

Your House History: Maps - Titles - Genealogy

A research guide

Researching Buildings & Properties

Interested in learning more about who lived in your home? Wonder when it was built and by whom? The GHS has compiled resources and suggestions for how to get started researching the history of your home.

1. Check Town Land Records

Land records include any document related to a property that has been recorded and filed for public record. Records include deeds, mortgages, property sales, rights of way, plus documents pertaining to water rights, timber rights and utility easements. In Vermont, Town Clerks Offices are the keepers of the land records for their town.

Lots of information can be gleaned from records- such as a legal description of the property, and the history of property ownership.

The Town Clerk's Office of Groton records maintains records from approximately 1835 to the present.

Online Records

1987-Present are available online. You can view the records for free, but you have to pay to print.

Access online record through the town website: www.grotonvt.com. Hover over "Government" and then select "Online Land Records."

Searching Land Records In Person

To research land records, make an appointment with the Town Clerk. In Groton, this is Carrie Peters. There is no hourly fee for the first 2 hours of research for Groton landowners searching their own property records. After 2 hours a fee of \$4.00 per hour is charged according to the Clerk Fee Schedule published by the State of Vermont. To copy or print records, there is a fee of \$1 per page.

Town Clerk

Carrie Peters

802-584-3276

townclerk@grotonvt.com

2. Look at maps.

The Grant of Groton was made on November 7, 1780. It was not chartered until October 20, 1789 and by then the land had been surveyed twice. The "available" land was plotted and sold off in lots. Early maps of Groton show the land divisions and lot numbers. Supporting documents can help to tie lot numbers to their first private landowners.

Maps can also show business locations, owners, and business type.

Up until the 1990s Groton's streets didn't have official names and houses did not have numbers. Members of the Groton Historical Society met with the Postmaster and was the resource to come up with the historically based official names. Route 302 was officially named Scott Highway in 1945.

A selection of maps of Groton can be found on the Groton Historical Society's website: www.grotonvhistory.org/maps

Additional maps can be viewed at the Groton Historical Society's Peter Paul House, and the Groton Free Public Library.

3. Research the Genealogy of Homeowners

Learn about the history of the house through the people who lived there by exploring Census Data as well as Cemetery records. You can also find genealogies of the early families of Groton, as well as Cemetery records on the GHS Website.

Groton census data are available online dating back to 1790: <https://grotonvthistory.org/census/>

Federal census data can be found online here: <https://www.archives.gov/research/census>

4. Read Mr. Glover's Groton & Learn about Caledonia County

Deepen your knowledge by reading about the town and the region. Mr. Glover's Groton is an indispensable resource when conducting research on property in Groton. Copies of Mr. Glovers Groton can be purchased from the GHS, or borrow a copy from the Groton Free Public Library. Learn more about Mr. Glover's Groton and read chapter summaries on the Groton Historical Society's Website.

5. Visit the Library

The Groton Free Public Library has a small collection of maps and books about Groton and Caledonia County, and Vermont.

The Leahy Library of the Vermont Historical Society is another great resource. You can search their online catalog here: <https://vermonthistory.org/leahy-library/>

6. Newspapers

The Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA) has partnered with Newspapers.com to provide free access for state residents to newspapers that are no longer subject to copyright law. Search the address, previous owners, construction company names...you never know what you might find!

<https://sos.vermont.gov/vsara/explore/newspapers/>

7. Contact the Groton Historical Society

Stuck in your research? Hit a dead end? Or, want to share what you've learned?

Reach out to GHS for assistance and to contribute your research to the Groton Historical Society.

Email: Grotonvthistory@gmail.com

Additional Resources

O'Donnell, Eleanor. 1998. Researching a Historic Building. U.S. Department of the Interior: The National Register of Historic Places: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB39-Complete.pdf>

Hubka, Thomas C. 1984. Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England. Hanover [N.H.]: University Press of New England.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/557811135>

Historic New England. "Architectural Style Guide."

<https://www.historicnewengland.org/preservation/for-homeowners-communities/your-old-or-historic-home/architectural-style-guide/>

The Groton Historical Society has been preserving Groton history since it was founded in the early 1930s. The Groton Historical Society is located at the Peter Paul House in Groton Village. The house was purchased & lovingly restored by the Groton Historical Society in 1987.