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## Updates & News

We'd like to introduce Caitlyn Beaulieu to our Board of Trustees! We'd also like to introduce new roles going into our 2026 season for our Trustees and members:

### **Curator**

*Cheri Losito*

### **Director & Asst. Director Building/Ground Maintenance**

*Jim Contois*

### **Director Marketing & Adult programming.**

*Rebecca Menard*

### **Director of Communication**

*Caitlyn Beaulieu*

### **Director Fundraising**

### **Director Membership/Volunteers**

*Rebecca Menard*

### **Director of Youth Programs**

*Kaylee Rogers*

### **Genealogist**

*Chief Paul Bunnell*

### **Historian**

*Wayne McElreavy*



## Turkey time

Prior to the popularity of greeting cards, most holiday wishes were sent by postcards. This postcard was mailed in 1912 to Grace Hale, mother of photographer George Hale, on 5 Central



### **An Interview with JD Salinger**

The Claremont, NH Historical Society received a research request recently that led to the following Daily Eagle (Eagle Times) article, where Windsor High School student, Shirlie Blaney, had a rare chance to interview the elusive, JD Salinger who'd recently become a neighbor to Claremont, over in Cornish, NH. This was published in 1953.

We've attached a photo of the original article below and a transcription.

### **Twin State Telescope**

#### **Interview with an Author**

**By Shirlie Blaney**

**(During the preparation of the recent student edition of the Daily Eagle, Miss Shirlie Blaney of the class of 1954 at Windsor High School, spied Jerome David Salinger, author of the bestseller "Catcher in the Rye," in a Windsor restaurant. Mr. Salinger, who recently bought a home in Cornish, obliged the reporter with the following interview.)**

**An author of many articles and a few stories, including "Catcher in the Rye," was interviewed and provided us with an interesting life story.**

**A very good friend of all the high school students, Mr. Salinger has many older friends as well, although he has been coming here only a few years. He keeps very much to himself, wanting only to be left alone to write. He is a tall and foreign-looking man of 34, with a pleasing personality.**

Jerome David Salinger was born January 1, 1919, in New York. He went to public grammar schools while his high school years were spent at Valley Forge Military Academy in Pennsylvania. During this time he was writing. His college education included New York University where he studied for two years.

With his father, he went to Poland to learn the ham shipping business. He didn't care for this, but he accomplished something by learning the German language.

Later he was in Vienna for ten months, but came back and went to Ursinus College. Due to lack of interest, he left at mid-years and went to Columbia University. All this time he was still writing

Mr. Salinger's first story was published at the age of 21. He wrote for two years for the Saturday Evening Post, Esquire, Mademoiselle and many more. He later worked on the liner "Kungsholm" in the West Indies, as an entertainer. He was still writing for magazines and college publications. At the age of 23, he was drafted. He spent two years in the Army which he disliked because he wanted all of his time to write.

He started working on "Catcher in the Rye," a novel, in 1941 and finished it in the summer of 1951. It was a Book-of-the-Month Club selection for the month, and later came out as a pocket book.

The book is a sad story of a troubled adolescent boy. When asked if it was in any way autobiographical, Mr. Salinger said: "Sort of. I was much relieved when I finished it. My boyhood period in the New Yorker was very much the same as that of the boy in the book, and it was a great relief telling people about it."

About two years ago he decided to come to New England. He came through this section. He liked it so much that he bought his present home in Cornish.

His plans for the future include going to Europe and Indonesia. He will go first to London perhaps to make a movie.

One of his books, "Uncle Wiggley" in Connecticut, has been made into a movie, "My Foolish Heart."

About 75 per cent of his stories are about people under 21 and 40 per cent of those about youngsters under 12.

His second book was a collection of nine stories. They first appeared in The New Yorker.



## Claremont History Spotlight - Vivian E. Washington

*Jim Contois*

Material sourced from the Black Heritage Trail website with additional information from Wayne McElreavy, Colin Sanborn, and Bev Janelle. (Bev's mother went to school with Vivian.)

### *The Story of Vivian E. Washington*

Vivian E. Washington built a distinguished career in education, social work, community service, and the Episcopal Church in Maryland, but she was born and raised in Claremont, NH. She graduated in 1932 from Stevens High School. She excelled both scholastically and athletically. She went on to Howard University to earn an A.B. in Social Work (1938) followed by two master's degrees (1946 and 1956). When she was almost eighty, in 1993, she received an honorary doctorate degree from the University of Baltimore.

For 34 years, Vivian Washington worked for the Baltimore City Public Schools, first as a history and civics teacher, then as a junior high school counselor and the system's first Black visiting teacher, a predecessor position to school social worker. In 1966, she helped create and was named the first principal of the Laurence G. Paquin Junior-Senior High School, a secondary school for pregnant girls. By law, pregnant women could not attend public school.

She wrote two books – the first a memoir, Mount Ascutney (A Reflection Book), published in 1958, and then, in 1986, I Am Somebody, I Am Me: A Black Child's Credo. In 1988, she helped to establish the Baltimore chapter of the Court Appointed Special Advocate program and served as chairperson of its

Governor's Commission on Children and Youth. She was a member of the Maryland Governor's Task Force on Teenage Pregnancy and chaired the Sub Committee on Prevention.

Her honors included the United Way Community Services Committee Hall of Fame, Maryland's Outstanding (Episcopal) Church Woman, and Towson University's Office of Minority Affairs' Distinguished Black Marylander's Award. As if all her professional, religious, and community service was not enough, Vivian also found time to be involved in her sorority, Delta Sigma Theta, including twice directing the national convention.

In her book, *Mount Ascutney*, she asks her mother as a 3-year-old in 1917, "Why am I Black?" The answer she gave at the end of her book is, "*I am not white because God created me as he wished me to be. I have work to do. There is no room for strife or bitterness. As long as there is faith, there is strength, and people are helped.*" At the book's end, Vivian says as she looked up at Ascutney Mountain on a trip back to Claremont, "*I humbly thank you, Father. I have been blessed.*"

In 2019, potential presidential candidate and former New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio came to Claremont to speak about national mental health issues. I talked with his wife Chirlane McCray, and she told me that her aunt was Vivian Edwards Washington and the home of the family on Mulberry Street was sold when Vivian died. The money from the sale went to Howard University for scholarships. The home is a small residence across Mulberry Street from the Topstone Mill Building.

This is quite the journey for a girl from a small city.

*Permission to use the article from the NH Black Heritage trail was granted*  
<http://www.blackheritagetrailnh.org/>

**Purchase "I Am Somebody" by Vivian E. Washington Here**





## **2nd Annual Global Youth Service Day**

*April 25th*

CHS Museum is gearing up for our second annual Global Youth Service Day on the calendar for April 25th! Global Youth Service Day is the longest-running annual youth participation event in the world and the only one that asks all youth ages 5-25 to work together for the common good while also recognizing the impact youth make on their communities every day of the year.

Key Club at Stevens High School has committed as a partner organization to help the museum with opening season prep: yard work, display cleaning, etc.

Do you know of a youth organization in town, or a young person who'd like to get involved? Register below!

Register here!

## **Honoring Claremont Veterans**

*Claremont Middle School*

Congratulations to Claremont Middle School student, Brooklynn, who placed first in the Honoring Claremont Veterans: Veterans Day Contest, hosted by the Historical Society.

Brooklynn interviewed and created a poster visual about Claremont Army veteran, David Waly, who teaches at Claremont Middle School.



# THANK YOU, HISTORIC CLAREMONT FIRST



Historic Claremont First generously donated over \$3,000 to Claremont, NH Historical Society & Claremont History Museum.



These funds will support 2026 strategic goals for Museum repairs, upkeep, and maintenance.



*Claremont, NH Historical Society is a Section 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization.*  
Claremont, NH Historical Society & Museum | 26 Mulberry St. Claremont, NH | [www.claremonthistory.org](http://www.claremonthistory.org) | Find us on Facebook!

OLD STONE WATERING TROUGH ON WEST CLAREMONT ROAD, CLAREMONT, N. H.

## Historic Claremont First - thank you!

Historic Claremont First was formed in 1996 by a group of abutters and concerned community members in response to Rite Aid’s proposal to demolish four historic buildings at the corner of Pleasant and Summer Street site to construct a new store. At the time, the project had received city approval and was part of a broader plan that also included a second Rite Aid location on Washington Street. Ultimately, Rite Aid abandoned plans for the Pleasant and Summer Street site. While the company stated the decision was due to the closure of CVS and Eckerd stores in

especially grateful to Historic Claremont First for their continued commitment to preservation, including their recent donation of over \$3,000 to the Claremont Historical Society. We extend our sincere thanks and are proud to highlight their lasting impact on our community.

## Mark Your Calendar

**Please note, events and details are subject to change. Stay updated with our Facebook page and website!**

February | 10th Board Meeting

March | 10th Board Meeting

April | 14th Board Meeting & April 25th - Global Youth Service Day

May | 12th Board Meeting & Opening Weekend\* (more information to come!)



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