It was noted that the upstairs floors are covered with a layer of dust or grime which needs to be cleaned up. It appears to be residue following the electrical installation. A regular floor sweep is also needed. Kelly Vandorn will alert Alfred and Candance Lettieri to the need for cleaning on the second floor. It was decided to try a darkening film on the upstairs windows. Mary Jean has ordered a roll of the product and will conduct a test of the product.

The need to thoroughly clean the second floor windows was identified. Due to the age of the windows, The General Conditions Assessment, dated May 2025 should be consulted.

John Sutherland reported that the Selectboard asked him and Mike Dunham to develop a five-year maintenance plan for the Holcomb House. John will notify Mary Jean when they start the process.

It was decided to order a foam mattress for the antique bed, which will be used for displaying quilts and other period items. Mary Jean found one online and Kelly found storage boxes, all of which Kelly will contact Rosemary Audibert to order.

A proposal to move the baggage wagon from the front porch was discussed. Dick Simay's recollected that it took six helpers to roll the wagon in place, considered an easy task. The suggested location is on the ground on the parking lot side of the stairs. Mary Jean Smith will get prices for potential protection from the elements. Mary Jean also reported that Tom Carney will re-claim his coat rack now that it is not being used at the Holcomb House. She also identified a future project to clean-out the shelf along the cellar stairs.

*Collections & Program Development:

Linda Jones reported that the JHS program on 26 April 2026, *Memories of the Pharmacy* was well attended with 45+ people and excellent audience participation.

Kelly Vandorn reported the Plot Cemetery Talk will be held at the Holcomb House on Sunday, 17 May 2026 at 2 PM. Duncan Hastings will give an overview of the cemetery's history and Kelly and Jacob Vandorn will put together a slide program. Alice Whiting, Linda Jones, Mary Jean Smith, Lois Frey, Dick Simays, and Kelly will present some salient facts about selected families. Homemade cookies needed.

*Revenue Development: 2026 Tuesday Night Live will have six concerts on Legion Field. See below for details.

*Membership: Alice Whiting reported the results of the recent membership drive: 120 members, 8 business members and income of \$1,135. Dick Simays suggested the membership form could benefit from clarifying donations are welcome to the Johnson Historical Society, Inc. during the membership drive. Linda suggested a re-write of the form will be considered for the November 2026 mailing.

*Vermont Historical Society membership. The VHS has changed their renewal procedure. Kelly Vandorn will work it out with Rosemary Audibert. The annual cost is \$50.

*Julian Scott House update: John Sutherland reported the Town has received a 90-day extension before removal of the building. He is working with Duncan Hastings and Doug Molde and others to develop a plan of action with options. When a letter of support is needed, they will advise the Johnson Historical Society.

Tuesday Night Live Planning: Start date will be 7 July 2026. Linda Jones reported that the number of pie-makers has diminished so new volunteers will be welcomed. Lois Frey will send the usual request to McKenzie Country Classics. Dick Simays will contact Hannaford's and have hot dog rolls ready for use. (He will miss the first concert.) Coordination will follow the same routine as in the past.

As stated last month, Tom Carney plans to check in with Howard Romero for the Historical Society's set-up location and parking spot for the trailer. Dean West said he and Tom Carney would be taking the trailer out of storage soon.

*Acquisitions:

Linda Jones read a note from Bobbi Rooney that documented that markings with the water height of the 1927 flood were written on the back of one of the bookshelves presently in the Holcomb House. Research will be needed to determine which bookshelf.

Mary Jean Smith delivered items from her mother's home including photos from a Vermont Electric Coop retirement party, an old postcard of the Power House Covered Bridge, several collectibles, and two very old jig saw puzzles.

Linda Jones delivered 8 notecards and 5 envelopes from the old United Church prior to the fire that destroyed it donated by Barbara Backus.

*Notes and/or reminders:

It was noted that details for the 2026 Memorial Day parade are sparse to date.

Need to identify potential second-story window washers.

Check potential location with Sue Lovering for Tree Board planting at Holcomb House

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at about 11:30 AM.

Minutes recorded by Lois Frey, Recording Secretary.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, 10 June 2026 at 9 AM at the Holcomb House.