



Bennington Historical Society News

Presentation: "David Redding: Hanged in Bennington"

Presenter: Phil Holland

Time: Sunday, June 23 at 2:00 pm

Location: Ada Paresky Education Center of Bennington Museum

This month's program features Phil Holland, who will talk about the capture, trial, and hanging of David Redding.

Was Redding really a spy? What was he doing when he was captured? Why would Ethan Allen step in to his case? What have we learned since that time about Redding? And what do we know of the strange journey of his skeleton?

On June 11, 1778, Loyalist David Redding was hanged on the Bennington town green for "enemical conduct." Ethan Allen, newly released from British captivity, served as State's prosecutor. It was Vermont's first hanging (though it would not be the last). Redding's execution was only the beginning of his odyssey through history. Denied burial in 1778, his bones were not interred until 1981. In the meantime, his case had caught the attention -- to the point of obsession -- of the founding Director of the Bennington Museum, John Spargo, who published a small book on the subject in which he accused the Vermont authorities of a miscarriage of justice. With the help of unpublished material prepared by Bennington historian Joe Parks, this talk will sort through the evidence and reflect on the passions aroused by the case.

About Phil Holland

Phil Holland grew up in Athol, Massachusetts to parents with Vermont and Maine roots. He attended college at Dartmouth and Bennington College then moved abroad for graduate studies in English. After returning to Vermont in 2014, he published a booklet on Robert Frost's years in Bennington County, as well as a general-interest book on the Battle of Bennington and the Bennington Monument. He is currently presenting a talk on "The Black Presence at the Battle of Bennington" through the Vermont Council on the Humanities Speakers Bureau.



Photo by Bill Morgan

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Tyler Resch Speaks About William Lloyd Garrison by Ray Rodrigues

In May, Tyler Resch, historian, writer of works like *The Shires of Bennington*, and editor of *The Walloomsack Review*, spoke on the life of William Lloyd Garrison. Resch complimented the work of John F. M. Kennedy, upon whose research Resch built his talk.

Garrison is probably best known for his thirty-five year editorship of *The Liberator*, the leading abolitionist newspaper of its time. He crusaded against slavery and was often attacked for his stance. He wrote, "I will not equivocate . . . , I will not retreat a single inch, and I will be heard." He was critical at times of Abraham Lincoln for not moving fast enough to end slavery and remained so until the Emancipation Proclamation. He even embraced disunion, with the North seceding to separate itself from the curse of slavery.


Garrison began an internship with a newspaper editor at the age of 13 and followed through with it until he felt he was employable as a printer, typesetter, and editor.

Before publishing *The Liberator*, Garrison wrote in Boston. In 1828, a group of Bennington citizens invited him to come to Bennington to begin a paper with a perspective different from the *Vermont Gazette*. In Bennington, he began publishing *The Journal of the Times*, with a subscription rate of \$2.00 per year. He was only in Bennington for eight months, and left to begin publishing *The Liberator*.

Among the events of Garrison's life that Resch talked about was the burning of Pennsylvania Hall in 1838. The Hall was dedicated on May 14, 1838, and burned by an anti-abolitionist crowd on May 18, 1838. In the few days in between, Garrison was one of the main speakers at the Hall. Throughout his life, Garrison campaigned for a number of causes and became a leader in the women's suffrage movement.

If you would like to search *The Journal of the Times*, go to: [The Journal of the Times](https://www.newspapers.com/title_6441/journal_of_the_times/).
https://www.newspapers.com/title_6441/journal_of_the_times/ And if you missed Tyler's presentation, you can go to this video: <https://benningtonhistory.org/archived-presentations/2019-2/william-lloyd-garrison/>



An issue of *The Liberator* depicting African Americans next to a lynching tree. 

Harwood Diaries Now Online

The Harwood Diaries may now be read online. To read the diaries, go to:
<https://archive.org/details/harwooddiaries1918hira>

These are the fascinating diaries of Bennington farmer Hiram Harwood, recording family and community events from 1808 to 1837. For an edited print version, see *A Tale of New England: The Diaries of Hiram Harwood, Vermont Farmer, 1810-1837* by Robert E. Shalhope

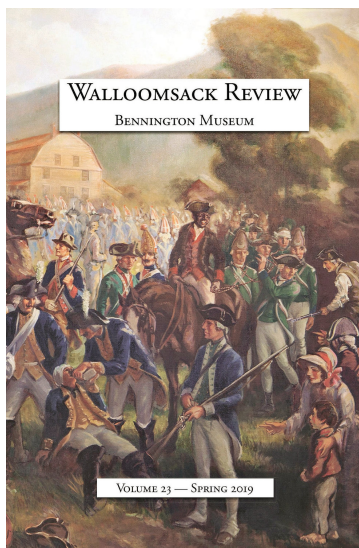
Have You Subscribed to the *Walloomsack Review*?

by Tyler Resch

The Bennington Museum's *Walloomsack Review* will produce its 25th issue this year.

Edited by Tyler Resch, *Walloomsack Review*—usually a semi-annual publication—will have three issues in 2019. Two of these have already been printed and distributed, and the third, the autumn issue, will appear around the start of that season, September 23.

Vol. XXIII features on its cover the “black youth” who led a group of imprisoned Tories after the Battle of Bennington, a detail taken from the panorama by Leroy Williams seen in the museum's permanent Battle exhibit. The article, by Phil Holland, analyzes the many historical references to the black youth and concludes that he was, indeed, a servant of the Moses Robinson family in Bennington Centre (Old Bennington).



Also featured in Vol. XXIII is Jen Shakshober's concluding chapter of the story of “tar and terror in Tampa,” the 1935 murder in Florida by the Ku Klux Klan of the Bennington agitator Joseph Shoemaker.

Editor Tyler Resch contributed a reminiscence of the 1965 “Vermont in Mississippi” project that sent Montpelier teacher Ted Seaver and his family to Jackson to work as community organizers; the project was sponsored by a group known as the Vermont Civil Rights Union, and others. Curator Jamie Franklin analyzes a new book of the Vermont photographs of Peter Miller that purport to portray the loss of a rural culture.

Vol. XXIV is an extra issue, subtitled *Bennington: View from Bingham Hill*, that was prompted by anthropologist Mirka Prazak, who tapped the talents of her Bennington College students to

observe and write about the town of Bennington, in which they found themselves as students. The result is a revealing and perceptive range of articles on demography, agriculture, environment, philanthropy, and sociology by students who hail from a wide range of hometowns.

The fall issue of the *Walloomsack Review*, which will be number XXV, is still being edited. It will include a major article about William Lloyd Garrison, the nationally famous abolitionist and agitator who briefly published a newspaper, *The Journal of the Times*, in Bennington before launching *The Liberator*, a fiery weekly that kept clawing away at slavery for 35 years until it was abolished by the Thirteenth Amendment. The article, by J.F.M. Kennedy, will identify and profile about a dozen Vermonters who became especially active in the abolitionist cause. Another article in the works for the autumn issue will describe the often violent anti-rent wars that plagued nearby New York state in the mid-nineteenth century, pitting tenant farmers against avaricious landlords who owned thousands of acres.

The Walloomsack Review was given that title to represent the region covered by the Walloomsac River, though one of several spelling variations added the extra k just to be distinctive.

The journal is available at the museum shop and at selected retail outlets, including the Northshire Bookstore, the Bennington Bookstore, and the Bennington Battle Monument gift shop. One can subscribe by writing to the museum or by calling 802 447-1571 x 208.

Old First Church Lecture Series

All these events are open to the public at the Old First Church in Old Bennington and begin at 1 pm.

June 19-- Church, State and Community in Early Bennington and the New Hampshire Grants --Rev. Kenneth A. Clarke

July 17-- Battle of Bennington and Its Impact on Old Bennington --Robert Hoar

August 21-- Cemetery Tour --Charles Dewey and Vicky Printz

September 18—Walking Tour of Old Bennington

Friends of the Bennington Monument Present a Walking Tour of Old Bennington

The Friends of the Bennington Monument are giving a Historical / Architectural Walking Tour of Old Bennington on Friday July 5th at 7 pm. The tour will start from the Bennington Monument and proceed to the Old First Church. It is free and open to the public. For information contact Robert Tegart at (315) 982-4053 or at rttegs@gmail.com.

Bennington Historical Society Board Members

Officers: Bill Morgan, President; Anne Bugbee, Past-President; Charles Dewey, Secretary; President-Elect, Don Miller

Members: Bob Tegart, Joe Hall, Bob Ebert, Beverley Petrelis, Ted Bird, Jackie Marro, Scott Maguire, Ray Rodrigues

Do you have an item you'd like to share through our newsletter--an historical anecdote, something from your family history, an historical artifact, a question for someone else to answer, a remembrance from Bennington's past? If so, send it to Ray Rodrigues at raymond_rodrigues@msn.com

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