

WATERBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



WINTER 2019

Volume 20, Number 4

Majestic Red Oak Down But Not Forgotten

Town and Revitalizing Waterbury Preserving Remnants of 143-Year-Old Main Street Tree

By B. Farr

As part of the Main Street project, a large red oak tree was removed on April 9, 2019. Several people expressed concern at seeing such a large and majestic tree taken down.

It was the only red oak tree identified on Main Street when an arborist assessed the health and conditions of the trees along the street's right of way. It was old and the roots were tangled with the sidewalk, road, and water and sewer lines right underneath. Sadly, it was identified for removal.

Three sections of the large trunk were taken to a specialty sawmill in Bristol, Vermont Tree Goods, that works specifically with heirloom trees to preserve their beauty for generations to come. The mill is believed to have the largest saw in the state. Owner John Monks says the history of each tree he works with has a story to tell, including Waterbury's special red oak.

The red oak tree is estimated to be 143 years old. That would place its start in life in 1876, or the 100 year anniversary of the US Declaration of Independence. When the tree trunk was cut down it weighed 23,500 pounds, according to the scale on the huge crane that was brought in to remove it. The trunk of the tree was divided into 3 sections approximately

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Fall Program Surveys Local Cemeteries

By Cheryl Casey

In keeping with the Halloween spirit and the waning daylight of late October evenings, the Historical Society's fall program highlighted seven of the cemeteries that dot the Waterbury landscape. Some cemeteries are familiar sights in our day-to-day wanderings about town, while others may have been long forgotten off the beaten path.

The Town's three most visible cemeteries--Maple Street Cemetery, Hope Cemetery, and the Old Center Cemetery--were presented by Jack Carter, Skip Flanders, and Cheryl Casey, respectively. Maple Street is known as the final resting place of a

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Clockwise from top right: The red oak tree can just be seen on the right of the photo, dated circa 1890; just after the flood in 1927; and just before its removal in April, 2019.

In This Issue

- Farrar's Addition proposed as historic district
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Farrar's Addition, northwest of the Waterbury Village Historic District, is being proposed to the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Mapping by CAI Technologies.

Mill Village Historic District

As Described in 1976 Survey

[Editor's Note: The below text is taken from the Statement of Significance in a 1976 survey of the Mill Village district for the Division For Historic Preservation and the National Historic Register. A number of districts were surveyed that year and will be covered in future newsletter issues.]

Mill Village Historic District retains much of its original character as an area of important local history for the perspective it offers on 19th and 20th century industrial history. The mill and dams and Thatcher Brook on which these are sited combine to form an unusually picturesque complex. Together with the upper and lower mill falls upstream at Colbyville (survey 1218-7), they provide a scenic and historic resource of importance to the community and area.

The Mill Village is a district of

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Farrar's Addition Proposed As Historic District By Town

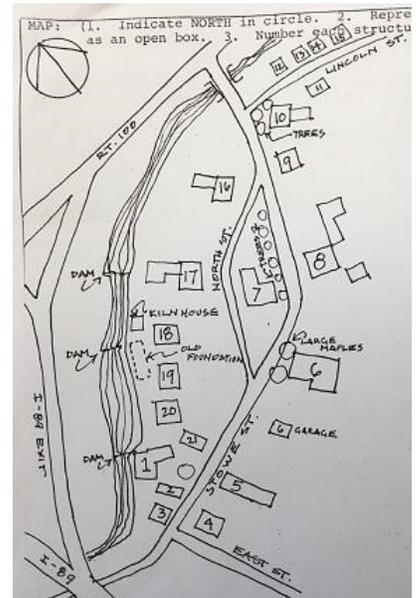
By B. Farr

The Town of Waterbury is pursuing a Historic Sites & Structures Survey and nomination to the State and National Registers of Historic Places for the proposed Farrar's Addition Historic District. This proposed District is to the northwest of the existing Waterbury Village Historic District that is being updated. The preparation of the Farrar's Addition survey and nomination will serve as the basis for an application to the State of Vermont and the U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, to have the proposed District listed on the State and National Registers.

There are approximately 60 parcels in the area of the proposed Farrar's Addition Historic District. All the parcels have at least one building on the lot. Roughly 2/3 of the buildings are more than 50 years old. Many have accompanying carriage barns or garages and some of those are more than 50 years old as well.

A couple of commercial buildings, or former commercial buildings that are now residential, also occupy the district. These are more than 50 years old. One was an auto dealership that is still commercial and the other was a creamery that is now multi-family housing.

Much of the proposed Historic District was once a part of the former Governor Ezra Butler property and includes his house, which is individually listed in the State Register of Historic Places.



A sketch of the Mill Village Historic District for the 1976 survey, included in the application to the National Historic Register and Division for Historic Preservation.



Preserving the Town's Majestic Red Oak

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8-10 feet each in order to be able to take it to the sawmill.

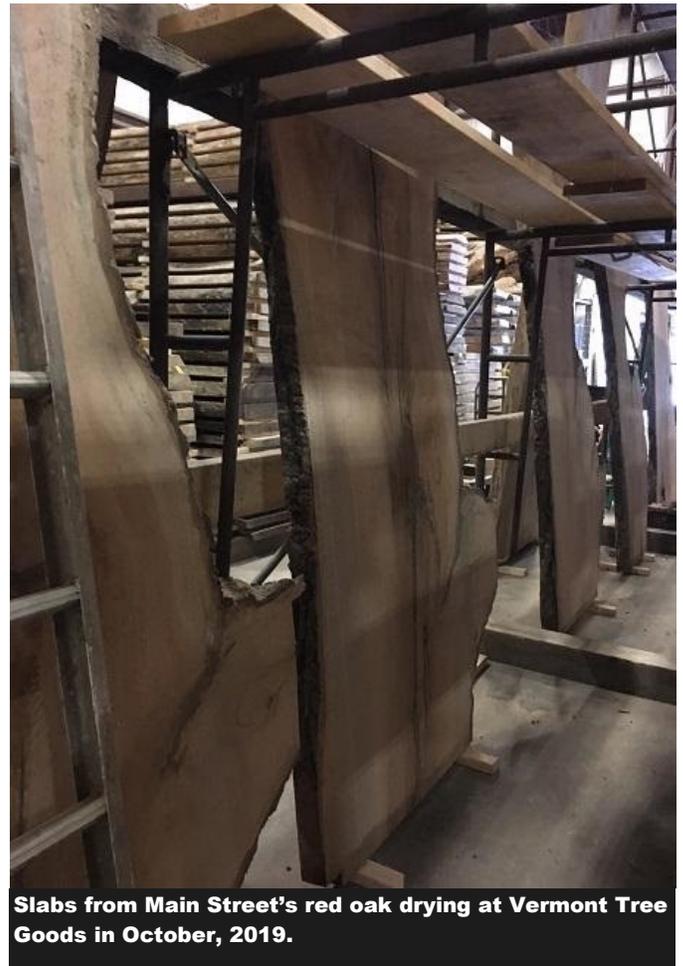
Vermont Tree Goods sawed the first two trunk sections in July: in 8' slabs and 42" slabs, which are 4+' wide and about 3+" thick each; and 6 "cookies," or horizontal slices, about 4' wide. Of these cut slabs, there are several that are suitable for dining tables or coffee tables. Some have the character resulting from bleeding from metal nails that discolored the wood over the years. Overall there is a good amount of very nice red oak slab hardwood with very little or no cracking/splitting or rot in the core of the trunk.

The third and last trunk piece about 8' long was cut in October. There are some beautiful prime pieces of 4+' wide slabs suitable for one-of-a-kind live-edge tables.

The next stage is the drying process that could take up to a year for the larger pieces. Because of their sizes, the slabs will be preserved best if dried in a controlled setting that includes part air drying and part kiln drying. For the time being most of the cut slabs will remain at the mill for proper drying under their controlled conditions.

The Town of Waterbury and Revitalizing Waterbury (RW) are partnering to preserve the memories of this tree and its significance to the community. Slabs, tables, wooden earrings and keepsakes will be made available to anyone interested through an RW fundraiser. All funds raised through the sale of wood products from the oak tree will go towards supporting a Beautify Waterbury project upon the completion of the Main Street Reconstruction. Revitalizing Waterbury, a non-profit organization, will coordinate and manage this project that will provide grant funds to businesses and private property owners in the construction zones to enhance the facades of their properties. More to follow in the coming year as the program is designed and becomes available.

More about Vermont Tree Goods and specialty work can be found at www.vermonttreegoods.com



Slabs from Main Street's red oak drying at Vermont Tree Goods in October, 2019.

WHS Welcomes New Office Manager

The Waterbury Historical Society welcomes LeeAnne Viens as the new office manager to help organize our collections, accept new donations, increase access to our online descriptions of objects and files, and respond to requests that come in from people far and wide looking for information on past relatives or other items of history. LeeAnne was the bookkeeper for the Town of Waterbury for approximately 30 years and is well versed in local knowledge and our community. We are lucky to have her expertise to keep our historic collections in good order.

Welcome, LeeAnne!

Donations

Robert Finucane:

- ◆ Tray of 33mm slides from 1973 - 1974

William W. Lowe:

- ◆ Hardcover book, *The History of Washington County*, printed 1882

Anne Imhoff:

- ◆ Four boxes of *Exit 10* photographs from 1998 forward

Brian Lindner:

- ◆ Notebook containing copies of slide presentation of Waterbury train wrecks

Caroline Stewart:

- ◆ Framed and matted photo of Drew Daniels beside the stone shed in Waterbury, with a railroad car loaded with granite slabs

Peter Miller:

- ◆ Framed poster of *Walter Hacks*, a play written and produced by George Woodard
- ◆ Matted photograph of George Woodard by Peter Miller Photography

Karen Steele:

- ◆ Copy of photographic documentation of the freight house before its removal
- ◆ Original photograph of the tower and tank at the old Anderson batch plant

Kathleen Daye:

- ◆ *Empty Beds* book signed by the authors

Stanley & JoAnne Ather:

- ◆ Printing plates for the Holdfast Clothespin boxes from Demeritt & Palmer Packing Co. in Waterbury



Mystery Photo Do you know who this man is?

Email the editor at Cheryl.casey1010@gmail.com

Rest and Relaxation From the China-Burma-India Front

By Calvin Dow

Deep in the bowels of the Pentagon, a blip registered in the personnel records department. Unit #20134934, non-commissioned officer Calvin Dow, *if still alive in the combat zone of China-Burma-India, has served his country for two years. He is entitled to enjoy two weeks of R+R (rest and rehabilitation) to restore his morale.*

The U.S. Army took over a resort hotel [for R+R] high in the cool comfort of the foothills of the Himalayan Mountains, 6,000 feet above the blistering, tropical, 105-degree heat of the subcontinent below.

It was an oasis paradise 12,000 miles from the U.S.A.: a lake, a view, fresh air, recreation facilities, socializing and dancing with American women

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Waterbury Cemeteries Highlighted

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number of Waterbury luminaries, as is Hope. Flanders also highlighted how Hope Cemetery was expanded over the years. The Old Center Cemetery includes 37 Civil War Veterans.

Lesser-known and little-visited cemeteries included Demeritt, Ricker Mountain, Johnson, and Loomis Hill. Demeritt Cemetery, presented by Betty Jones, is primarily a small family cemetery, consisting of 12 gravestones. It is located off of Blush Hill.

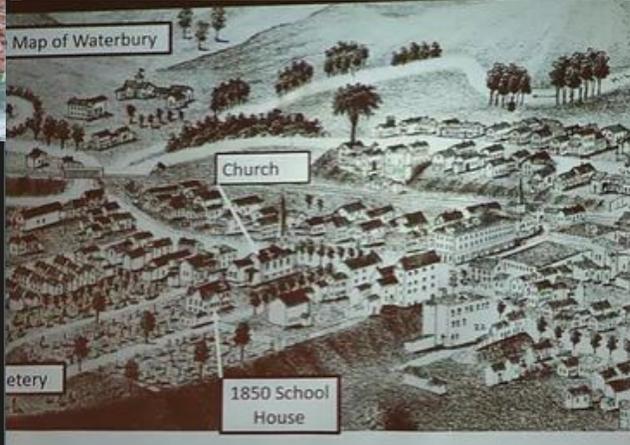
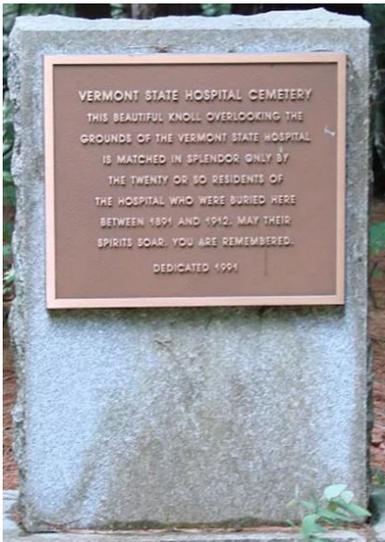
Brian Lindner covered several of the cemeteries scattered on Ricker Mountain, above the Little River Campground. The Ricker Cemetery itself is the largest, containing 18 headstones. Upper Cemetery contains about 10, and Little Wingate holds about three.

South of the Ice Center, up between the Interstate and the railroad tracks, lies the Johnson Cemetery. John

Woodruff told a humorous tale of thieves whisking away the red granite headstone of Revolutionary War veteran Zachariah Bassett, and the various hoops required to replace it.

The Loomis Hill Cemetery was presented by Barbara Walton, who has been a major force in organizing the reclamation of the cemetery from overgrowth and time. Established in 1799 near what is now the intersection of Ripley and Loomis Hill Roads, the Cemetery is the final resting place of a number of familiar names, including the Cady, Loomis, Newcomb, and Wheeler families.

With the Town's lengthy history of colonial settlement, many smaller and family cemeteries could not be included in the program. Notable among these is the Vermont State Hospital Cemetery, where nearly 30 residents of the hospital were buried between 1892 and 1912. The cemetery sits near the Perry Hill bike trails, on a knoll that would have overlooked the grounds of the hospital.



Clockwise from top left: The marker memorializing the patients of the Vermont State Hospital in the hospital's old cemetery; the view down what is now Hollow Road, with the Old Center Cemetery visible on the far right; Loomis Hill Cemetery; the replaced Bassett headstone in Johnson Cemetery;

a sketched Village map showing Hope Cemetery at the bottom left, behind the Church and 1850 School House.

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor,

[In response to Skip Flanders' Fall 2019 article about 1899 Village Sewer Plans.] The water supply for Waterbury Center came from springs on North (now Barnes) Hill. Water for Waterbury came from springs on Mount Hunger. The 1907 sewer pipes discharged sewage into the Winooski River, which made for unhappy fish. This invasion of the pristine natural resources of the river, which flows into Lake Champlain, came to an end as the populations of Waterbury exploded.

*Your Connecticut Member
Calvin Dow*

Below: Birthday boy Richard Abare, who will celebrate his 100th on January 5, 2020. (Photo courtesy of Facebook.)



WHAT AND WHERE? Do you know this former structure in Waterbury? Do you know where it was located? Write to the editor with your memories!

Historical Society Member Celebrates 100 Years

By Cheryl Casey

The Waterbury Historical Society wishes a very happy birthday to member Richard Abare, who will turn 100 years old on January 5, 2020.

Born on Crossett Hill in Duxbury as one of 12 children, Mr. Abare grew up in the Waterbury area and graduated from Waterbury High School. He spent much of his life as a self-employed public accountant, living for part of that time in the Burlington/Essex area.

Mr. Abare is a proud veteran of World War II. He is now retired and living in Morrisville, staying quite active--including on Facebook!

**Happy
Birthday,
Richard!**

A Look Back At the Mill District's History in Town Survey

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predominantly 19th century buildings on Stowe Street, North Street, and Lincoln Street; having as its focus a grist mill and mill dam at the lower falls on Thatcher Brook. The village derives its name from the many early industries once located along the brook. Above the dam and falls are the remains of some early industries and an area of great natural beauty.

Progressing north from the village "mini-park" on Stowe Street is a cluster of small cottages, some defining the mill yard to the west side of the street. The mill faces the mill yard with its back to the mill dam and falls of Thatcher Brook. Continuing north on Stowe Street is a gable-front house with a porch set into the gable-end of the roof. Here the North Street splits off to the west of the Stowe Street, leaving a polygonal island between the two roads. There is a large house situated on this unusual and conspicuous site. Along Stowe Street is a succession of buildings ending at the intersection of Stowe and Lincoln Streets. A house on a small hill overlooks the intersection. The five houses on Lincoln Street are also part of this village complex. On North Street is a series of houses set back up the hill from the street. The Seabury-Jewett house is the most recent (1918) of these larger homes and is sited above and to the north of the mill, at the dam.

The existing grist mill and dam, the remains of two other dams, parts of a foundation and kiln-house are the remains of a succession of early industries. The first mill in Waterbury, Caleb Munson's was located 50 rods upstream from the existing mill and burned in the 1830's, according to one source. Another account notes that a mill and grist mill was built by John Carpenter in 1792, near the site of the present grist mill. This mill, the old Seabury Flour and Feed Mill, is the most intact relic of the early industry in Mill Village. Supposedly built by Issac Woolson in 1807, it passed through a succession of owners to William W. Wells in 1835. Wells, an important local figure, rebuilt the mill replacing the 24' overshot wheel with more up to date ones and did a large business in flour and feed. It was bought by the Seaburys in 1870 and worked by the family into the twentieth century. Around 1903 when the flow of the brook was lessened by the local water system, a dam was built to increase the head and wheels adapted for a small stream were installed. It is these double turbines and metal penstock that still exist in this deteriorating relic of nineteenth century engineering.

The area now under the bank of Interstate 89, across from the brook from the village "Mini-Park", was once known as the "Tannery Flat" and housed a long succession of tanneries. It was connected to Stowe Street by the "Tannery Bridge".

Behind the houses on North Street is the site of an early wool carding and manufacturing plant. It was later the site of a producer of fork, rake, hoe and broom handles and of ash doweling used for reed and rattan furniture. This was later the site of the Boyce butter-bod factory. The kiln house and the concrete foundations of the factory and boiler house, as well as the timber dams still exist.

The early brickyard of J. McMurphy was located in this area, near the former Perry Hill Road crossing of the Mount Mansfield Electric Railroad. It may have provided brick for a series of early local farmhouses.

"The Yellow Bus Line" was started by Fred A. Jewett in 1922 at the site of Newton Baker's garage. It ran first to Montpelier and Morrisville, and later to Burlington. It was sold in 1929 and became the Vermont Transit Lines.

SUBMIT CONTENT

We want to hear from you!

To submit a letter to the editor, stories, or photos for an upcoming issue,
email the editor at dulcinea28@gmail.com or send by post to:

Dr. Cheryl Casey, 1389 Kneeland Flats Rd., Waterbury Center, VT 05677.

Quarterly submission deadlines: February 15, May 15, August 15, and November 15

WWII Vet Recalls R+R at Army Resort

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from the United Service Organization (USO), entertaining music concerts, and movies. Food that service men and women dream about after facing months of institutional, bland forgettables that issued from the well-named military mess halls. We ate steaks, gravy, ham, bacon roasted scalloped potatoes in milk and butter, and apple pie with ice cream. Heavenly!

Danny Marshall, from Memphis, Tennessee, was my daily tennis partner. He possessed a scintillating personality and became a lifelong friend. A nature hiking trail led us to a fascinating tea plantation.

Suddenly, it [R+R] was all over. Sergeant Dow, report back to war in China-Burma-India.



At left, contributor Calvin Dow relaxes at a Himalayan resort in 1944 during his two-week "R&R" from the China-Burma-India front.

Main Street Finds

Curiosities From the Reconstruction



L: A cow hock, or joint in the hind leg corresponding anatomically to the ankle in humans. This piece was found in an old sewer basin on South Main Street near Horseshoe Drive at the State Office Complex. Waterbury Veterinarian Clinic vets and their technicians identified the hock in May 2019.



R: A wooden water pipe unearthed on Main Street over the summer. It was used in the Village water system.



Waterbury Historical Society
28 North Main Street
P.O. Box 708
Waterbury, Vermont 05676

November 1, 2019

Dear Members and Friends of the Waterbury Historical Society,

For more than 60 years the Waterbury Historical Society (WHS) has been devoted to collecting, preserving and exhibiting papers, photographs and artifacts pertaining to the history of the Town of Waterbury.

The WHS has an active board, many volunteers and two part time staff to help support the goals and mission of the WHS. The WHS board of directors has the following goals:

1. To continue to inventory, catalog and photograph our collections and archives using the PastPerfect program to provide a searchable online database.
2. To display and share Waterbury's rich history beyond the walls of our History Center and museum.
3. To continue to provide a wide range of quality programs for our membership and general public.
4. To continue to provide funding for part-time staff to organize and catalog existing and new donations as well as continuing to upload items into the online searchable system.

These goals are supported in part by volunteers and membership dues that continue to be our main revenue stream. Our board and volunteers have spent countless years cultivating Waterbury collections, coordinating public presentations, fundraising and archiving to the absolute best of our ability.

Waterbury's history and its accessibility to its treasures matters. This history of Waterbury truly belongs to all of our citizens, from those whose families have been here for generations to those we have newly welcomed to the community.

It is with this belief that we come to you, the citizens of our community, for a level of financial support that will assist in accomplishing our goals of preserving and sharing our heritage for generations to come. Our fundraising goal this year is \$10,000. Any level of support you can provide to help us achieve this goal is greatly appreciated. If you are not currently a member of the WHS, please consider becoming one to receive our quarterly newsletter and advance news of upcoming programs.

Sincerely,

Barbara Farr, President, Waterbury Historical Society Board of Directors
A. James Walton, Vice President
Paul Willard, Treasurer and Membership Coordinator
Grace Sweet, Secretary
Jack Carter, Curator
Jan Gendreau
Steve VanEsen

Please make checks payable to the Waterbury Historical Society (a tax deductible 501(c)(3) non-profit organization).



Mission: The Waterbury Historical Society collects, researches, documents, preserves, and exhibits artifacts related to the history of Waterbury, Vermont to help people gain a deeper appreciation, education, and inspiration through connections with our past.

Annual Appeal and Membership Form - Thank you for your support!

Name(s): _____
 Address: _____
 Town: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
 Telephone: _____ Email: _____

I would like my quarterly newsletter emailed. To save a stamp, check here:
 If not checked you will receive a quarterly black and white paper newsletter.

Annual Appeal	\$
Individual Membership - \$10.00	\$
Family Membership - \$15.00	\$
Total Amount	\$

Please send this form and check to: Waterbury Historical Society
 P.O. Box 708
 Waterbury, VT 05676

The WHS is a tax deductible 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. More info at: waterburyhistoricalsociety.org



NEXT MEETING AND PROGRAM January 22, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. Steele Community Room

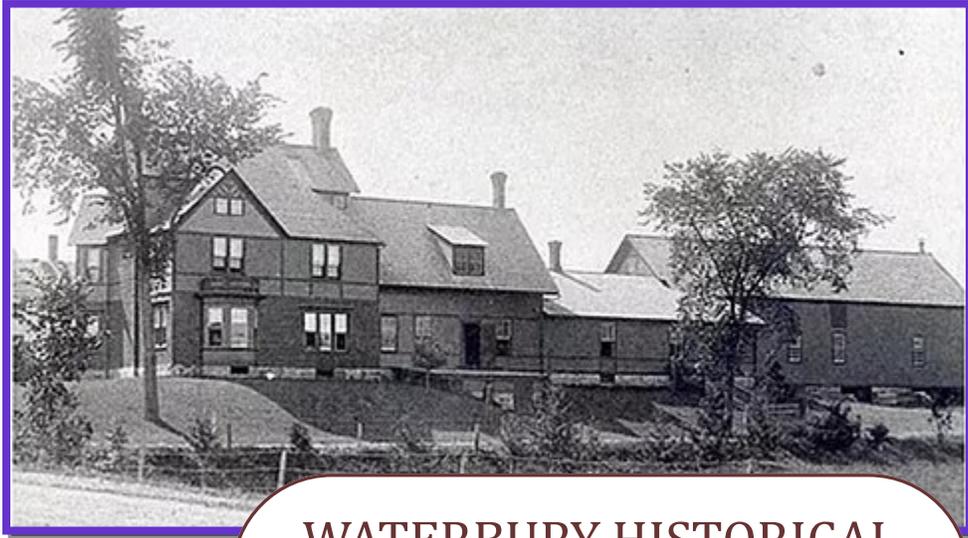
Featuring the Mount Mansfield Electric Railroad

Presented by Skip Flanders

Join us for a presentation about the Mount Mansfield Electric Railroad, which ran a distance of approximately 12 miles from Waterbury to Stowe between 1897 and 1932.

This event is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served and some history items will be for sale. WHS appreciates donations.





WATERBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY HISTORY CENTER

The History Center is open **Monday—Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Located on the second floor of the Municipal Building in the newly renovated Dr. Janes house, the museum is free and open to the public. The Historical Society's vast collections rotate through the exhibits, which are carefully assembled by our Curator. Stop by and learn something new about Waterbury's place in Vermont and national history!

History Center Acquisition Criteria

Have something to donate to the museum? See if your item(s) meet these criteria:

- *Relevance:* Well-documented link to the town of Waterbury.
- *Non-duplication:* Unique to the existing holdings of the collection.
- *Duration:* Intent is to officially add the item to the collection for the WHS to keep or sell (where proceeds will only go to benefit the Society).
- *Title and Provenance:* Deed of gift or bill of sale should accompany all items.
- *Restrictions:* Items will not be held by the donor to criteria about use, display, or future disposition.
- *Physical condition:* No extensive conservation required.
- *Rights:* Transfer of item(s) includes all pertinent rights (literary, property, copyright, etc.).
- *Costs:* Management and care of item(s) should be financially viable for the Society, or dedicated funds should accompany the donation of the item(s).
- *Tax law compliance:* Gifts must be in compliance with applicable tax law.

**For more information or to begin the donation process, contact:
officewaterburyhs@gmail.com**



Donations Welcome - We are a community organization that deeply appreciates the support and interest of our community. You can donate online at our website below.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

\$10 per person

\$15 per family (couple and children under 18)

(Check the mailing label on your newsletter to see when your membership expires.)

Please help the Historical Society GO GREEN!

Contact us to opt for email-only delivery. Benefits include cost-saving, paper-saving, and a newsletter in color!



waterburyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

www.waterburyhistoricalsociety.org

FB: [@waterburyhistoricalsocietyVT](https://www.facebook.com/waterburyhistoricalsocietyVT)

Waterbury Historical Society, Inc.

PO Box 708

Waterbury, VT 05676-0708

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Webmaster - Paul Willard

PLACE
STAMP
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