

Waterbury Historical Society

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Waterbury, Vermont 05676

Wallace Award

By Skip Flanders



Terry Palermo, Chris Palermo, Jane Willard, and Paul Willard. Photo courtesy of Gordon Miller

Waterbury recognized the community service work of Jane Willard and Chris Palermo with the Keith Wallace Award at the March 1, 2016 Town Meeting. Both Jane and Chris have given a lifetime of community service for the betterment of Waterbury area residents in a variety of ways.

Jane has volunteered for a number of years in the student mentoring program at the Thatcher Brook Primary School and Crossett Brook Middle School. She served as a member of the Community Reparative Board in Waterbury and is presently serving on the Review Board for the Washington County Diversion Program. Jane has served as a teacher in the Central Vermont Adult Basic Education Program and chaired the Educational Advisory Board of the Dale Correctional Facility. The Waterbury Historical Society has benefited from Jane's vision and leadership on our Board of

Directors as the new History Center was being planned and made part of the new Waterbury Municipal Center.

Chris has served Waterbury on the Cemetery Commission, four years on the Waterbury Planning Commission and ten years on the Waterbury Selectboard. Chris is president of the Vermont Funeral Home Directors. Chris is currently serving on the Waterbury Historical Society Board of Directors and his vision and knowledge of municipal government were instrumental in helping the Historical Society work with the Town of Waterbury to make the History Center a reality.

The Waterbury citizens at Town Meeting expressed their appreciation to Jane and Chris for all they have done for their community. This was the 21st year of the Wallace Community Service award in memory of Keith Wallace. Keith served 35 years as moderator at Town Meeting and 29 years as a School Director and represented Waterbury in both the House and Senate. Keith passed away on June 15, 1995. Robert J. O'Brien was the first recipient of the Wallace award given posthumously at the 1996 Town Meeting.

Waterbury History Center Opens

Story and Photos by Jack Carter

After almost 60 years the Waterbury Historical Society has a new home in an old location.

On February 12th and 13th the Waterbury community celebrated the opening of the Waterbury Municipal Center to an overflow crowd of happy attendees. The Municipal Center is a joint venture that combines the Historical Society and the Waterbury Municipal Offices and



Downstairs room, History Center.

the Waterbury Public Library.

The History Center is located in what was the former library and the home of our beloved Dr. Henry Janes. It occupies the upstairs rooms along with the downstairs front room with exhibit and office space.

It is a bright and cheerful space and a total transformation of the previous rooms. The downstairs room is dedicated to Dr. Janes and is created to look like his office and tells the story of his life. During the restoration, using old photographs of the front rooms, the original fireplace mantels were recovered and placed in their original location. The interesting parquet floors have been repaired and refinished throughout the building. New track lighting enhances the exhibits.

Upstairs contains a much needed office space and two exhibit rooms, a storage closet and a new restroom. We were able to refit our beautiful vintage wood and glass cabinets by putting them back to back with much needed storage unit in between. This beautiful work was done by local woodworker/craftsman Benjamin Keaton. Local woodworker/craftsman Fred Collins created a center island display unit.



History Center Island Display.

Wood blinds will be installed to help with filtering sunlight to protect the collection and help control glare in the office. A security camera system has been installed in all of our rooms. The History Center is handicap accessible by an elevator/lift located on the ground floor in the middle of the Municipal Offices area.

The process to get to this point has been a huge undertaking. All of the collection had to be cataloged, boxed, and moved out of the building. There were more than 215 cartons of memorabilia as well as larger artifacts and furniture that were transported to three storage units offsite.

Then things had to be moved back – in the winter! Space in the new center is a premium and it will be necessary to maintain two of the storage units for the time being.

There were many who helped with this transition but three members who need to be recognized and thanked for their extraordinary volunteerism are; Linda Kaiser, Chris Palermo and Paul Willard.

We are very fortunate to now have a permanent home to exhibit our collection and an office to catalog and research our history. Exhibits will be ever changing as time goes on.

The History Center is currently open Monday through Friday during office hours

8:00 am to 4:30 pm. Entrance is through the main entrance of the Municipal Offices.

Visit our History Center – it's a treasure to be proud of.



History Center Cabinet Displays.

Waterbury Center Grange Curtain



Robert Brier, Darlene "Dee" Hawkins, Zachary Fisher, Jan Gendreau, Christine Hadsel, Will Cleland, Augie, Jack Carter, and George Woodard helped raise the curtain.

Photo by Ted Schultheis

Dear Members,

The Waterbury Center Grange, which was established in 1895 recently made the difficult

decision to close its doors. As part of this process, their members decided to donate the painted curtain (see picture), which has hung in the Grange Building for 80 years! The curtain is beautifully restored and depicts a pastoral scene surrounded by advertisements of many of the businesses located in Waterbury during the 1930's. We are very fortunate to have such a remarkable artifact from that time in our history.

The building has been sold to new owners, Monica Callan and Peter Holm and the curtain was removed from its former home. We are excited that Thatcher Brook Primary School (the former Waterbury High School) agreed to be the host for this beautiful piece of history. On Town Meeting Day we unveiled it to an appreciative public and it looks spectacular on the rear wall of the gymnasium. This is a most appropriate location given the building was constructed in the same era that the curtain was painted. The Historical Society arranged for the professional installation and repairs of this very large curtain, which measures 25.6 feet wide x 8 feet high.

The cost to professionally hang and appropriately protect the curtain is \$4,100.

Please consider making a tax deductible donation to defray the costs of this important work. We have already raised approximately \$3,600 and just need \$500 more to complete the fundraising for this project. We realize this request comes on the heels of our capital campaign, and are most appreciative of your support.

Sincerely,
Board of Directors
Waterbury Historical Society



The Waterbury Center Grange Painted Curtain

“Green and Gold” An Artistic Story of the Vermont State Hospital

By Jack Carter

Waterbury Historical Society’s April meeting program will feature the newly released documentary by Bryce Douglass. The film integrates the talent and vision of Sarah-Lee Terrat with the history of the Vermont State Hospital and the life of Jean Killary and her artistic expression. It takes you on a journey through the demanding creative process that led to the creation of the stunning mural that was unveiled in January at the new Vermont State Office Complex. The mural was inspired by “Green and Gold”, a poem written by a former patient at the Hospital, Jean Killary. The film provides glimpses into Jean’s life along with Sarah-Lee’s process and the archival perspectives in creating the striking and thought provoking visual imagery.

After the showing of the film both the film maker, Bryce Douglass and the artist, Sarah-Lee Terrat will answer questions from the audience about their experiences in the creation of both the mural and the film. It plans to be a fascinating and interesting evening about what was an important and special part of Waterbury’s history.

The program is Wednesday, April 27th at 7:00 pm to be held in the Steele Community Room of the Waterbury Municipal Center, 28 North Main Street. The event is open to the public and handicapped accessible. Refreshments will be served.

Historical Society Hosts Film Premiere

By Cheryl Casey

The Waterbury Historical Society is excited to host the premiere of a historical documentary film about Waterbury. The premiere will take place at 2 pm on May 14 in the Steele Community Room, with refreshments and a

conversation with some of the production team to follow the screening.

More than two dozen Waterbury residents, all of whom grew up locally, were interviewed for the film. Interviewees include Skip Flanders, Brian Harwood, David Luce, Chris Palermo, and Theresa Wood. The film is a combination of stories recounted by these residents and more than 200 photographs shared by the Historical Society. When blended with the historical images, residents’ stories provide a unique insight into Waterbury’s past and highlight some important events that played a role in shaping what the village and town are today.

Senator Bill Doyle's "Vermont History and Government" class at Johnson State College collaborated with Vince Franke, of Peregrine Productions in Waterbury, to produce this 35-minute documentary. Senator Doyle commended the 7 students as an “excellent class” that “made a significant contribution to the film on Waterbury.”

Franke added, “This is a great collaboration between Johnson students, local residents and the Waterbury Historical Society to archive and share oral histories to give our history a much more personal feel.”

The event is free and open to the public. Johnson State College will send free copies to all the schools and libraries in the Waterbury area, while residents can purchase a DVD copy of the film at the premiere event.

Program Committee Events

By Betty Jones, Program Chair

At the January meeting 60+ enjoyed a great program that showcased the painted curtain given to Waterbury History Society by the Waterbury Center Grange.

The program committee researched and reported on each of the 24 businesses displayed on the curtain. At the History Center is a display about the curtain as well as a book with the

history of each business. You can also go to www.waterburyhistoricalsociety.org.

The Program Committee has been busy planning some exciting events.

April 27 – Annual Meeting; Program “Creation of Mural in the Waterbury State Office Complex.”

May 14 – Premier of “History of Waterbury as Told by Locals”, 2 pm at the Community Center.

June 18 & 19 – Vermont History Expo at Tunbridge, VT. WHS will have a booth.

July 27 – Summer Meeting, 6 pm Pot Luck at Waterbury Festival Playhouse on Waterbury/Stowe Rd. Program: “Yankee Brass Band” will perform 19th Century music. The program is dedicated to WDEV's 85th anniversary.

October 26 – Fall Meeting, 7 pm Community Room. Program: “History of some Streets/Roads in Waterbury.” Do you have a Street you want to know about - email bbtravelers@aol.com and let us know.

Watch for more information on the above in the future.

Memorial Day Ghost Walk

By Jan Gendreau



A past years Ghost Walk

Memorial Day is Monday, May 30th this year! 11 am in the Maple St. Cemetery in Waterbury Center. Join us as we learn about some of the special ladies that have lived in Waterbury: Winona Hoffman, the Minott sisters and family, Helen Burleigh, (daughter of Phoebe Ricker Burleigh), and Anne Witham.

Email Addresses Sought

By Paul Willard

The Waterbury Historical Society is looking to update the email addresses of our members. If you have an email address, we would appreciate it if you would send it to the Society at waterburyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Please make sure we have your current name and address and phone number so we can keep our membership list up to date. Our website waterburyhistoricalsociety.org has added a new Facebook link. The link is designed and maintained by Cheryl Casey, a member of our Program Committee. You will find current and interesting information on a regular basis.

Thank you,
Paul Willard

New Members

Jeffrey & Susan Amestoy, Waterbury Ctr.
Willis Breen, Jr., Westford
Eileen Chittick, Florida
Marty & Sue Johansen, Waterbury
Chuck Kletecka, Waterbury Ctr.
R. Allyn & Sandra Lewis, Waterbury
Robert Stanton, Waterbury Ctr.
Chris & LeeAnne Viens, Waterbury Ctr.

Letters to the Editor

February 8, 2016

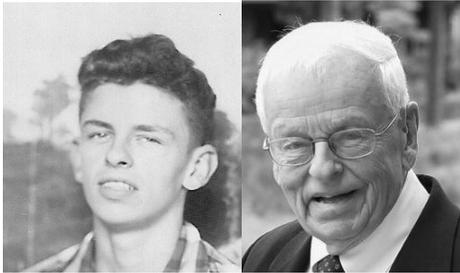
Our Duxbury Historical Society would like to express wholeheartedly their appreciation to our neighboring Waterbury Historical Society for their generosity shown by giving us three filing cabinets.

Since our society is bulging at the seams for history and artifact preservation issues; this gift will be both useful and warrantable in our

preservation efforts. Again we thank you for your thoughtful gift.

Donnie Welch, President

In Memory



William D. Robie

January 11, 1937 - March 16, 2016

William “Bill” Robie, the son of late William and Margaret (Deal) Robie, passed away at the University of Vermont Medical Center in Burlington on March 16, 2016. He was born in St. Johnsbury on January 11, 1937. On May 21, 1960, he married Penelope A. Sandison in Barre.

Bill was a graduate of Waterbury High School, Class of 1955. He then enlisted in the US Army. After his discharge Bill went to work for the State of Vermont Highway Department. Bill eventually worked as office manager and bookkeeper for Steele’s Plumbing and Heating Company for over twenty years. Later he worked for Green Mountain Propane and Blue Flame Gas.

Bill’s memberships included the Waterbury Jaycee’s, the Masons, the Waterbury Congregational Church, the Waterbury Historical Society, and the Blush Hill Country Club.

Bill is survived by his wife of 55 years, Penny Robie of Waterbury; his sons, William S. Robie, and Michael E. Robie and their wives and his grandchildren. His brother, Ronald Robie also survives him.

Businesses of the Paint Curtain

By Grace Sweet

Steele’s Plumbing and Heating

Owners: Everett Steele, Geraldine Steele and Edward Steele

Everett Steele was born on January 6, 1905 in Northfield. His parents died when he was young, so he lived with an aunt. He worked more than ten years in Montpelier for Fred I. Somers and Sons doing every kind of plumbing and heating repair and installation. It was in Montpelier that he met Geraldine Garvey, the woman who would become his wife.

He came to Waterbury around 1933 and started Steele’s Plumbing and Heating business. He had a panel truck which was equipped with all manner of items needed for the installation and servicing of oil burners which were quite new at that time. Business was good. His “Shop at Your Door” became a familiar sight around Waterbury. According to the newspaper article from May 16, 1934, “he had already finished several sizable jobs and was, just then, engaged in completing the plumbing and heating installations at the new Charles Parker property on Main Street where a new water system, bathrooms and heating plant including a new motor stoker have been included in the extensive repairs to the property which lately was that of Mrs. Roxana Crossett. Mr. Steele comes to Waterbury with a splendid background of practical experience.”

He and Geraldine lived at first in the Garvey house at 168 South Main Street across from Smith’s store. In May of 1935 they moved to the big house at 58 South Main Street where they lived for the rest of their lives and their son, Edward, was born in 1937. While Everett was out on a job, Jerry ran the office which was in the back of their home. About 1941 he bought the propane business from Edgar Jewett. Propane at that time was sold in 100 pound tanks. About every two weeks Dick Hough, an employee, would load a truck with 35 empty tanks and drive

to White River to get them filled - a trip that would take about all day. Sometimes Ed Steele would go with him to keep him company. In the beginning Steele's employed two or three fellows. Later he had five or six men working for him.

Everett and Jerry's son, Ed, graduated from Waterbury High School in 1955 and from Norwich University in 1959. Together, father and son ran the business until 1988 when Ed sold it to Green Mountain Power. It has been sold several times since.

On July 4, 1942 at 10:30 pm Everett Steele and two others noticed that the dairy farm barn that belonged to the State Hospital was on fire. He and his companions released most of the cattle thanks to quick thinking and great courage.

Everett died in May 22, 1986. His wife, Jerry, died June 10, 1965.

Thanks to Ed Steele for information and to Skip Flanders for the newspaper accounts. The account of the fire is also in the Waterbury History 1915 – 1991.

Slack's Store

Slack's Store at the park in Waterbury Center was owned by Hazel (DeCell) and Wayne Slack from 1931 until 1967.

The building had been a store since at least 1857 with numerous owners. Living quarters were upstairs. Owners of particular interest to me were James Gilmore, father of Gladys Wrisley and grandfather of Winnie Wrisley who owned it before 1907. (Winnie was the Pastor at the Waterbury Center Community Church in the 1970's and 1980's.) From 1920 until 1929 it was owned by Arthur and Ernest Newcomb who were cousins of my grandmother (Grace Ferguson Lamson of Randolph) descended from the Eliakim Allen family of Waterbury Center.

The Center Post Office was in a back room of the store, accessed either through the store or from an entrance on the north side. Hazel was the postmistress, and, as such, was eligible for a pension when she retired. Tom

Sweet's Aunt, Marion Moulton, was a postal clerk for some of that time. The Slacks called each other "honey". They sold basic dry goods including socks and cheap sneakers as well as groceries. Wayne always wore a full length apron. If a customer wanted a pound of hamburger, Wayne would go in the back and grind up a piece of beef to order. Another popular cut was cube steak. There were Cross crackers from Montpelier in the cracker barrel and chocolate drops in the candy container to be purchased by weight, and, of course, a wheel of cheddar cheese on the counter. They owned the store at a time when a young boy (Tom Sweet at age 5) could walk to the store on his own with a quarter in his fist and get RedMan chewing tobacco for his grandfather, Frances Lee Minott.

It was a welcoming place for the community. When kids arrived in the Center on the late bus, many would go into the store and buy candy or a snack while waiting for family to pick them up.

I miss the glow of the cheery lights in the big front windows on a dark winter evening.

Information from Carolyn DeCell Ellis (niece of Hazel Slack), Carol Sweet Moulton and Tom Sweet.

Waterbury Store Owners as compiled by Jackie Spence:

Benjamin Barrett
William Wells 1857
Micah French 1866
Thomas Downer 1867
John & Deluem Hayes 1869
Roswell and Frankie Mather 1886
Martin and Martha Perrin 1897
James Gilmore dates uncertain
Arthur & Ernest Newcomb 1920
Warren & Cora Roby 1929
Wayne & Hazel Slack 1931
Leon & Norma Andrews 1967
Howard & Georgia Rexford 1973
Joe & Marie Lukowich 1976
Howard & Patti Trautnein 1983
Tom & Jackie Spence 1987
Perrin Williams (Center Bakery) 2003

Robert E. Bordeaux, Sr.

Submitted by Elizabeth Bordeaux

These are some of the items that Betty Bordeaux submitted to the newsletter concerning the activation of the National Guard Troops in 1950. At the time that Bob left, he and Betty were engaged to be married.

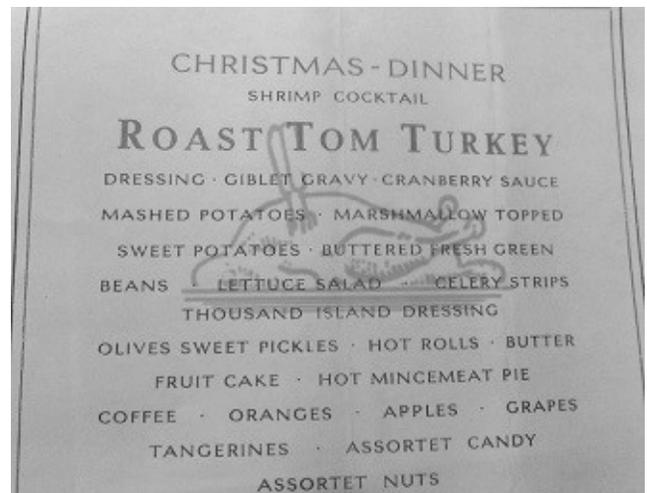
When the troops were preparing to leave, reporter William Lindsey Gresham and photographer Robert Isear captured the town of Waterbury and its departing troops for Redbook magazine for the January 1951 issue with an article titled "All but the Heart May Go".



Christmas Menu 1951, Germany



206th FA Battery, Bob Bordeaux



Christmas Menu 1951, Germany



Bob Bordeaux – the cook in his kitchen –
Germany

**Cornelia Demeritt Schuneman
Blackhart Cooper**

March 12, 1833 to July 28, 1921

By Linda Kaiser

My mother-in-law, Madalene Kaiser, was a Demeritt from Waterbury and eight generations of her family have lived here. Cornelia Demeritt, whom this story is about, was first cousin to Madalene's grandfather. Cornelia's grandmother, Judith Demeritt, was buried on Blush Hill in the family cemetery once owned by Daniel Demeritt, Judith's oldest son and Madalene's great grandfather. Cornelia's father and Judith's second son, Edward Demeritt was buried in the Route 100 Old Waterbury Center Cemetery. Edward's grave was mere footsteps from the house where he died. There is now a small parking lot for the cemetery where Edward once lived.

Cornelia's story begins with her birth in Waterbury Center where she was born March 12, 1833 to Edward and Elizabeth Demeritt. Her father was both a farmer and a grocer. She had two older sisters, Sarah, born in 1829 and Elizabeth in 1831, both in Waterbury Center. A sibling, born after Cornelia, died young. Cornelia attended school in the Center only through fourth grade. The family moved from the Center to New York State when the girls were teenagers.

Approximately 1851 Cornelia married William Schuneman, a widower, who was 18 years her senior with three young sons, which she raised as her own. After a few years Cornelia and William along with her two sisters and their families decided to move West. Cornelia and William settled briefly in Ohio and then Detroit, Michigan. When all three families moved from New York, their parents, Edward and Elizabeth moved back to Waterbury Center.

The story from this point on will be told in Cornelia's own words as her story was originally printed in the Spirit Lake Beacon of Spirit Lake, Iowa.

"In 1860 my husband and myself determined to seek a new home for our growing

family in the West. Relatives in Dickinson County, Iowa, had urged us many times by letter to go there and see the beauties of the prairie country and the advantages that could be developed in a few years by economy and industry. In October we left our home at Detroit, Michigan, traveling by water to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and taking our horses and light wagon with us, as we had planned to travel in prairie schooners the rest of the way.

Arriving in Milwaukee, our real journey began. My husband's mother and sister accompanied us on the trip. When we could find room to sleep at night, the women and children occupied it, but the boys always slept in the wagons. Passing through Wisconsin in a few days, we crossed the Mississippi River at Prairie du Chien on a ferry and entered the Promised Prairie Land of Iowa with many pleasant anticipations concerning our arrival at Spirit Lake. It was the month for prairie fires to be abroad in the land, but we were inexperienced and not much worried at the seemingly distant red lights during the nights and much admired the panorama on every side of us, but were destined to learn one of the saddest and most serious lessons imaginable, no such experiences having ever entered our lives. In the vicinity of Algona, a town of a half dozen small houses or shelters, we followed a prairie fire for miles before daring to pass through, finally doing so safely. Seeing a light near, we drove there, finding an elderly couple and asked for shelter, which was at first refused, but later we were permitted to sleep in a part of the house.

As always, the wagon was slept in at night by my husband and boys. When we retired in our field bed on the floor, not very cozy you can imagine, the old lady passed through our room with a large butcher knife in her hand; this much disconcerted us, and little sleep visited our eyes, although we greatly needed rest. In the morning they told us they were always afraid of strangers – and who could blame them, living so far from human habitation, with rumors sometimes reaching them of murderous assaults being committed within their range.

During that day we forded the Des Moines River, not far from where Emmetsburg has since been located, and slept that night at Miles Mahan's, the last house we would find until we reached the settlement of Spirit Lake, a distance of thirty miles.

When leaving Mahan's in the morning, we expected to reach our new home that night and we were not sorry, for our long ride had become monotonous; the end so near, we cheerfully climbed in the wagons, stopping a short time at noon for luncheon. As we returned to our places in the wagon, a thick smoke came up the hill, dividing at the summit and surrounding us so quickly we hardly realized our precarious position, the heavy, hot smoke half blinding us. My husband made an unsuccessful attempt to turn the team around, but all was confusion, with the smoke and flames upon us; we could not discern one from another. At this critical moment a strange gentleman, Tom Dougherty, a citizen of Spirit Lake, came to us and begun starting a fire in our midst to burn a space for our safety. When this was accomplished and the fire had passed, my husband was found several rods from us fatally burned with only his boots and the seams of his clothing remaining on his body. He was unconscious and never again regained consciousness.

One of the horses had to be put out of his misery there the next day. We drove on toward Spirit Lake as fast as possible while I held Mr. Schuneman in my arms the rest of the way that he might be as comfortable as possible. When we got as far as the old Jenkins place a messenger was sent to town to tell them to be prepared with a doctor.... Friends and a doctor did all things possible for us. We went to the home of my husband's brother Henry, and the already tired horse with rider were dispatched to Mankato for medicine; he lived nine days and his remains now rest in Lake View Cemetery. I was then a widow with six children and empty hands and six months later a little son arrived at my house whom we named "William"; whose father, William Schuneman, lost his life trying to save

his family from perishing in the fire.

Going back to the summer of 1861, I will endeavor to collect correctly some of the incidents. Alarming reports of Indian troubles in adjoin counties were brought in by different ways, did not stop the erection of a new brick courthouse, that was well on the way of being some protection from the untutored Indian.

The settlers becoming anxious about the safety of their families decided all grown men that could be spared should leave immediately for Sioux City and enlist as soldiers. The Indians must have learned of their going away and planned to execute their well laid scheme of killing all the white people through to Minnesota. Ere any returned from Sioux City our fears were realized when twenty-five Indians appeared in a body, pretending they were going to Ocheyedan River to hunt elk. Providentially two of our men, who had left their families to enlist, were returning home and met the Indians near town, and forced them to return.... Early the next morning they were released on promising to leave the county; men escorted them toward Estherville.... Afterwards there were found signs of their murderous intentions painted on stones and trees, probably for the other sixty that passed west and north of Spirit Lake.... the massacre followed, which has been printed in several historical books.

I then lived with my small children in a log house.... The only door was placed in the opening at night and taken down during the day, a poor if any protection, had the Indians attacked us. My step-sons, Frank, Henry and George had found light employment among the neighbors.

As I remember, the third morning after the going away of the Indians, a man came to Luther Stimpson (a settler living a few miles north) at 3 o'clock in the morning, and told him of the massacre. At dawn of day Mr. Stimpson arrived, and he, with others set on horseback to urge the settlers to come in as quickly as possible. I think Mr. Stimpson had not yet arrived when I was doing my morning chores, when a passing stranger stopped and said, "Why don't you come in? The Indians are coming!" I

was so stunned and frightened at the news and the thought of my helpless condition that I scarcely did anything really sane, and it seems now an eternity of torture as I think of the fright I received. The man returned to the mill at the Isthmus, now Orleans, bringing back with him a small child that was unconscious, he having carried it all the way from Belmont, walking through the night, hiding from fear of the enemy. I took care of them at a place somewhere near the courthouse guarded by soldiers. I think the child survived less than two days; I prepared it for burial and it was laid to rest in the first burying place in the northeast part of town, then the father went away and I never saw him again.

I then went into the courthouse; I distinctly remember Mrs. Daniel Bennett, relating to myself and others the horror of the ride behind the oxen as the family came to town that day with a cook stove, some clothing and pieces of bedding. The settlers brought to the courthouse old muskets, shotguns and several rifles, having enough ammunition to last but an hour in battle with the Red Men, but that was one secret the enemy had not fathomed.

One day the watchman on the cupola described a long line of supposed Indians coming from the east, which caused quite a panic among us but proved to be people coming for protection and bringing their cattle with them.

The problem and necessity of building a stockade to protect both settlers and soldiers who had now all returned with horses to scour the county every day that we might not be surprised – was before us, and the good work begun. Brave men and women gave their aid with brawn and brain all helpful. While the men sawed the timbers at Okoboji sawmill, women served themselves to bravery, and men and boys drove the ox-teams after material. My boys, Henry and George, went and when we parted with our children in the morning we were not assured we would see each other alive again. George was only ten years of age, and one day his ox-team ran into Lake Okoboji to swimming depth, then went out; George expected to be drowned, and this reminiscence still lingers with him.

The stockade was finished in due time and occupied by the cavalry horses. After several weeks the Red Rascals were caught and thirty-two executed at Mankato at one drop of the machine. Thus ended the Indian troubles in Dickinson County. I went to the old Rice house. I boarded twenty-one soldiers for a long time, in fact, until I entered a home in reality....”

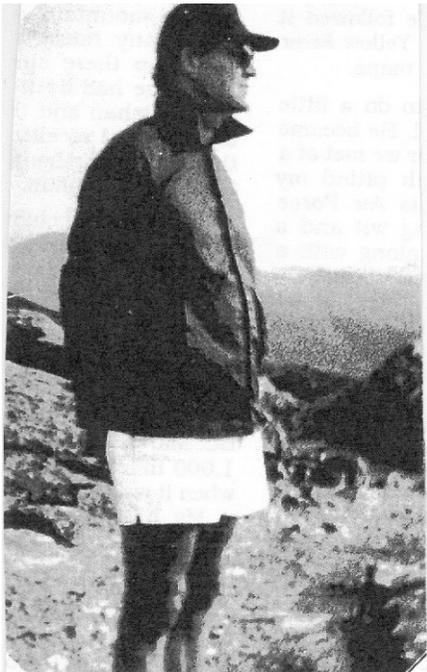
Cornelia first met widower, Geise Blackert, nicknamed Gussie, when he was sent to Iowa from Nebraska as a soldier in the Cavalry to protect the area from Indians. He and his young son settled in town and Gussie operated a store. Cornelia and Gussie were married in 1863 and had one child, Edward, born in 1864. In 1872 Gussie died leaving Cornelia once again to raise the children on her own. She took in laundry, worked doing housekeeping for others and did sewing, plus the children always helped her by working. In 1883 Cornelia married widower Bennajah Cooper. Bennajah died in 1888. The life was difficult and not one of her marriages lasted ten years. She had raised five children from her marriages and four stepsons.

Imagine the changes she saw in her life and ironically her death was the result of one of these marvelous wonders. She was in her house on June 29, 1921 when she heard a “hydroplane” passing over. She went outside on her porch to watch it fly across the sky. She was looking up watching the plane, when she stepped forward and fell from the porch, sustaining multiple injuries and breaking her hip. She steadily failed, not recovering from the terrible fall and died at age 88 on July 28, 1921. Thus, the girl born and raised in Waterbury Center, Vermont, died in her beloved home in Iowa.

(Dots in the narrative indicate that there was a longer description of the story, which would help the local people of Spirit Lake understand where the different events happened, but for our space some of the account has been shortened but still as she told it.)

China and the Great Wall

By Calvin Dow



A Vermonter in the Steppes of Central Asia

I had been thinking about it for a long time. It was one of those things that I had to do to complete a certain chapter in my books of life. I first got the idea during WW2 while flying over a section of the Great Wall of China. My mission: to walk on or beside the Great Wall in northern China from the west at Shanhaikukuan to the east at Chatyukuan, seaport city at the Yellow Sea in the Pacific Ocean - 1500 miles long; first started in 204 BC, made of rammed earth, modernized in the 12th Century with stone, brick and earth from 20 to 50 feet high; 12 feet wide at the top and boasted watch towers at regular intervals. Its purpose was to stop the hordes of invaders that were moving south from Outer Mongolia.

I would also be following in the footsteps of Marco Polo. Part of the Venetian explorer's route followed the Great Wall when he journeyed from Venice to Peking in the year 1271. Part of my route would be on the Ancient Silk Road, later changed to Royal Road and now known as Kerkorian Road. This whole area was just steeped with historic significance.

My return to China also included a nostalgic visit to Kunming, my home for two years during WW2. Yes, this was going to be another one of my unforgettable trips, 12,000 miles away to the other side of the world. I found myself rushing through the final stages, coordinating my provincial maps, juxtapositioning my logistics, digging into my war chest of souvenirs to resurrect my chop sticks for all occasions, made of wood, ivory, porcelain, etc.

My basic Mandarin, perfected after two years in Kunming was somewhat rusty. I instituted a crash course at my local university, had some practice conversation at the Ying Wah Laundry, chatted with the staff at Ho Yean Restaurant over sweet and sour sub gum and played tennis with Wei Ming, who had recently returned from a trip to Shanghai.

In my mind's eye, I can still see my first view which occurred during WW2. I was a passenger in a reconnaissance plane cruising at 20,000 feet northeast of Kunming, near Tatung. Suddenly, there it was! Solid, masonry, blue-gray, evenly spaced lookout towers – there was no mistaking it. It ran for miles curving off to the east to climb the mountains and disappear like a writhing gray serpent. We followed it for a hundred miles to the Yellow River as I feverishly checked my maps.

Danny Marshall had to do a little finagling to get me aboard. He became one of my best friends after we met at a tennis tournament which pitted my Army players against his Air Force group. He had a flashing wit and a scintillating personality along with a slight Memphis, Tennessee accent.

Now it is 1980, Danny is back home in Memphis and I'm checking out Explorer's Tour that covered most of China in 30 days.

Our motley tour group boarded a 747 at San Francisco and hours later I had a nostalgic view of Victoria Harbor before settling down at the Hong Kong's Kai Tak Airport. I was back again on the soil and soul of China. We caught a train at Kowloon Station for a three hour ride that took us through the Bamboo Curtain and into the

People's Republic of China. It was July and dashu – means great heat. We flew out of Baiyun for a thousand miles to Sian. Sweat poured from all of our pores as we sat in that old turbo prop plane. Then came the air conditioning in the form of souvenir fans. I was ticked off until I saw that my fan bore a hand painted scene of the Great Wall. Good omen.

Our next stop was to bring me back to my old stomping grounds in Yunnan Province, Kunming. As I walked down the airline ramp at the new airport, the first place I looked was up to the broken mountain peak in the west. How many times had Stacce and I hiked up there since the first time when she had been my guide? It was called Xishan and there were tears in my eyes as I recalled her telling me of the ancient earthquake that had shattered this mountain.

Kunming had changed so much that familiar landmarks were hard to recognize. My hike up Xishan brought back familiar sites.

The new airport completed my ambivalent tour of Kunming. I had a lot to digest and ruminate about as we flew north toward the Great Wall. We flew into overcrowded Peking and commenced some dreary days with the tour. We seemed to be seeing everything but the Great Wall. Why not sneak away from this group of sheep, break out on my own and see what I wanted to see. I would need a visa and travel permit to get through the various military zones so hie myself hither to the US Embassy. The staff was quite willing to have my name removed from the group visa and in two days I had my required papers.

Finally airborne again, my destination was Jiayuguan, western terminus of the Great Wall.

It was late the next day when the bus came to a stop in the shadow of the Great Wall. Rising above me to fifty feet was a striking drum tower known as the Tower Fortress. I took intense pleasure in rubbing my hands on the blue gray ashlar blocks before climbing the lookout tower.

I hired 11 two-hump Bactrians to make up my own personal camel caravan. I had

gathered a certain amount of experience with these stubborn creatures in India, Egypt and Morocco. Each one was led by a puller but stopping and starting was a hassle. When I wanted to mount, I had to endure a noisy ritual.

The ordeal, the wailing and huffing finally got to me. To hell with tradition, I thought and took a running start, placed my hands on the front hump and vaulted up to find myself snugly settled in among the soft camel hair. The pullers were aghast but my camel seemed happy. Every so often I would dismount to walk or run along the brick hard crest of the Wall. At times, I dug small brightly colored pebbles from it to carry back home as souvenirs for friends. I had the thrill of my own camel train for over 100 miles and then decided to pay off the drivers so they could return to their village.

My maps showed I was nearing the eastern end of the Great Bend in the Yellow River. I made camp near a river bed.

I was leaving the rammed earth section of the Wall and nearing where it was made of everlasting masonry blocks called ashlar. Here I chiseled my name in Chinese characters and the year – 1980.

My next required stop would be Beijing at the US Embassy, my final travel permit that would take me all the way to the Yellow Sea. But before that was to occur, I would find myself incarcerated in Dalong jail. How was I to know that I was walking much too close to restricted rocketry range. Security police interrogated me for two days before coming to the conclusion that I was not a foreign agent observing how they tested their nuclear missiles. However, a Mr. Li was to accompany me all the way to Beijing just to make sure that I would be a good boy.

Near Lupau, we reached the high point of the Wall at an elevation of 6000 feet. We were climbing and slipping on top of the Wall just as I always dreamed but erosion here made it tough going. Then we reached the lookout tower at sunset I caught my breath for the sun was a fiery ball over the gray dragon of the Wall. Toward the east, the dragon ran on and on and the sheer magnificence of the view filled me anew with

wonder that such a vast engineering project could have been carried out centuries ago.

Eleven days later, I was visiting the Marco Polo Bridge with its thousand foot marble span, arches, pillars and sculptured lions.

I was now pretty much a seasoned hiker. Each day added another 28 to 30 miles and my goal was drawing near the realization of a lifelong dream.

The last night, probably sleepless, would be spent where I could look down to the Yellow Sea. It came unexpectedly, the glint of the ocean, night was falling, my backpack slid to the ground, the view was charged with emotion as I felt a part of this ancient gray dragon of weathered masonry I had traveled with so long. Feelings of victory and regret began to surface.

Dawn found me moving down to level ground on to fort and gate tower at Shanhaiguan. I took off my blue cap, waved it at the far bluer Chinese sky, then ran, clothes, shoes, and all down the sand dunes to plunge into the welcoming waves of the Yellow Sea.

(Editor's note: Due to space limitations, Calvin's article was edited.)

Membership Dues

Check your mailing label. If it does not read 1/1/2017 or higher, you owe dues.

One person \$10.00 per year.

Couple living in the same household \$15.00 per year.

Thank You

Editor's Note

I wish to thank all the people who over the past eight years have sent their articles, letters, ideas, and photos to make the newsletter interesting. A special thanks goes to Calvin Dow for his insight into Waterbury Center life.

I became editor in the Fall of 2008, taking over from my mother, Linda Kaiser, who had started the newsletter in the Fall of 2000. It has been a good experience and I hope your next editor enjoys it as much as I have. This issue is the 63rd and as always, I hope you enjoy it.

Wesley Kaiser



Elm Street Waterbury. Cooley House at end.

Waterbury Historical Society
 St Leo's Hall
 January 27, 2016

Minutes

Theresa Wood, President called the meeting to order at 7pm. Approximately 50 in attendance

Secretary's Report

Minutes of the October 2015 meeting were accepted as printed in the Winter 2016 newsletter.

Treasurer's Report

The report was accepted as presented.

No Old or New business

Announcements

1. Theresa thanked Paul for his weekly photos of the town center construction project. The photos are posted on our website.
2. Theresa talked about the Grange curtain installation at the elementary school. *We need to raise money for the cost of the installation and she encouraged the audience to consider making a donation. The curtain will be installed on the stage in the gym the week before Town Meeting and will be unveiled at Town Meeting.
3. Information about the Grand Opening of the Waterbury Town Center: Friday, Feb 12, 3-5pm: Politicians and speeches followed by open house. Saturday, the 13th, 10-2: open house

Respectfully submitted,
 Jan Gendreau, Secretary

Program:

The program committee researched (with much help from Skip Flanders) and presented a program about the 24 business advertisements on the Grange Curtain. These ads helped pay for the curtain when it was painted and installed at the Waterbury Center Grange Hall sometime in the 1930s. Green Mountain Power and Co-op Insurance were two advertising companies that are still in existence today.

Board of Directors, Officers and Committees

April 2015 – April 2016

Co-Presidents:
 Brian Harwood
 Theresa Wood

Secretary: Jan Gendreau
Treasurer: Paul Willard
Archivist: Linda Kaiser
Assistant Archivist: Jill Chase
Curator: Jack Carter

Board of Directors:
 Jane Willard
 David Luce
 Chris Palermo

Program Committee:
 Betty Jones
 Jack Carter
 Cheryl Casey
 Camille Mason
 Grace Sweet
 Nancy Murphy

The above are the voted positions for the Waterbury Historical Society.

Newsletter Editor: Wesley Kaiser

If anyone wishes to contact anyone of the above, write to them in care of Waterbury Historical Society, PO Box 708, Waterbury, VT 05676. To make it easier to direct the mail, please use the persons name in the address.

Waterbury Historical Society Email Address
 Waterburyhistoricalsocietv@gmail.com

Historical Society Financial Statement

P.O. Box 708
 Waterbury, VT 05676

January 27, 2016

	Value		Value
	12/31/2015	Changes	1/27/2016
Checking Account Balance	22798.14	-179.95	22618.19
Savings Account	6730.94	0.00	6730.94
T. Rowe Price Mutual Fund	47095.48	-1723.48	45372.00
Capital Campaign	15688.81	-1997.60	13691.21
Edward Jones	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total of all Accounts	92313.37		88412.34

Waterbury Historical Society Annual Meeting

Community Room at Waterbury Municipal Center 28 No. Main St.

Wednesday, April 27, 7 pm

Election of Officers

Program - Creation of Mural in the Waterbury State Office Complex



Waterbury Historical Society, Inc.

PO Box 708

Waterbury, VT 05676-0708