
GROTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

Volume 22 Issue 2

Groton, Vermont 05046

Spring 2009

GROTON FAMILIES

IN 1850



Sally (Morse) Hill tombstone in Darling cemetery is inscribed with erroneous claim she was “The first born in Groton Vt.”

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2009 OFFICERS

President	Richard Brooks
Vice President	Deane Page
Secretary	Diane Kreis
Treasurer	Joan Haskell
Web Site Editor	Donald Smith
Newsletter Editor	J. Willard Benzie

The number of families living in Groton in 1850 was 172 with nearly half (80) new families since 1840. All but 20 of the new families were children or other relatives of earlier settlers. And 72 of the families counted in 1840 were not listed in 1850. Some (6) moved in with their children and some (17) died, but most moved away. The population was about four percent less than it was at the previous census, with only 878 people counted in the 172 families. The westward movement that had started earlier was continuing and Groton had her share of citizens

(Continued on page 2)

MEETING SCHEDULE

(second Tuesday)
April through October
10 AM at the Peter Paul House,
1203 Scott Hwy.

(Continued from page 1)

following Horace Greeley's advice "Go west, young man." The "Gold Fever" of the '49ers had some rushing to California, but most were seeking fertile farmland in the Midwest or elsewhere.

The asterisks in the following lists identify those missing in the GHS family records. BIL is for brother-in-law; SIL is son-in-law; d is for daughter; and neph is nephew. A record of all the people in each family can be seen on the GHS web site. (See page 3 for instructions to find the web page) Scroll down to "Research material available" and click on Groton censuses 1790-1930 Most available On-line, then click on 1850 census index.

Heads of families in 1850 living here for ten or more years were:

Jacob Abbott 1781-aft 1850
Cutting Bennett 1811-1867
Moses Burnham 1795-1861
Elijah S. Clark 1800-1852
Martha Clark 1804-1870
John Corruth 1801-1884
William Corruth 1806-1877
James Craig 1778-1862
Nathan Cunningham 1820-

Nathaniel Cunningham 1792-1858
Ira Darling 1801-1886
John Darling 1789-1855
Moses Darling 1782-1856
Samuel Darling 1775-1856
Samuel Darling Jr. 1819-1894
William Darling 1810-1864
Hugh Dunn 1805-1882
James Dunn 1800-1874
Isaiah Emery 1814-1858
Noah Emery 1791-1875
Simon Emery 1797-aft 1860
Timothy Emery 1807-1883
Ebenezer Fisk 1783-1858
Isaiah Frost 1790-1857
Moses Frost 1793-1880
Otis Glover 1811-1897
Thomas Goodwin 1812-1888
Isaac N. Hall 1808-1893
Jacob Hatch 1794-1873
John Hatch 1797-1875
Moses Hatch 1793-1858
Daniel Heath 1793-1863
James Heath 1810-1891
Jesse Heath 1798-1883
Sally Heath 1794-1856
Sally Hill 1787-1864
Stephen Hodgdon 1794-
William Hodgdon 1771-1856
John Hooper 1807-1890
Polly Hooper 1794-1873
Samuel Hooper 1808-1888
Sarah Jones 1799-1876
Susan Low 1806-1898
Moses Lund 1796-

McLane Marshall 1816-1889	Ara Welch 1811-1894
Norris Marshall 1789-1858	Evi Welch 1792-1860
Abraham Morrison 1794-1876	Forrest Welch 1786-1858
Charles Morrison 1790-1867	George Welch 1816-1865
Timothy Morrison 1805-1882	Hosea Welch 1787-1880
Jacob Orr 1815-1863	Jonathan Welch 1804-1871
James Orr 1804-1892	Medad Welch 1793-1872
Enoch Page 1781-1869	Stephen Welch 2nd 1810-1890
John Page 1789-1867	Thomas Weston 1792-
Jonathan Page 1814-1883	Reuben Whitcher 1783-1873
Moses Page 1807-1879	James B. Whitehill 1813-1889
Peter Paul 1811-1861	James M. Whitehill 1817-1893
Jonathan Peck 1808– aft 1860	Peter Whitehill 1800-1884
Samuel Plummer 1790-1880	Peter Whitehill 2nd 1818-
James Renfrew 1810-1873	William Whitehill 1817-1884
John O. Rhodes 1797-1867	Levi Wilson 1806-1864
Oliver Rhodes 1765-1852	William Wilson Jr. 1813-
Andrew Ricker 1810-1895	
Joseph Ricker 1765-1851	
Joseph Ricker 1805-1870	
Orson Ricker 1806-1887	
Daniel Roberts 1800-1884	
John Roberts 1802-1890	
Thomas Scott 1815– aft 1860	
David Silver 1788-aft 1861	
John Taisey 1791-1872	
William Taisey 1816-1895	
David Vance 1788-1863	
David Vance Jr. 1809-1886	
Ruth Vance 1799-1869	
William Vance 2nd 1810-1881	

The heads of new families listed in the 1850 census of Groton were:

Josiah Abbott-Jacob's son
 Percival Bailey-Flavel's son
 John Baldwin-Enoch Page's SIL
 David Bean-Norris Marshall SIL
 James Bennett*
 William Brown-Jacob Hatch SIL
 Sophia Buchanan-Orange Clark d.
 Eliphalet Carpenter-Glover's BIL
 John Carrick-Orange Clark's SIL

(Continued on page 4)

GROTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY WEB PAGE

Go to the Town's web page on the internet at <http://www.grotonvt.com/>
 Then click on the link to the **Historical Society** in the list of organizations.
 See pictures scanned by Dick Kreis posted on the web page by Don Smith

(Continued from page 3)

Daniel Cash-new family
 Stephen Chase*
 Betsey Clark-Almon's 2nd wife
 Orange G. Clark-Orange S. son
 William Clark-Orange S. son
 Daniel Coffrin-J. Hooper's g. son
 William Cross Jr.*
 Ed Cunningham-John Hatch's SIL
 Hazen Cunningham-Nathan's son
 Ammon Darling-Daniel' son
 Brock Darling-John's son
 Jonathan Darling-John's son
 Stephen Darling-Samuel's son
 John Dodge*
 William Dow-new family
 Ansel Foster-Noah Emery's SIL
 Arial Gilbert*
 Abner Goodwin-Rufus' son
 Robert Goodwin-new family
 Philinda Hall*
 Caleb Hanson*
 Franklin Heath-Daniel's son
 Josiah Heath-Jesse's son
 Mariah Heath-Jesse's daughter
 Robert Heath-James' son
 Josiah Hodgman*
 William Hubbard*
 Caroline Humphrey-Aaron
 Hosmer Jr.'s daughter
 Jane Johnston*
 David Jones*
 William Leithead-John Page's SIL
 Jonathan Lund-Silas' son
 Baldwin Martin*
 George Marting*

James McGen*
 Wm. McLaughlin-Peter's son
 John Miller-new family
 John Morrison-Abraham's son
 Francis Morrison-Charles' son
 William Morrison-Charles' son
 William Orr-James' brother
 Benjamin Page-John's son
 Leverett Page-Jhn Whitehill's SIL
 Ebenezer Pane*
 Bradley Plummer-Samuel's son
 Ebenezer Plummer-Samuel's son
 John Plummer-Moses' son
 Moses Plummer-Moses' son
 William Plummer-Moses' son
 Benjamin Randall-Moses Page SIL
 Jonathan Randall-Samuel's neph
 Archibald Renfrew-Andrew's son
 Simon Ricker-Joseph's son
 George Scott-Thomas' son
 William Seaver-new family
 John Stuart* [Stewart in 1860]
 Thomas Taisey-John's son
 Daniel Vance-David's son
 Aaron Welch-Medad's son
 Daniel Welch-Stephen's brother
 Daniel Welch 2nd-Daniel's son
 David Welch-Jonathan's son
 Hosea Welch-Medad's son
 Jeremy Welch-Forrest's son
 Moses Welch-Daniel's son
 Martin Weld-Moses brother
 Marvin Whitcher-Reuben's son
 Nelson Whitcher-Reuben's son
 David Whitehill-James brother
 John Wormwood-Joseph's son

(Continued on page 10)

PROPOSED CANAL in GROTON

by Dale Brown

Prior to the advent of the railroads, that operated in Vermont as early as 1848 and in Groton by 1873, the rivers and lakes were the primary routes of travel for people and produce. Even the foot trails, horse trails, oxen and wagon trails usually followed the waterways. Where water is of sufficient depth to float a vessel, or where its frozen surface offers winter travel, it is a basic highway, following the natural path of least resistance.

The Connecticut River was used by flat bottom river boats as far north as Barnet by 1810 when 5 canals had been completed to bypass rapids and waterfalls that previously required a portage or carry. Samuel Morey built a steamboat in 1791 that was successfully tested on the Connecticut River between Fairlee and Orford, and Robert Fulton built one that was used commercially on the Hudson River in 1807. Steamboats were a major boost for water transportation.

In 1823 a canal connected the Hudson River to the southern

tip of Lake Champlain at Whitehall. And two years later, the Erie Canal had linked Troy and Albany with the Great Lakes. The Ohio Canal further aided the westward movement. Later, in 1843, the Chambly Canal on the Richelieu River completed a navigable water route to Montreal and other port cities on the St. Lawrence River.

The canal fever was burning high in ambitious Vermonters and a great project, talked about for years of speculation and planning, was a scheme to link Lake Champlain to the Connecticut River, by way of the Winooski River. In 1825, a State committee in Montpelier recommended such a project. They passed a resolution which read in part "That his Excellency the Governor be requested to apply to the Secretary of the War Department of the United States ... to explore and survey ... a route for a Canal from Lake Champlain to the Connecticut River, through the valley of the Onion [Winooski] River ..."

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

In the summer of 1829, a contingent of the United States Topographical Engineers surveyed the Winooski River from Lake Champlain to Marshfield. From Marshfield the route would continue to the Connecticut River through Groton and the Wells River or through St. Johnsbury which would have been 200 feet higher elevation and 5 miles longer. The Groton and Wells River route would be more efficient.

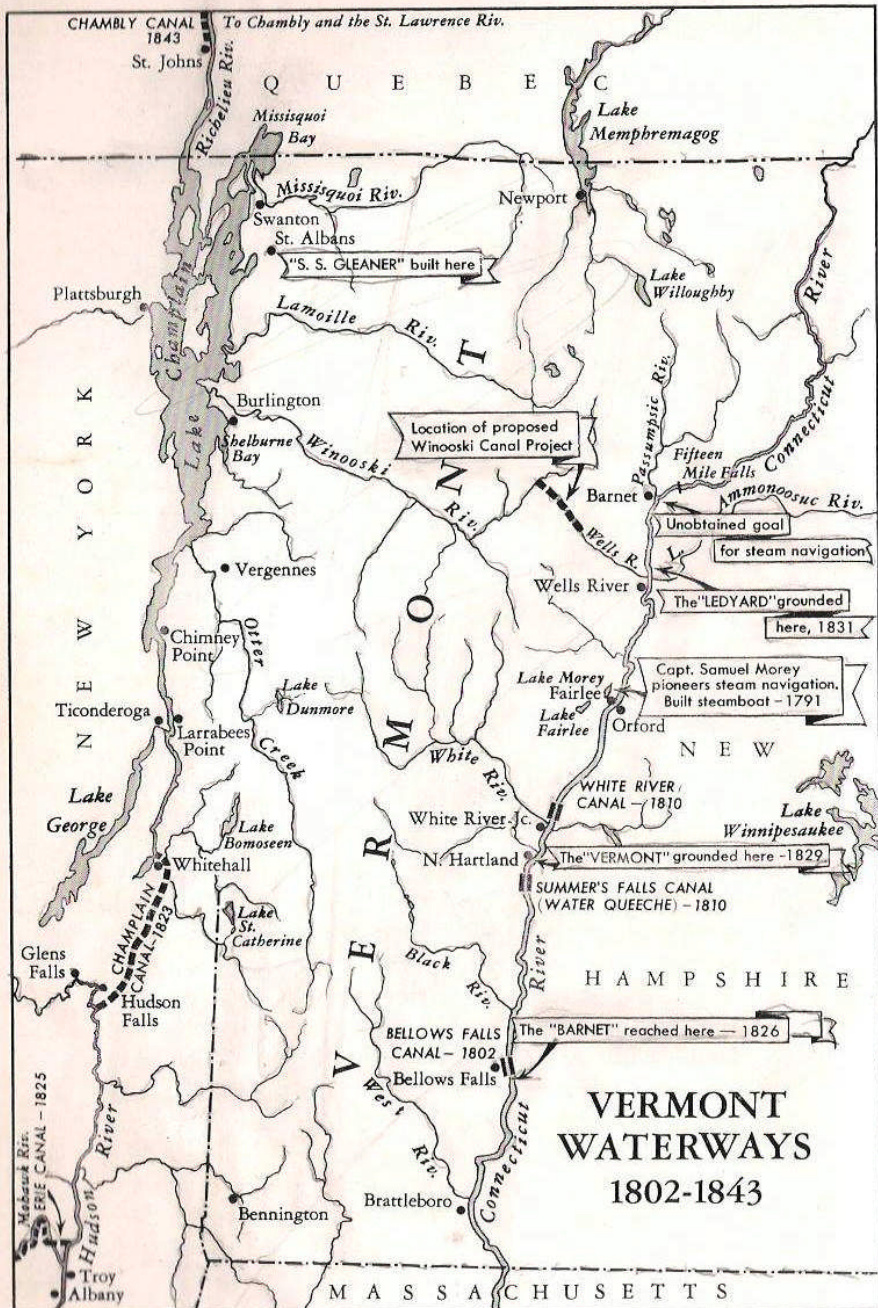
The elevation of the Winooski River at Lake Champlain is 100 feet above sea level and at Marshfield it is 840 feet. The highest elevation of land where the canal would likely go, near Owl's Head, is 1300 feet, about 222 feet higher than Lake Groton which is 1078 feet and Kettle Pond is a little higher. Wells River is 1051 feet elevation where it leaves Rickers Pond, 740 feet at the Groton-Ryegate line and 430 feet where it enters the Connecticut River.

Two possibilities for building the connecting canal would be as follows. Use 272 locks to reach the elevation of land near Owl's Head, using Kettle Pond as the feeder lake; however water needs

would undoubtedly far exceed this source of supply. The other possibility would use 203 locks by digging a ditch, 230 feet deep, near Owl's Head and raise the boats up to the level of Lake Groton. Lake Groton would be the feeder lake.

For the 81 mile journey from Burlington to Wells River, the number of locks required to provide this canal service, would possibly be around 260. Needless to say, this canal was never built. It would have been an uneconomical project and short-lived because the railroad era was beginning. Within forty years the Montpelier and Wells River Rail Road was operating over the eastern part of this same route with up to ten trains a day.

The map of Vermont Waterways 1802-1843 on page 7 showing the proposed canal is from Edmund Fuller's book VERMONT A History of the Green Mountain State, published by the State Board of Education, Montpelier, VT 1952.



THE NATIONAL SURVEY, CHESTER, VT.



Daniel Welch family



Dolly (Page) Welch wife of Nehemiah



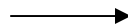
Enoch Welch son of Nehemiah



Welch siblings—Ira, Andrew, John Ara and Laura (Welch) Hitchcock

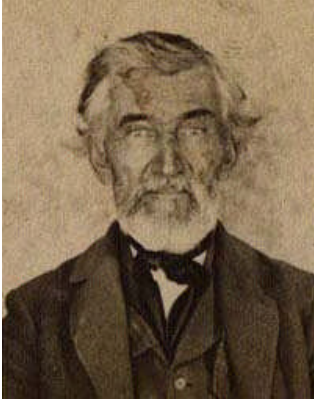


Silas Lund Jr.
brother of Moses



Jacob C. Hooper
brother of Samuel





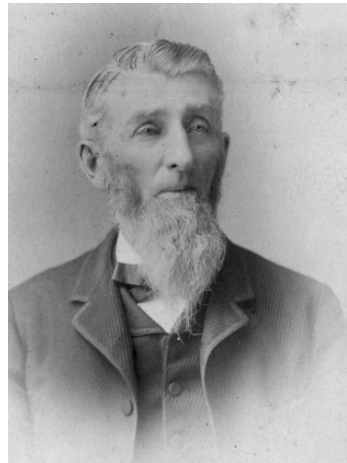
John Brock Darling



Jonathan Robards Darling



George B. Hatch g-son of John

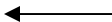
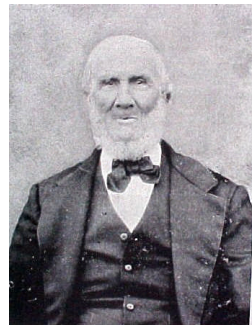


Isaac Page Dunn brother of
Hugh and James



Andrew Buchanan
brother-in-law of Sophia
(Clark) Buchanan

Moses Plummer



(Continued from page 4)

The heads of families listed for the first time in 1840 and missing in the 1850 census are:

Phebe Abbott m. Alonzo Fife
 Charles Bailey went to Peacham
 Benjamin Bennett went to WI?
 Barnard Brickett*
 James Buchanan to Wells River
 Silas Burnham
 Jeremiah Chase went to NY
 Morris Clark to Wells River?
 James Corruth went to Topsham
 Peter Corruth
 Wesson Crown went to Ryegate
 Lyman Culver*
 Samuel Darling 2nd went to CT
 Lucius Divoll*
 John P. Emery went to WI
 Joshua Emery went to MN
 Charity Franklin to Ryegate
 William Furwell*
 John Gates—died 1841
 William Grant went to Corinth
 Moses Hadley*
 Daniel Hatch*
 Reuben Hill went to Montpelier
 Elijah Hooper
 Nathaniel Hooper
 John Jones—died 1845
 William Jones*
 N. H. Joy*
 William Marshall went to CA?
 Isaac Morse went to Derby VT
 Thomas Morse

Michael Moulton*
 Samuel Page*
 James Patterson*
 Ebenezer Paul
 Asa Philbrick
 Stephen Roberts went to CA
 Lebbeus Welch
 Moses Weld went to ME
 Ephraim Wheeler*
 George Whitcher to Shaftsbury
 Hiram Wood—died 1845

Heads of older families missing in the 1850 census were:
 Flavel Bailey—died 1847
 Timothy Bennett living with son
 Orange Clark living with son
 Samuel Clark—died 1848
 Daniel Darling living with son
 Jonathan Darling went to WI
 Judith Darling—died 1845
 Nathan Darling went to NY
 Benjamin Goodwin
 Reuben Goodwin went to NH
 Rufus Goodwin living with son
 Horatio Heath—died 1841
 Jacob Heath—died before 1850
 John Hill—died 1840
 James Hooper—died 1848
 Simon Lathrop
 Ephraim Low—died 1850
 Enoch Manchester went to NY
 Peter McLaughlin living w/ son
 Edmund Morse—died 1843
 Enoch Page III
 Moses Plummer

Samuel Randall
Andrew Renfrew—died 1843
Daniel Stanley—died 1843
William Stanley—died
James Taisey –died 1841
Nehemiah Welch went to IL
Job Welton—died 1849
Joseph Wormwood living w/ son

Many Groton families in 1850 were the third generation from their ancestor settlers and some were the fourth. Groton was a well established town with many family ties back to the founding fathers. Other family members had moved on to other states from Maine to California and Texas to Minnesota. People with roots in Groton were spreading to other lands including foreign countries, especially Canada. But new families were also moving to Groton as evidenced by the 20 new families listed in the 1850 census.

Farming was the major occupation in Groton; 70% of those listed in the census were farmers. Another 16% were laborers, probably farm hands, mill workers and woodsmen. About 8% listed one of the building trades and there were 3 professionals: a physician, lawyer and Clergyman. Others

included millers, blacksmiths, shoemakers, merchants, Inn keepers, clothiers, a jeweler and an axe maker.

Most farms had several cows for milk, butter, cheese and beef; a few sheep for wool and mutton, a hog or two for pork, and poultry for eggs and meat.

Oxen were being replaced with horses, as fields were getting easier to cultivate and roads easier to travel. Stonewalls were still being built, but post and rail fencing was coming into common use.

Hay was being harvested with a scythe, bull rake and pitch fork; grains with a sickle, dried in shocks, and threshed with a flail on the barn floor. Farm machinery was in the future.

Sawmills, grist mills, carding and fulling mills all had limited operations in 1850, but were soon to see an expansion in their business.

Railroad service had already reached Wells River so the long trips to southern New England to sell produce and purchase supplies were less frequent now.

Farming, lumbering and local businesses kept Groton in tune with the times of the mid 19th century.

ALLEN BROTHERS and GROTON

Groton's Charter was signed 220 years ago on October 20, 1789 by Governor Thomas Chittenden of the Independent Republic of Vermont. Only 13 proprietors, who signed the town grant, nine years earlier, were on the Charter. One of the new signers, James Abbott, was the only proprietor who actually lived in Groton. He built a log cabin in the northeast corner of town in 1782 and later a plank home before moving to Ohio in 1807.

Another new proprietor on Groton's Charter was Ethan Allen, the legendary leader of the Green Mountain Boys. But unfortunately he died of a stroke in 1789, the same year Governor Chittenden signed the Charter.

Ethan Allen was born in Connecticut, the oldest of 8 children. Ira, the youngest, surveyed and laid out Groton's First Division in 1787 and was Moderator at the early proprietors meetings.

Before Europeans arrived, two Indian Nations lived and battled in the area. The Iroquois west of Lake Champlain in New York consisted of the Mohawk, Cayuga, Oneida, Onondaga and Seneca

tribes known as the Five Nations. Later the Tuscaroras joined to make six. East of Lake Champlain and in eastern Canada was the Algonquin Nation also with many tribes. Two of the best known were the Mohicans and the Abnakis. During the French and Indian wars the French recruited Algonquins to fight the English Colonies. And during the Revolutionary war the British recruited Iroquois to fight the Colonies. Constant danger from raiding parties discouraged new settlers.

After the French and Indian wars ended with the fall of Quebec in 1759, capture of Montreal in 1760 and Treaty of Paris in 1763 all of Canada belonged to England and peace seemed secure enough for settlers to start moving north into the New Hampshire Grants.

New Hampshire was made a separate Colony from Massachusetts in 1741 and Governor Benning Wentworth lost little time granting townships west of the Connecticut River, starting with Bennington in 1750, his namesake.

The New York Colony believed its eastern boundary was the Connecticut River, but earlier disputes with Connecticut and Massachusetts had established their western boundaries 20 miles east of the Hudson River. Governor Wentworth thought this should apply to the New Hampshire Colony as well and started granting townships as far west as the Massachusetts border with New York.

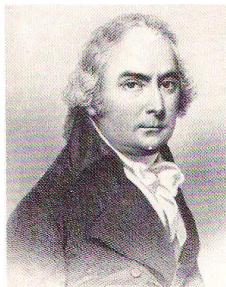
Ethan Allen and his brothers went north from Connecticut about 1767 into the New Hampshire Grants. The dispute between New Hampshire and New York left the settlers in the area with little choice but to defend their land with their local town militias. In 1770 Ethan organized the militias and other settlers into the Green Mountain Boys for that purpose.

About 1772 Ethan, Ira, their cousin Remember Baker and others formed the Onion River Land Company to purchase land along the Onion [Winooski] River. In 1775 Ethan and his partners offered 45,000 acres for sale along the Onion River guaranteeing a valid title from the Province of New Hampshire. Perhaps Ethan purchased his right in the

Groton Charter with proceeds from sale of his Onion River lands .

Vermont declared independence as a sovereign state on January 15, 1777; about 6 months after the 13 colonies had declared independence from England. Both Ethan and Ira worked hard to keep New York and New Hampshire from claiming the State during its independence from England, France and the United States. Vermont remained independent until joining the Union of the original 13 Colonies as the 14th State on March 4, 1791.

Ethan Allen
1738-1789



Ira Allen
1748-1814

GROTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Paid memberships for 2009 are now more than 56% (44 of 78) and only two members who haven't paid dues since 2006 have been removed from the mailing list. The last year of your paid dues is shown on your mailing address. Please notify the secretary of any errors.

A copy of Newsletter No. 11, Spring of 1991 has been found thanks to member Chestine Beaton. The GHS file is now complete except for issues 1 & 2.

From 2008 Town Report

The Groton Historical Society meetings are open to everyone at 10 a.m. on the second Tuesday of each month, April or May thru October. All meetings are held at the Peter Paul Historical House. If you wish to become a member of the society, the dues are \$10 per person or \$15 a couple. The recent dues increase was necessary to help with the expense of mailing the quarterly newsletter. Current officers are Richard Brooks, president; Deane Page, vice president; Joan Haskell, treasurer; and Diane Kreis, secretary. There will no longer be open house during

the months of July and August on Sunday afternoons. Instead we will be open by appointment from May thru October. We are open all day on the first Saturday of October for Fall Foliage Day. Appointments to visit the house may be made by calling Richard Brooks. Come join us at our meetings. We maintain the historical house, genealogical records and new projects. This coming year we will be recording the Groton buildings over 100 years old. Diane Kreis, Secretary

Member Dale Brown has written stories about the Proposed Canal in Groton (p. 5), and the Manufacturing of the Page Chain (planned for a future issue). Members are encouraged to submit stories, pictures and other material to the newsletter. Everything will be considered and appropriate material will be printed as space permits.

Who were your ancestors? What were their defining characteristics? What family values were they entrusted with and how did they pass them

along to more recent generations?

Family values shape and define our character. Our past is our future. Connections with older generations provide touchstones to the past. Photographs, diaries, and letters that have found their way to your generation are all part of your family-story.

Many Groton Historical Society members and friends have donated collections of their historical documents, heirlooms, and pictures to the Society. These collections both honor the donors' families and open the doors for historians, genealogists, and future generations to connect to the past.

It's estimated that 80% of the paperwork that finds its way into people's lives can be safely tossed. But what about the other 20%? When is it safe to empty that box of long-forgotten documents collecting dust in the attic or storage area? The present day FEAR about having your identity stolen is resulting in permanent destruction of many family documents that might help future generations learn about their family history.

The state of Vermont has set a deadline of July 1, 2015, by which time all municipalities must find and document their old roads or lose the public's right to use them. Some of these roads date back centuries.

Local Historical Societies items for discussion

- * Membership--Growth, retention, fees, and management
- * Communications--
Newsletters, websites, postcards, e-mail newsletters
- * Programs
- * Special events--Including special celebrations, such as community-wide events
- * Publishing--Including books
- * Merchandise
- * Collection management--
Storage, preservation, record keeping, digitizing, access, display
- * Fundraising--Events, grants, endowments, capital campaigns, others
- * Planning--Including a long-range plan
- * Volunteers--Recruiting, organizing

Suggested items for discussion provided by the Vermont Historical Society. Ed.

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Complimentary Copy
Annual membership dues
Individual \$10
Couple \$15