
GROTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

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1947 FREEDOM TRAIN



Did the Freedom Train go through Groton on 17 October 1947?

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Does anyone remember the Freedom Train going through Groton in the middle of the night or early morning on 17 October 1947? I was away in the Navy then, but my brother, Melvin, often told about Dad waking up the family to watch it passing on the tracks behind our house on Railroad Street. The records on Google show it's route going from Montpelier, VT, where the exhibits were on display October 16, to Nashua, NH, where they were scheduled to be on display October 18, through White River Junction on the B&C RR line and not through Wells River on the M&WR line?

The tracks from Montpelier to Wells River through Groton, laid by the M&WR RR but owned by the B&C RR in 1947, were still in use at the time, but when the second "American Freedom Train" made its tour in 1976 to celebrate the bicentennial of the United States, the tracks had been removed. Perhaps this led to confusion about the route of the 1947 Freedom Train through Groton?

The Freedom Train consisted of seven railroad cars. Three were designed to display 127 historical documents plus 6 flags. Three others

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housed a staff of curators and a detachment of Marines to guard and protect the invaluable historic exhibits. The seventh was a baggage car to carry luggage and supplies. One of the Marines, Sgt. Timothy Hodge, wrote later "More than a rolling museum, the Freedom Train was an educational and patriotic program that provided a vivid reminder of the greatness of America's heritage to a nation still recovering from economic depression and world war."

William Coblenz a government employee in the Department of Justice, got the idea of a traveling exhibit of historic documents when visiting the National Archives during his lunch hour in April 1946. He passed the idea to the U. S. Archivist, Solon Buck, who relayed it up the chain of command to Attorney General, Tom Clark, who is credited with making it a reality 10 months later, when the American Heritage Foundation was formed for raising private funds to finance the project.

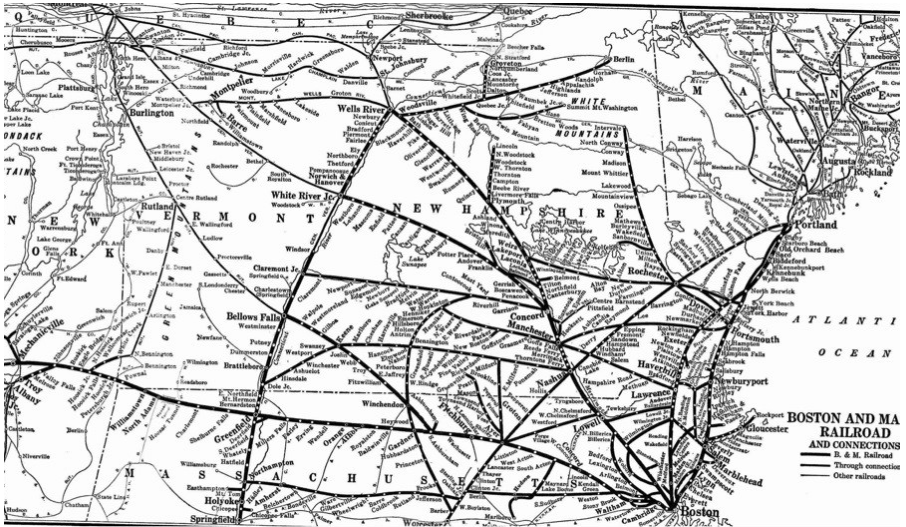
When the Freedom Train started its tour in September 1947 Irving Berlin's song "The Freedom Train" recorded by Bing Crosby and The Andrews Sisters was played on radio for the first time and it was an instant hit.

The National Archives supplied the train with 127 historical documents, including the Emancipation Proclamation, a letter from Christopher Columbus, the Mayflower Compact, and German and Japanese surrender documents from World War II.

The train's first display stop was in Philadelphia, PA, on September 17, 1947. From there, it traveled to New England, down the Atlantic coast to Florida, across the nation's southern states to California, up the Pacific coast to Washington, then across the northern states to Minnesota. After touring the perimeter of the nation, it went inland to Colorado then Kansas and Missouri, north to Wisconsin, then south to the Ohio River valley, north again to Michigan and finally east to New Jersey. The train's official tour ended January 22, 1949 in Washington, DC. A notable stop on the train's schedule was at the Chicago Railroad Fair July 5 to 9, 1948. The American Heritage Foundation licensed vendors to sell Freedom Train memorabilia like books and postcards.

Leaving Philadelphia the train made 19 public display stops before arriving in Rutland, Vermont on October 13, Burlington on October 15 and Montpelier on October 16. Then it went on through Groton for a stop in Nashua, New Hampshire on October 18, continuing its tour of the U. S.

The Freedom Train's 37,160 mile tour was the only train to operate in every state, using 52 different railroads. Over 3 million people visited it during display stops in 326 cities and towns.



Montpelier & Wells River RR through Groton with connections in Woodsville NH for Boston & Maine line to Nashua, NH, 1947 Freedom Train's next stop.

THE FREEDOM TRAIN

By Del Robb

*I am an American. A free American.
 Free to speak - without fear.
 Free to worship in my own way.
 Free to stand for what I think is right.
 Free to oppose what I believe wrong.
 Free to choose those who govern my country.
 This heritage of Freedom I pledge to uphold
 For myself and all mankind.*

This Pledge of Freedom was recited by millions of Americans during the historic journey of the Freedom Train which toured the then forty eight states from September 1947 until January 1949. It was a truly historic journey whereby many of our country's most historic documents and memorabilia were transported throughout the land in a special seven-car train to more than 300 communities in all of the states. To accomplish this objective government and private sources made available a remarkable collection of documents in which was written our national heritage. I was honored to be chosen to serve as Archivist on the train.

FREDERICK MANLEY CLARK 1848-1926

Don Smith

Don Smith, a second great grandson of Manley Clark, as he was known, researched newspaper archives revealing glimpses of his life from the time he was appointed Groton's Postmaster in 1885 at age 37 until his death at Waterbury in 1926 at age 78. editor

Manley Clark was born 4 September 1848 in Groton, VT son of William F. and Lois (Heath) Clark. He was the eldest of seven children. On October 8, 1868 he married Ellen Donaldson, daughter of George and Margaret (Symes) Donaldson and they raised three daughters, Ida Mae, Mabel Jane and Eva Myrtie. Ellen died 22 June 1900 in Groton, VT and Manley married Cynthia Greenfield 27 April 1904 in Henry Co. IA. On 26 August 1908 he married Mary (Allen) Perkins in Wells River, VT. Manley died 24 October 1926 in Waterbury, VT.

The first newspaper clippings about Manley Clark in 1885 report on his appointment as Postmaster in Groton. The Burlington Free Press on October 22 reported "*Sweeping changes in Vermont Post Offices...*" and listed twenty changes including Manley Clark replacing J. B. Darling in Groton. President Grover Cleveland, the first Democrat elected since 1856 (before the Civil War), resulted in widespread political appointment changes, customary at the time. The Argus and Patriot in Montpelier also reported November 4 that Manley had received his commission and they added "*... A. M. Heath is reported as hinting that he was not fairly used in that contest etc. If he does he knows he is not telling the truth, having had the benefit of all the doubts at the caucus at which the matter was voted on.*" Three years later on August 15, 1888 The Argus and Patriot reported, "*D. F. Clark, of Groton, is the new clerk at the Montpelier post office. B. F. Clark, his father, is one of the prominent Democrats of Groton, while Manley Clark, his uncle, is the most efficient Postmaster Groton ever had.*"

A news item in the Vermont Watchman and State Journal out of Montpelier on October 3, 1894 reported "*I. M. Ricker, Editor Richardson and Manley Clark, while at Barnet Pond hunting last week, were thrown from their wagon, receiving a few injuries. The horse was frightened by the firing of a gun.*"

On August 7, 1895 the Argus and Patriot reported, "*Postmaster Manley Clark has had a telephone placed in his house.*" This was fifteen years before Theodore Vail, President of AT&T, purchased 200 acres of

what is now Seyon State Park and is credited by some as having the first telephone in town, but Manley's was apparently earlier in 1895

In 1897 Manley was selling real-estate as the *Argus and Patriot* reported 22 October, "*Manley Clark has sold a building lot on Depot street to Alfred Ricker and has four more lots staked out awaiting purchasers. Mr. Ricker will build a house on the lot he has bought either this fall or the coming spring. This is not the last of the new houses to come either, for Postmaster Carpenter is negotiating with T. B. Hall for the purchase of a lot near the one recently bought by Orange Morrison and expects to build himself a house.*" In May 1900 both the *St. Johnsbury Caledonian* and the *Montpelier Evening Argus* reported he sold four more lots, one east of his house to John Fraser for \$350, two to Dr. G. B. Hatch for \$150, and one to Fred Webber for \$150.

January 1898 the *Groton Times* reported, "*Manley Clark has sold his goods in the old post office to A. R. Taylor. Mr. Clark has been in the tobacco, cigar and sporting goods business for the past 12 years, and during this time has been postmaster, with the exception of 2 1/2 years. He has faithfully performed the duties of this office to the satisfaction of the public.*" Those 2 1/2 years were during President Benjamin Harrison's term between President Cleveland's two non-consecutive terms. Manley sold the furniture he used in Groton to the postmaster at South Ryegate as reported in the *Montpelier Evening Argus* on October 19, 1898. The paper also reported earlier in October that "*...J. H. Smith was fined \$8 and costs for assaulting Manley Clark, Charlie Scott \$5 for drunkenness and Major Little \$50 for serving rum, cider or whatever it may be.*"

It appears that animosities might have occurred between Manley and some of the people in town. Perhaps over his political appointments or maybe in his merchandising or real estate businesses? His life was disrupted a number of times in the first decade of 1900. Manley's wife, Ellen, died 27 June 1900 and he was undoubtedly mourning her loss during this time.

Barre Evening Telegram on October 19, 1900 reported, "*Manley Clark had been taken to the asylum for the insane at Waterbury for treatment.*" He was released after a few months and February 16, 1901 The *Montpelier Evening Argus* published, "*Manley Clark is critically ill. The Doctors report that they think he will not recover. Wednesday morning at about 9 o'clock he was attacked with a paralytic shock. Doctor Tillotson was called and aided the suffering man all that he could. In the afternoon of the same day he was again attacked by a second shock which left him totally unconscious. He did*

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not rally until Thursday evening. Friday noon he had not regained anywhere near his normal condition. Everything that can possibly be done to relieve his suffering is being called into use.” Almost a year later on 14 January 1902 the Montpelier Evening Argus wrote about an accident at his home. *“An accident at the home of Manley Clark last Wednesday night came very near setting the house afire. W. R. Carbee and Walter Hayden have a room in Mr. Clark’s house. One of them went to move a table on which there was a lamp, when it tipped a little, and the lamp fell to the floor. The oil ran out, and in a few minutes there was a blaze. Mr. Carbee grabbed the lamp and rushed out of doors with it and in this way prevented a more serious accident. No one was injured and the damage was slight.”*

March 27, 1903 The Burlington Free Press reported Manley Clark was again taken to the asylum for the insane by Police Chief McMahon where he remained for five months before being released in October. His nephew, Daniel F. Clark, Assistant Postmaster in Montpelier and his guardian acknowledged receiving payment of Manley’s insurance endowment of \$1,399 on March 2, 1903. And in July The St. Johnsbury Caledonian published a Probate Court Notice that John D. McAllister, guardian of Manley, a mentally incapable person, applied for a license to sell his real estate described as a dwelling, outbuildings and land situated in Groton.

Manley then went west to Iowa where he married widow Cynthia (Greenfield) Clark April 27, 1904. Two years later The Rutland Daily Herald reported on January 23 1906, *“Manley Clark of Groton was brought before Justice of the Peace, J. C. Harvey on charges of tramping. He was found guilty and sentenced to the house of corrections for six months. Mr. Clark was once a prominent citizen of Groton and owned a house near the depot. His story is a sad one, about five years ago he was committed to the state hospital at Waterbury and after a short time was discharged because he was not insane. Within two years he was committed again and likewise discharged. After a guardian was placed over him he went west and met a lady who returned with him and helped him pay off his mortgage and have the guardianship removed. Then he sold the farm and left but Mrs. Clark caught him at Wells River. Soon after this he was placed in the state hospital for a third time and was discharged again as before. Then he went about tramping as the only course to follow.”*

The story of Manley Clark three times in asylum, found not insane, charged with tramping and sentenced to six months in the workhouse was widely covered by The Rutland Daily Herald, St. Johnsbury Republican,

St. Albans Daily Messenger, The Brattleboro Reformer, The Poultney Journal, and Morrisville Messenger. Several reported Attorney General Clarke C. Fitts requested State's Attorney Hill to investigate the alleged false imprisonment case of Manley Clark and his claim of mileage graft. Efforts to pardon him were reported in the April 25, 1906 issue of The Rutland Daily Herald. Whether he was pardoned or served the final three months of his sentence was not found.

Montpelier Evening Argus of August 24, 1907 reported "*Manley Clark has arrived home from California where he has been for a year.*" It appears he went to California when he was released from the house of correction in Rutland. The Groton Times of April 17, 1908 had an item, "*Manley Clark has opened a boot and shoe repair shop in the building of Horace Clark, at the bridge. Mr. Clark learned the boot and shoe trade and followed it for several years. He solicits your patronage and guarantees good work.*"

On August 26, 1908 Manley married for his third wife, Mary (Allen) Perkins in Wells River and The Groton Times printed it August 28. In the November 13 issue the paper reported Manley was arrested for bigamy. And the December 4 issue stated "*Drs. I. N. and S. N. Eastman and Judge T. B. Hall were in Chelsea, Tuesday, called there on the case of Manley Clark.*" News and Advertiser of Northfield, VT reported on December 22, "*Manley Clark of Groton who was arrested about a month ago and held for the grand jury on a charge of bigamy, was not indicted by reason of insanity of the respondent and the court, acting on the report of the grand jury, ordered Clark committed to the state hospital for the insane at Waterbury at the expense of the state.*"

The next news about Manley was notice of his death in The Groton Times October 29, 1926, "*Manley Clark, son of W. F. and Lois (Heath) Clark was born in Groton in 1847 and died in Waterbury Oct.24. He was the eldest of a family of six sons and one daughter, B. Franklin, Henry, Austin, Oscar, John, and Augusta M. All are now deceased except Oscar. Mr. Clark married Ellen, daughter of George Donaldson of Ryegate who died in 1900. Two daughters survive, Mrs. Mabel Moore of Lowell, Mass., and Mrs. Eva Clough of Bellows Falls. The eldest daughter, Mrs. Ida Smith, passed away two weeks before her father. Besides the two daughters he leaves several grandchildren, G. C. and G. E. Smith of Groton and several children of Mrs. Clough.*"

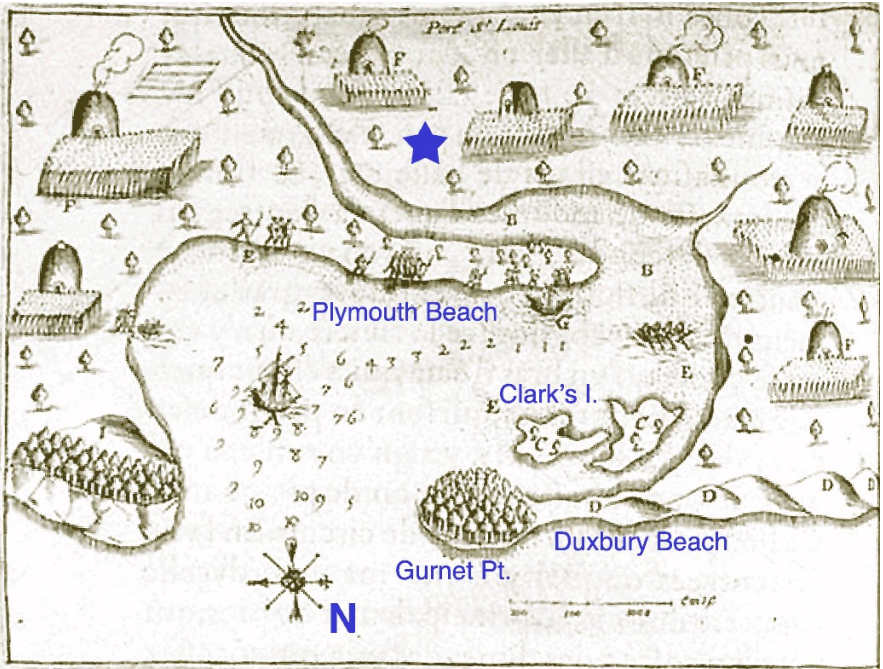
Mr. Clark served nearly eight years as postmaster under the Cleveland administration, being appointed during Cleveland's first term and reappointed during the second term.

Funeral services were held Tuesday afternoon at the Methodist church with burial in the village cemetery beside his wife."

PICTURES



Peter Paul House repaired and painted sans shrubbery. Photo by Lise Shallberg



Samuel de Champlain's 1605 map of Port St. Louis (Plymouth Harbor) with the Wampanoag village of Patuxet. Some modern place names added for reference. The star marks the approximate location of Plymouth Colony. From Wikipedia.



Mayflower II sailing to Plymouth Harbor for 400 year anniversary of Pilgrim's landing at Plymouth Rock in 1620 and the Plymouth—Wampanoag settlement.

MAYFLOWER 400 CELEBRATION

Celebrating 400 years since the Mayflower landed at Plymouth Rock 20 December 1620 has faced many problems this year, and most scheduled events have been postponed until next year. The covid-19 pandemic and civil unrest during an election year have interrupted “normal” living conditions and gatherings. A recent story by Richard Holledge published in the New European and titled: *Pilgrims and progressives: The story of the Mayflower voyage* describes another problem in telling the story of Plymouth Plantation establishment 400 years ago.

The cultural revolution, in efforts to rewrite history, accused the Mayflower Pilgrims and passengers of being plunderers and exploiters and responsible for all that came after them. Some went as far as blaming the Mayflower landing for George Floyd’s death in Minnesota earlier this year. In June Susie Boniface wrote in the Daily Mirror “The US was founded, 400 years ago this year by the Mayflower Pilgrims, on the idea of supremacy. Specifically, white, Protestant supremacy. What happened in Minneapolis last week, when George Floyd was murdered... started at Plymouth Rock in 1620 when 35 radical fundamentalists decided it was theirs.” Before Thanksgiving last year, the New Yorker magazine claimed that far from being “good hearted settlers from pious, civilized England... the pilgrims were, in fact, a warrior tribe.”

The Pilgrim’s motives though contradict that unlikely claim. William Bradford, who served as governor of the colony for about 30 years, wrote they decided to flee to Virginia, as the English colony all along the eastern seaboard was then known, because they were disheartened by the hardship of life in Holland and appalled at the licentiousness of the youth. Above all, they yearned to preach and live by the gospel as they saw it.

After unsuccessfully searching for a suitable location to settle at Provincetown, where they found buried corn they took for planting, they sailed to Plymouth Harbor and found an abandoned native village, Patuxet. It had suffered disease a few years earlier with only one survivor, Squanto, who lived with the Wampanoag tribe and later helped introduce them to Chief Massasoit.

Chief Massasoit, a name revered in Wampanoag folklore, signed a treaty with the settlers which guaranteed neither side would attack the other and any transgressors would be punished. That mutual defense pact saved the settlers and helped the Wampanoag, who themselves had been weakened by diseases introduced earlier by Spanish, French, English and other European explorers, fishermen and fur traders.

Judging Plymouth Plantation's role as a colonial power, one should consider its most aggressive actions were against their fellow English settlers who not only undermined the Pilgrim's vision of a well-ordered, God-fearing society but, were also rivals in the fish and fur trade.

The Wampanoag accepted payment from William Bradford, who bought a township for 16 pounds and nine shillings (today's value about 2,615 dollars) and another settler paid six coats, half a dozen pairs of small breeches, 10 hoes, 10 hatchets and two brass kettles.

These mutual living conditions between the two communities were interrupted in 1630 when 11 ships with 700 refugees under the leadership of Puritan John Winthrop sailed to New England to escape persecution at the hands of England's King Charles I.

The population of Boston in 1635 had reached 20,000. They needed more land for expansion – and it came at the expense of the local inhabitants. The French then occupying Canada utilized the native's predicament and incited them to attack the English settlements in New England.

In 1636, Winthrop's men of the Massachusetts Bay colony with Narragansett and Mohegan Indian allies – but not Plymouth or Wampanoag – nearly wiped out the Pequot tribe who had been carrying out guerrilla attacks on the settlers. By 1640s Plymouth Plantation did not have political control over anything but their own small corner of New England.

William Bradford died in 1657. Sachem Massasoit died around 660 and was succeeded by his son Wamsutta. Passing of the first generation disrupted the personal bonds between the two

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very different cultures. Tensions had long existed due to their different ways of life. Colonists' livestock trampling Native cornfields and competition for resources created friction. Regional economic changes forced many Natives to sell their land.

In 1662 Massachusetts Bay Colony forces took Wampanoag leader Wamsutta to Plymouth to exert control. The Wampanoag people were greatly angered when Wamsutta sickened and died shortly afterwards. Wamsutta's brother Metacom (King Philip) became leader and ultimately led his people into war to honor their traditions. After 50 years of peace between the Plymouth colony and the local Wampanoag tribe the rapidly expanding Massachusetts Bay Colony forced unwilling land sales causing protests.

Reacting to increasing hostility, the English met with King Philip, chief of the Wampanoag, and demanded surrender of their arms. The Wampanoag did so, but in 1675 a native informer to the English was murdered, and three Wampanoag were tried, convicted and executed for the crime. This ignited the already tense relationship. Chief Metacom (King Philip) began attacking and destroying English settlements, wiping out all west of Concord, nearly destroying the Massachusetts Bay colony. King Phillip's War (1675-1676) decimated the native population in New England. Many of those not killed or captured fled north to join with other tribes in Three Rivers, Canada.

It appears the Pilgrims are being unjustly blamed for actions of others, much like today's citizens being blamed for past incidents. Celebrating the 400 year anniversary of the Pilgrims voyage on the Mayflower and establishment of Plymouth—Wampanoag Plantation will be a challenge to focus on the historical facts.

'Voices of the Mayflower' by Richard Holledge is published by Troubador and available in bookstores.

THE WISDOM GAP

Condensed from a story by Alan W. Dowd, senior fellow at Sagamore Institute, printed in the American Legion magazine, April 2020.

Before the 20th century, human knowledge doubled every hundred years and by the middle of the century it was every 25 years. Today it is doubling every 13 months, and in the near future, some experts predict it could double every 12 hours.

That's because humanity and its machines are producing 2.5 million terabytes of data per day, and each terabyte equals about 85 million pages of text. With the internet, social media and digitizing of everyday things we use, like refrigerators, microwaves, TVs, cars, thermostats, etc., we are adding to the amount of information we generate. A lot of the information is worthless, but some is priceless and precious—and private. Making use of it, storing and accessing it, and determining who will be permitted to use, store and access it, will require more than intelligence.

Dan Coats, past director of national intelligence, said, "It's a constant struggle to process data, analyze it and convert it into knowledge and understanding." And Jonah Goldberg of the American Enterprise Institute observed, "We drown in information, but we starve for knowledge." Knowledge is the process of organizing information into something usable and then applying it to a problem or a need. The summit of knowledge is science, which literally means "the state of knowing ... systematized knowledge." In addition to access of more information and data, we also have greater access to knowledge and science than earlier generations.

What we lack with all this information and data, knowledge and science, is wisdom. Today's world is really starving for wisdom. Just as accumulation of information doesn't automatically yield knowledge, accumulation of knowledge doesn't automatically yield wisdom.

James Kelly, professor of physiology and medicine, told his students, "Knowledge is to wisdom as raw material is to the manufactured article—crude and comparatively worthless." Knowledge is a staircase to wisdom, but it alone does not make one wise.

Wisdom is more than intelligence, more than turning information and data into knowledge. Wisdom is the art, the craft, indeed the gift of sifting through knowledge, mixing it with judgement and experience, and then applying it to the challenges of life. That's an imprecise definition, because wisdom, unlike knowledge, is an imprecise quality. Wisdom cannot be honed into a science. Wisdom cannot be defined by a formula. Wisdom cannot be obtained by a course of study. Yet we know it when we see it or hear it.

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Most religions emphasize the importance of wisdom. The three monotheistic traditions—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—all agree wisdom is a gift from God. In Buddhism an entire book is devoted to wisdom and Hinduism calls for one to pursue “the way of wisdom.”

Americans have believed that religion serves as a foundation stone for free government and a repository of wisdom. We don’t have to worship on the same days or the same ways to recognize this. But organized religion in the U. S. has declined from 76 percent of Americans being members of an organized church in 1948 to only 50 percent being members today.

Knowledge of our history is also disappearing. Just half the American public can identify when the Civil War was fought. Sixty percent cannot name the nations we fought in World War II. Only 55 percent of millennials—now the largest generation in the U. S.—agree that “communism was and still is a problem,” according to a 2016 study.

Understanding of civics and political institutions is being lost. Only 26 percent of Americans could name our three branches of government. And only 40 percent could list any of the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment. Fifty seven percent don’t know how many justices are on the Supreme Court. Just 37 percent can name their member of Congress.

Do today’s leaders in elected office and business, in the intelligence community and the military, in education and health care, in computer technology and bioscience, have the wisdom to make proper use of the tidal wave of information and knowledge inundating them?

Our leaders wrestle with the ramifications of artificial intelligence’s (AI) manipulation of data and CRISPR’s manipulation of genes and deep-fake manipulation of images, with stateless enemies and endless wars, with digitization and technology and robotics, with hypersonic weapons, with pilotless aircraft, with rise of China and decline of postwar order, and cyber attacks, they need wisdom.

Again and again we see that a hallmark of wisdom is to seek advice and insight from others. Many attributes of wisdom come with living and experience, which is why we often relate wisdom to gray hair and wrinkled skin, but everyone knows old people who are foolish and young people who are wise beyond their years. Yet age and experience, like distance, tend to bring perspective.

Tomorrow’s leaders are a product of today’s culture. A culture that devours information while devaluing wisdom—a culture that disregards faith, history and pillar institutions—will find it increasingly difficult to find leaders with wisdom.

Good news is that wisdom can be handed down from generation to generation, but we have to start listening and learning again.

Groton Historical Society News

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The Peter Paul House, home to GHS, has been repaired and painted as scheduled for 2020. Its new coat of paint is a welcome sight for those entering Groton village from the east on highway 302 or from the north coming down Minard Hill. A new puzzle is planned for this fall to raise funds for finishing the painting next year. Rumors are it may be based on a map of Groton?

Fall Foliage Day in Groton has been cancelled this year, but the Historical Society is planning to be open if the situation will allow it on the first Saturday in October to sell GHS books, GHS calendars and the new GHS puzzle to the locals and travelling leaf peepers.

August 4th Vermont Research Newsletter reported Vermont has consistently been in the five states with fewest COVID-19 cases and deaths, both in total and per capita.

French explorers maps of 1713 and 1715 show an abandoned native village in the Newbury area. “Kowasek” is a well-known Western Abenaki village identified by historic and ethno-historic sources as located near Newbury, VT and Haverhill, NH. The Abenaki place-name “Kowasek” (Coos, Cowas, Cohas, Koes) is translated “at the place of the White Pines.” The Cowasuck Abenakis in northern Vermont are known for their hybrid corn grown here. When the first English settlers came up the Connecticut River to the Newbury area, they were given corn seeds by the Cowasucks living there. Today, the corn isn’t for sale at the supermarket and not available in catalogs. The few gardeners who grow it depend on saving their own seeds to continue a line that has been growing here for the past 1,000 years. (*reprinted from Happy Vermont*)

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