



Montgomery Historical Society
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ABOUT US

The Montgomery Historical Society was formed in 1973 in a grass roots effort to save the Town's former Episcopal Church from demolition. This community landmark, initially completed in 1835, was Montgomery's first church. It underwent major improvements between 1870 and 1890 when stunning stained glass windows, a clock, and bell were installed. The church was purchased by the newly formed Society for \$1.00 in 1974.

Now on the National Register of Historic Places and renamed Pratt Hall, the Society has carried on several major projects: including a new roof; removing the clock, bell, and top two sections of the tower steeple in 1976 and re-installing them in 1985; cleaning and restoring the stained glass windows from 1990-1995; and making structural repairs since then. In 2010 the Society began preservation and structural work on the entry vestibule and bottom section of the tower. The project took three years and involved over \$80,000 direct costs, donated goods and services and volunteer labor. An estimated \$131,000 of additional structural work on the west wall was completed in 2015. It involved repairs to the attic/roof truss, wall and foundation. Three stained glass windows and two clear glass lancet windows were removed, restored and reinstalled during that project.

Pratt Hall was purchased with not only preservation in mind, but also to serve Montgomery and surrounding communities as a venue for a variety of events. Considered a "living artifact", over the years the Society has hosted quilt shows, speakers, funerals, weddings, plays, Christmas programs, exhibits, school visits, meetings of regional groups, and more. Our summer "Concerts By The Common" series brought an eclectic mix of music (mostly by Vermont artists) to the area for 25 years. All of this is done at no cost or for modest fees meant to defray costs.

While preservation and repair of Pratt Hall is the focus of much of what the Society does, we also have a limited capability to document, store, and exhibit the treasures of Montgomery's past. The Society published a Town history in 1976 and an updated second edition in 1991. A third edition was published in early 2014 with over 100 pages of new material. Small scholarship grants are awarded annually to a Montgomery high school senior. The Society also boasts an award winning web site, www.montgomeryhistoricalsociety.org, that's chock full of information and is part of our outreach mission, and participates in regional and State history meetings. In the future, the Society hopes to add to our archives and mount more frequent exhibits.

All of this is the result of enthusiastic and generous support from our membership, community, and a dedicated group of volunteers led by our Board of Directors. Since 2007 annual membership has averaged over 215 households/businesses, and the Society has won 10 Vermont Historical Society / League of Local Historical Societies awards for excellence. We qualified for a significant donation from TD Bank in 2010 as a result of members designating the Society as their Affinity charity. The Society was the only non-profit in Vermont to receive this donation and has qualified for additional donations every year since then.

The Montgomery Historical Society Mission is to:

- preserve Pratt Hall, artifacts, structures and memorabilia of historical interest.
- provide a venue for local exhibits and artisans to share their talents.
- sponsor programs that assist in preserving town history and cultural events.
- award scholarships to students on an annual basis.

We have members from: 20 VT towns including 8 in Franklin County, 16 states & the District of Columbia, 2 Canadian Provinces, and 3 foreign countries other than Canada. Why not join us?