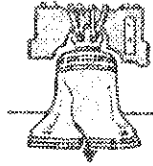


The Groton Historical Society



NEWSLETTER

GROTON, VERMONT

FALL - 1989

NO. 6



GROTON'S BICENTENNIAL YEAR

1789 - 1989

Our Town is celebrating it's 200th Birthday....all year!

On October 20, 1789 Gov. Chittenden signed the Charter and the Town of Groton officially came into being. The original Charter is now hanging on the wall in the Town Clerk's Office, if you are interested in seeing it!

The key event in our Town's celebration was the purchase, by the Groton Historical Society, with financial aid of many of our local people, of the "Future Home of the Groton Historical Society", on Main St.

One room of this house was fixed up just in time for Fall Foliage Day, and the three ladies in the above picture were on hand to greet the

many visitors who came in to look around that day. Well over 100 people signed the guest book!

The Hostesses: from left to right are Helen Benzie, Alice Goodine & Norma Hosmer. They look as if they had just stepped out of the pages of history; and they added a beautiful touch to the day's activities.

Historical displays were set up in our new "home" and also at the Library.

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The Groton Historical Society sponsored a Poster Contest to commemorate the occasion. The theme of the contest was "Why I Love Groton". 42 children ages 5 thru 12 entered the contest. The Posters were displayed in the Community Building during the Fall Foliage Chicken Pie Supper.

Prizes of Gift Certificates for McDonalds were awarded to the winners in four age categories:

- Age 5 - Ariana Kimball
- 6/7 Abbey Gandin
- 8 Christy Gould
- 9-12 Jessica LaChance.

Overall prize winner was Christy Gould, who also received a copy of "Mr. Glover's Groton" history book.

All entrants also received Groton T Shirts and certificates of appreciation.

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The Society is also sponsoring an Essay Writing Contest through Blue Mountain School. \$ 50.00 Savings Bonds will be awarded to 1 Jr. High student, and 1 Sr. High student.

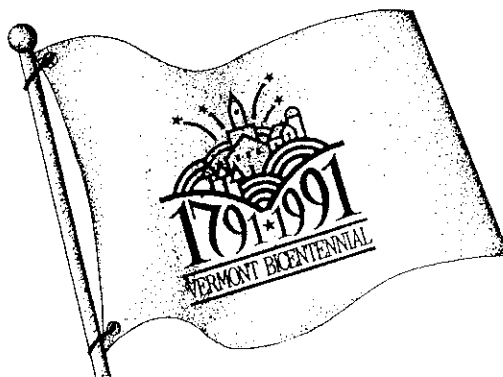
The Essays will be of approximately 250 words and the subject may be the general history of the town's 200 yrs. or a particular person or event in the town's history from the days of

the early settlers to the year 1900.

The contest will end on Nov. 27th and the prizes will be awarded at a ceremony at Blue Mountain School on Nov. 30th. Judging will be done by members of the Historical Society

Students may speak to their English teachers at school if they need more information.

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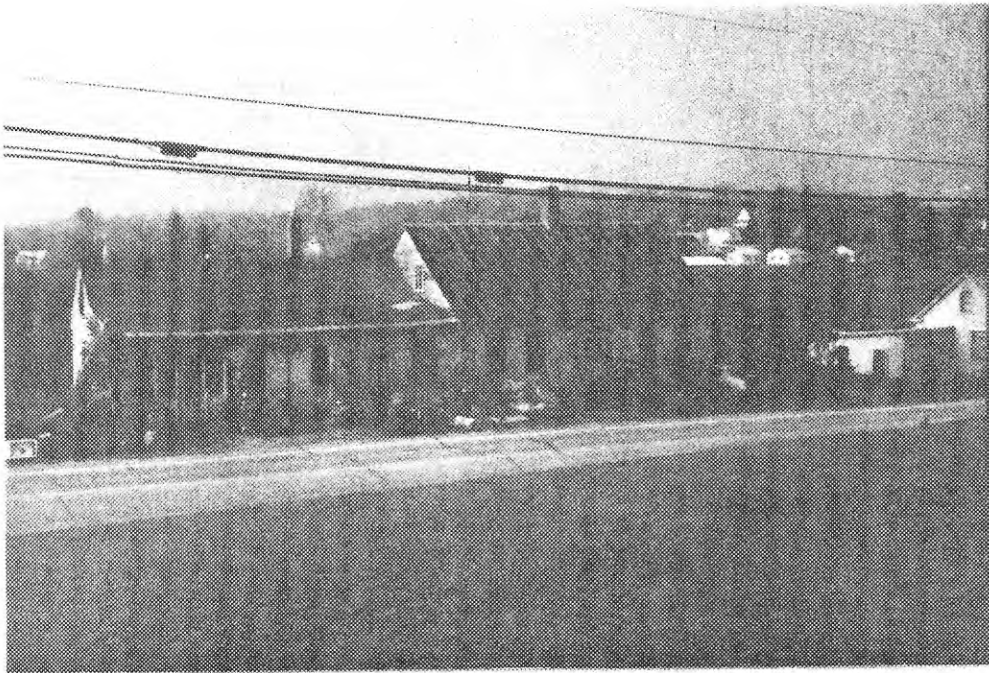
As we move along through the year celebrating our own bicentennial, we should also be thinking ahead to the State of Vermont Bicentennial in 1991! The U.S. Congress voted to admit Vermont into the Union as 14th State on March 4, 1791.

Many cities and towns around the state are already planning events to commemorate this occasion.

Workshops on planning for this big event are scheduled to be held at the Fairbanks Museum in St. Johnsbury.

- (1) "Exhibiting History"
9:30 to 12:30 Sat. 2/10/90
- (2) "Parades"
6:30 to 9:30 PM Thurs. 4/12/90

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This is a "before" picture of the new Groton Historical Society Home. We hope to have an "after" picture in a later issue of the Newsletter.

There is much work to be done..... cleaning, repairing and painting, inside and out; landscaping, furnishing, and much more. Many volunteers will be needed! Speak to Alice Goodine, president of the society, if you wish to help.

On Sept. 30th we started the clearing out process. A large group of volunteers equipped with pick-up truck and bucket loaders removed literally tons of material from the house and garage. Smaller groups worked several weekends after that to finish the job.

These workers deserve to be recognized and are listed here as follows:

Willard Benzie
Sally Blair
Dale Brown
Gene Dennis
Ralph Evans
Doug French
Josephine French
Alice Goodine
Joan Haskell
Kent Haskell
Norma Hosmer
David LaRose, Jr.

Dorothy Main
Spicer Main
Ross McLeod
Jim Newton
Bing Page
Deane Page
Dr. Gordon Page
Raymond Page
Harold Puffer
Janet Puffer
Ruth Putnam

also, a friend of Jim Newton (who's name we didn't get recorded)

If you worked on this project and didn't get your name listed here, please let us know. You deserve to be recognized!

Although the Groton Historical House may not be the oldest framed house in the Village of Groton (it was built in 1840), it has an unusual and interesting history. Dale Brown, a member of the society did a lot of research on this house, and has written up a 6 page history of it. It may be possible to get copies of this if you are interested. Please check with the Society.

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EXCERPTS FROM "COUNTY GAZETTEER AND
DIRECTORY - CALEDONIA & ESSEX
COUNTIES, VERMONT, 1888"

(Submitted by Willard Benzie)

"The surface of the town is beautifully diversified by mountain, stream, valley and lakelet, while this diversity is not sufficiently pronounced to retard cultivation of the soil. Though rather hard, the soil is well adapted to the production of grass and grain. The timber is mostly spruce and hemlock, interspersed with maple, beech and birch. Wells River flows a southeasterly direction through the town, and with its branches and tributaries forms the water course of the township, affording some good mill privileges. The town also has several natural ponds, the largest of which is Wells River Pond, through which flows Wells River. It lies in the northern part and is about three miles long by three-quarters of a mile wide. Lund's Pond, just southeast of the former, covers about 100 acres. Leverett H. Page has a hotel, The Lake House, at the foot of this pond, for the accomodation of fishermen and pleasure parties. Kettle Pond lies in the extreme northwestern part of the town. It covers about 40 acres, and received its name from the fact of Mr. Hosmer, a hunter, having lost his camp kettle in its vicinity.

Whitcher Mountain, the highest elevation of land, lies in the southeastern part of town, having an altitude of 1,100 feet.

In 1880 Groton had a population of 1,014 souls. In 1886 the town had eight school districts and eight common schools, employing one male &

eleven female teachers, to whom was paid an average weekly salary of \$8.50 to the former and \$4.25 to the latter. There were 224 scholars, nine of whom were attending the private schools. The entire income for school purposes was \$1,906.47, while the total expenditures were \$1,857.47. A. M. Heath was superintendent.

Baldwin & Hazen's steam saw-mill, at the outlet of Wells River Pond, was built in 1883, to take the place of one that burned on May 19th of that year. The whole forest in this vicinity was on fire at that time, and the people only escaped by getting out upon the pond on rafts, logs, etc., where they were obliged to remain a day and a night.

The present owners of the mill came into possession in 1886. They employ sixty hands, and have facilities for turning out 50,000 feet of lumber per day."

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IN SEARCH OF :

NEW MEMBERS

The Groton Historical Society invites all interested persons to join the Society. Meetings are on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Community Building, with an occasional special meeting called during the month. Dues are \$2.00 per year.

Call Alice Goodine - 584-3314; or Norma Hosmer - 584-3601 for more information.