
GROTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

Volume 29 Issue 2

Groton, Vermont 05046

Spring 2016

225 YEARS OF STATEHOOD

March 4, 1791—March 4, 2016



Haying in Groton about 1900

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On March 4, 1791 the Independent Republic of Vermont became the first state to join the 13 Colonies that rebelled against King George of England and declared their independence 14 years earlier on July 4, 1776 as the USA. Vermont had its own struggles during the revolution fighting for independence, not only from England and France, but also from the New York and New Hampshire colonies that both claimed the territory between the Connecticut River and Lake Champlain from north of Massachusetts to the Canadian border.

The Green Mountain Boys led by Ethan Allen disrupted many attempts by these two colonies to sell land grants to settlers in Vermont, but some had to purchase their grants twice. Ira Allen, younger brother of Ethan, surveyed the first division of Groton in 1787, and served as Moderator at some of the earlier

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proprietors meetings. Later he founded the University of Vermont.

New York named the Northeast part of Vermont Gloucester County and built a “road” from Lake Champlain to the Connecticut River to encourage settlement of the area. The Gloucester County Road followed an old established Indian Trail along the Onion (now Winooski) River and then into Groton where it was the first “road” in town. Stories by Hosea Welch and Dale Brown about this trail and road including a map of its location through Groton were in the summer 2005 and winter 2009 newsletters. Part of this old road in Groton, where it crosses Goodfellow Road, is still called west and east Gloucester (*sic*) Roads today.

The nineteenth century was a settlement time for Vermont and Groton. Logging to provide building materials and clearing land for farming resulted in removal of forests from much of the state. Population increased during this period. Groton increased from 45 people in 1790 to its maximum population in 1900 when the census recorded 1,059 residents. The town was served by the Montpelier and Wells River Railroad (later the Barre and Chelsea RR) beginning in 1873 for more than eighty years. This provided new markets for farm products and stimulated industrial development in granite manufacturing, lumbering, and mercantile businesses well into the next century.

By the twentieth century much of the logging industry had moved westward and many others were abandoning their farms and following the migration westward for more fertile farmland. Some remaining forests and wild lands became State Forests and State Parks to be managed for watershed protection, a sustainable supply of building material, wildlife habitat, and recreational use. Groton State Forest is the largest one in Vermont. Groton granite businesses declined with attempts to unionize the workers in the 20’s and gradually disappeared during the depression of the 30’s, and competition from Barre and South Ryegate manufacturers. The railroad was abandoned by 1955 when automobiles and trucking services competed for moving people and freight. Bus service continued for a few more years by Vermont Transit and Beckley’s Bus routes, but these too were soon replaced by private vehicles and commercial trucking companies.

The Industrial Revolution was in full swing early in the

century, with Henry Ford building model T's on an assembly line and reducing the cost of an automobile to \$500 in 1908. Groton village had electric street lights in 1909 replacing the earlier oil lamps. Two Hydro-electric plants on the Wells River provided the power for homes and businesses in the village, one behind the Baptist Church and the other about a mile upstream. These power generating stations were later purchased by Green Mountain Power Co. and they were damaged by the 1927 flood. In the mid 1930's, during the depression, electricity was being delivered to rural areas by the efforts of emergency relief programs. Some farms had their own wind generating power plants, storing electricity in Delco batteries, before power lines arrived from electric cooperatives.

This increased availability of power and the development of smaller and cheaper electric motors led to many new labor-saving machines on the farms and in the homes. Kitchen wood stoves were replaced with electric or gas ranges, ice boxes were replaced with electric refrigerators, washboards and clotheslines were replaced with electric washers and dryers and brooms were replaced with vacuum cleaners. Milking machines, tractors, and power equipment became available for farm chores. For more information on Technology and Family Life in the 1900's see the story in the winter 2007 newsletter, Volume 20, issue 1.

The abandoned farmlands became reforested and today Vermont is one of the most rural states in the U.S. with less than 39 percent of the population living in urban areas compared to more than 81 percent for the total U.S. population. About 54 percent of the world population lives in urban areas. Vermont is the penultimate state in total population with only Wyoming having fewer people. Descendants of Vermonters, including Groton inhabitants, have spread to most other states and to many other countries.

NOTE: earlier GHS newsletters can be read on the GHS website which can be easily accessed online from the Town Website at <http://www.grotonvt.com/> then click on "Historical Society"

GROTON HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES 1903-1909 and 1923-1967

1903

Inez Ricker.

1904

George Whitehill, Harry Morrison, George Morrison.

1905

Bessie Blanchard, Gertrude Clark, Clyde Morrison, Grace Dennis,
Elizabeth Whitehill, Abigail Welch.

1906

Harry Corruth, Ella Hood, Marinda Pearl Keenan, Nettie Page,
George Pillsbury.

1907

Fred Morrison, Irene Page.

1908

Katie Downs, Emma Jones, Virginia Ricker, Helen Smith.

1909

Elizabeth Scott, Jennie Taylor.

1910-1915

Only two years of High School offered in Groton.

1916-1918

No High School classes offered in Groton until 1919.

1923

Crawford Adams, Edwin Carter, Ross Clark, Alice Dunn, Cyrus
Eastman, Hazel Johnson, Dorothy Miller, Donald Morrison, Milton
Ricker.

1924

Kenneth Beckley, Benjamin Clark, Della Frost, Rufus Hosmer,
Raymond Ricker.

1925

Bart Eastman, Donald Fifield, John French, Hattie Hood, Wendell
McLam, Edmonds Secchairi, Clarence Welch.

1926

Adeline Daniels, Annabelle Dunn, James Main, Donald Miller,
Duncan Miller, Raymond Page, Beatrice Welch, Joanna Welch,
Linwood Welch.

1927

Florence Carbee, Carlos Dunn, Martha Emery, Bessie Frost,

Nellie Welch, Mary Wilson.

1928

Lawrence Blanchard, Lyman Blanchard, Lee Fifield, Fremont Fiske, Kermit Hood, Mildred Hood, Thelma Johnson, Orabelle Main, John Page, Charles Pillsbury, Irma Renfrew, Harry Welch.

1929

Margaret Blanchard, Albertine Boomhower, Ruby Clark, Wendell Crown, Seth Eastman, Vern Frost, Emma James, John Peterson, Alice Ricker, Stanley Taisey, Austin Welch.

1930

Anna Hood, Clara Hood, Ethel James, Robert Pillsbury.

1931

Edith Bartlett, John Crown, Guy Darling, Esther Eastman, Clifton Fifield, Ruth Goodwin, Paul Heath, Morris Keenan, Bernice Main, Ralph Page, Dwight Renfrew, Warren Welch, Harry Williams.

1932

Gwendolyn Caldwell, Kenneth Eastman, Lucille Eastman, Ralph Evans, Glenn Haskell, Helen Hertz, Margaret James, Doris Keenan, Jennie Lund, Elizabeth McLam, Elmer Page, Leona Page, Mary Page, Alice Welch, Seth Welch.

1933

Gordon Boomhower, Trafford Brink, Cecile Carpenter, Dorothy Carpenter, Emma Daniels, Edward Evans, Donald Foley, Edwin Goodwin, Florence Grapes, Theresa Legare, Lona Main, Walter Main, Mary McLam, Howard Page, Roderick Pillsbury, Dorothy Putnam, Edmund Ricker, Roland Steele, Harry Welch, Philip White.

1934

Elizabeth Brock, Jackson Carpenter, Kendall Carpenter, Clarence Eastman, Sophronia Emerson, Stanley Fifield, Dorothy Foster, Thelma Hood, Esther Lee, Loren McAllister, Annie Murray, Carlene Page, Nellie Roberts, Evelyn Taplin, Murdena Thurston, Robert Welch.

1935

Doris Armstrong, James Beaton, Dale Brown, Faye Converse, Clara Daniels, Paul Frost, Frances Gibson, Doris Goodwin, Faustena Hood, Pauline Hood, Lyle Mason, Gordon McLam,

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Gordon Page, Sylvanus Thurston.

1936

Kenneth Brock, Robert Brock, Dwight Carpenter, Roland Daniels, Clifford Darling, Bernard Doe, Dorothy Eastman, Franklin Emerson, Elsie Emery, Vera Fifield, Patrenle Fitzgerald, Jean Foster, Mary I. Main, Mary E. Main, Pauline McLam, Hazel McQueen, Austin Morrison, Cedric Newton, Elizabeth Page, Pearl Phelps, James Rouhan, Albert Shepard, Andrew Smith, Edith Wright.

1937

Martha Foster, Milo Furman, Arlene Gibson, Faye Haskell, Madeline Hood, Casper Lyford, Russell Page, Elizabeth Welch.

1938

Louise Doe, Lloyd Eastman, Irving Evans, Franklin Ingram, Hazen Keenan, Fredrick Miller, Phyllis Mouton, Wendeline Moulton, Irene Page, Pearl Ricker, Stanley Welch, Mildred Thurston, Ida Welch, Elizabeth Will.

1939

Phyllis Caldwell, Merle Crown, Gerald Darling, Newton Darling, Ercil Davis, Bernadine Eastman, Ernest Eggleston, Ralph Gibson, Priscilla Goodwin, Warren Goodwin, Horace Hood, Carolyn Hooper, Chester McLam, Theresa McQueen, Helene Moulton, Thomas Olsen, Florence Page, Phoebe Taisey.

1940

Cleason Darling, Howard Eastman, Robert Ricker, Francis Ricker, Barbara Brown, Myrtle Davis, Thelma Edwards, Iona Gray, Shirley Haskell, Velma Hood, Marjorie McQueen, Margaret Page, Minnie Welch.

1941

Arlene Barnes, Lyman Crown, Richard Daniels, Dalton Darling, Lillian Darling, Dale Fifield, Harold Hart, Darwin Hendry, Alice Hooper, Irving Moulton, Douglas Page, Raymond Taylor, Ruth Taylor, Frances Thurston, Dario Zampieri.

1942

Vern Haskell, Rudolph Hendry, Darius James, Gerald Smith, Clayton Welch, Princetta Bailey, Chestine Brown, Bertha Evans, Bernice Needham, Pauline Page, Phyllis Paige, Lucille Williams, Helene Welch, Pearl Young.

1943

Frederick Dana, Julia Foster, Calvin Frost, Sewell Page, Gordon Puffer, Porter Thurston.

1944

Robert Brown, Inez Farrow, Marie Farrow, Floyd McDonald, Francis McQueen, Alta Welch.

1945

Ivis Barnes, Lyle Edwards, Harlene Evans, Evelyn Frost, Wallace Hood, James Moulton.

1946

Willard Benzie, Helen Brock, Betty Brown, Eldora Chamberlin, Madeline Darling, William Emery, Muriel McDonald, Geraldine Page, Pearl Sayers.

1947

Theresa Cassady, Harold Darling, Joseph Davis, Hugh Farrow, Douglas French, Allen Gandin, Beverly Hartson, Richard Page, Stuart Page, William Palmer, Eugene Puffer, Katherine Ricker, Ida Sayers.

1948

Maria Bailey, Melvin Benzie, Patricia Brown, Mildred Davis, Winston Doe, Vernold Eastman, Barbara Ingram, Deane Page, Lorraine Peck.

1949

Albert Achilles, William Achilles, Josephine Avery, Orin Beck, June Dickey, Ruby Edwards, June Evans, Marlene Farrow, Vilma Gandin, Phillip Hanchett, Kent Haskell, Carroll Palmer, Joan Schwartz, Philip Sherlaw, Helen Vance, Dale Wright.

1950

Charlotte Benzie, Dale Darling, Eva Davis, Leslie Edwards, Clara Hatch, Robert McDonald, Christie Murray, Evelyn Page, Eric Sayers, Viola Whitehill.

1951

Patricia Bain, Walter Blodgett, Kenneth Brown, Durwood French, Vern Frost Jr., Lona Gandin, Norman Morse, Hazel Sayers, Anita Vance, Lamona Vance, Leona Welch.

1952

Alice Achilles, Shirley Barnes, James Crown, Florence Darling, Harvey Dean, Carol Dickey, Robert Eastman, Frances Frost, Madelyn Page, Linnie Welch, Leverett Welch, Clarence Williams.

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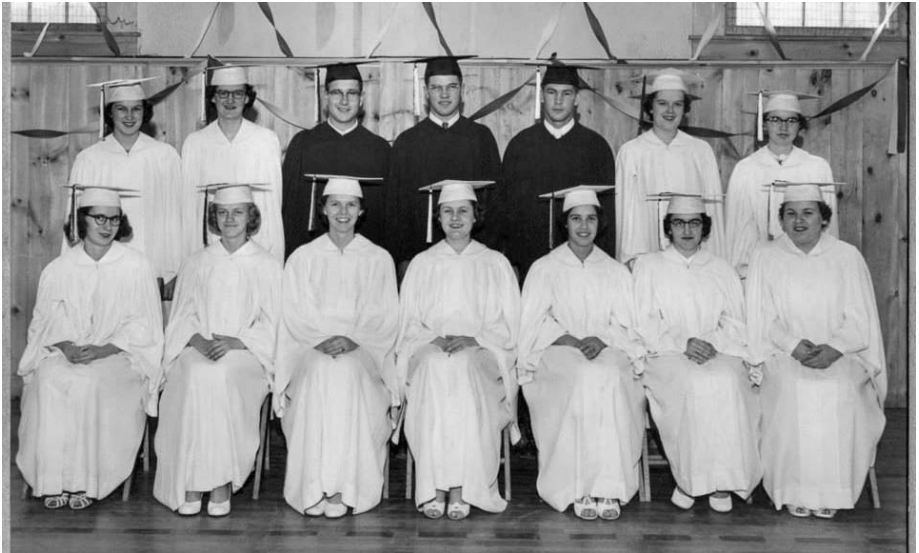
SOME GROTON HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES



80 years ago 1935-36

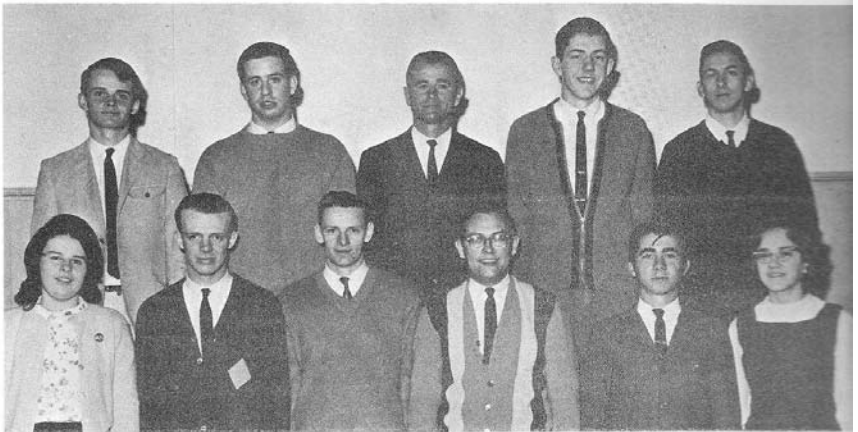


77 years ago 1938-39



61 years ago 1954-55

Seniors



FIRST ROW: Barbara Smith, Gary Mason, Wayne Blodgett, Steven Austin, Joan Ricker.
SECOND ROW: Max Robitzer, Barry Heath, ADVISOR: Mr. Stoney Hinkle; Kenneth Eastman, Wayne Records.

50 years ago 1965-66

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1953

Ellen Ashford, Laura Avery, Lottie Batchelder, Juelle Eastman, Katherine Eastman, Myrna Frost, Clifford Hatch, Donald Hatch, Coreen Wells, Evelyn Whitehill.

1954

Patricia Bailey, Donald Darling, Hilda Dean, Dixie Dickey, Elaine Frost, Lorrey Hatch, Minola Heath, Frances Ricker, Scott Sayers, Bruce Wells.

1955

Ruth Achilles, Beverly Bain, Janet Benzie, Ruth Crown, Marilyn Evans, Anita Gandin, Robert Garland, Marilyn Hatch, Donald Orr, Harold Puffer, Shirley Sayers, Donna Welch, Betty Whitehill, Phyllis Williams.

1956

Lois Bailey, Stanley Crown, Charles Frost, Phyllis Hatch, Don Hood, Betty Mitchell, Mary Ricker, Henry Sanville, Arthur Shields, Edna Welch.

1957

Claudette Beaulieu, George Dickey, Harold Eastman, Marilyn Gray, Delia Heath, Herbert Orr, Betty Playful, Joyce Hart, Carolyn Ranney, Marjorie Robitzer, Hollis Vance, Bruce Whitehill.

1958

Loren Daniels, Wendell Darling, Ann Main, Janice Hatch, Gerald Pierce, Creston Ruitter, Linda Whitehill.

1959

George Austin, Nanette Crown, Donna Gandin, Guy Haskell, Gordon Page, Gracelyn Ricker, Myrna Ruitter, Richard Vance, Jackalyn White.

1960

Annette Beaulieu, Lucille Clark, Priscilla Clark, Kathleen Moulton, Barbara Orr, Marcia Ricker, Arlyn Robitzer, Betty Sayers, Robert Wernecke.

1961

Victoria Beamis, Doreen Beck, Mirla Graham, Dorothy Hatch, Jon Main, Sylvia McAllister, Sharon Morrison, Norma Murray, Kathleen Page, Alton Ricker, Beatrice Smith, Louis Smith,

William Vance, Gunther Wernecke.

1962

John Clark, Keith Daniels, Leroy Graham, Raymond Hood, Ralph Orr, Cheryl Pierce, Ernest Wilson.

1963

Bruce Darling, Ina Darling, Sharon Frost, Gaylord Gandin, Archie Glidden, Gary Goodwin, Dean Hatch, Rodney Jordan. Peter Lyon, Susan Main, Roy Records, Doris Ricker, Terrance Reilly, Joyce Rixford, Linda Sayers, Lois White.

1964

Bernard Achilles, Shirley Beamis, Richard Beck, Richard Daniels Jr., Kenneth Darling, Allen Goodine, James Gruber, Janice Hart, Greta Heath, Lyndol Lyon, Colin Morrison, Laurel Murray, Donald Page, George Rock, Pamela Smith, Sherry Vance, Clarence Welch, Donald Wernecke, James White.

1965

Roy Achilles, Russell Crown, Mary Daniels, Donna Darling, Gary Darling, Elaine Downing, Mary Eastman, Patricia Lakin, Myrtie Legare, Jean Lyon, John Morgan, Margaret Morgan, Howard Page, Gordon Peterson, Allen Phelps, Eugene Records, Harvey Ricker, Thelma Ricker, Stanley Williams.

1966

Steven Austin, Wayne Blodgett, Alan Dennis, Kenneth Eastman, Barry Heath, Gary Mason, Marguerite Morey, Wayne Records, Joan Ricker, Arland Robitzer Jr., Barbara Smith.

1967

Carrieree Cilley, Sherry Dana, David Daniels, David Darling, Zoa Darling, Stanley Davidson, Ruth Eastman, Stuart Goodwin, Deborah Hamlett, Diana Hood, Paula Lakin, Brenda Page, Doreen Smith, Glenn White.

1968-1970

Students were tuitioned to other schools until Blue Mountain Union School opened in the fall of 1970.

Please bring any errors or omissions to our attention. The names of Groton students graduating from other schools are not available in our records. Help in obtaining them will be appreciated.

Dirt Roads

(Condensed from a story by Sara Rimer in
THE NEW YORK TIMES on June 24, 1996.)

You would think that everyone would want a better road. But in Vermont people fight to keep roads that freeze in winter, turn into muddy sinkholes in spring, kick up clouds of dust in summer, and gobble up shocks, mufflers and occasionally whole cars.

When the state proposed paving a half-mile stretch of road in Brookfield some years back, there was a citizens' uprising. Jackie Wilder, a retired teacher, threatened to lie down in front of the bulldozers with her grandchildren. The road was not paved. "It was a great victory," said Ed Koren, the cartoonist, who relocated to his dirt road in Brookfield (population 1,080) from the Upper West Side of Manhattan (population about 250,000), where all the roads are paved and many are potholed.

Vermont has about 8,000 miles of unpaved roads -- just 6,000 miles are paved -- and only 600,000 people. When small-town Vermonters give directions to their homes, there is always this part: "And then the pavement ends."

There is no rush hour on a dirt road. There is not much traffic, period. "Paved roads are for cars, not people," said Naomi Flanders, who lives on a dirt road in Calais, where the residents rallied last year against a plan to pave part of a County Road. "Dirt roads are for people."

Dirt roads go nicely with that other Vermont symbol, the covered bridge. Tourists love them, though they don't

seem to come around much during mud season.

One reason the state still has so many dirt roads is the thriftiness of Vermonters. In addition to their pastoral charms, dirt roads are a lot cheaper to maintain than pavement. "It's economics," Mr. Koren said. "No one has the money to pave the damn thing."

Among New York City apartment dwellers, the building superintendent is all powerful. The Vermont equivalent is the local road commissioner, who maintains the town roads by grading, sanding and plowing. The road commissioner decides whose road is worked on first.

New Yorkers bestow Christmas tips upon their supers. The grateful residents of Brookfield rewarded their Road Commissioner and his crew with a standing ovation at town meeting a year ago.

Oxford has its Rhodes Scholars. Vermont is proud of its Roads Scholars -- graduates of a 10-day workshop, sponsored by the Vermont transportation agency, that covers things like road drainage, signing and winter maintenance. Braintree's Road Commissioner, Loren Bent, was recently named a Roads Scholar. "One thing they did teach us," he said. "When somebody starts complaining, you say, 'I didn't make these roads, I inherited them.' "

There are 251 towns in Vermont, and most of the small ones have a road commissioner. Mr. Howrigan held the job in Fairfield for 50 years and the town honored him by putting his picture on the cover of the annual town report one year.

You can't drive in the fast lane on a dirt road!

GROTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Visit GHS Web page at Historical Society on <http://www.grotonvt.com/>
You can send us email at grotonvthistory@gmail.com

Thanks to the help of many members from all across the USA, *Mr. Glover's Groton* has been republished. It contains lots of new information and pictures and is now available in paperback from the publisher at <https://www.createpace.com/5925298> and it can also be ordered in paperback or Kindle ebook at www.amazon.com. Copies may also be ordered from the Groton Historical Society, P. O. Box 89, Groton, VT 05046 at a cost of \$20.00 each for members plus \$7.00 shipping and handling.

Our Facebook page is called **Groton Historical Society**, it is a lot of fun and has brought many people together.

We held a scavenger hunt at the Peter Paul House on Fall Foliage Day. It was super fun and brought tons of people into the house to look around and learn about Groton history.

We held an Open House on the Saturday before Christmas. We served apple pie, baked by member Phil Coutu, hot mulled apple cider and had a chance to visit leisurely with members of the Groton community while delivering pre-ordered copies of *Mr. Glover's Groton*. Enough money was raised in 2015 to meet our annual expenses.

We have lots of plans and dreams for 2016. We hope to add more names of Groton Families to the book, and do some re-organization and scanning of the documents stored at the Peter Paul House. We hope to host a town wide scavenger hunt, highlighting historic sites in the town. Finally we would like to bake something in the Glenwood cook stove! Watch the Groton Historical Society Facebook page, there may be a Baked Potato Bash or an Apple Pie Social about to happen at the Peter Paul House.

Thank you for your continued support. Groton History is alive!

Warm Regards,

Deborah Jurist, Secretary

Membership dues are payable for the calendar year
Annual dues are \$10 for individuals and \$15 for families
Lifetime Membership dues are \$100

Membership status as of 4/1/2016:

Life—30, paid up—28, renewal due—23, behind—4.

The first meeting of 2016 is scheduled for 6 pm on May 3rd at the Peter Paul House in Groton. Agenda items include election of new officers for 2016, planning some new programs, and projects for this year..

All-Classes Reunion of Groton High School students will be on Saturday June 25th from 11am until 5pm at the Groton Community Building. A cold luncheon buffet will be served and plenty of time for visiting with your school mates.

Vermont Historical Society

The 1970s in Vermont were a time of radical change in culture, population, politics, and social life. An influx of young men and women who wanted to build a better life made Vermont an epicenter of communal living as they experimented with local, organic food systems and progressive politics. Several of the state's colleges also fostered social and community engagement, and young people who came for education stayed and made a lasting impact on the state's history. Many of the features that are today considered quintessentially Vermont – its politics, its local food movements, and its offbeat culture – have their origins in this period of recent history. The Vermont Historical Society has embarked on a two-year research project to collect, document, and share the history of Vermont in the 1970s. We will conduct community conversations with Vermonters who were here in the 1970s or were influenced by that time.

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