Vermont Life

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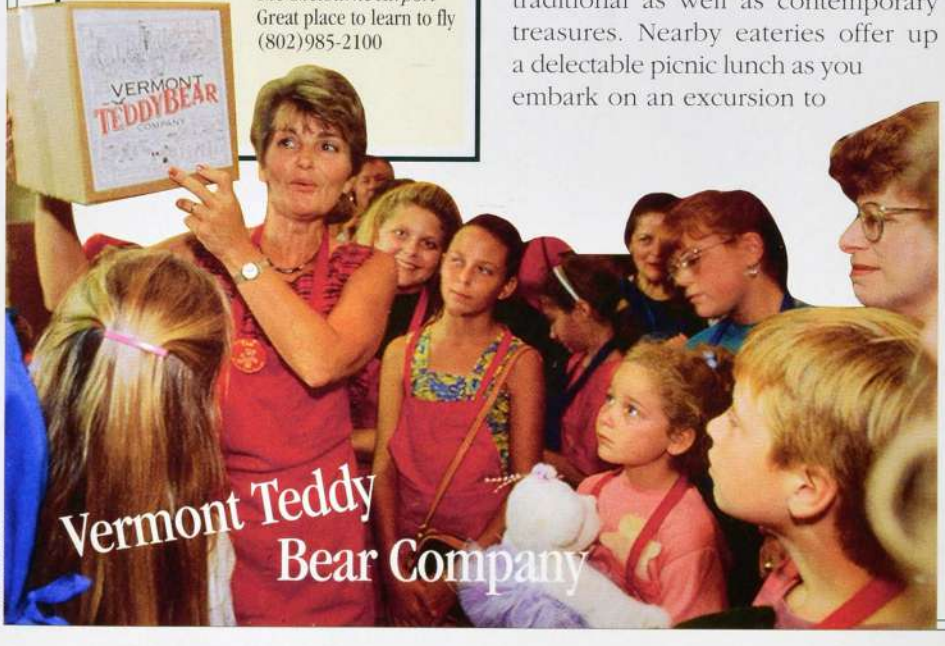
John Goodman

Shelburne embraces the new Vermont yet retains the best of our traditions and history. If you want the Vermont experience, visit the place that offers it up in one neat package: *Shelburne.*

Put on your walking shoes for a stroll through charming Shelburne Village. Enjoy a real old-fashioned country store, a favorite with local schoolchildren and their parents, brimming with jars of penny candy, beautiful hand-crafted gifts and Vermont products. Across from the country store and a short walk from Shelburne Green are local antiques, clothing and craft shops filled with traditional as well as contemporary treasures. Nearby eateries offer up a delectable picnic lunch as you embark on an excursion to



Paul O. Boisvert

Vermont Teddy Bear Company

Ken Burris

Festivals

nearby Shelburne attracti
all within only a few miles of
village.

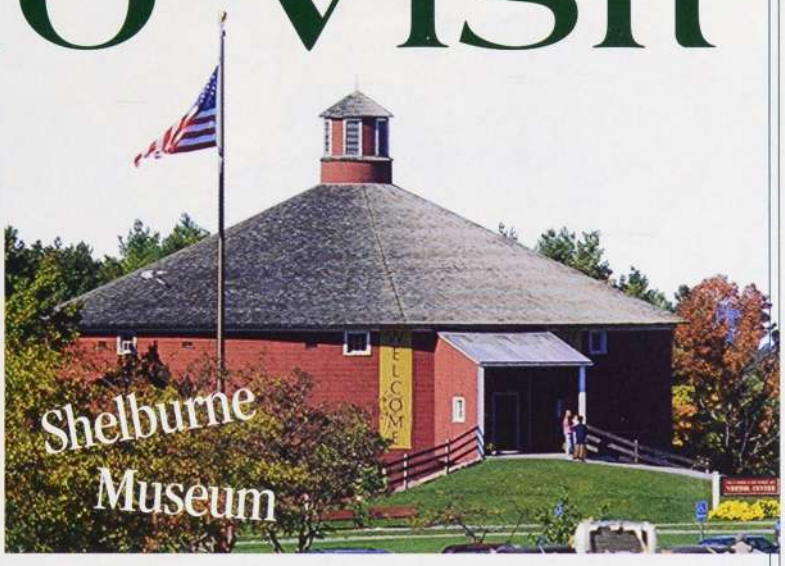
"...Cool!" Delight in
whimsical world of the *Verm*
Teddy Bear Company. Take the
filled tour through the factory to
skilled hands cut, sew and then s
love, dreams and imagination
each cuddly companion. Afterwa
stroll among the hundreds of te
bears in the Bear Shop where you
pick out your friend for life. This
magical place where teddy bears
memories are crafted for a lifetim

"History came alive
Step back in time and discover N
England's heritage at *Shelbu*
Museum—celebrating its 50th a
versary in 1997. Inside you will
37 exhibition buildings nestled
45 beautifully landscaped ac
home to over 80,000 artifacts of

Scenic

lace to Visit

We invite you to explore a truly charming community. With nearly 2,000 acres of conserved farmland, Shelburne is the quintessential Vermont town, rich in history, featuring specialty stores and antique shops, a lovely town green, and several of our State's most memorable attractions. Conveniently located on U.S. Route 7, Shelburne is only 7 miles south of Burlington, Vermont's largest metropolitan area, and yet it possesses all the charm for which our State is famous.



Ken Burns

yday life and collections of folk, fine d decorative art. Explore rooms led with quilts, furniture, carriages, ols, toys, decoys, prints, paintings, cus memorabilia and more. Step oard the sidewheel steamboat *conderoga*, a National Historic ndmark. Sit down with slate and alk for a lesson in the one-room hoolhouse. Clutch the reins of a galloping stallion as you ride the vintage 1920s carousel; or imagine a trip by steam locomotive as you tour a private rail car. There is always something special awaiting you at Shelburne Museum.

"Never have I seen more beauty." Wander along scenic walking trails on a visit to lovely *Shelburne Farms*. Here, more than 1,400 acres of pristine farmland and woodlands create some of the most beautiful landscape in Vermont and include a thriving farm that is a living testimony to Vermont's great agricultural heritage of stewardship. Take a tractor-drawn hay ride to the magnificent Farm Barn where you can visit the Children's Farmyard and milk a cow or gather fresh eggs. See cheddar cheese being made from the milk of the Farm's Brown Swiss cows. Explore forests, fields, lake views and enjoy the incredible beauty of one of Vermont's heirloom treasures—Shelburne Farms.

"We all had a good time." You may even want to plan your Shelburne vacation around one of the many community events that are offered throughout the year. But, anytime is a great time to visit scenic Shelburne, Vermont. *It's one great place to visit!*

Map courtesy of Resort Maps, Inc.

Phil Mason

Shelburne, Vermont

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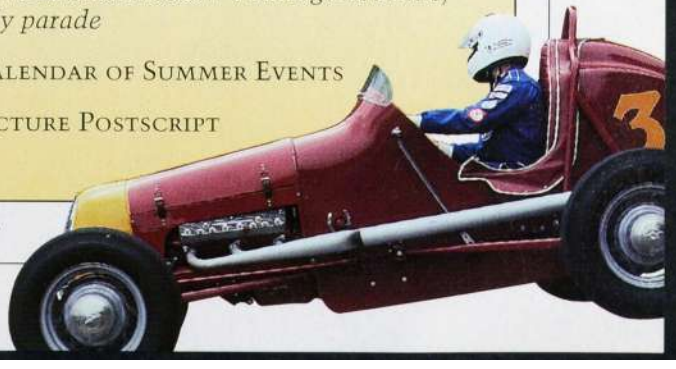
PLACES IN THIS ISSUE

DEPARTMENTS

COVER: *Volunteers stack wheat cut during Draft Horse Field Day at Shelburne Farms. Photograph by Richard Howard. Story, page 36.*



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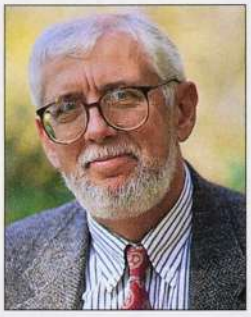

A Sense of Vermont

WE HEAR A LOT OF TALK ABOUT "a sense of place," these days. But what does that really mean? What does it take to make a location a genuine, distinctive *place*?

Here's my recipe: It takes respect for the natural world — since that's the foundation of what makes any place unique. It takes stories, years of them, and that includes an understanding of history and tradition. And I think it also takes commitment to gradualness — a recognition that change will, of necessity, come but a commitment, out of respect for the past, to a rate of change that is slow and manageable.

Because of a lack of commitment and respect, many localities in America are no longer places. They have become interchangeable. They sport the same mediocre high-rise office buildings, the same fern bars, the same suburbs and malls with the same traffic and crime problems.

Vermont has fortunately always been a real place. Our farming traditions have given Vermonters a determination to care for the natural world. You can't farm a field very long if you don't care for it, fertilize it, leave it fallow once in awhile — in a word, respect it. Vermont's strong environmental laws, its concern for the purity of its streams, the integrity of its mountains, the health of its pastoral landscape are all an expression of the bred-in respect Vermonters have for the natural world they have inherited.

Likewise, Vermont's commitment to its past continues, along with a distinct skepticism toward change for change's sake. You can see that commitment in the local historical societies and museums around the state, in the stories people tell about their families and ancestors, in the working traditions of farm and forest.

All those instincts are good, because Vermont, like the rest of America, is under enormous economic and social pressure to bend and change and become much like everywhere else. It is only our belief in the virtue of the natural world and our understanding of our past as a key to the future that will save Vermont for the next generation.

This issue of *Vermont Life* celebrates the natural world in articles on the establishment of ospreys as permanent residents of Vermont (page 56), in a look at how farmers regularly save fawns from injury (page 50), and a visit with a family and their resident band of milk snakes (page 24). We look at our Vermont heritage in "A Feeling for Horses" (page 36), in our visit to Middletown Springs (page 30), and in the tales of Bennington's Battle Flag (page 66) and of Mount Independence (page 78).

There's plenty of contemporary Vermont in these pages, but our emphasis, as it has always been, is on those elements that make Vermont special and unusual — that make it a place, after all is said and done.

Tom Slayton
EDITOR

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Letters

Backyard Memories

Your story about "Backyard Sugarin" in the Spring issue brought back fond memories of my brief sugaring career in the mid '70s. We four "stay-at-home" moms sugared over an open fire, and I can still smell the distinct aroma of smoke in the air, in our hair, and on our clothes, mixed with the odor of sap evaporating and the earthy mud smell. We involved our children, ages 11 down to 3, in this project with varying degrees of success.

The personal satisfaction of producing a product literally from scratch made up for the sore muscles, burned skin and clothing and was well worth the labor. And, it provided my children with a Vermont experience I'm sure they will carry with them the rest of their lives. Thank you for helping us relive fond memories.

Margo Miller
San Diego, California

Andersonville

I read with interest your article [Spring 1996] on Vermont's George Dewey, who survived Andersonville only to die of typhoid on his way back to the Green Mountains. My interest in Andersonville began years ago and in 1993 I visited the historic prison. A number of individual state monuments are located on the grounds but, as I recall, Vermont did not have its own. I was rather disappointed and found it ironic that my home state, noted for her granite monuments, could not provide an individual marker for her fallen sons.

Woodman H. Page
Alexandria, Virginia

According to officials at Andersonville, Vermont has no individual monument. The state's name and the number of Vermont dead — more than 689 —are on a plaque listing all the Union states. — Editor

Spring Plowing

The picture of George Crane and his team [Spring 1996] caught my attention and so I stopped to read "To Plow a Better Furrow."

The last article I finished reviewing for my own publication [*The Schoharie County Historical Review*] was about the first Agricultural Society Fair in

Continued on page 17

Post Boy

Home Is Willoughby Lake

When Lois White was a mere 23, she and two of her friends at Camp Songadeewin on Willoughby Lake played the bugle each summer morning at the camp's flag-raising ceremony. One morning, *Vermont Life* photographer Mack Derick took a picture of them that wound up as the Summer 1948 cover of the magazine.

Jon Gilbert Fox

Lois White with twin granddaughters Annah and Evelyn White last summer. Left, the 1948 VL *cover.*

Nearly 50 years later, Lois White still plays the bugle and still goes to Willoughby every summer. In fact, the lake has become what she refers to as her family's true home.

A music teacher in the schools of Windsor for 38 years, White is now retired. She has summered for as long as she can remember on the shores of Willoughby, first as a girl with her grandparents, later at Camp Songadeewin, and later still at the family's shoreside compound.

"It's my home. It's my everything," she declares. "I'm really a Willoughby Lake native."

Every July 4th, the family has a gathering and a parade at which White plays the bugle. She remembers the challenge of swimming across the lake as a girl, encourages her children and grandchildren to uphold that local tradition, and last summer, to celebrate her 70th birthday, White once again swam all the way across Willoughby.

Her late husband Raymond White is buried near the lake, and White will be too.

"The view from up there is wonderful," she declares.

Though neither of the other two young women in the *Vermont Life* photograph now lives in Vermont, White still keeps in touch with them. She is in the center of the photo, with Nancy Lane Wilson, now of Durham, North Carolina, on her right, and Sally Needham, now of Camarillo, California, on her left.

Once More Unto the Peaks...

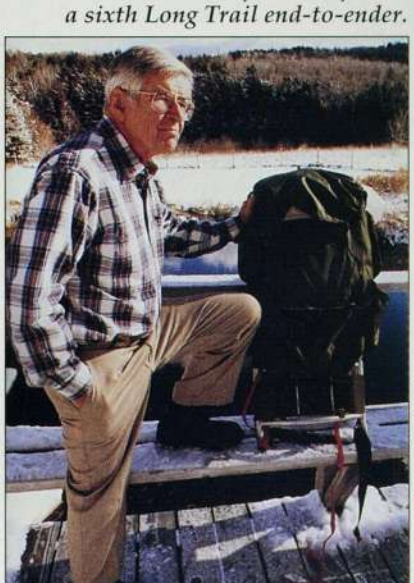
Bob Northrop of Underhill, who has already made five end-to-end trips on Vermont's Long Trail, may be 75, but he's at it again. This time, he's hiking to benefit the Green Mountain Club, the group that oversees and maintains the trail.

Northrop hiked the Long Trail completely — 265 miles over the crest of the Green Mountains from Massachusetts to Canada — in 1937, 1938, 1971, 1981, and 1991. This time, he'll don his well-worn handmade Limmer boots to hike with his 43-year-old son, Stephen, who lives in California.

In his 1991 trip, he temporarily lost the sight in one eye and had to rest at home for a time. However, Northrop says, he never gets tired of the long hike: "It's sort of like listening to *Carmen* several times: It's always interesting. The Long Trail has so many good memories for me. It offers so much."

His goal for the trek, which as in past years he hopes to complete in three weeks, is to raise $75,000 for the Green Mountain Club's Long Trail Protection Campaign. The campaign has already protected nearly 40 critical miles of

Bob Northrop contemplates a sixth Long Trail end-to-ender.



Nancy Bazilchuk

the Long Trail, 14 miles of side trail, and 15,500 acres of mountain land.

Those wishing to help or contribute to the protection campaign may contact the Green Mountain Club, RR#1, Box 650, Waterbury Center, VT 05677.

The Spreading of Fred

Tunbridge dairy farmer Fred Tuttle, like many older Vermonters, needs a retirement plan and a little extra cash. Unlike most, Fred has a plan: He'll run for Congress.

"I've spent most of my life in the barn," he declares. "Now I'd like to spend a little time in the House."

That's the premise of *Man with a Plan*, the latest quirky, made-in-Vermont movie from John O'Brien of Tunbridge. Fred's campaign takes off, complete with a debate, speeches, hand-shaking, and even a sex scandal (in which Fred chastely succumbs to a band of longjohn-clad sprites in a pasture above his farm).

Jack Rowell

Does Fred win his election? You'll have to catch the movie to find out. But in real life, Fred got several votes in Vermont's Town Meeting Day presidential primary, and his neighbors have taken to calling him "movie star," a title that mystifies him.

"I'm not any movie star," snorts Tuttle. "I just helped out with John's movie."

Nevertheless, Vermont Governor Howard Dean offered his congratulations, and *Man with a Plan*, ad libbing all the way, has turned into a smash Vermont hit. It broke several local theater attendance records and was held over 10 weeks in Burlington this past spring.

Whatever you think of this seat-of-the-pants production, it has a real Vermont feel that no Hollywood studio could ever capture. It also has beautiful, colorful footage of a Vermont autumn descending on the hills of Orange County, and a cast made up almost entirely of Vermonters.

If you've been mystified by the bumper stickers that proclaim Fred's campaign slogan: "Spread Fred," now you know what it's all about. More or less.

For information, contact John O'Brien, Tunbridge, VT 05077, tel. (802) 889-3474.

The Underground Railroad Revisited

Vermont's role in the pre-Civil War movement of slaves from captivity in the South to safety in Canada is well known. But there's also a lot of folklore and misinformation about precisely where, when and how the so-called "Underground Railroad" actually functioned in Vermont.

To separate fact from folklore on the subject, Calais researcher and architectural historian Ray Zirblis will be inspecting attics, basements and tunnels this summer.

Although the Connecticut River Valley and the Champlain Valley were known corridors for escaping slaves from the 1830s through the 1850s, Zirblis says: "It wasn't necessarily a house-to-house sort of thing."

Luck, weather, and sympathetic abolitionists all played a part in where fugitive slaves actually went.

"The abolitionists were heroic," Zirblis says. "But the real heroes were the fugitive slaves whose deep-felt longing for freedom was, I think, one of the most noble expressions in a human being."

Rokeby Museum in Ferrisburgh (tel. 802-877-3406), a confirmed Underground Railroad site that was the home of the Quaker family of writer Roland Robinson, is open to the public.

— RICHARD EWALD

Speaking Computerese With a Vermont Accent

Dave Nilsen is a mechanic well-known for keeping Rutland area cars in motion. He professes to know little or nothing about computers, but that didn't stop him from coming up with a little book called *The Vermonters' Guide to Computer Lingo*. For Dave, "log on" is what you do to make a woodstove hotter. "Log off" is what happens when your stove gets too hot, and "modem" is what you did to the hayfields last summer.

(Continued on next page)

AH, SUMMER!

Take Yourself Out to the Ballpark, with *Vermont Life*!

As everyone knows, August 16 is Bennington Battle Day. This year, it also happens to be *Vermont Life* Day at the Vermont Expos' baseball game in Burlington. If you love Vermont and small-park baseball, don't miss it! We'll be giving away magazines, subscriptions and other *Vermont Life* prizes. The game against the New Jersey Cardinals starts at 7:05 p.m. at the University of Vermont's Centennial Field. If you haven't discovered the fun of watching professional baseball played in a setting where you can see not only the ball but the players' faces *and* the Green Mountains, now's your chance!

Courtesy Vermont Expos

Combined with illustrations by Chris Mathewson, Dave's little 77-page paperback hit Vermont book stores for the last Christmas season, sold out several modest printings, and is now sallying forth into the outside world, retitled as *The Backwoods Guide to Computer Lingo* and available in such book stores as Walden Books and Lauriat's.

As for Dave, he's still fixing cars and hatching new ideas. But if you're having computer trouble, don't consult Dave. He thinks a "hard drive" is what it's like getting home during mud season and "random access memory" is when you can't provide your wife with the price of the rifle you just purchased.

For information, contact Cowsamungus Publishing, 1 Scale Avenue, Unit 53, Rutland, VT 05701, tel. (802) 773-7735.

Save Vermont; Save America

Vermont's small communities, environmental integrity, and suspicion of change could offer a blueprint for improving the rest of America, according to social critics Ron Powers and Thomas Naylor of Middlebury College.

In an essay entitled "The Vermont Option: Scenario for Survival," Naylor and Powers declare that while most of America is in deep trouble, Vermont has chosen a different path.

"Vermont evinces a deep sense of community and strong sense of place," write Naylor and Powers. "Vermont is our surviving Arcadia, a threatened but still-functioning artifact of our country's founding ideals: idealism, self-sufficiency, nonviolence, hard work, local democracy, perseverance, a strong sense of community, an ardent respect for the land."

Vermont is threatened, say the two authors, by the same forces that have damaged much of the rest of the U.S.: rampant commercialism, mega-growth, unchecked development, and a resulting sense of social isolation and alienation. The issue is very much in the balance, they say, but their essay expresses hope that Vermont can effectively combat those forces.

"Vermont has a profound story to

tell the beleaguered nation about the value, and price, of human-scale community," the two authors note in conclusion.

Their book, *The Longing for Community*, will include a section on Vermont.

UPDATES

Our story about **Middletown Springs** (page 30) notes the importance to the town's early history of that old-time source of energy, the horsepower. In *Grandpa's Gift*, a booklet Joy Millard wrote to record and honor her father's tales of growing up in **Danby** in the early part of this century, horsepowers appear, too. Tim Rowe, Joy's dad, remembers the days when he and the other boys took their own turns walking the treadmill that ran a horsepower, spinning grinding wheels on the family farm on Fayette's Mountain. These days things are different, and treadmills are just another source of revenue for health clubs, whose patrons pay hundreds of dollars a year to use them. And they turn no grinding wheels.

•

During the last basketball season, Oxbow Union High School's **Jazz Huntington** became only the second Vermont girl to score more than 2,000 career points. The other was her older sister, Jade [*VL*, Spring 1988]. Jazz, whose name is actually Jasmyn, averaged more than 31 points per game and scored 46 points in two games last season. Next year she'll play basketball for the University of Nevada.

•

True North Kayak Tours, mentioned in last summer's article on sea kayaking on Lake Champlain, will offer a variety of tours and lessons on the lake this summer, complete with kayak rentals. For information: True North Kayak Tours, 53 Nash Place, Burlington, VT 05401, tel. (802) 860-1910.

•

CORRECTION: Alas, we were wrong. The **Tour de Sol** did not go anywhere near Brattleboro this May though we said twice in our Spring issue that it would. In May of 1997, however, the tour of solar and electric cars *will* travel through Vermont. For information, call (413) 774-6051.

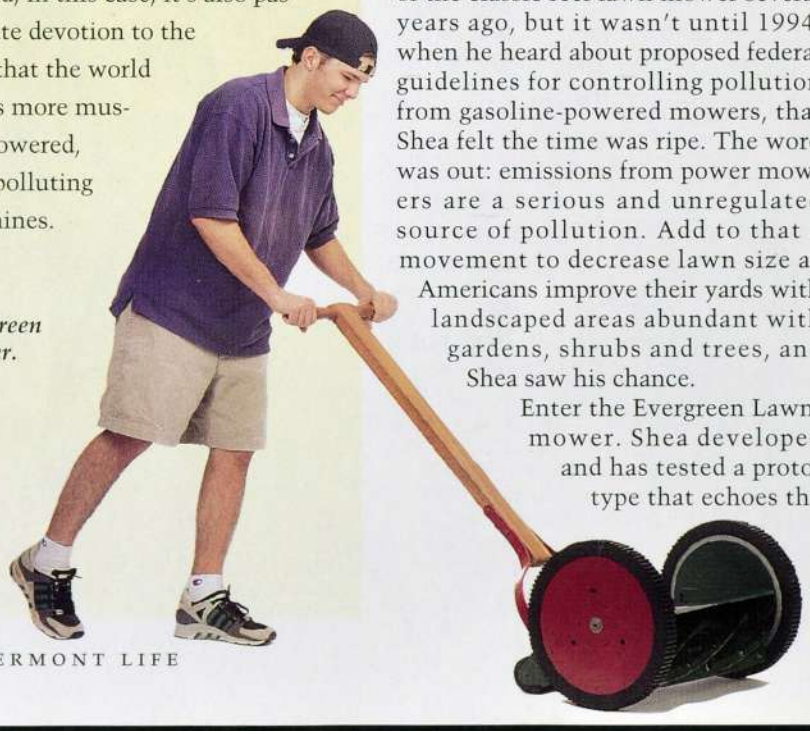
Clearing the Air

By CHERYL DORSCHNER

IT'S OFTEN SAID that necessity is the mother of invention, but I don't believe it: Dreaming is.

The work of inventors Dan Shea, Gerry Hawkes and Bruce Cunningham, and of the marketers behind the Step 'n Go bike, shows that inventing has more to do with unceasingly seeing the potential for improvement. It's persistence each time an idea doesn't quite work. It's faith that the vision and the investors will someday mesh.

And, in this case, it's also passionate devotion to the idea that the world needs more muscle-powered, non-polluting machines.



The Evergreen mower.

Len Mastri

Mow Clean

Dan Shea hopes to transform the summertime weekend ritual of lawn mowing into a kinder, gentler activity. If he has his way, you won't awaken on Saturdays to the buzz of your neighbor's 12-horsepower tractor crisscrossing the plantation to hack the grass to crewcut level. Lawn mowing will be a quiet, human-powered art. The smell of exhaust fumes will be replaced by the summery scent of freshly cut fescue.

Shea came up with the idea of an improved, updated and upscale version of the classic reel lawn mower several years ago, but it wasn't until 1994, when he heard about proposed federal guidelines for controlling pollution from gasoline-powered mowers, that Shea felt the time was ripe. The word was out: emissions from power mowers are a serious and unregulated source of pollution. Add to that a movement to decrease lawn size as Americans improve their yards with landscaped areas abundant with gardens, shrubs and trees, and Shea saw his chance.

Enter the Evergreen Lawnmower. Shea developed and has tested a prototype that echoes the lines of turn-of-the-century mowers. It has bigger wheels than its predecessors, a gear mechanism that he says makes it easier to push, and its cut can be adjusted from one to four inches in height.

Price is another difference between the Evergreen and other contemporary reel mowers, which are cropping up in the industry like weeds. Others sell for about $100; Shea's would cost $195 for the 20-inch mower, $250 for the 24-inch.

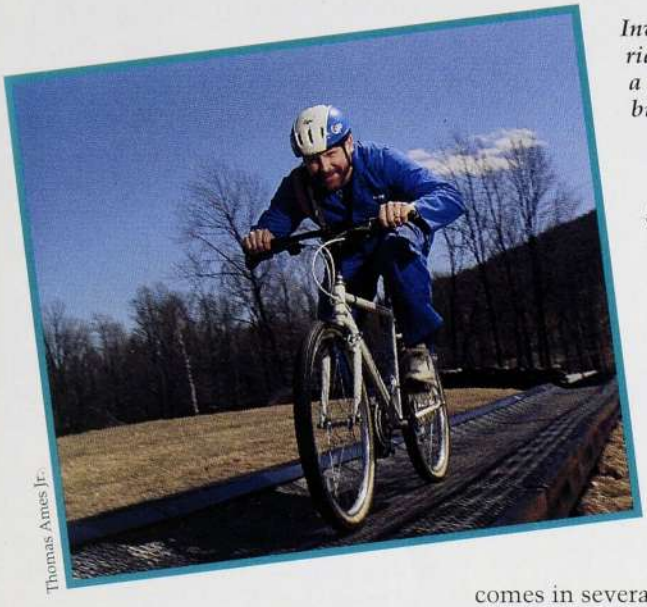
Evergreen mowers come with a 10-year warranty, however. Shea says they need virtually no repairs and no fidgeting, and the alloy blades have to be sharpened only once every couple of years.

He's got the blueprints. He's got a 40-page business plan. He's lined up a manufacturer. He has a distribution plan. He's raised $60,000 and is awaiting another $60,000 to finish the prototype and another $300,000 to start production. He had hoped to be manufacturing in the spring of 1995.

"On schedule? No! When we get money, we go forward; until then, we go looking for money," he says, voicing every inventor's lament.

But Dan Shea foresees a green future. "There's always somebody mowing the lawn in America," he says.

Evergreen Lawnmower Company, *120 Lakeview Terrace Number 6, Burlington, VT 05401, tel. (802) 658-7473.*



Thomas Anes Jr.

Inventor Gerry Hawkes rides on his EcoTrack, a portable, interlocking bike path.

On the EcoTrack

Gerry Hawkes is attacking air pollution from a different approach: the bicycle path.

Hawkes has spent most of his 48 years in forestry. With his family he worked in farming, logging and sawmilling. He earned a forestry degree from the University of Maine; served as a Peace Corps forester in Africa; consulted internationally and managed 30,000 acres of Vermont forests. His own business focused on low-impact timber harvesting techniques.

But Gerry (pronounced Gary) concluded that all the ecological forestry techniques in the world can't make up for the fact that pollution is making trees more susceptible to insects and diseases. "I just see the air pollution issue as taking precedence," he says. "I've been trying to get my point out within the profession, but I had to get outside the profession to do my part to solve this problem."

Hawkes felt that if he could entice more people out of cars and onto bicycles, he could help reduce pollution. So he invented the EcoTrack path system, designed to make bicycling, walking, jogging and wheelchair access easier and more environmentally friendly. It not only encourages people to travel routes other than highways, it allows paths to tread lightly across wetlands, beaches, dunes and other fragile areas.

With a series of rugged, four-foot interlocking pieces made of recycled yogurt containers, soda-bottle bases and other high-density plastics, the track can be anchored to the ground or trestled over uneven terrain. It has been tested at Cape Cod National Seashore, by the Nature Conservancy and in several local uses. It comes in several widths and can be reassembled or reconfigured. There are drainage holes, curved edges to help keep vehicles on track, and reflective edges for night travel. Hawkes seems to have addressed all the angles. All except the money needed for start-up; EcoTrack failed to garner the $1.5 million needed to begin production.

"I've spent all my money in product development and have nothing left for marketing." he says. "But EcoTrack is a future project."

For now, he's come up with a variation on the EcoTrack. EcoTrack tiles are installed over existing surfaces to increase the life of ramps, boardwalks and decks. This time Hawkes is going after the hazards of pressure-treated lumber, which he believes will soon be banned from landfills because it contains arsenic. Square-foot EcoTrack tiles ($25) cover pressure-treated surfaces so they don't have to be ripped out and disposed of.

And, to foster bike use, he has invented a safer, better-looking, easy-to-use bike rack, his Little Parker Wall-It, available in units ranging from the simplest wall-mounted ones to octagons and H-shaped on-the-ground installations that will hold 22 bikes. He also devised a vertical bicycle hanger and a combination bike, ski and snowboard rack for Amtrak's Vermonter passenger train. Other more traditional installations are at Burlington's City Hall and the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Hanover, New Hampshire.

Bike Track Inc. *RFD #1, Box 247, Woodstock, VT 05091, tel. (802) 457-3275.*

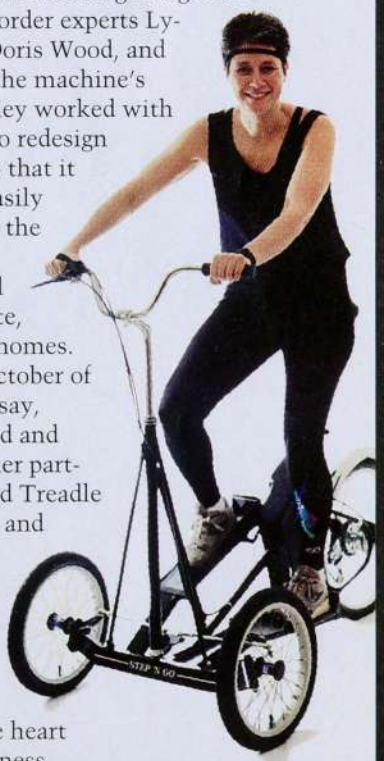
You Step, It Goes

In the field of muscle-powered, non-polluting transport, the Step 'n Go bike stands out — and the rider stands out, too, because this is a vehicle you don't have to sit down to operate.

It's essentially a treadle-powered tricycle that is stable, easy on the legs, and that turns not only wheels but heads. You have to try it to see what's so different about it, but it moves because of a weight-shifting, stepping action. You step, it goes, average cruising speed 8 to 10 m.p.h.

Invented in North Dakota by John Sandgren, a forklift salesman who thought of it as an easy, non-polluting way for workers to travel around large warehouses, the Step 'n Go has found a home among a group of Vermont direct-mail marketers.

Stuart Lindsay, in search of a product to sell, discovered Sandgren's invention in the pages of a farm magazine, contacted Sandgren and bought the patent rights. Lindsay and some friends got together with mail-order experts Lyman and Doris Wood, and discussed the machine's virtues. They worked with Sandgren to redesign the bike so that it could be easily pedaled up the heights of Rabbit Hill in Charlotte, near their homes. Then in October of 1992, Lindsay, Doris Wood and several other partners formed Treadle Power Inc. and set out to spread the Step 'n Go gospel.



The Step 'n Go.

Mail orders were and are the heart of the business, but Treadle Power also went on the road to demonstrate its product. The company headed for East Coast beach resorts with miles of boardwalk and tourists eager to rent bikes to pedal through the sea breezes. At first

Continued on next page

they placed the Step 'n Go in rental shops. Then they opened their own store in Ocean City, New Jersey. Last winter, in search of a longer stepping season, they took their bikes to the West Coast beach scene, opening a store in Venice, California.

The Step 'n Go has developed a devoted following, particularly among older people who may have given up riding bicycles. It can also be transportation for people with disabilities who cannot ride traditional bicycles.

"It does more than provide low-impact exercise," says partner Chris Williamson, "it brings back the joys of cycling to those who had given it up or had never tried it."

And, he hastens to add, anyone who wants a vigorous aerobic workout on a Step 'n Go can get one: just step faster.

By the way, if you want to sit, the Step 'n Go does have a seat, a famous one at that, noted for its two-part ergonomic design and, like the rest of the bike, adjustable to fit children and adults.

Step 'n Go bikes are assembled at Vermont Ware in St. George, and available in two colors: Champlain Blue and Mountain Green; $1,099, for the six-speed version, $999 for a one-speed.

Treadle Power Inc., *Box 180, Cedar Beach Road, Charlotte, VT 05445, tel. (800) 648-7335, (802) 425-2264.*

Pedaling Water

On just about any fair-weather summer day you're likely to find Donna and Bruce Cunningham biking the waves of Lake Champlain.

Their CycleCraft combines two pontoons with a special apparatus that adjusts to fit any bicycle. You simply remove the bike's front wheel and attach the bike. The back wheel turns a drum connected by a belt drive to the propeller shaft, and with the hook-up in front you can turn the rudder, go through the gears, back up and even turn tight circles.

"Bikers like it because you use your own bike that you're comfortable with," says Donna Cunningham, "I like it because there are no hills. I love it when boats go by." Donna has a reputation for heading straight into the waves. She calls it "surfing Vermont-style."

She is a public relations specialist for Bell Laboratories, who, by day, manages a staff in New Jersey from the Cunningham's Hinesburg home. Inventor Bruce Cunningham adjusted his career as an IBM engineer to become an IBM contractor. Inventing is his hobby, moonlight business or habit, depending on how you look at it. He has also come up with a reusable mesh tote bag for raking leaves and a Washer Watcher that turns off washing machine water to avoid accidents. In the works is a three-legged picnic table that won't wobble.

The CycleCraft plies Burlington Harbor.

Those have been less troublesome than the launch of CycleCraft. Although the product has been improved in each of three versions, the price is the problem. To own and use a custom-made CycleCraft, all you need is a bicycle, a life jacket and $5,000.

"Right now, we're trying to keep the price down without losing the fact that it is adjustable to any bike," says Bruce.

Their goal is to sell CycleCrafts to resorts and high-end bicyclists. Until then, they can be seen working up a sweat bicycling as though they're walking on water, then pausing on the specially built platform on the end of the CycleCraft and diving off for a refreshing swim in Lake Champlain.

CycleCraft, *RR 1, Box 2035, Huntington, VT 05462, tel. (802) 482-2933.*

Cheryl Dorschner regularly writes Vermont Life's *"Made in Vermont" column. She lives in Williston.*

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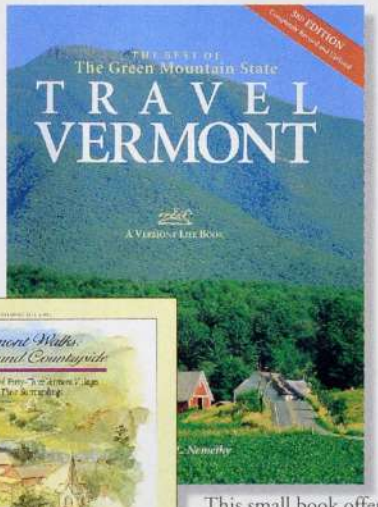

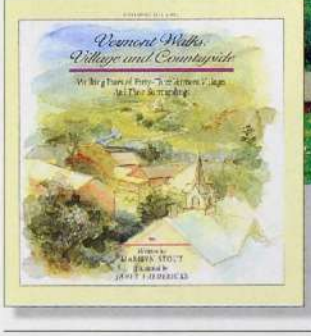

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Continued from page 5

Schoharie County, held in October 1819. The main event in the afternoon was a "Ploughing Match." A premium of $8 was offered to "the person with a team of horses and also the person with a team of oxen who shall plough the most and best in a given time."

It was good to read 177 years later that this country fair tradition is still being carried on.

Edward A. Hagan
Middleburgh, New York

Remembering Windham College

Your article about Putney [Winter 1995] rekindled bittersweet memories and brought tears to my eyes. As a professor at Windham College, I was fated to be an eyewitness to its final years of glory and its ultimate demise. Even now, more than 20 years later, I consider my tenure at Windham to have been the apex of my academic career. When Putney lost Windham, it not only lost probably the best small college in the United States, but it also lost a family of dedicated scholars and wonderfully kind and considerate human beings who were totally dedicated to transmitting knowledge and real values to their students.

Although the author states that "a dramatic drop in students forced it to close after the end of the Vietnam war," that is only part of the story. What I consider to have been the true death knell was the tragic deaths of several students (one of whom was mine, and whose name shall forever be engraved in my memory), when an off-campus dormitory burned to the ground.

I shall treasure my years at Windham College to the end of my days.

Alexander Habib Arkin, Ph.D
Pepperdine University
Malibu, California

George Aiken

While I enjoyed the article on Putney, I must express my disappointment that nowhere was Putney's most famous resident, George D. Aiken, mentioned. Would you write an article on Plymouth and not mention President Coolidge?

Aiken, a life-long Putney resident, is easily one of the most important Vermonters of this century. It was he who helped bring Vermont into the 20th century during the 1920s and '30s and served as its U.S. senator during the time of greatest change and turmoil in this country. From the beginning of World War II through the Cold War, Vietnam and Watergate, it was Aiken who brought Vermont sensibility and character to Washington and represented the state with honor for more than 30 years.

George D. Aiken wrote often of his love of Putney, from its people to its land, and I think if you were to ask him what he did for a living he might have responded that he was a Putney farmer caught up in politics.

Garry W. Koop
Hood River, Oregon

Well said, Mr. Koop! — Editor

Send letters to: *Vermont Life*, Letters to the Editor, 6 Baldwin Street, Montpelier, VT 05602; fax: (802) 828-3366; E-mail: vtlife@lif.state.vt.us

The Race up Equinox

By SANDRA MCCLELLAN
Photographed by CRAIG LINE

The view from the bottom: A vintage sports car prepares for its sprint up Mount Equinox.

SUMMER IS UPON US, and the road beckons. We all hear the call differently, though. Some of us like to drive, and some of us love to drive, and then there are those for whom driving is a grand passion. If you want to watch the latter sort of drivers in all their glory, don't miss the 46th anniversary of the Mount Equinox Hill Climb in Manchester.

Each year, usually on the second weekend in June, Mount Equinox welcomes a swarm of humanity and machinery, otherwise known as the Vintage Sports Car Club of America, home track Lime Rock, Connecticut, to race against the clock up the snaking 5.2-mile Skyline Drive.

It's a sight worth seeing — and hearing. Barking and growling their way up the twisting course are some of the great names of racing from earlier decades, when cockpits were open and speed had style: Bugatti, MG, Morgan, Allard, Jaguar, Porsche, Cooper, Lotus. All pre-date 1960, many cost in the six figures, and each is a finely tuned racing machine that, in the words of VSCCA member Jim Donick of Pleasant Valley, New York, "deserves to be exercised."

It's some workout, a jolting joyride for man and machine. Towering 3,816 feet, Equinox is the highest mountain in southwest Vermont and is definitely on the A-list of hill climbs. The spiraling drive up, boasting more than 50 elbow and hairpin turns, is the longest paved hill-climb course in the world and the second oldest hill climb (next to Pikes Peak).

At the summit is the refurbished Equinox Mountain Inn, where the food is excellent and the view goes on forever, taking in Vermont's Green Mountains, the White Mountains of New Hampshire and the Adirondacks of New York.

To the west, tucked in a tranquil clearing a little below Lake Madeleine, is the austere granite monastery of the Carthusian Order, owners of Equinox's 8,000 acres since 1969, when the mountain's owner and developer, Dr. J.C. Davidson, died, entrusting the future of the mountain to the monks.

The irony of dozens of expensive race cars blasting and smoking their way up a mountainside owned by a contemplative religious order is not lost on VSCCA members.

"It's amazing. Here we are, the antithesis of what the monks believe in, and they let us race up their road," marvels VSCCA driver David Brownell, editor of *Hemmings Motor News* in Bennington.

The Sports Car Club of America held the first hill climb at Equinox in 1950, just three years after the toll road was opened to the public. In the late '60s, vintage cars began running the course too, and by 1973, the VSCCA had taken over the event. It was in

1969, during the SCCA reign, that the yet-to-be-beaten course record of 4:08 was set by a New Yorker, John Meyer, in a Lola T-70. The all-time King of the Hill was clocked at a heart-stopping 140 m.p.h. on one stretch of the course.

"His record will probably never be broken," explains Bob Girvin of Holliston, Massachusetts, VSCCA member and event chairman at the hill climb, "because we don't allow that kind of car to be run here anymore, and the hill has deteriorated a lot. It's nowhere near as smooth as it was back in those days." He waits a beat before adding, "You need somebody, too, who doesn't really care if he lives through the weekend. It was a *very* heroic run."

Course times are carefully kept — the current vintage record of 4:28 was set in 1993 by Joel Finn of Connecticut in a 1959 Cooper — yet this race is not really about speed. There isn't even a trophy for the winner, a fact VSCCA members proudly point out.

"One of our past presidents is alleged to have said, 'We're institutionally indifferent to who wins,' and we are," says Donick.

For further proof that speed is not of the essence, one need only talk to Gordon Matson of New Hampshire, whose stately 30 m.p.h. pace up the mountain in a 1911 EMT Racer routinely places him at the bottom of the pack. Undeterred, Matson keeps coming back. "This car just likes to climb hills and so do I," he explains. He does recall that once he got his car up to 70 m.p.h. on the club's Lime Rock track: "Conditions were ideal, all the other cars had passed me and I could really thump it — but I'm not anxious to do it again."

For safety purposes, the race always piggybacks with a radio relay contest held on the mountain by ham operators from Maine, New Hampshire, New York and Vermont. Doug Tshorn of Arlington, a radio and car enthusiast, has been attending the race for the past 25 years and says of the relay, "You try to have 24-hour coverage and make as many contacts as you can. It's something like speed-dialing on a telephone." For the race, radio operators are positioned at 15 checkpoints on the course and clear each car past their

station.

On race weekend, the hill is closed to traffic and racing begins around 10 a.m. both days. Drivers can opt to go the full distance or do a shortened course of three miles. Rain won't stop the race but fog can shorten it. If there's low visibility on top, everyone does just the short course. Entries are limited to 50 cars, so each driver can get three or four runs in each day. Before the race and between heats, spectators can pay the $6 toll and drive to the top or to one of several parking lots along the course. To get the full flavor, though, browse around at the base of the mountain (it's free), taking in the sights and sounds. The chance to get close to these exotic machines and chat with their friendly owners in a spectacular outdoor setting such as Equinox makes this truly a special experience for spectators.

The demands of the course and the history of the event combine to make it special for the drivers, too.

"The course is very challenging," says Brownell. "It can eat you up in a second; you can't look at the scenery. I've been driving here since 1978 and I haven't got it memorized yet. I'm always saying, 'where did that curve come from?' "

Donick notes, "This is undoubtedly my favorite event and it is for many of us. It's just you and the mountain, and there's a certain romance in going out and driving cars that were raced up that hill in the early days of the sport."

And as the bumper sticker on one race car reads, "It's Never Too Late to Have a Happy Childhood."

How to Go

This year's Mount Equinox Hill Climb will be held June 8-9, starting at 10 a.m. each day. Most of the racing usually occurs on Saturday.

Mount Equinox is off Route 7A just south of Manchester. The toll road opens May 1 and closes November 1, and the Equinox Mountain Inn is open from mid-May to late October. For information about the race, call the inn at (800) 868-6843.

Writer Sandra McClellan lives in Salem, New York, not far from the western border of Vermont.

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The Lincoln Inn. Rates: $99-$139 prdo; $89-$119 prso. Renovated farmhouse situated on 6 acres of rolling hills bordered by Ottauquechee River and Lincoln Covered Bridge. 6 rooms with private baths. Superb continental cuisine. Dinner: Tues.-Sun. 6-9 p.m. Rates include gourmet breakfast. Rte. 4W, Woodstock, VT 05091. (802) 457-3312. Fax (802) 457-5808.

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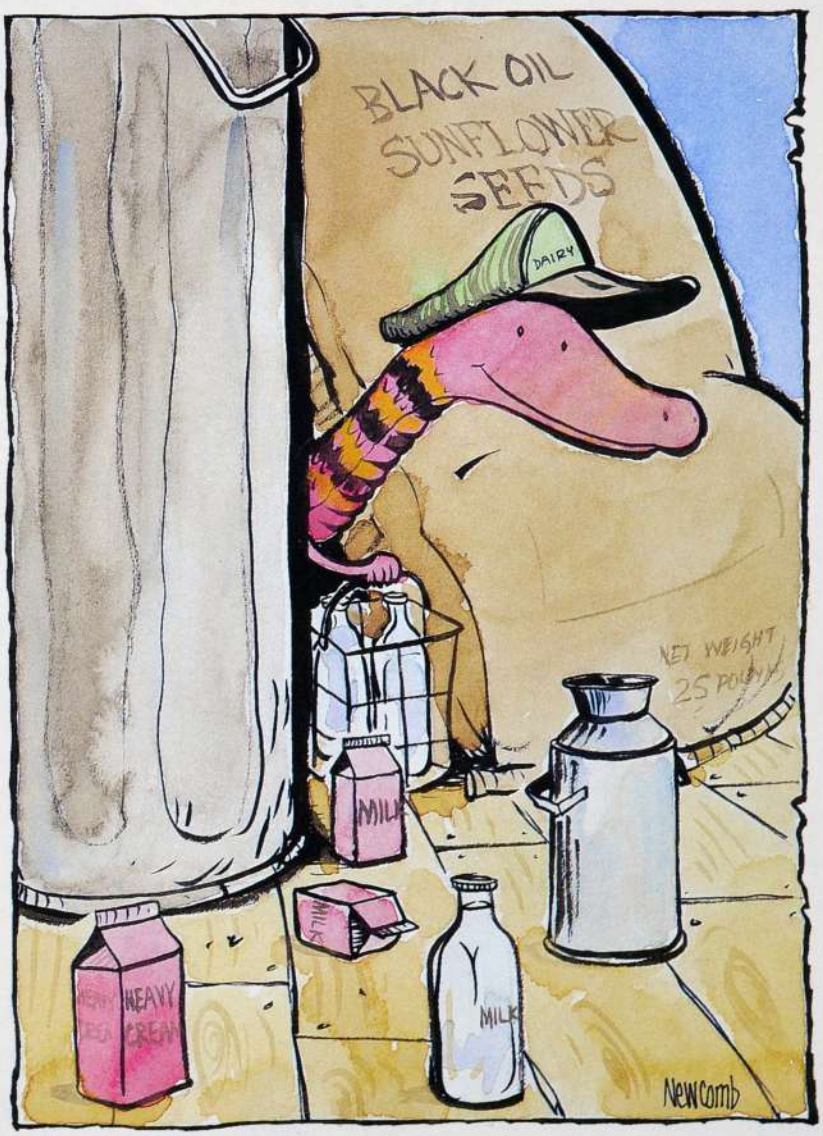
NEARBY:

CORNISH, NH

The Barberry House. Built in 1795, the House was elegantly restored in 1990. Located in a rural setting but only 3 miles from Windsor, VT, 20 minutes from Woodstock, VT and a five minute walk to St. Gaudens National Historic Site. Full breakfast. 70 St. Gaudens Rd., Cornish, NH 03745. (603) 675-2802.

The Snakes of Summer

By JENNY LAND
Illustrated by TIM NEWCOMB



EVERY SUMMER they appear at our step, arriving on a warm and fresh day in mid-May. I've only once seen their sleepy faces greet me in April, for a sugar snow usually falls once or twice to cover the delicate hepatica that bloom purple in the side woods. But after the days have warmed convincingly and the honeysuckle leaves have irretrievably uncurled, the visitors return to their summer home. The milk snakes again claim our garage as their own.

Though only milk snakes insist upon co-residence with our family, we have almost daily contact with several other snake families. On the kind of hot day when the clay soil in the vegetable garden cracks, and my mother, clad only in her bathing suit and sneakers, wanders around with spades and rakes, the lean and silent ribbon snakes glide swiftly to the hose for a drink. As my mother sprays icy water on her wilted plants, the usually dignified snakes ecstatically curl and wind through the wet grass and then cautiously snake back and disappear into the tall weeds at the yard's edge. And whenever I roll the woodpile's bottom logs out from the mud to be dried and restacked, I'm fairly certain I'll chance upon a tiny ring-necked snake. The diminutive creature blinks shyly upward from the gloom of a muddy cavern. Only the eyes and remarkable scarlet necklace of scale markings appear distinct until the little recluse resolutely wriggles away to find another cool and moist log-home, away from sunlight.

The milk snakes, which enjoy stretching a full three or four speckled feet across the pebbled driveway to bask on sultry summer afternoons, have not a shy vertebra in

their thick, muscular bodies. When I can work up the nerve to walk, apprehensively, four inches in front of them and wave my arms and dance, the snakes won't budge. They simply tense and relax their strong muscles and wait patiently for me to recover my wits. I oblige and tiptoe around with respectful courtesy.

Uncurled to full length, spanning a good half of the driveway, the milk snakes quite reasonably consider themselves impressive specimens, to come and go on their own terms. They're formidably large and colorful by Vermont snake standards. A ribbon snake (which is often confused with the garter snake, but which possesses much bolder black and yellow stripes and likewise a slightly bolder personality) may attain the length of a yard, but never the same thickness as a milk snake, which sometimes reaches a good inch and a half in diameter.

Most milk snakes of my acquaintance are a mottled burgundy-brown, although they can range to a pale yellowish-brown. Their markings consist of variations of overlapping white diamonds and dark splotches and a light, Y-shaped marking on the forehead. In the southeastern United States, the milk snake looks much like the highly poisonous coral snake of that region, except that the coral snake has red and yellow bands that touch each other. The milk snake's rings are separated by a black band.

Although many Vermonters call milk snakes "puff adders," mistake them for copperheads, or think they're rattlesnakes when they shake their tails, milk snakes do not kill prey with poisonous venom. In fact, except in a few rocky areas of southwestern Vermont, there are no reptiles or amphibians in the state that are poisonous to humans. Rather, milk snakes constrict their quarry — small mammals, snakes, lizards, amphibians and eggs. Because of their appetite for the pesky mice that help themselves to grain, farmers welcome the snakes in their dairy barns — hence the name "milk snake."

The species can, however, possess an extremely aggressive nature, as I discovered in my own first encounter with a milk snake during the summer vacation after kindergarten. My par-

ents had built our home half a mile off a rural road, in a young forest of mixed hardwood and pine that surrounds old farmland. I took the greatest delight in tracking crawly things, following the example of my parents' love of wildlife — especially that of my mother, who to my father's incredulity carries her appreciation for nature so far as to save and release from a Tupperware container each spider and hornet that enters the house.

Each summer day I made a little pilgrimage over to the pile of rocks extracted from the vegetable garden to visit the "Lowly Worms," or rather, the congregation of garter snakes. (I was a fan of illustrator Richard Scarry's Lowly Worm, the smiley snakelike worm with the Austrian hat.) Their slender, finely molded little heads really did seem to smile at me as they emerged from below the mossy rocks, winking bright black eyes and hesitantly flickering their delicate tongues. I loved to stroke their smooth, dry bodies, and glimpse the pale horizontal ridges of their undersides as they inquiringly lifted their necks to greet me.

With such pleasant acquaintances, I certainly had no reason to fear a half-grown milk snake peering at me from underneath our Jeep. I squirmed underneath the vehicle to give my regards as I would to any garter snake. I remember staring face-to-face at the ruddy little snake whose head swayed back and forth, eyeing me. And then lunging at me.

The little aggressor did bite me, and I remembered that swift strike over and over. The sight of any snake sent a thrill of fear through me for years, and still does on occasion when I come upon one unexpectedly.

Although I've largely overcome my fear of the legless creatures, and even seek the garters out in the stone piles once more, it's the milk snakes that live in the garage. Their presence has always been quite inevitable; they enter easily because my brother and I troop in and out all day long in search of extra Whiffleball bats or Popsicles out of the garage freezer. Besides, the snakes seem to have a number of sneaky routes in through the railroad-tie flower boxes by the back door. They appear to navigate a favorite

pathway from behind the freezer, across the step that leads to our mud room and behind the garbage can that we keep full of birdseed. As my mother is wont to inform visiting humans, one need only look both ways before stepping into the garage.

One summer my father determined to remove the invaders from his workshop adjoining the garage. His little, crowded space is full of boxes of old tools and books and prized curiosities that *might* be useful someday, and I think it's the likely site of the snakes' habitation, as yet undiscovered. After a large and memorable battle that consisted of my brother chasing the milk snake with a rake, my father succeeded in wrestling the three-and-a-half foot-long rope of muscle into a lobster pot. Gloatingly victorious, he marched the

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My mother watched incredulously as the snake balanced on its tail against the wall and slithered up across the pipes and into a hole in the wall of our house.

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pot a quarter mile down the road to release his prisoner by the pond that he and my mother had built with visions of a lovely swimming hole back when we first moved in. By July each year, the sunken basin is both a naturalist's delight and the breeding ground of our personal mosquito colony, with a surface so thick and full of algae teeming with frog and turtle heads that it appears to be a green skating rink.

I still can't quite figure out why my father thought the pond bank the logical territory in which to leave a milk snake with hopes of it remaining there forever after. He returned triumphantly to the house, with an explicit warning to my brother and me NEVER to leave the garage door open. Of course, we forgot within the week, received our well-deserved scolding, and the same splotched snake was back for the rest of the summer.

Not long after the lobster-pot incident, my mother was in the garage collecting garden tools when the milk

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snake slithered across its usual route from the freezer and behind the birdseed. When it reappeared alongside the wall by the furnace, my mother watched incredulously as the snake balanced on its tail against the wall and slithered up across the pipes and into a hole in the wall of our house.

Well, it doesn't take much to figure out why a milk snake would feel inclined to share the house as well as the garage. I figured that since we don't have cats and refuse to set traps to limit our burgeoning mouse population, the snakes ought to be reasonably welcome. So did my mother. But after watching them crawl through the walls, she drew the line and took direct action against an animal for the first time in her life. After stuffing the holes with self-hardening foam clearly had no effect, she went so far as to call the local exterminator, Eudy Bean.

Mr. Bean listened carefully to the story of our wild inhabitants and even sympathized a bit, but apologetically and resolutely replied: "I don't do snakes." He did, however, offer the suggestion of making a glueboard. When my mother warily inquired what such proceedings would entail once the snake had slid below the pipes onto the glueboard, he patiently responded, "Well, ma'am, all you got to do is carry the board with the snake stuck on it out to the back woods with a hammer..."

Six summers later, the milk snakes remain our firmly established summer housemates. We still haven't seen one *inside* the house, but my guess is that if one did appear, it would be quite tolerably received — even by my parents. Right now, Vermont is in the midst of mud season, and I've seen the first hepatica leaves in the side woods. I figure our visitors will show up in just over a month. I wonder if they'll have diamond patterns, or be splotched like last year. I wonder if this will be the year they decide to share the inside household. It'll liven things up, and I'm ready. After so many years, they're part of the family.

Jenny Land is a Dartmouth College senior majoring in creative writing. She lives in Shelburne and is a former director of the Green Mountain Audubon Nature Center's Summer Ecology Day Camp.

Middletown Springs Eternal

WHAT'S IN A NAME? In the case of Middletown Springs, the clue to its unique beginnings, a tribute to a prosperous phase of its history, and some hints of the independent streak that still runs through its citizenry.

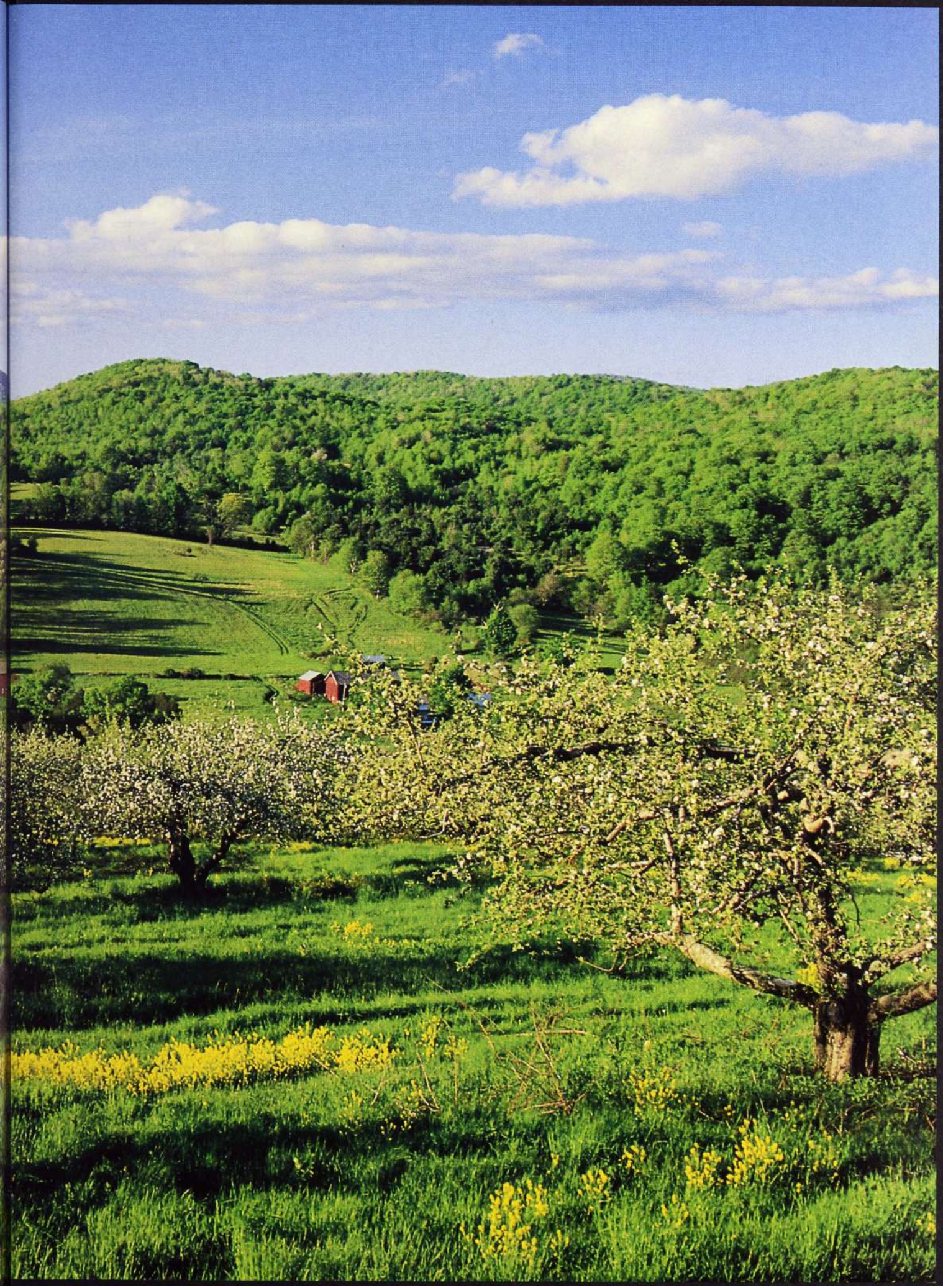
The town nestles snugly in a picturesque Rutland County valley less than 10 miles from New York and bisected by the Poultney River. Virtually alone among Vermont municipalities, Middletown was created by mandate of its residents, who valued practicality more than government edict.

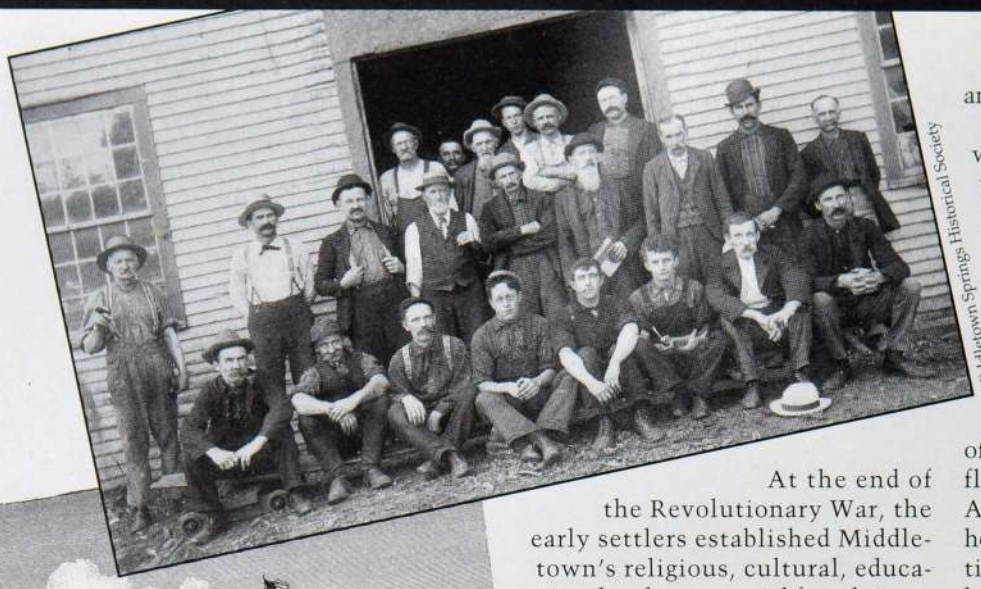
Soon after settling the towns of Ira, Tinmouth, Wells and Poultney in the mid-1700s, those citizens who chanced to live in the Poultney River valley found themselves in a quandary. Vermont weather often made it impossible for them to navigate the mountains between them and their respective town centers, where they needed to conduct commercial or municipal business.

Thus, when the traveling state legislature met in Rutland in 1784, it was presented with a petition asking for the incorporation of a "middle town" that would include the four abutting corners of Ira, Tinmouth, Wells and Poultney that lay in the valley. The state granted the request, approving Vermont's first case of town planning.

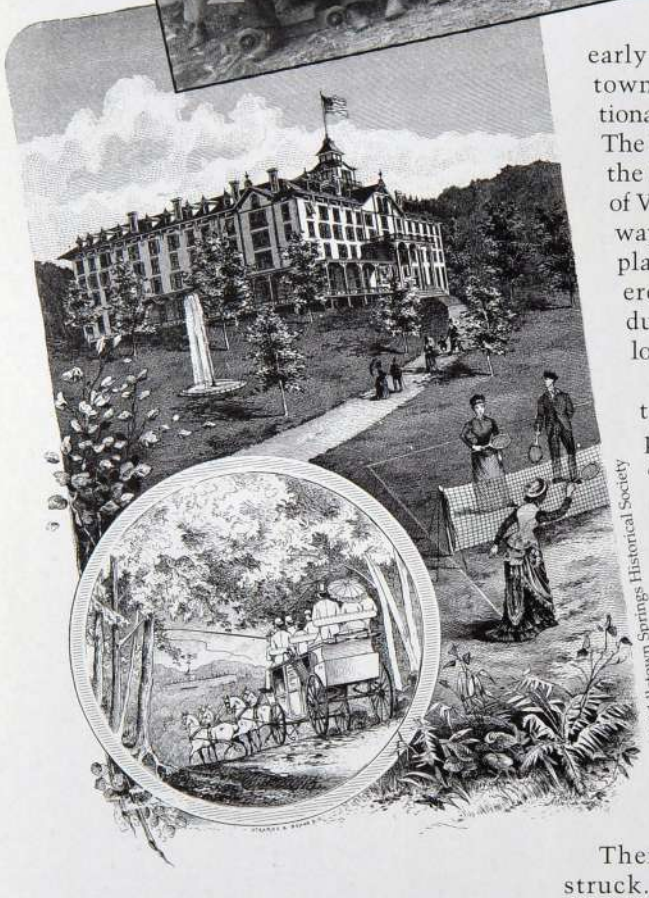
Burnham Hollow Orchard in the hills of Middletown Springs. Top, the restored springhouse in Mineral Springs Park recalls the days when Middletown's healing waters were famous.

By NANCY BOARDMAN
Photographed by JERRY LEBLOND





Middletown Springs Historical Society



Middletown Springs Historical Society

Art from the heady time when the Montvert Hotel drew visitors from afar.

Top, the workers who produced horsepowers (opposite page) for A.W. Gray in the late 1800s.

Right, Nan Gilmour, a Manhattan transplant who has flourished.

At the end of the Revolutionary War, the early settlers established Middletown's religious, cultural, educational and commercial foundations. The Congregational Church — now the Community Church — is one of Vermont's oldest. By 1785, highways and school districts were in place, a meeting house had been erected, farmland put into production, orchards planted and logging begun.

By the turn of the 18th century, Middletown enjoyed its peak population to date. Residents numbered about 1,200, compared to roughly 680 today, and those who weren't farmers, lumbermen or shopkeepers found work in the many mills and factories that lined the river banks. As Barnes Frisbie wrote in his 1867 *History of Middletown*, "all was alive with the hum of business" in the first decade of the 1800s.

Then, on July 22, 1811, disaster struck. Torrential rains caused the Poultney River to flood, destroying virtually everything along its banks. In two days, the river drowned 50 years of progress.

Gradually the town rebuilt. By the mid-1800s, the economy rested squarely on the shoulders of the Gray family. One side of the clan made such implements as corn planters and apple presses. The other was headed by A.W. Gray, who invented and manufactured "horsepowers," ingenious devices run by one, two or even three horses that walked in place on a treadmill. Through a series of belts and wheels, energy was generated to do a multitude of tasks, including sowing, sawing, threshing and cutting corn. (Smaller versions of the device used goat and dog power to churn butter and separate cream.)

Gray's gaily painted horsepowers were a godsend to farms and lumberyards deficient in water or manpower. They were in demand all over the country, and by about 1860 Gray was the biggest employer in Middletown, with 100 on his payroll.

In 1868, another flood swept through town. But this time it brought a wave of prosperity. Receding water uncovered a series of mineral springs hidden by the first flood. One taste allegedly convinced A.W. Gray that these were the same healing waters touted by the area's Native Americans a century before, and he decided to develop them. His timing was perfect, coinciding with a state-wide hydropathy craze.

Gray and his two sons promoted the curative powers of the springs so successfully that they next built a hotel to accommodate the cure-seekers, who arrived by train in Rutland or Granville, New York, and were brought by carriage back to his grand Victorian Montvert Hotel. A short stroll from the springs, the Montvert offered its 250 guests sumptuous meals, croquet, quoits, picnic excursions to Lake St. Catherine and Mount Tabor, and concerts featuring the hotel band playing "The Montvert March."

Ever the entrepreneur, Gray's next venture was to bottle and sell not only the mineral waters, but also the hotel's table water, which flowed from a ridge behind the Montvert. So proud of their springs were Middletowners — and so eager to publicize them — that in 1868 residents once again petitioned the state, this time to add "Springs" to the name. Again, the request was granted.

Eventually the hotel was sold to a consortium of New York owners. They tried to revitalize the enterprise by adding tennis courts and a bowling alley, but to no avail. The mineral springs health fad was over. Forced to close, the Montvert was razed in 1906.

A bit of tourism continued into the early 1920s in the form of summer boarding houses, but they soon folded, too. The advent of gasoline engines spelled doom for the horsepower business; the Gray factory closed on the eve of World War I. Then, the commercial center burned down. As if to seal Middletown's fate, yet a third flood occurred in 1927, covering the mineral springs with so much dirt and gravel that they, like their municipal munificence, disappeared.

For the next 40 years or so, Middletown turned inward. Ice cream socials and square dances provided entertainment; the big white school on the hill prepared children for high school in Poultney, Clarendon or West Rutland; the Grange, 4-H and the literary Fortnightly Club met; the churches tended to the poor and offered communion in the larger sense of the word. Although not as prosperous as a century before, the town was as self-sufficient.

In the late 1960s and early '70s, two distinct groups of newcomers ended Middletown's insularity. First came the influx of retirees, drawn by Middletown's serenity and old-time feeling. They bought and restored many of the village homes and outlying farms. Along with a certain amount of wealth, the retirees contributed enormous amounts of talent and energy to town affairs, as well as a zealous interest in preserving and explaining Middletown's illustrious history.

The Middletown Springs Inn, above, and Priscilla's Victorian Inn are two spots in town where contemporary visitors can stay.

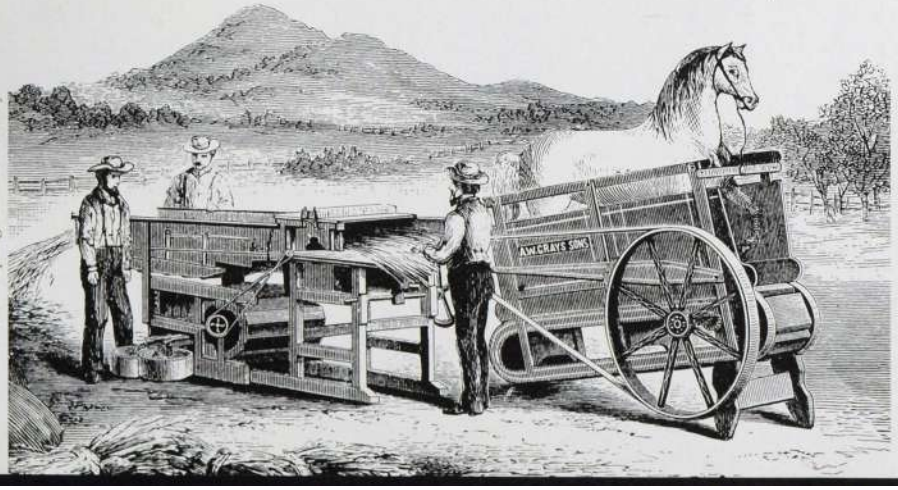
Most notable among their efforts was salvaging the handsome Community House on the town green, which was turned over to the nascent Middletown Springs Historical Society for its meetings, exhibits and events. The society's first project was to dig out and restore the mineral springs along the river. Mineral Springs Park will celebrate its 25th birthday this year. From the land it sits on to the Victorian springhouse arching over the four wellheads and the careful labels marking native trees and points of interest, the park represents countless donations of money, time, labor and expertise.

Society membership is now more than 300, many from out-of-state and overseas. Local members put on an array of special events, virtually one a month. The summer Picnic in the Park is a thank-you to the town, while the others — held on the green or at Burnham Hollow Orchard — are fundraisers. But all foster respect for the town's history, and each is "a wonderful chance to socialize," says current president Jim Geddes, whose parents were among the society's founders.

Next to discover Middletown Springs were young simplicity-seeking "back-to-the-landers," as they wryly call themselves today. Entrepreneurs of a different sort than the Grays, they raise herbs, build houses, make rugs, run an art gallery, do desk-top publishing and operate the town's two inns. A large proportion, particularly for a hamlet as small as this, are writers or artists.

Another subset of this early-'70s influx had an effect not only on the town, but on the state as well. These are the home-schoolers, notably Natalie Casco, who home-schooled her own children and now oversees Vermont's home-schooling program.

Nan Gilmour was a member of that residential wave, buying and restoring



Middletown Springs Historical Society

HOW TO GO

Middletown Springs is smack in the middle of Rutland County, at the junction of scenic routes 140 and 133.

First on every visitor's list should be a trip to Mineral Springs Park, one block south of the town green. The Historical Society Museum, on the northeast corner of the green, is open Sunday afternoons from Memorial Day through October. Call (802) 235-2144 for information.

The ornate "sister inns" — Priscilla's Victorian Inn on South Street (802-235-2299) and the Middletown Springs Inn on the green (802-235-2531) — offer a helpful guide to local points of interest. Make sure to take the family to Burnham Hollow Orchard on Route 140 west of town for maple sugaring in spring, berry picking in summer, and just-pressed apple cider and homemade donuts in fall.

Lake St. Catherine in Wells, the marble Carving Studio in West Rutland, and the new Slate Museum in Granville, New York, are interesting side trips.

The Historical Society's Jim Geddes.

one of the oldest homes in town, which is now her real estate office. A transplant from Manhattan, she learned how to garden and milk cows, raised three children, started the elementary school library. It is to her house that friends, family and guests repair every Sunday night for volleyball (or movies in the winter) and a bountiful potluck supper of garden-grown food.

But to get a full picture of how Middletown has changed, talk to the natives. These are the people, such as Anna Fenton, who have lived here all their lives, or those who grew up in Middletown, moved away, but now

have returned. In this category are Kay Avery, the great-granddaughter of A.W. Gray, and Josie Berger, whose grandfather, Arthur Norton, was the village homeopathic physician in the early 1900s.

Anna Fenton lives in the farmhouse atop Spruce Knob Road that was built by her ancestor, Joseph Spaulding, who surveyed Middletown's borders more than 200 years ago. In her living room are chairs salvaged from the Montvert Hotel and amber bottles that once held Middletown spring water. One day they will go to her great-grandchildren. Anna remembers when more than 20 farms sent milk to market (today there is one) and when there were only seven homes on Spruce Knob (there are far more now). An organizer of the Rutland Fair's livestock competition for children, she regrets that Middletown is down to only one 4-H Club.

Kay Avery has returned to Middletown Springs after many years away. She lives in what was once a summer cottage on Montvert Street, part of the formerly extensive Gray family property. She regrets that many of the old families are moving away, lured perhaps by higher wages or lower taxes elsewhere. Yet she believes the lovely town green exerts the same powerful unifying force it always has, and she is proud of the Historical Society's work.

Although Middletown is now more of a bedroom community for commuters to Rutland and Granville, Josie Berger finds the commitment to civic activities strong. "The energy and magic of living here are different," she says, "but they're still here."

What is new are some of the dicey issues facing many Vermont villages. Under a certain amount of pressure, the Select Board recently decided to write a town plan using the state's guidelines. There is growing demand for zoning regulations, and heightened awareness that the influx of new residents is boosting housing prices, land costs, property taxes and demand for town services.

Yet divisions haven't meant divisiveness. Consider the justifiably famous Memorial Day Parade, a Grange-sponsored paean to patriotism that's 27 years old this May. The town green can barely contain all the parents, children, dogs, visitors, veterans, bands, fire trucks and floats. Schoolchildren read their prize-winning essays on democracy, the gold-headed cane is presented to the town's oldest citizen, the clergymen of St. Anne's Catholic Church and the Community Church lead prayers, and there's a volley of musket fire as a wreath of remembrance is laid on the soldiers' monument. The day ends with a community-wide potluck supper.

Another quite different community effort occurred a few years back. The federal government decided the town had outgrown its post office (and unofficial gathering place), and planned to move it to a new building. Their letters and petitions of protest unheeded, citizens blocked postal workers on the day of the move, forcing the government to capitulate. Middletowners now do their mailing, and meeting, in an historic clapboard house rather than a characterless cinder block structure.

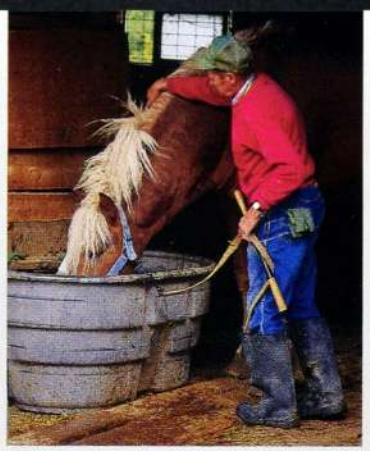
It was further evidence that Middletown Springs residents have retained the feistiness of the original settlers, as well as the cooperative spirit needed to make this little town work.

Writer Nancy Boardman lives in Arlington.

For nearly 30 years, the Memorial Day Parade, far left and below, has marched by the town green, helping to knit Middletown together.

Left, Anna Fenton in the house built by her ancestor, the town's original surveyor.

Bottom, the winners of the costume contest in the first annual croquet festival.



By Chris Granstrom
Photographed by Richard Howard

A Feeling for Horses

Vermont's Draft Horse Tradition Lives On

Tom Minor has noticed me hanging around, watching the draft horse demonstrations, and now he catches my eye and calls me over. "Come here and give it a try."

I walk up to the plow handles and take hold. "You steer by pushing down on one side or the other. Don't try to turn the handles," says Tom. He purses his lips, making what sounds like a few kisses, and Millie and Dixie, a pair of black Percherons, lean into the harness and start walking. At Tom's direction, I lift up the plow handles until the point bites into the ground, then level them out. Millie and Dixie may be walking, but I'm at a near trot. The plow handles are very sensitive: A little push one way or the other and the plow heads off in a new direction. I understand now why plowing a straight furrow symbolizes rural virtue: Waywardness is far easier to achieve.

Tom is driving the horses. If this were for real, the reins would be around my back and I would be steering the animals as well as the plow. We get to the

Diane St. Clair plows with her Morgan-Percherons, Dan and Diamond, in the community gardens of the Burlington Intervale. Left, Cornwall's Bernard Moeykens, one of the few Vermonters who works full time with draft horses.

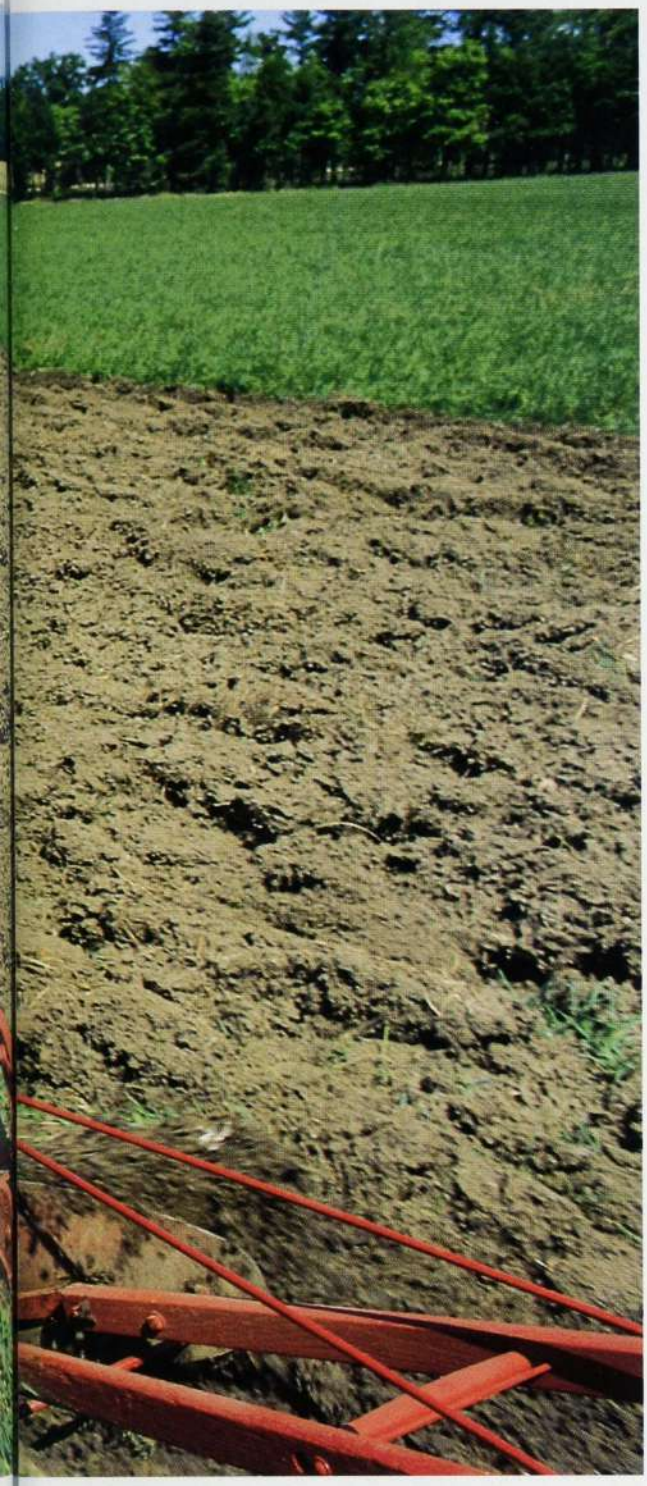
end of the field and I tip the plow out of the ground and let it drag on its side while the horses turn around. We start back the other way, and I think I'm getting the feel of it. The sod makes a ripping sound as it shears off and is rolled over by the moldboard. The harness leather creaks. Before I know it, we're at the end of the field, and Tom stops the horses with a gentle "Whoa." He looks at the furrow and tells me gently, "You did good. It's not any more crooked than it was before."

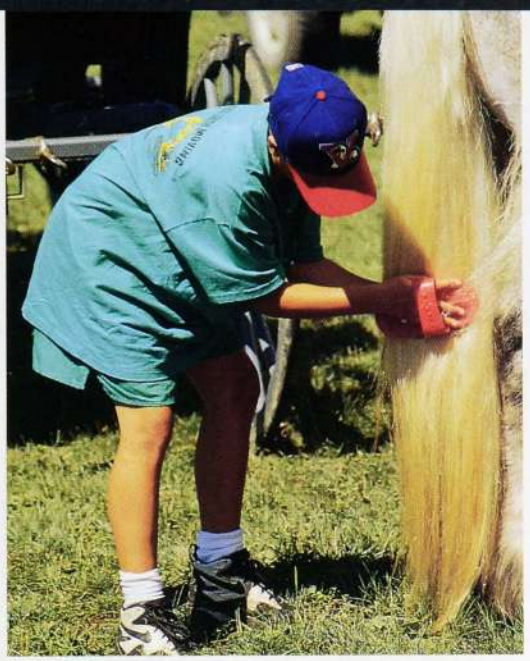
Another greenhorn steps up to the handles and starts off under Tom's patient direction. We're here at Shelburne Farms under the plentiful July sun as part of the Green Mountain Draft Horse Association Field Day. The organization (and the event) are dedicated to preserving and passing on the skills and knowledge involved in using work horses. Draft horse owners have gathered from around Vermont to demonstrate their skills, trade tips, look at each other's horses and socialize. Many visitors have

come to watch, and even try, some of the horse-powered jobs that may seem quaint today, but that many of our grandfathers, even our fathers, did for their livelihoods.

Tom Minor's father, Wallace Minor — who is telling stories to a small group over by the horse trailers — started farming in Fletcher in 1955 with a team of horses. He didn't buy his first tractor until the early '60s. Ed Therrien, from Sheldon, who is standing over by the fence, his weathered face in the deep shade cast by the brim of his cap, logged with a team for years and still gets his firewood out with horses. Bob Blair, who is watching the horse-drawn wheat harvest in the next field, remembers when his father sold the last team on their farm in 1953 "for a hundred dollar bill so that mother could get a new stove." Within memory is a time when draft horses were *the* power supply in rural Vermont.

Then, in a slow wave that crested in the 1940s, tractors replaced horses. Ironically, many farmers saw the first tractors as great horse *savers*, saving the animals from the strain of the heaviest field work. Of course, within a few years, tractors were saving horses from doing any work at all. Suddenly horse-

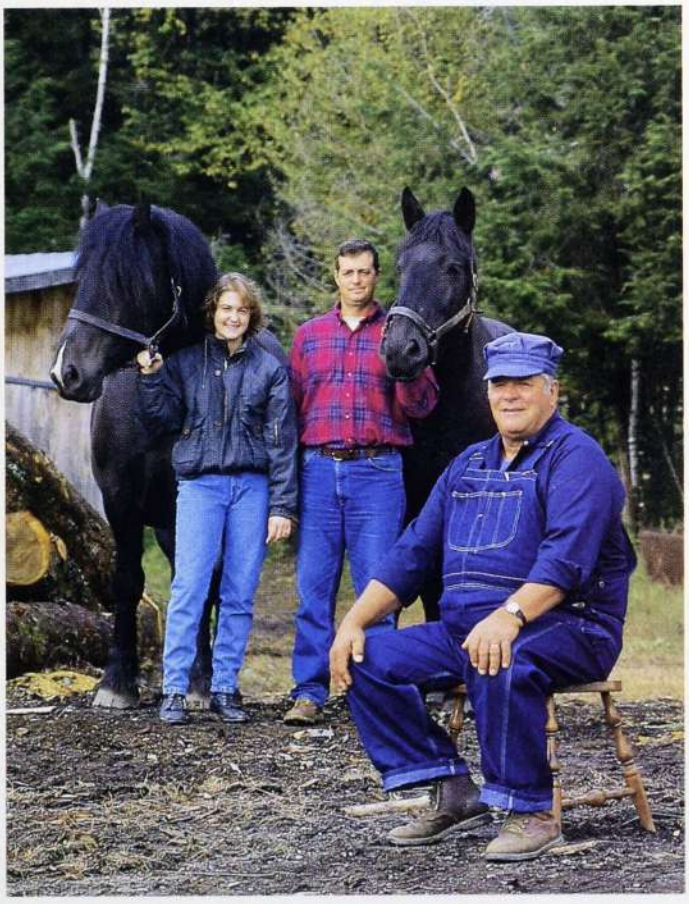




Left, Audra Minor demonstrates the art of plowing with horses at Shelburne Farms during the Green Mountain Draft Horse Association's annual field day.

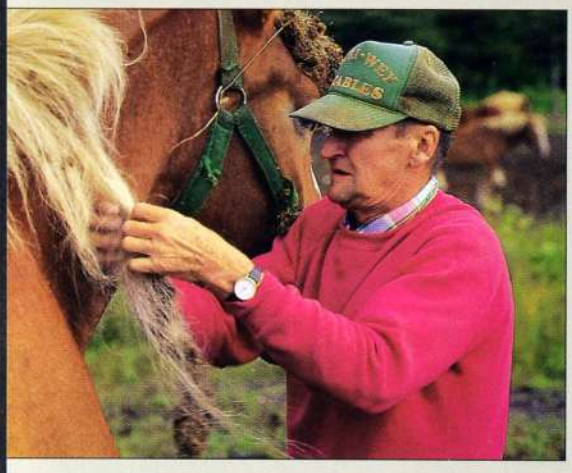
Below, three generations who know how to handle work horses: Audra with her father, Tom, and her grandfather, Wallace, on the Minor farm in Fletcher.

Top, fine grooming at Shelburne Farms.



power meant the size of the machine, not the number of heads in the stable. But a few farmers kept their teams — some because they honestly thought there were jobs horses did best, others out of simple affection.

The number of work horses in Vermont probably continued to fall through the 1970s, but in the last 10 or 15 years their numbers have gradually increased. Not that horses are being put to work on farms; the interest is mostly from people who simply like draft horses and want to keep them as a hobby. The draft horse breeds, listed roughly in the order of



Bernard Moeykens, *Horseman*

The biggest collection of draft horses in Vermont may well be at Bernard and Jennifer Moeykens's farm in West Cornwall. They usually have about 55 horses on the place (mostly Belgians, and a few Morgans) — 45 of their own and 10 that other owners have left there to be trained. Bernard, 64, is probably the only farmer in Vermont who works almost full time with draft horses and makes a living at it.

There are several angles to his business: He has 15 brood mares and two stallions and sells some of the offspring from these every year. He takes in draft horses to train for their owners (though, as he says, sometimes it's the owners who really need the training). He shows horses and has an impressive record of collecting blue ribbons and first-prize money. He gives sleigh rides, hay rides, and carriage rides.

Bernard grew up on a dairy farm in Derby and well remembers doing all the farm work with horses. His father did a lot of haying for other farmers, and by the time Bernard was 13, he had the job of mowing and raking enough hay each day to keep two crews of men busy loading wagons and storing the hay in the barn. "I couldn't mow so much that it would get rained on, and I couldn't mow so little that the men would have to quit at five o'clock with nothing to do." When his father bought the first tractor, in 1952, Bernard wasn't impressed. He still isn't.

"I hate the sound of the motor," he says. "I'm so sick of hearing that roar in your ears."

Fifty-five horses eat a lot. Bernard raises as much as he can right on his place — using horses to do the work whenever possible. He hitches a young horse — one of his own, or one that's in for training — to an experienced horse and they go to work in the field. The farm work gets done, and the young horse learns a thing or two.

It's young, aspiring teamsters who sometimes get discouraged. "They see the horses and think that would be fun to do," Bernard said. "But if they go out to plow, say, a six-acre field, and they go around 10 times and they've got a strip done that's about *this* wide, they wonder, 'why are we going so slow?' It may be slower, but to me it's a heck of a lot more peaceful. It's work, but it's satisfying work."

Bernard has an extraordinary empathy for the animals with which he works. He once sold a stallion to someone in Japan and worried that the "cultural shock" would be greater for the horse than it would be for a person. The horse that Bernard has had the longest relationship with (and the horse that is most often hitched with a young, green horse) is Cub, the first draft horse he bought when he moved to his farm.

"He's a friend to me. He's a horse that you can go work with all day and talk to him, and he'll listen," Bernard said. "It's a feeling I get for a horse."

their numbers in Vermont, include Belgian, Percheron, Clydesdale, Shire, and Suffolk.

One of the more visible uses of draft horses is in the pulling competitions at county fairs. But the teamsters who participate in these competitions don't seem to mingle with other draft horse owners, who tend to look on pullers with some suspicion.

There may be other, more subtle reasons for the recent interest in draft horses. One is the sense on the part of younger people — including someone like Ted Russell, who organized the first Green Mountain Draft Horse Association Field Days — that the vast body of draft horse skill and knowledge, gained over centuries, shouldn't be allowed to die out with the last generation that grew up using work horses. There may even be a deeper sense that, in our highly technological society, using horses may be a way to connect with an older way of working.

Russell, a friendly man with a balding head and a build nearly as solid as a workhorse, grew up in Sudbury and has vivid memories of a neighboring farmer who still worked with a team of horses. He admires the way Amish communities have stayed healthy and he believes that the Amish use of draft horses is part of the reason why. He got involved with draft horses out of both a love of the animals and a deep sense of history and community.

Russell manages the bison farm on Route 7 in Charlotte, where the hilltop bison statue is a well-known landmark. As a fringe benefit, he gets to keep his own team of horses in the farm's pasture. He advises new draft horse owners to try to get to know, and learn from, a circle of experienced teamsters. The Draft Horse Association events — several clinics

Mowing the old-fashioned way during Draft Horse Field Day at Shelburne Farms.
To attend, see page 72.

each year in addition to the July Field Day — may be the best place for a beginner to make connections with an expert.

Unless, of course, you grow up in a family of experts. When Tom Minor was a boy on the family farm in Fletcher in the 1950s, his father did most of the farm work with horses. But then in the '60s there were a few years when the last team had been sold and there were nothing but tractors on the place. When Tom got to be a teenager, he badgered his father to buy another team. (This pleased Wallace no end.) Wallace and his wife, Margaret, made a trip to the Amish country of Ohio and bought a team. Soon after they got home, Tom said he wanted to learn to plow with the horses. Wallace went to bed that night thinking of the stoniest field on the farm: "If he can plow there, he can plow anywhere."

Now, Tom and his wife, who have a dairy farm just up the road from Wallace and Margaret's place, have teenage children of their own. Their son, Adam, and their daughter, Audra, have become avid and expert horsepersons themselves. There's no denying that the real work on the Minor farm gets done with tractors; the horses are a hobby. But if Tom gets caught up, he might do a little plowing or spread manure with the team, just for the fun of it.

Tom wishes it made sense to use the horses on the farm more. "It would be an easier world, a better world, with horses," he said. Wallace, who has been back to Amish country several times and has gotten to be good friends with a couple of Amish families,

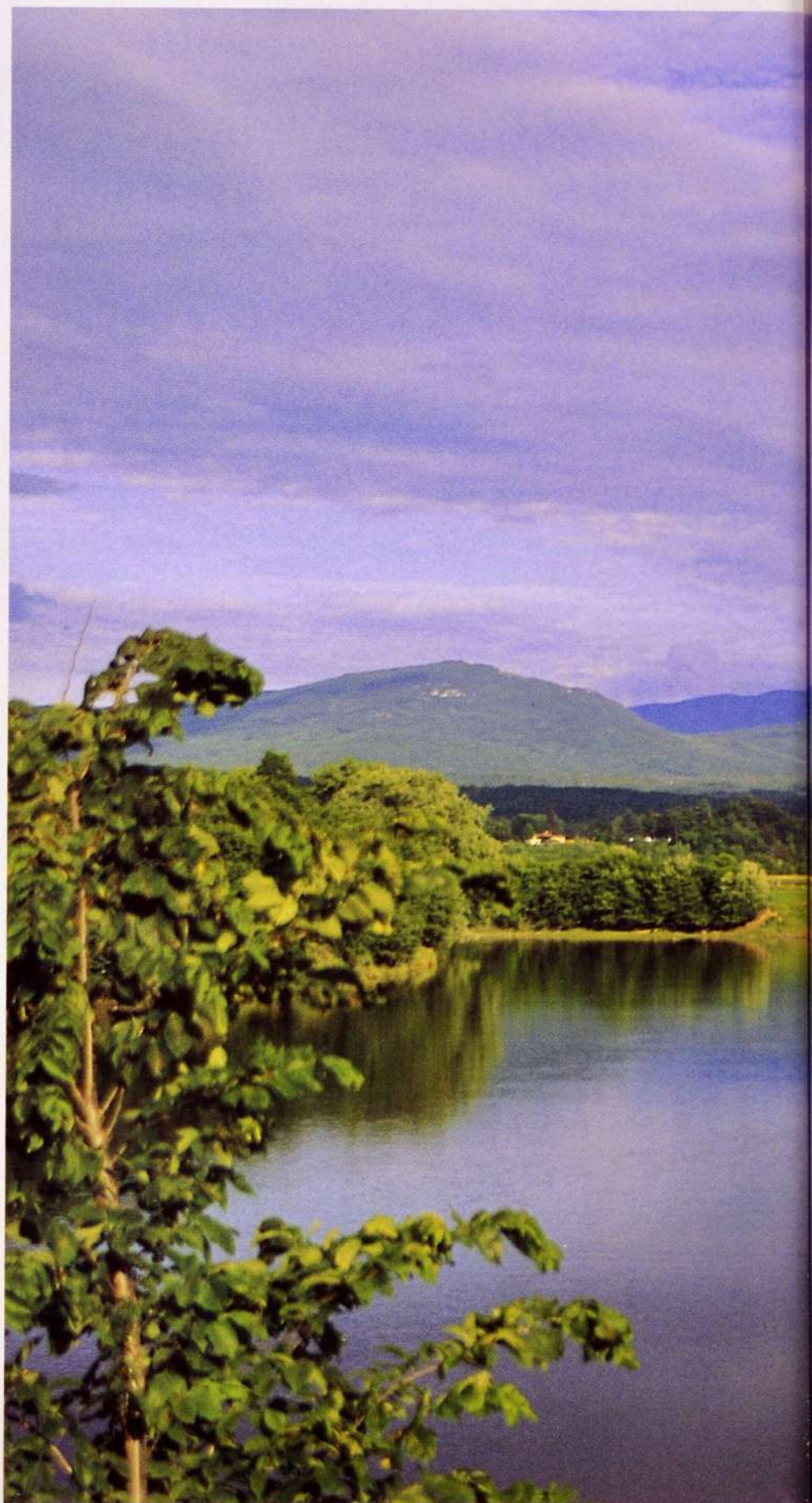
Continued on page 72

Male Indigo Bunting
in Calais, by Tim Seaver.

The Sweet Variety of a Green Mountain Summer

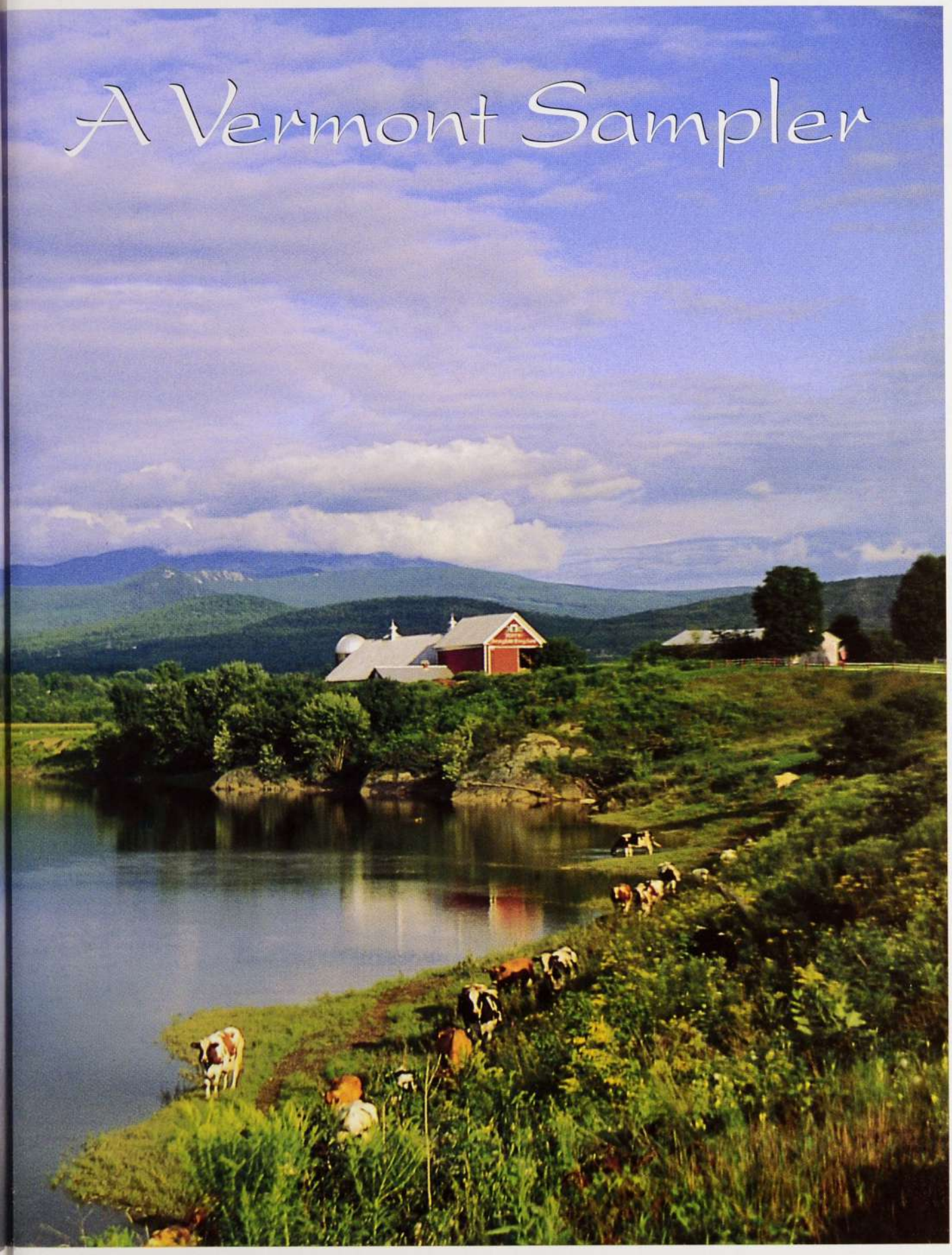
Vermont, though small, beckons with a striking variety, especially in summer. The state's beauty takes on many different guises, all worth exploring. And throughout, that beauty displays the handiwork of both nature and humanity.

The rural beauty of the Connecticut River in Newbury, beckoning visitors to a day shunpiking on old Route 5, is a case in point. Farming, a traditional way of making a living in this valley, softens the foreground and opens the view to the mountains beyond.



The Connecticut River in Newbury, by Martin E. Harwood.

A Vermont Sampler



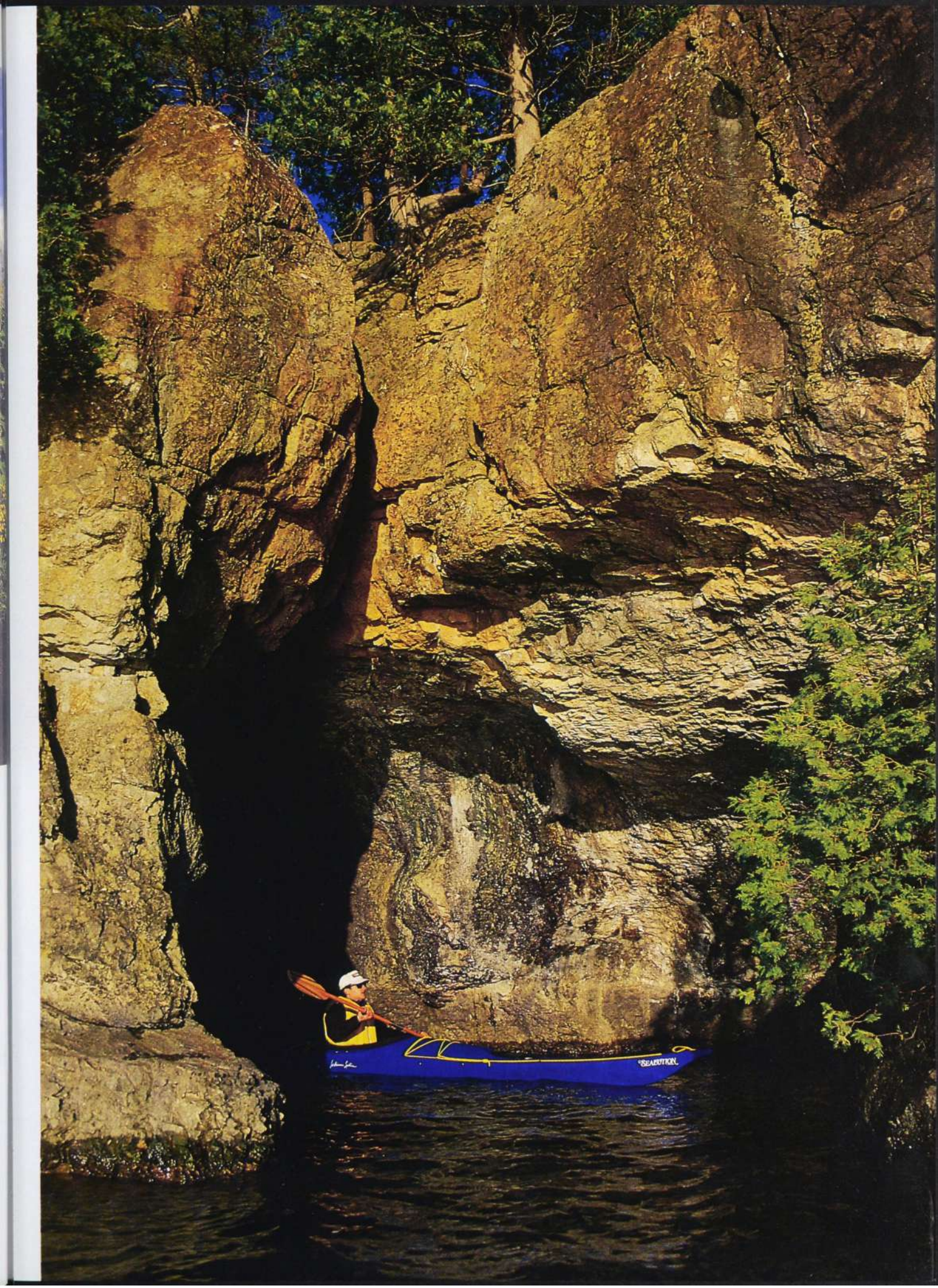
The Inn at Shelburne Farms, by Paul O. Boisvert.

Almost anywhere you go in Vermont, human history and the natural world combine in pleasing and surprising ways. Lake Champlain's shoreline intrigues paddlers with its mystery and beauty. That same shoreline is overseen regally by the turn-of-the-century opulence of Shelburne Farms, just a few minutes south of contemporary Burlington.

Once a private mansion, the Farms are now open to the public, a center for environmental education and in summer a site for the Vermont Mozart Festival and a variety of other events. Above, the Farms' formal gardens and the mansion, recently converted to a unique and luxurious inn.

Opposite, a kayaker paddles along the rocky shore of Lake Champlain's Malletts Bay.

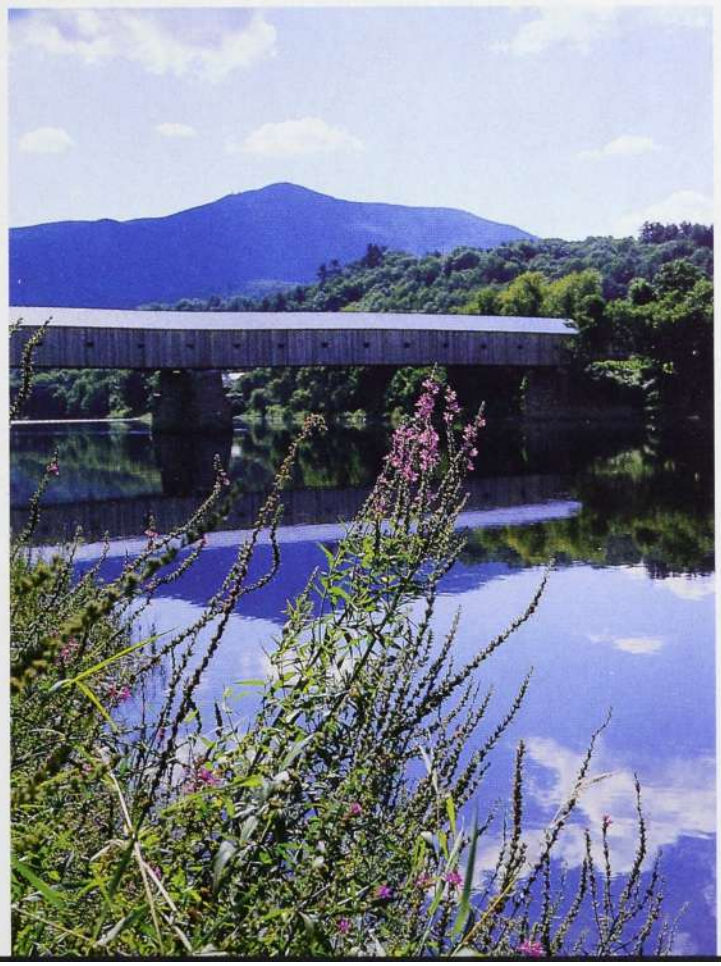
Below, a summer's leap at a quarry in Williston, both by Jeb Wallace-Brodeur.



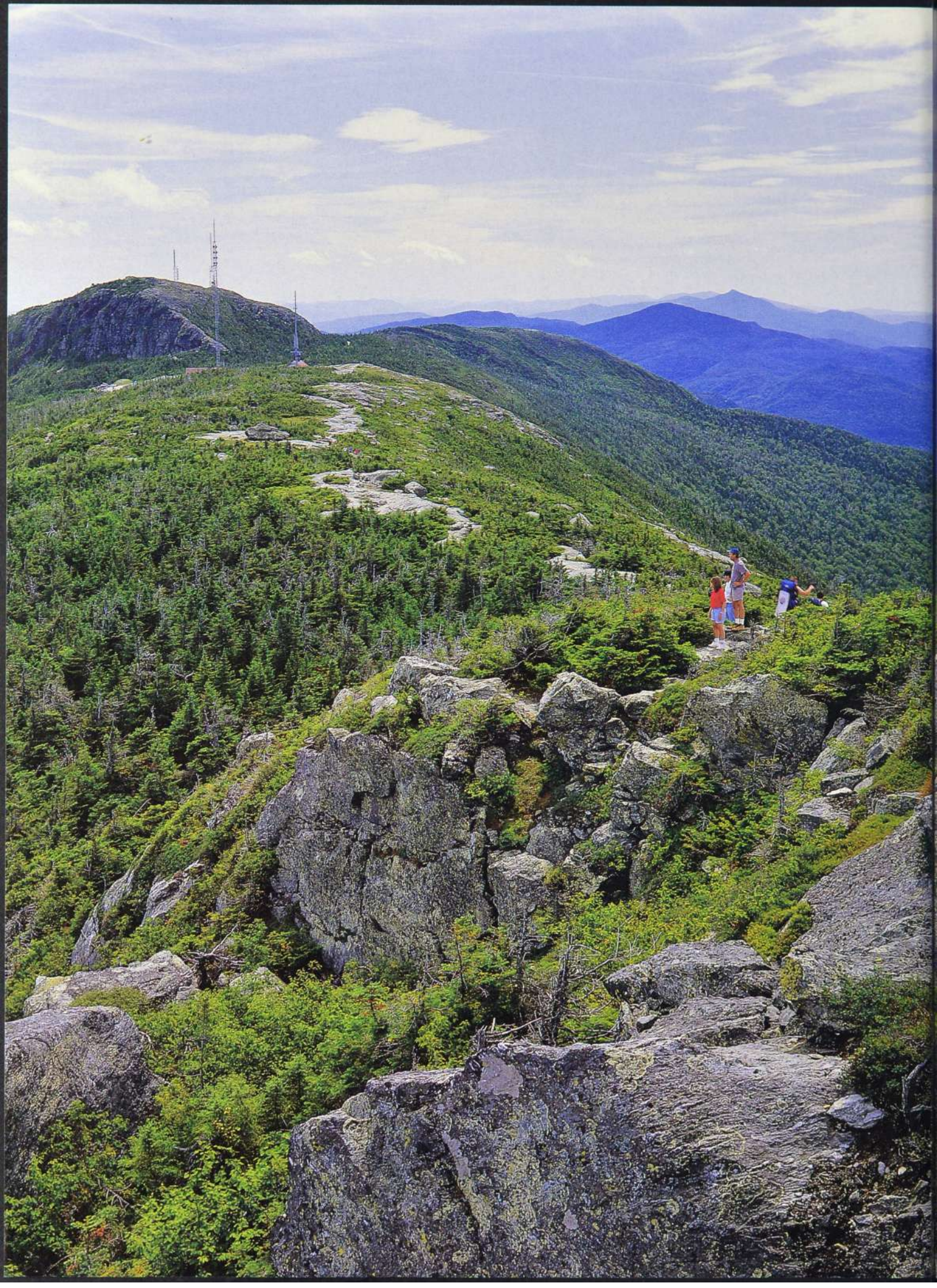
Splendors of the season at the Old Stone House in Brownington, by William Johnson.

History and nature combine at Brownington's Old Stone House (left) where Alexander Twilight, probably America's first black college graduate, built the great stone edifice as a boarding school. The view (bottom) of Mount Ascutney, near Windsor, with the historic Windsor-Cornish bridge crossing the Connecticut, is as serene as when the bridge was first built in 1866.

Showy Lady's-Slipper in Hartland, by William Johnson.



Right, the Windsor-Cornish covered bridge spans the Connecticut, by Jon Gilbert Fox.

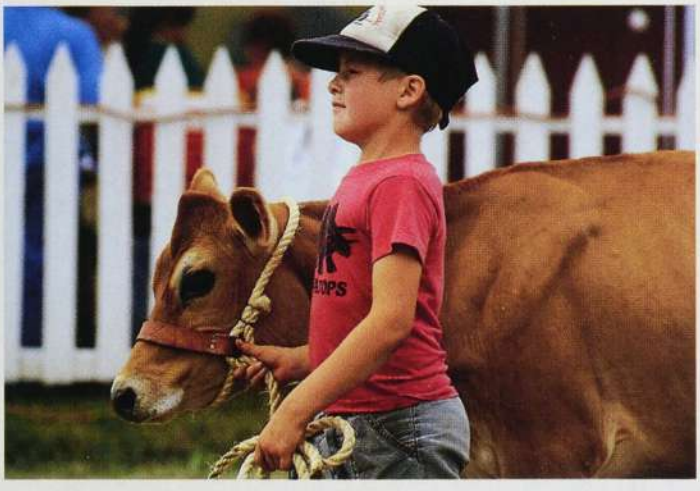


The annual antics at the Bread & Puppet Theater's Domestic Resurrection Circus in Glover, by Gabe Kirchheimer.

Left, livestock action at the Caledonia County Fair in Lyndonville, by Alan L. Graham.

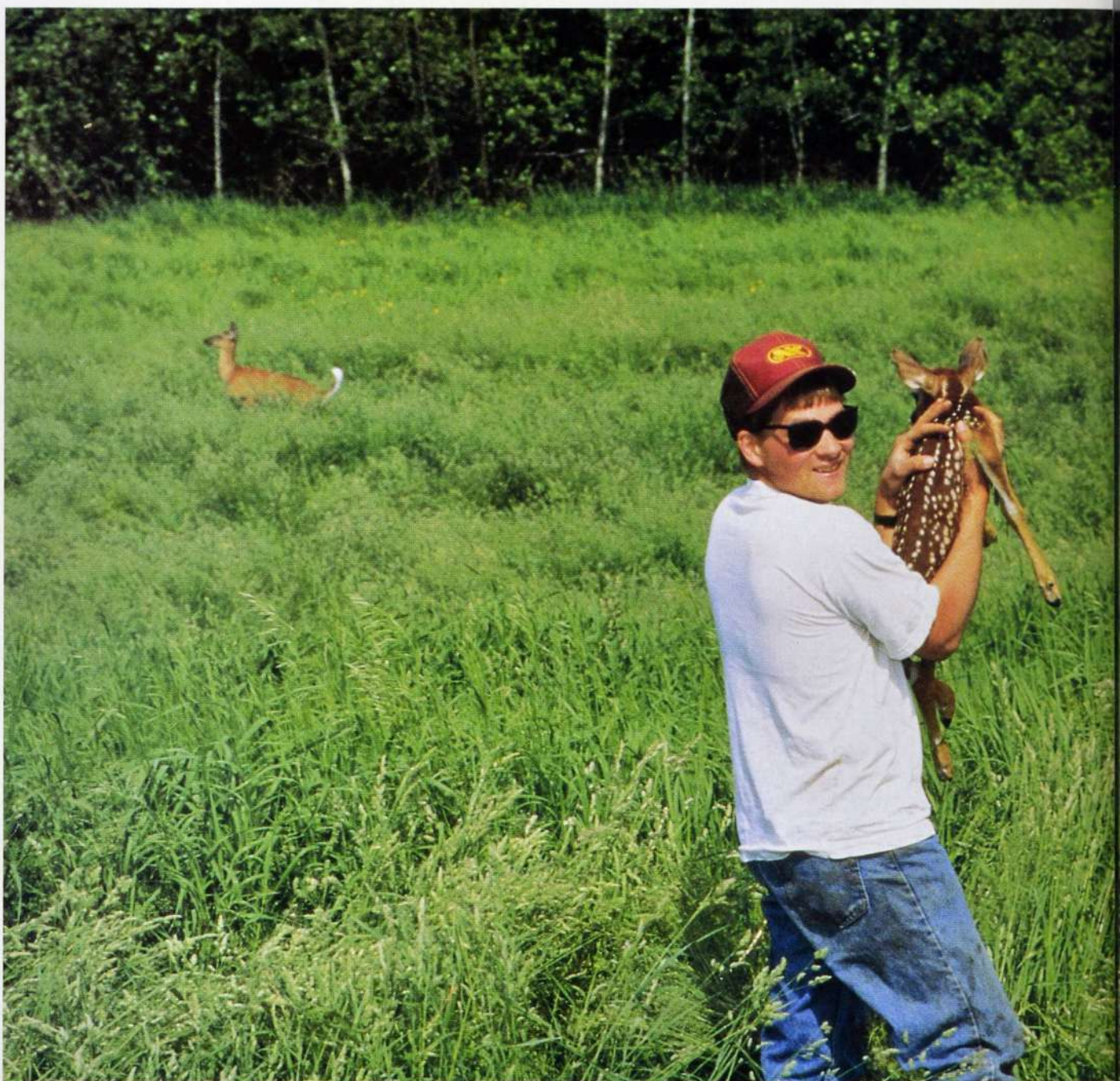
Far left, hikers on top of Mount Mansfield, by William Johnson.

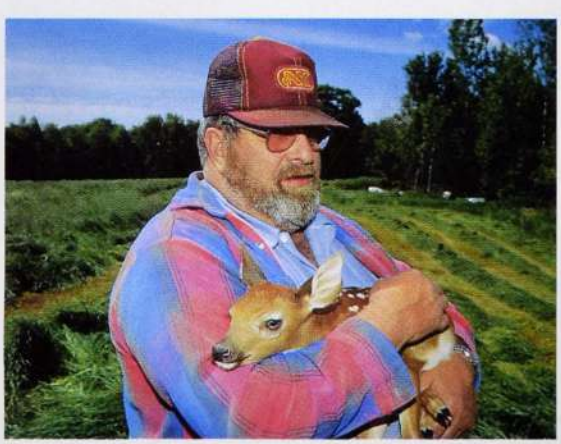
Below, picture-perfect porch in Whitingham, by Turnbull/Boudreau.



Want the big picture on Vermont in the summer? Climb Mount Mansfield (left) or some other peak in the Green Mountains. If it's culture that you're interested in, try the Bread & Puppet Circus (top) held each August in Glover, or any of the amazing Vermont array of music, theater and the visual arts. Country fairs offer traditional pleasures, as the young man above has discovered.

At summer's end or day's end, we all have a special retreat, a place that offers rest and relaxation. And we can all agree — there's just too much to do in a Vermont summer! — T.K.S.





Steve Yates returns a fawn to its anxious mother. Like many farmers, the Yates family routinely rescues the young deer, which often lie motionless in the tall grass (opposite page) when haying machinery nears.

Left, Jerry Yates, Steve's father, holds a newly born fawn. If freed too soon, the fawns are likely to head right back into the grass — and into the path of the haybine. Although state wildlife biologists discourage handling any wild animals, they make an exception in this case to save the lives of the deer.

FAWNS & Farmers

A VERMONT whitetail doe gives birth in early June in dense cover. For the first few weeks, the doe ranges for food, visiting its fawn only for brief periods. Not far from the edge of the woods, the thick grass of a dairy farm's hayfields provides perfect cover, allowing the fawn a better chance for survival against predators.

The farming practices of earlier days allowed ample time and space for these newborns to grow. Today, however, the haybine operator has to be constantly vigilant to avoid killing fawns, which lie motionless in the tall grass when threatened.

For more than 70 years, three generations of the Yates family have farmed the same land in Fairfield. Today the 750-acre farm is operated by Jerry and Mary Yates and their sons John, Tom and Steve and the Yates's son-in-law, Ed Lamos. Their long work days don't diminish their intense interest in wildlife, especially the whitetails, and they practice animal husbandry in more ways than one. When they cut hay, they're always on the lookout for fawns that may be using their fields as a nursery. When they spot them, they rescue the young animals and release them as quickly as possible along the edge of the woods. The doe usually presents herself in some way, and they try to send the young in her direction.

Their land and their concern protect the deer and nourish them as they grow.

"We raise 'em!" says Jerry Yates.

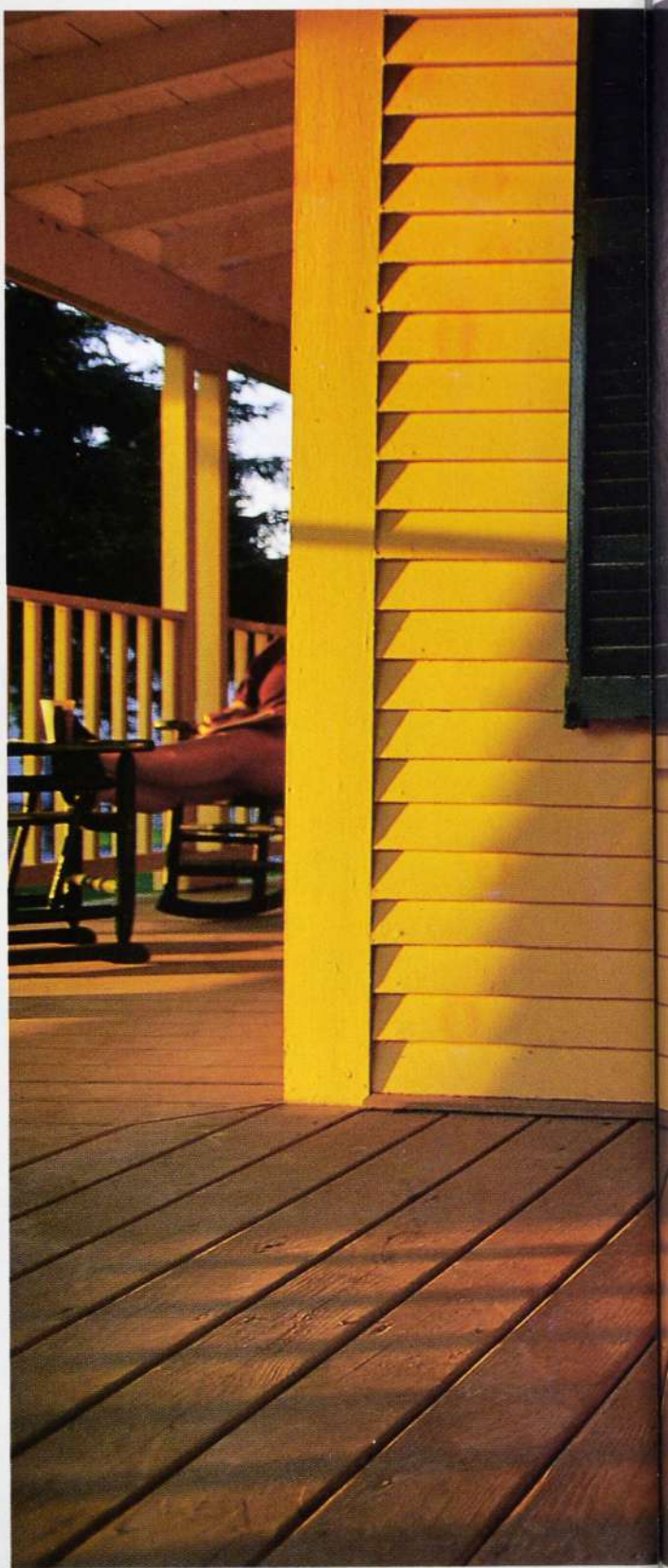
Indeed they do, saving fawns so they can reach maturity and keeping the land open and free from development despite the tough financial struggles and endless work of dairy farming. ∞

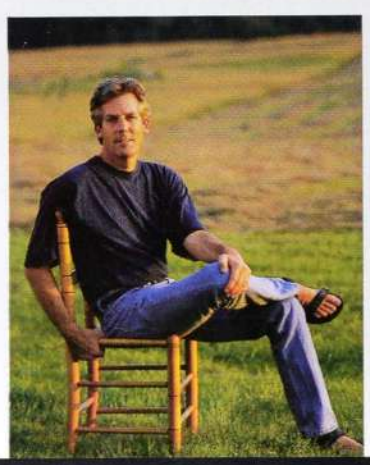
Rod Vallee, a former chairman of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board, recently retired from his oil business in St. Albans to pursue a career as a wildlife photographer. He lives in the Franklin County town of Georgia.

Written and photographed by ROD VALLEE

THE NEW BREAD LOAF

Change Comes to Robert Frost's Magic World of Writers





It's somewhere between two and three in the morning on the first Saturday of the 1995 Bread Loaf Writers' Conference in Ripton.

North Ferrisburgh writer Tom Paine is attending for the second time. He was here in 1993 as a "contributor," an unpublished but aspiring writer willing to pay $1,500 to spend a week and a half at Bread Loaf for the chance to learn more about his craft from professionals and peers. He has now returned as a "scholar," his tuition paid by the program because of a promising short story of his that appeared in *The New Yorker*.

Paine is in a house named Treman on the south side of Route 125, the road that bisects the small world of Bread Loaf. He has been in Treman with a glass in his hand since late Friday night, part of the crowd that migrated there after a dance in the Bread Loaf barn ended much earlier that evening. He is in the midst of a conversation about short fiction with acclaimed novelist Helen Schulman when the significance of their discussion dawns upon him: Schulman is a member of the Bread Loaf faculty, he is a lowly scholar, and they are talking together in what had been the faculty fortress and bar, the staff's sanctuary from the likes of Paine.

By Chris Bohjalian

Photographed by Alan Jakubek

Immersing oneself in mountain light and the printed word is a tradition at the annual Bread Loaf Writers' Conference in Ripton. Director Michael Collier, far left, has changed the way Bread Loaf operates.

One thing that hasn't changed at Bread Loaf is the surroundings: Right, a writer reads her work amid the yellow clapboard buildings that cluster beneath the Green Mountains.
Below, Vermont poet Ellen Bryant Voigt, part of a faculty of accomplished writers.

And he is not alone. In addition to the faculty, the room is filled with contributors, scholars and the young writers who work in the dining room in lieu of paying tuition.

"I remembered that in 1993 I'd once walked through the door at Treman, and the bartender had told me I wasn't supposed to be there because I was a contributor," Paine recalls. "The old guard made me feel unwelcome, and so I left. Inviting the contributors into the faculty lounge in 1995 might seem like a small thing, but it showed just how accessible the faculty wanted to be, and conveyed a new feeling of democracy. It exemplified how different the place had become."

•

The yellow clapboard buildings of Middlebury College's Bread Loaf campus cluster like blocks on a small plateau just west of the last rise before a particularly wavy link in the Green Mountains. Rolling north to south are the peaks of Bread Loaf, Kirby, and Burnt Hill, their forested summits ranging from 2,900 to almost 4,000 feet. Nearby is Vermont's roadside homage to Robert Frost — a short nature walk and a picnic area named after him, and the dirt road to a cabin in which he wrote.

Although Middlebury uses Bread Loaf for a brief but intense foreign language program and a nordic ski center, it is best known for the writing conference that abruptly blooms there for two weeks every August. Or, if you ask the right person during the right year, that rages there.

Last year, its 70th, something changed. Poet Michael Collier took the reins from poet Bob Pack, the first time the conference directorship had changed hands since Pack inherited the responsibilities from John Ciardi in 1973.

Contributors could feel Collier's mark upon Bread Loaf from their first day in Vermont. On that very first morning, he began the writing workshops in which aspiring writers meet with the faculty; at past conferences, they had been held exclusively in the second week. Although about half of the conference's 20-person faculty had taught at Bread Loaf before, not one member of the 1994 program was back in 1995. And, least tangible but perhaps most important, the hierarchy for which Bread Loaf had been famous (or infa-

mous), the world in which the varied levels of faculty kept their distance from the even more varied levels of students, had been diminished.

Whether these changes are small improvements or cataclysmic mistakes depends upon whom you ask. In its decades of service to writers great and small, published and unpublished, Bread Loaf has been a chameleon of a conference that no two writers experience in exactly the same way.

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Michael Collier's hair is thick and wavy and largely gray. For a man whose poems include "Pictures Drawn by Atomic Bomb Survivors" and "Vietnam," his smile seems boyish, his voice serene.

"There are some things about the conference that can't be changed, and you wouldn't want to change," he says over breakfast the day before the 1995 conference begins.

"Those things have to do with the immovable, such as geography and buildings," says Collier. "There is the yellow and green paint on the buildings, the shape of the mountains and the meadows.... Those things are important, they're part of the tradition. Traditions, actually. Things like the story of Robert Frost suggesting that a conference or gathering of writers would be a

Continued on page 70

OSPREYS ON TH

E WING

An Endangered Species Gets a Chance To Prosper in Vermont

Written by
CHARLES H. WILLEY

Photographed by
CHARLES *and* RUTH WILLEY

WHEN ROBIN MAULE and her husband, Thomas, bought 400 acres from a timber company liquidating assets in remote Essex County, they didn't know what an osprey was. They do now. They have a pair of the nearly eagle-sized hawks nesting in the middle of their property.

The Maules aren't complaining — clearly the opposite. In less than a decade, they, like a fortunate few Vermonters, have become enthusiastic stewards of an endangered osprey population struggling — possibly for centuries — to gain a foothold in Vermont. And with the help of citizens like the Maules, state wildlife officials, and the Vermont utilities that have helped erect nesting platforms, the ospreys are beginning to succeed.

Mountainous and forested interior Essex County was about the last place one would expect to find an osprey nest. Almost exclusively fish eaters, ospreys prefer open, extensive wetlands for nesting and feeding. But there they were, their three-foot branch-and-twig nest balanced on the top of a nearly dead pine tree. Abundant claw marks on the trunk clearly indicated a nest that had been attacked and was vulnerable to future predation, so the state Fish and Wildlife Department proposed some assistance.

Mrs. Maule was eager to help. "When I got your letter about the ospreys and your request to put up a predator shield," she told me, "I had to call my uncle who lives on the coast to find out what an osprey was. He said, 'Let those Fish and Wildlife people do anything they want; those birds are important.' "

Both revered and reviled, the osprey (*Pandion haliaetus carolinensis*), commonly called the fish hawk, has a worldwide reputation. In Sweden, lakeside home values reportedly escalate if ospreys nest nearby, and on the island of Martha's Vineyard, off Massachusetts, there is a long waiting list of people who will eagerly pay several hundred dollars to have an osprey nesting platform on their property. Yet in Japan, a nation of fishermen and fish farmers, fish-feeding ospreys are sometimes viewed as a threat.

Whatever the perception, ospreys are exciting, fascinating birds of prey. Their large size (four to five pounds and a five- to six-foot wingspread), their vocal and distinctive call (an almost whistling *chewk chewk chewk*), their open nesting habit, and their electrifying fishing technique (see page 59) make them a high profile species that is addictive to watch.

The name comes from the Latin *ossifraga*, literally meaning *bone breaker*, and it is well deserved. Equipped with razor-sharp talons that can clamp shut in a 50th of a second, thickened, spined pads that help secure struggling fish, and a sharp, curved beak designed for tearing flesh and bone, the osprey is marvelously adapted to catch and eat its prey.

Ospreys themselves can be subject to attack, however. Mammalian predators, such as raccoons, may eat osprey eggs or chicks. Avian predators, such as owls, may attack nesting ospreys under cover of darkness. Nesting ospreys may even be attacked by other ospreys — attacks believed to be more rooted in competition for nest sites than competition for mates.

Worldwide, there are an estimated 30,000 osprey pairs, and they have colonized all continents except Antarctica. Historically, man has been a threat to ospreys, however, and shooting, cutting of nesting trees, and egg collecting can still place osprey populations at risk.

Twentieth century ignorance of environmental hazards has been just as lethal as any earlier intolerance. During the 1950s, '60s, and even into the '70s, contamination from the pesticide DDT poisoned embryos and made osprey eggshells too thin and fragile to be turned in the nest or to support the weight of the incubating parent. By 1973, DDT was finally banned in the United States, but it had already caused a precipitous osprey decline throughout North America.

The North American osprey, however, is an incredible testimonial to man's potential for positively influencing wildlife. Ospreys, once so severely at risk, now number approximately 8,000 pairs in the U.S. alone. Over half of these nest along the East Coast, with the remainder largely in the Northwest and Great Lakes regions.

There is no compelling evidence that ospreys ever successfully nested in Vermont during the 19th century, or for most of this century, for that matter. Historical accounts from 1853 to 1941 indicate a rare summer presence, lack of nesting, and more common migrant status. The 1985 *Atlas of Breeding Birds of Vermont* documented only three confirmed nesting sites: Shelburne in 1962, Newport's South Bay of Lake Memphremagog in 1965, and Barton in 1975. These attempts were short-lived.

Based on this history and Vermont's limited osprey habitat, one might conclude that any population recovery efforts would be futile. But that is hardly the case.

THE LIFE OF A

VERMONT OSPREY

After wintering in southern Central America or northern South America, ospreys return to Vermont in mid-to-late April. Mating for life, returning pairs reclaim and refurbish their former nests. Elaborate male courtship displays precede copulation, and three to four eggs about the size of chicken eggs are laid. Incubation lasts about six weeks, with both parents sharing the job.

Osprey young grow quickly, gaining 70 to 80 percent of their adult weight in 30 days. If food is abundant and the parents are good providers, all offspring usually fledge and leave the nest the last week of July. Some will learn to catch fish within a few days; others may depend upon their parents for two to three weeks. By late August or early September, ospreys leave Vermont for their wintering grounds — a journey they may make each year for a quarter century.

An osprey returns to its branch-and-twig nest.

OBSERVING OSPREYS

To watch an osprey fishing is a dramatic experience that will likely never be forgotten. Hovering 30 to 100 feet overhead, the osprey assesses the likelihood of catching its prey. Once committed, it swiftly folds its wings back in a move that propels it downward in a steep, sometimes nearly vertical dive. Legs outstretched in front with talons open, the osprey's keen eyes line the fish up with the top of its talons like a gun-sight. In a descent so rapid as to be a blur, the bird hits the water in a precise, explosive and dazzling spray. Resting momentarily on the water's surface, the osprey extends its long wings, slowly lifting itself and its prey into the air, and flies off toward its nest or some favorite perch to feed.

Although watching and photographing ospreys are exciting and challenging ventures, they should be done at an adequate distance from the nesting site to reduce the likelihood of bothering the birds. Steve Parren of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department recommends that one approach no closer than 200 feet. High-magnification binoculars, spotting scopes, video cameras, and long telephoto lenses (600-millimeter or more) add immeasurably to the pleasure of observing and photographing ospreys, while allowing one to remain an adequate distance away.

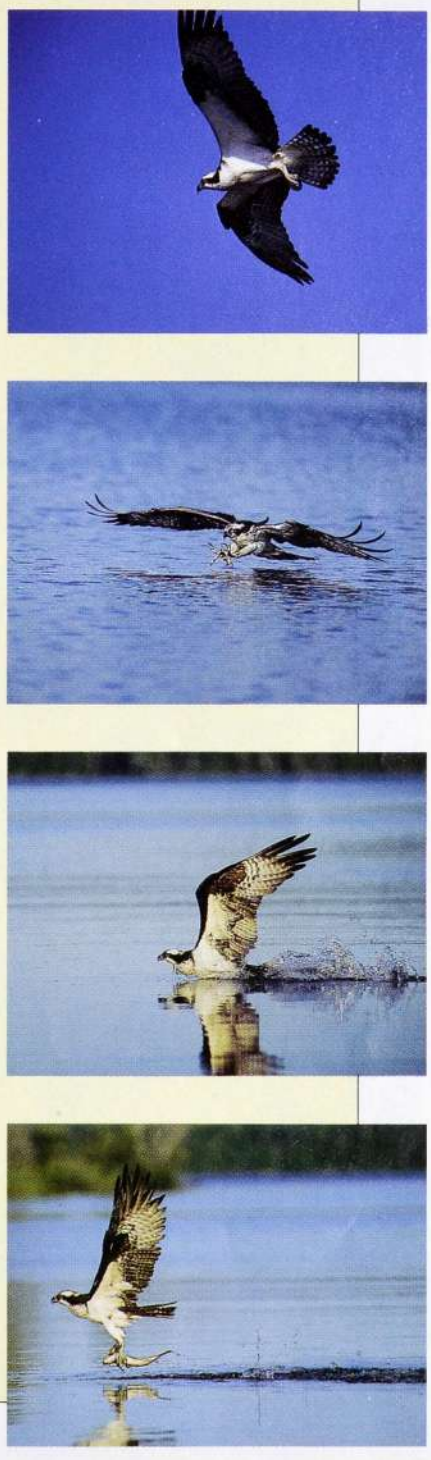
Keeping your distance is particularly critical when the chicks are young; they may overheat from the sun and die if the parents are frightened away from the nest for extended periods.

Regardless of the distance, an osprey *always* knows that an observer is there. The most telling evidence of being seen is an occasional, glowering, absolutely penetrating stare that seems to pierce your very soul — eyes that define the essence of the word *predator*. Even the slightest movement in an adequately distanced, well-camouflaged blind may trigger an osprey's alarm call.

Ospreys vigorously defend the nesting site. I clearly recall the squawk of surprise and look of terror in the eyes of a great blue heron that made the mistake of landing on the edge of an osprey nest just vacated by the adult and fledged young. I was photographing the heron when I was surprised to see its every feather stand on end and to hear the approaching rush of wings of an adult osprey, talons outstretched, plummeting toward it. The heron instinctively threw itself off the nest and, awkwardly spilling air from its wings, turned just in time to avoid a potentially lethal mid-air strike.

Although ospreys can become accustomed to human presence over time, occasionally an osprey will be completely intolerant of human intrusion. One osprey researcher nearly lost an eye to an osprey aggressively defending its nest.

Two popular spots for viewing ospreys are Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge in Swanton and Highgate, and the mouths of Otter and Little Otter creeks in Ferrisburgh.



Ospreys in action: on the prowl for food; heading for splashdown with talons out; finding prey just below the surface; and flying home with a meal.

Encouraged by the effectiveness of artificial nesting structures (50 to 75 percent of all U.S. osprey nests are on artificial structures), the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department began an osprey nest project in 1987. Donations to the Nongame Wildlife Fund, generous contributions of time, staff, poles, and equipment by Vermont utilities, and the efforts of eager volunteers resulted in placement and monitoring of 18 nesting structures from 1987 through 1990.

It was an investment that would take time to pay off. In those four years only four of eight nesting attempts were successful, fledging eight chicks. By the fall of 1994, however, another 13 structures had been erected, and their use by ospreys had gone from occasional blossom to bouquet. In 1994, an astounding 23 chicks were fledged — in 1995, another 22.

Some osprey pairs still struggle. The Maules' ospreys have yet to produce young, and Meeri Zetterstrom, of the Franklin County town of Georgia, despairs for her ospreys. Worried that

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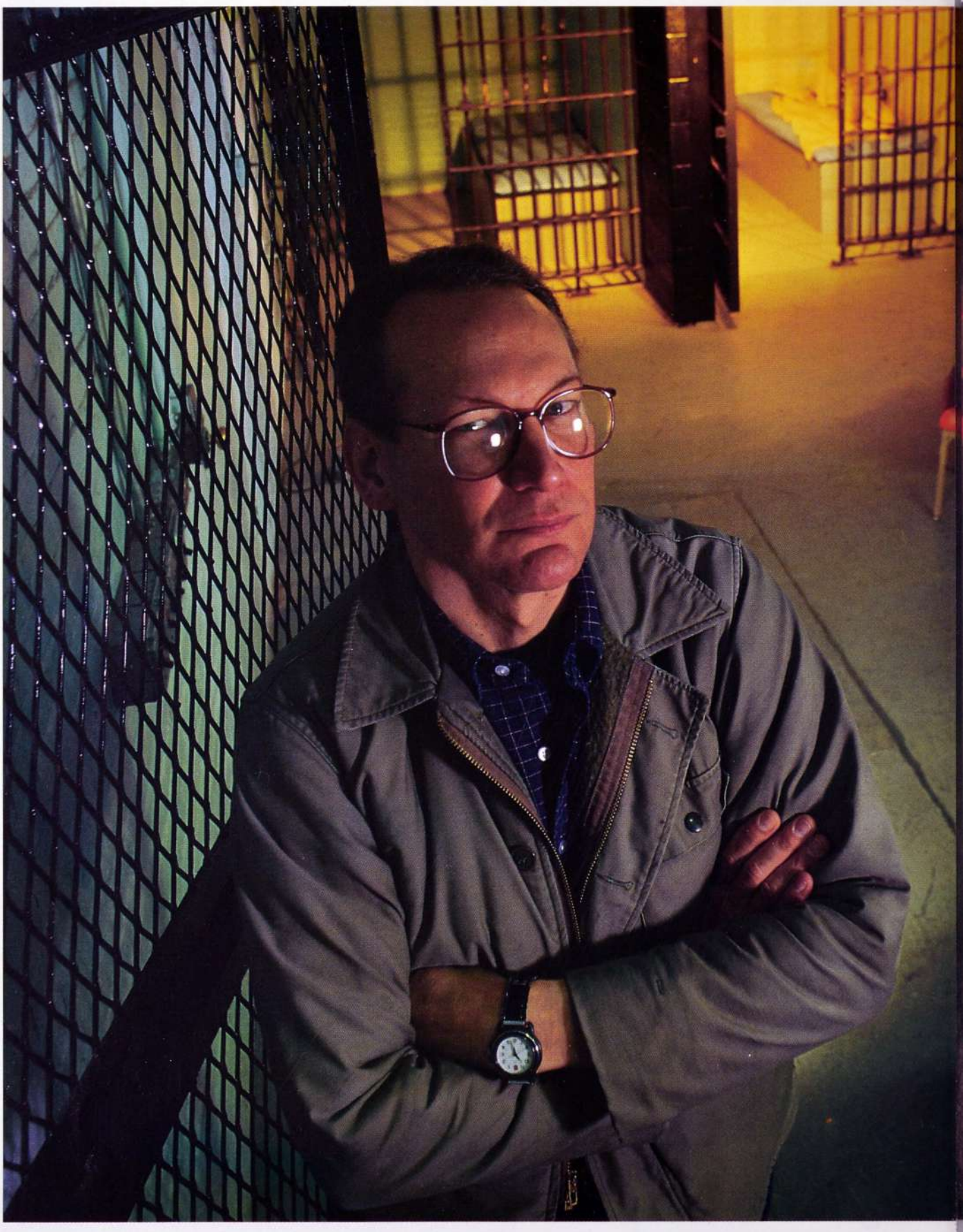


Author Archer Mayor at the Brattleboro Police Department's lockup, a place that Detective Joe Gunther — the indestructible hero of Mayor's novels — knows well.

THE MAN WHO CREATED JOE GUNTHER

By Nicola Smith
Photographed by Jon Gilbert Fox

On the outskirts of a low-income housing development in Brattleboro — where an invisible but clearly understood line at the entrance marks the boundary between the haves and the have-nots — writer Archer Mayor ignores the wary glances cast his way by some of the inhabitants, who clearly know outsiders when they see them.

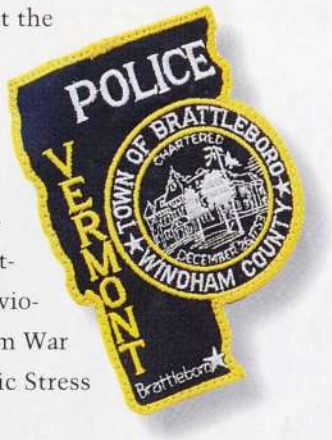
Mayor is not quite a stranger, however. He has been there before — as an emergency medical technician for Rescue Inc., Brattleboro's rescue squad. As an EMT, Mayor has seen his share of violence, from women beaten during domestic disputes to a Vietnam War veteran terrorizing, and terrorized, as a result of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Now he is here in a different capacity, giving a curious visitor a tour of some of the locations that turn up in his highly regarded series of police procedural novels featuring the Brattleboro detective Joe Gunther.

As he drives away, Mayor puts forth a gospel to describe the forces behind human behavior, behavior he has observed both as a writer and in his current post as captain of the rescue squad of the NewBrook Volunteer Fire Department in his hometown of Newfane.

In his succinct phraseology, it boils down to four essentials: "Lust, Loot, Liquor and Lunacy." It is a simplification, of course, but Mayor's rough philosophy holds true as much for the Joe Gunther books as it does for the oddities and brutalities he has witnessed as a rescue volunteer.

Mayor is heir to the classic American tradition epitomized by Ed McBain's 87th Precinct or K.C. Constantine's western Pennsylvania cop Mario Balzic, with a dash of Ross MacDonald and Raymond Chandler



(And Put Brattleboro on the Detective-Story Map)

thrown in. What Mayor has achieved is the slightly improbable but highly successful transplant to ostensibly placid rural Vermont of a genre once rooted in corrupt urban decay.

In the process, he has humanized the remote, cynical figure of the private eye or burned-out city cop into the stubborn, compassionate and apparently indestructible person of Joe Gunther, a Korean War veteran turned policeman. Together with a resourceful group of colleagues, Gunther thwarts villainy and restores order to the mean streets of Brattleboro. That eternal struggle between good and evil, which is at the heart of all detective novels, is the foundation of Mayor's fictional universe.

"Mine is a form of morality play," says the 45-year-old Mayor emphatically, with a hint of Biblical sternness that belies his usually affable demeanor. "It's righteousness versus wrong. The good guys succeed and the bad guys don't."

Mayor, whose relations with state law enforcement officials are cordial, to say the least, given the favorable spotlight into which he has thrust them, notes that despite an outsider's perception of police work in Vermont as a real-life version of Mayberry, R.F.D., the problems of cops here are the same as cops' everywhere: exhaustion, disease and the stress of a profession that puts the police in contact with the worst extremes of human behavior.

"People dump on them for being stupid or vicious, but who do we depend on when we get into a jam?" he asks rhetorically. "I think cops deserve a lot of respect for what they do. They're asked to isolate themselves and I don't think people realize how difficult that is."

While his sympathies clearly lie with the police, Mayor is not sanctimonious about it. The police aren't always icons of virtue and the bad guys aren't always so bad. His current and well-received book, *The Dark Root*, which postulates the encroachment of an Asian crime syndicate into Vermont, features a villain whose actions, while reprehensible, have a certain warped nobility to them.

And as with *The Dark Root*, Mayor's next book, *The Ragman's Memory*,

shows his ability for picking subject matter that is timely. Due for publication this fall, *The Ragman's Memory*, says Mayor, deals with "a fictional $15 million convention center in Brattleboro ... the Act 250 planning commission, zoning boards and corruption within those ranks."

In contrast to the spasmodic eruptions of violence that characterized *The Dark Root*, Mayor promises that *The Ragman's Memory* will be "fairly genteel." By Mayor's definition, genteel means a seemingly unconnected series of deaths, apparently of natural causes, that Gunther and his team piece together.

It is Mayor's sense of place and attention to detail that give the series its flavor and authenticity, says *Los Angeles Times* critic Charles Champlin, who in 1993 selected *The Skeleton's Knee* as one of the year's 10 best works of crime fiction. "I think it's one of the best series going," he says. "You don't think of Brattleboro as a hotbed of crime, but thanks to him, it's on the map. He observes the town very well. He's a very good plotter. He makes Joe Gunther terribly real. He makes Brattleboro very real."

That's probably because Mayor has made such a close study of the town and likes it so well. Winding in and around Brattleboro, he points to a ramshackle structure in a rundown part of town. "I picked up a few knifings in that building," he says casually.

Mayor scans buildings covetously, admiring 19th century architectural ornamentation since deteriorated with time and neglect, eyes fairly glittering when he spies a prime spot.

On request, he takes a visitor to the heart of it all, the Brattleboro Police Department, situated in a red-brick Victorian behemoth downtown. He is greeted like a trusted colleague, buzzed through without having to identify himself. "Oh, there's a call for Joe Gunther," jokes Richie Bouchard, a dispatcher, as the telephone rings.

In truth, Boy Scout Joe, the affectionate term Mayor uses to describe his creation, is, moral code aside, as far removed from the shrewd, irreverent, European-raised and Yale-educated Mayor as you can get. "I'm not him but I like him," says Mayor.

A wanderer with a restless and inquisitive temperament, Mayor moved many times as a child with his parents and six siblings, from suburban Westchester County, New York, to Toronto to Paris before being shipped off at age 15 to Suffield Academy, a Connecticut prep school. He eventually was accepted to Yale University, more by dint of his congenial, quick wit and considerable self-confidence than, he acknowledges, any sterling academic achievement.

After graduating from Yale in 1973 with a bachelor's degree in American history, Mayor headed out on the road, drinking in the wealth of experiences that came his way. "After growing up in France," he recalls "the U.S. had become a fascination to me."

From 1973 until 1980, Mayor was a jack-of-all trades, working as a political consultant in California, a writer-for-hire of family histories in Texas and the South and a researcher at both Time-Life in New York and the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library in Austin. It was during a job at the University of Texas Press in Austin that he met his present wife, Ponnie, a native Texan. About his first marriage to another Texan, Mayor says little. He has an 18-year-old son, Jonathon, by his first marriage, and a 13-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, from his marriage to Ponnie.

"In 1980, I quit and I've never held a job since," says Mayor facetiously. He moved to Thetford to be near his parents, who had by that time relocated to Hanover, New Hampshire. Two years later, he and Ponnie moved to Newfane, a compromise, he says, between country and city that also put him near Brattleboro, which he had already decided would be the location for a series of mystery novels. After seven years of moving from place to place, Mayor was finally coming home.

A writer at heart, he turned to mysteries assuming they would be the simplest way to break into trade publishing. He was quickly disabused of this notion. "I discovered that it's not easier to write a mystery book. The flesh of the matter had better be well done. The plot and the narrative are just the skeleton."

Open Season, the first book in the series, published in 1988, went through two unsatisfactory drafts be-

JOE GUNTHER

fore Mayor hit upon the idea of writing it in the first, rather than third, person. "Joe came last," he remembers. "On the first page of the third draft, he came to me. I'd been going through a process of self-identification. How do I breathe life into him?"

Thus was born the voice of Joe Gunther: solid, dogged rather than brilliant, and a thoroughly decent human being. Not a Superman by any stretch of the imagination, unless you count his preternatural qualities of endurance — surviving shootings, stabbings, beatings and the occasional dose of curare. "Well," laughs Mayor, "you suspend disbelief. And Joe, of course, doesn't age. He's forever mid-50s but as tough as a bloody log."

Indeed, Gunther's name comes from Mayor's desire to write about the "Regular Joes" of this world, the men and women whom he calls "the fabric of Vermont." They are the people whom he sees everyday, as a writer and rescue squad volunteer. "As an EMT, you go into people's houses, houses I would never see otherwise, where people are hanging on by a fingernail."

Although Mayor has depicted Vermont as far more crime-ridden than it actually is, he is also conscious of portraying its rougher edges. His is not exclusively the quaint, picturesque, village-green Vermont so often trotted out in calendars and coffee-table books. As in *Borderlines*, his second Joe Gunther novel, set in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, Mayor etches a portrait of "a slice of ... society that's poor and desperate and isolated."

Mayor is, naturally, very protective of his characters, instinctively knowing how they will behave under certain situations. He recalls an episode during the writing of *Borderlines* in which Joe flirted with the idea of having an affair with a young woman whom he met investigating the case.

Despite advice to the contrary from his agent, Mayor stubbornly held to his conviction that — out of a personal sense of honor and loyalty to his girlfriend, Gail Zigman — Joe, although tempted, would never succumb. This resolve seems to ground Mayor as well. "That's all we've got," he says firmly. "Our sense of right and wrong, our sense of morality. That's what allows us to walk the face of the earth with righteous dignity."

Those flashes of intensity aside, Mayor prefers, publicly at least, to keep things light and friendly. He is a good storyteller, funny and self-deprecating. And just when his innate confidence begins to sound vaguely egotistical, he reins himself in with a quip or a change of subject.

With six well-praised Joe Gunther novels under his belt, Mayor is fairly content with life. His output is constant: one new book each year. He likes his stable of characters and how they have evolved. He engages in what he calls "loopy correspondence" with Joe Gunther fans. He is a prodigious researcher, keeping fat, three-ring binders of notes for each project. He works hard to publicize his novels, traveling to book-signings and making appearances at a steady pace, clearly enjoying the opportunity to meet with Joe Gunther devotees.

But despite an ever-growing audience, Mayor is acutely conscious of how tenuous it all is, should one book sell less than expected. As a writer, he says, he would like the time to devote two years to each book, but that's a luxury — of time and money — he cannot afford.

"I want to do more than what I set out to do. I want to turn out a really beautiful piece of work, but the financial rewards will have to come before I do that," he observes. "I'm sometimes saddened when reading aloud that I don't have passages of sheer beauty. But I'm not unhappy working within the context of the genre. There's no reason to relegate the genre to the literary trash heap."

In that vein, he ruefully describes a moment during a public reading of *Fruits of the Poisonous Tree* when a young woman raised her hand to pose a question. "So, Mr. Mayor," she asked earnestly, "when are you going to write a novel?" Sitting at home in Newfane in his easy chair, before his computer and next to a wide picture window, this self-described "middle-class writer of middle-class books" lets the line sink in before he tilts back as far as the chair allows, laughing loudly and with genuine amusement.

Nicola Smith, a reporter for The Valley News, *lives in Hartford.*

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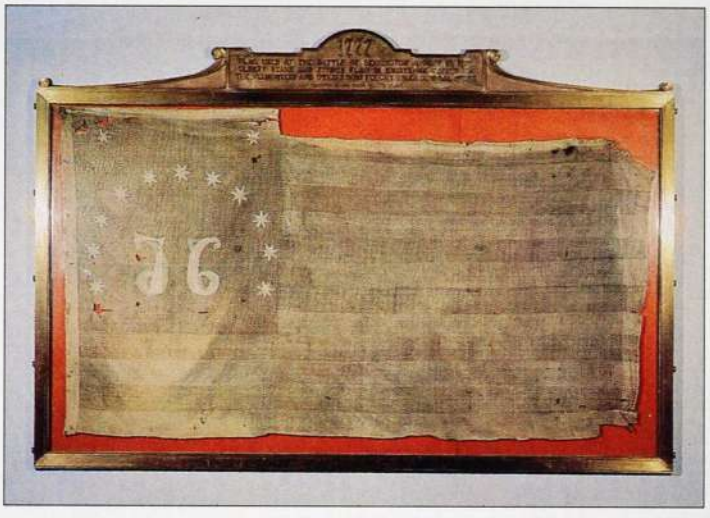
New Life for Bennington's Battle Flag



Frank Forward/Forward's Color Production

Above, the 5.5-by-10-foot Bennington Battle flag before restoration. Below, conservator Deirdre Windsor carefully removes flag from glass.

Bennington Museum

By SHERYL LECHNER

HOW MANY TOWNS have their own American flag named after them?" asks Steve Miller, executive director of the Bennington Museum.

The answer: Only one. Bennington, Vermont.

The Bennington Battle Flag, one of the museum's most prized treasures, returns this summer from perhaps the most important journey of its long and mysterious life — a journey that museum directors hope will preserve the flag for future generations and crystallize the bonds between it, the museum, and Bennington.

The huge flag has been to the cleaners. And not just any cleaners, but those at a highly specialized art conservation lab at the Museum of American Textile History in Lowell, Massachusetts.

The fragile banner's year-long odyssey — transport in a climate-controlled van, a high-tech cleaning and microscopic examination — will culminate in re-installation in its own climate-controlled room this June, complete with fife and drum ceremony. Throughout the process, the museum has taken great pains to involve the people of Bennington, literally rallying them around the flag.

Interestingly, the preservation effort has raised new questions about the flag's uncertain origin. Since the nation's bicentennial, the legend of the flag has come under increasing scrutiny, with an emerging consensus that the Bennington Battle Flag was probably not really present at the Battle of Bennington (which actually took place over the border in New York) but instead was made years later, perhaps to commemorate that battle. The flag's exact age is still a mystery.

Despite this, museum staff assert that it remains one of the two oldest stars-and-stripes flags known, along with the Smithsonian Institution's War of 1812 flag, which flew at Fort McHenry and inspired Francis Scott Key to pen "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Though there is disagreement about the flag's history, everyone agreed that it was badly in need of restoration. In addition to drastic fading that had rendered its red, white and blue a ghostly monochrome, the flag was moldy, dirty, tattered and badly puckered.

When museum staff and trustees decided early in 1994 to undertake the $14,000 project, they also decided to raise the money from within the region — although they probably could more quickly have raised it by approaching national corporations and foundations.

Since then, the Bennington Battle Flag Committee — including museum staff, trustees and area residents, and headed by Police Chief David Woodin — has raised more than $11,000 for the project with the help of such local groups as the Rotary Club, VFW and the Business and Professional Women's Club.

Part of what makes the flag so intriguing is the mix of history and myth in which it is enfolded. The legend presents an alluring image: the huge flag hand-sewn by the women of Bennington, carried billowing by Vermont soldiers under General John Stark as they outmaneuvered the British and Hessians to protect the town's munitions stores during the famous August 16, 1777 battle. One problem with that legend is that the flag is too large to have been carried into battle.

An alternate story has the flag flying over the munitions storehouse, at the site now marked by the Bennington Monument. But even that version is suspect; it simply doesn't make sense that such a large flag could have been made all of cotton before the 1800s, since cotton was not readily available and, even if it had been, would have been very expensive. The cotton content does not definitively rule out the 18th-century dating, but it lends weight to theories that the flag was made in the early to mid-1800s.

Regardless of its age, the flag is one of the most famous of all U.S. flags, featured in every book written about the American banner. And it certainly was passed down in the Fillmore family, kin to 13th U.S. President Millard Fillmore — though family tales that it was rescued from the Battle of Bennington by Lieutenant Nathaniel Fillmore cannot be documented.

In 1926, Maude Fillmore Wilson donated the flag to the Bennington Battle Monument and Historical Association, which soon became the Bennington Museum. By then, it had lost one of its 13 stripes and one of its stars, apparently snipped off by vandals. Its reds and blues were already badly faded and its whites yellowed when, in 1927, it was hermetically sealed inside a custom-designed display case, its edges glued between two half-inch-thick sheets of glass inside the enormous bronze frame; the whole thing weighed three-quarters of a ton.

The conservation work required to stop more than a century of damage has not brought back the flag's color, but cleaning has brought the fabric from a dingy gray to a respectable beige. And it has stabilized the flag's condition, hopefully ensuring that it will survive as a teaching tool and a treasured piece of Vermont's heritage for future generations.

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The refurbished Bennington Battle Flag will be installed during a special open house weekend at the Bennington Museum June 14-16. Admission to the museum will be free, and there will be a variety of special events. For information, call (802) 447-1571.

Writer Sheryl Lechner lives in northern Massachusetts.

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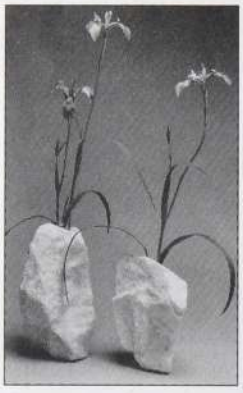

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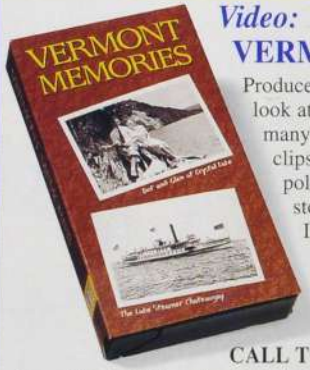

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Continued from page 55

good thing to have up here; the involvement over the years of some of the great American writers. Those things you don't want to affect, that's what you begin working with."

The names of the Bread Loaf staff over the years are indeed legendary: Richard Wilbur, Wallace Stegner, Shirley Jackson, John Gardner, John Irving and, of course, its literary godfather, Robert Frost. Any list of the writers who've passed through as students or fellows is equally impressive: William Styron, Anne Sexton, Eudora Welty, Walter Moseley, Julia Alvarez, Jay Parini, and Tim O'Brien among the many.

Yet if the conference participants are renowned, their exploits have often been notorious — or, perhaps, their exploits have grown notorious, transformed into the sort of big fish stories that make writers seem larger than life: More possessed than self-possessed, a young Truman Capote stalks from a Robert Frost reading. Poet Linda Pastan climbs onto the back of critic Terrence Des Pres's motorcycle, and the two hit triple-digit speeds on the back roads of Ripton. John Gardner's first wife hires a plane to drop leaflets on Bread Loaf, informing the conferees of her ex-husband's alleged noncompliance with their alimony agreement.

In legend, if not in life, one supposedly never knew who might struggle into breakfast with whom, and the drinking was said to have been Dionysian.

The reality, of course, is that there were always lots of faculty families up on the mountain, and a great many small children. There were parent-child soccer games, softball, and family bird-watching at sunrise.

And somehow, amidst it all, young writers with talent often learned what they needed to reach a higher plateau, and established writers regained the confidence they needed to go on. To this day, John Irving credits Pack with providing him the literary reassurance he needed while struggling in the 1970s to finish *The World According to Garp*.

"I look back with great satisfaction on the number of young writers we've recognized over the years," Pack recalls. "When Irving was reading the opening of the book that would become *Garp*, everyone in the theater knew this was a literary event."

Collier is the author of three widely praised collections of poetry, and he's won awards or grants from the Poetry Society of America, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Guggenheim Foundation. Now a professor at the University of Maryland, he first attended Bread Loaf in 1981 as a 28-year-old scholar and was a member of the faculty from 1992 through 1994.

Nevertheless, when Middlebury College announced in the spring of 1994 that Bob Pack's successor would be Michael Collier, a small tremor rumbled through the nationwide literary community that cared about the conference. The selection committee had carefully scrutinized 20 applications, agonized over six, and then forwarded to Middlebury College President John McCardell Jr. an even shorter list, from which McCardell would make the final choice. Although the committee believed Collier was qualified to direct the conference, he was certainly a dark horse.

•

Middlebury's McCardell knew his choice might surprise some people. He terms Collier "a clear signal that a new generation is taking its place at Bread Loaf. We made a deliberate turn to new blood." He cites three reasons for choosing Collier over the other candidates, some of whom had a longer affiliation with the conference and with Middlebury: Collier understands Bread Loaf's literary tradition; he is a rising star in the world of poetry; and, perhaps most significantly, "He said he would emphasize teaching, and the elevation of teaching above all other hierarchies at the conference."

In the vocabulary that surrounds Bread Loaf, few words have greater resonance than *hierarchy*. For some writers, especially some of those contributors who give up their summer vacations and pay thousands of dollars to study at Bread Loaf, the word conveys the chasm that has sometimes separated faculty and students.

For others, however, that legendary hierarchy was critical to both the intangible mystique of Bread Loaf and the tangible way one learned. And while Pack admits the conference he directed with fellow Middlebury Col-

lege professor Stanley Bates for more than two decades had a "hierarchical aspect," he notes it was a hierarchy "based on accomplishment. We wanted a writer's accumulated work over the years respected. We wanted to honor great writing."

In fact, the various faculty levels evolved because Pack expanded the staff so every aspiring writer who wanted a manuscript dissected by a published writer would have access to one. Because of a limited budget, that meant inviting some writers at less established stages in their careers.

Stacey Chase, a reporter for the *Burlington Free Press*, has been a Bread Loaf scholar and a member of the administrative staff. She was there when John Irving read for two hours from *The Cider House Rules*, Irving's novel set in a Maine orphanage, and Linda Pastan fainted during one particularly graphic scene involving human embryos and garbage. Chase admits she was somewhat disappointed by the 1995 Bread Loaf she visited for a day.

"This year's conference felt more sedate. The hierarchical staffing was gone, but so were the big-name writers and the drama that came with them. For those of us who had been there in the big-name, high drama years, it felt sad," she says.

Or, as another faculty member put it when he visited in 1995, "The place was a night sky without any stars."

In the old Bread Loaf, contributors might have been barred from the illustrious faculty lounge and the staff's Bloody Marys at noon, but their manuscripts were read by writers as renowned as Erica Jong and Howard Nemerov, and they heard lectures from the likes of the late Stanley Elkin.

"We always had the highest standards for faculty as writers and teachers," Pack recalls. "We wanted [contributors] to learn about the craft and about the great tradition."

David Haward Bain, co-author with Mary Smyth Duffy of a history of Bread Loaf, takes issue with the idea that there are no longer stars on the faculty. He notes such 1995 staff as Vermont poet Ellen Bryant Voigt, novelist Francine Prose and short story writer Reginald McKnight, all members of the old regime and all extremely accomplished.

Collier himself downplays the changes.

"I'm not changing the real structure of the conference. Inside the structure, perhaps, the furniture is being rearranged," he says. "Of course, rearranging the furniture inside a room can sometimes create a dramatic sense of change."

Collier believes the pivotal change has been starting the workshops earlier: "My sense is that ... the people who come here want to talk about their own work more, not the staff's. Previously [contributors] would arrive and for the first week there would be staff up at the podium, and they'd be in their seats in the theater. So there was this immediate distance.

"By making the workshops the center of the conference, we'll have writers at all levels sitting down together and really talking about the text that's in front of them," he says.

Most paying students at the 1995 conference, whether they were there for the first time or — in the case of Virginia's Norton Girault — the 19th, applauded the democratization.

"I liked the additional workshops. I thought it was an outstanding change to begin them the first week," Girault says. "And I liked the vibes I got from Collier. The sense of community I always found at Bread Loaf was still there."

And even those who miss the high drama of the old days admit it would be hard to break the spell Bread Loaf has cast upon them.

"I'm in love with Bread Loaf and I always will be," says Stacey Chase. "It's like Brigadoon, this beautiful, magical place that rises from the fog. It's one of the only spots in the world where people really appreciate a writer's agony about where to put a comma."

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This year's conference runs from August 14-25. Tuition and room and board cost $1,600. For information, contact Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT 05753, tel. (802) 388-3711, ext. 5286.

Chris Bohjalian's fifth novel, Midwives, *will be published next spring by Harmony Books.*

Continued from page 41

admitted that he would have enjoyed farming the way the Amish do.

Diane St. Claire didn't grow up with horses — didn't even grow up on a farm — but now she has joined the small group of Vermonters who actually do some farm work with horses. She does much of the tilling and cultivating at the community-supported gardens in the Burlington Intervale. Diane was well into adulthood and had an established career with the Vermont Health Department when she decided that she was tired of pushing papers (as she puts it) and wanted to see more results from a day's work.

She bought a team of horses, went through a long learning period (including a couple of accidents that would have discouraged a less determined person) and now says that she is the only commuting horse farmer around. She keeps her team — Dan and Diamond — stabled at a farm in Essex, and trucks them to the Intervale once a week to keep up with the seven acres of vegetables that are grown there. It's a perfect place for horse power. Many of the farm's subscribers — who pay a flat membership fee to share in the farm's bounty — allow extra time when they come to pick up their produce each week just to watch the horses at work.

A handful of loggers and sugarmakers around the state have found a place for working horses. And a team of horses adds a festive note to any celebration — from weddings to store openings. Karen Munson of Underhill Center meets the bride and groom at the church door with a fancy carriage, a team of horses, a bouquet and champagne, and drives them off to the reception. Dave Russell offers a horse-drawn sleigh ride to the Christmas tree plantation on his farm in Starksboro, where you can cut your own tree and bring it back while you listen to the bells jingle. The Vermont Country Kitchen, a fancy-food store in Middlebury, hires Patrick Palmer with his team and wagon to deliver the first case of Beaujolais Nouveau (and some publicity) to the store each year. And no parade would be complete without a team of horses pulling a wagon.

Then there is the show ring — where manes are braided, tails beribboned, hooves painted, buckles shined, where teams of four or six horses are expected to step in perfect unison. For the teamsters, this is where the highest expression of draft-horsemanship is found.

Eleven of Vermont's best show Belgians live in a barn at Stan and Penny Wright's farm in Enosburg. Like a lot of horse owners, the Wrights are involved in this project as a family. Stan grew up on a farm that used horses, his father has continued to

Draft Horse Day

If you want to try walking behind a plow, your chance will come on Saturday, July 27. That's when the Green Mountain Draft Horse Association will hold its fifth annual Draft Horse Field Day in the meadow in front of the magnificent Farm Barn at Shelburne Farms. The draft horse activities run from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. (and there's a lunch wagon at the site), but you might want to come earlier or stay later to give yourself the chance to explore Shelburne Farms. For more information about the event or the Draft Horse Association, call Dina Marcotte at (802) 879-1357. For information about Shelburne Farms, call (802) 985-8686.

There will be about 10 teams of horses at work in the field — some plowing, some mowing hay, some pulling a reaper-binder through a field of ripe wheat, some pulling a wagonload of visitors on tours of the site. You can even do a bit of work, following the reaper-binder to pick up the sheaves of wheat and stand them upright in stooks.

There are plenty of knowledgeable people around who can answer questions about the horses, the farming techniques, and the period in history that is being recreated. You might find yourself sharing the wonder of one man at last year's event who had picked up a sheaf of wheat and was shaking the grains into his open hand, separating the wheat from the chaff. He was overheard saying to his young son, with a touch of awe in his voice: "This is such a part of our metaphorical lives, but I've, I've never touched it before."

keep horses in his retirement, and Stan and Penny's three daughters are all expert horsepersons. The Wrights take time off from their farm work — raising veal — to travel to horse shows around the Northeast. As Mary, their eldest daughter, grew up, Stan turned more and more of the show driving over to her. Her reputation as a teamster got around. She graduated recently from UVM and was hired by the Anheuser-Busch company as the first woman ever to drive one of their big Clydesdale hitches.

Mary Wright is one of only a few people in America who get paid a salary for their expertise with draft horses. Others make some money from show prizes, hay rides, training, and breeding fees. But most draft horse owners are in it purely for the pleasure of being around these animals.

And to have a little fun. They're having fun back at Shelburne Farms, near the end of the Draft Horse Field Day, as the barrel race — riding a draft horse bareback around a simple course — gets started. It's an event that comes close to pure silliness.

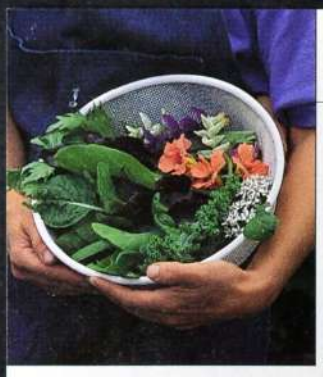
Some of the horses don't seem to know what to make of a person sitting on their back. Some walk but don't want to run. Some run, but don't want to go around the barrel. Karen Munson leads youngsters on three separate runs around the course — and appears to have worked harder than any of the horses all day.

The starter announces: "Here's Patrick Palmer on Zack. The president of the club." Ted Russell calls out: "Who, Pat or Zack?"

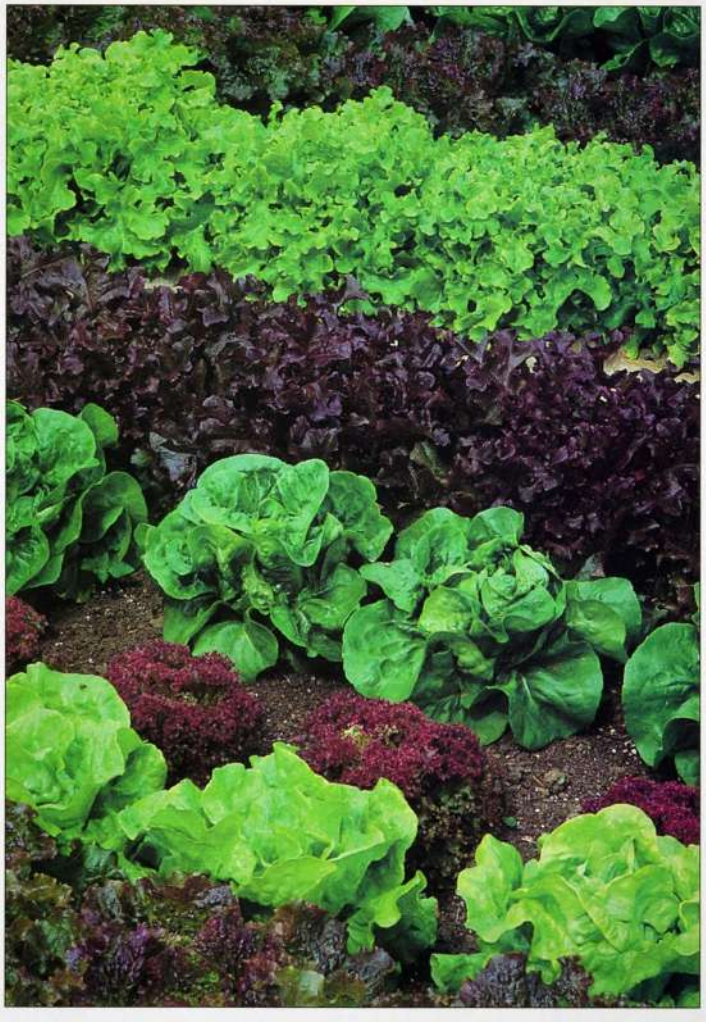
Audra Minor sits on Millie's back, desperately trying to coax the horse into a trot. Wallace shouts from the sideline: "Grandpa raised that horse to walk!"

Roger Fortin is watching the fun from the seat of his pickup truck, parked nearby. He says that riding a draft horse isn't all that silly: He can remember as a boy riding one to cultivate corn. He pauses for a thoughtful moment, then says: "I liked it better with horses. I love horses. It's a quieter and more natural way to work."

Chris Granstrom wrote about backyard sugaring in our Spring issue. He lives in New Haven.



The Rich New World of Vermont Greens



A bountiful crop and a beautiful harvest from The Cook's Garden.

By ANDREA CHESMAN
Photographed by
RICHARD W. BROWN

STANDING IN THE MIDDLE of a field of lettuce in Monkton, I slowly make my way down each row. Every few feet, grower Marjorie Sussman offers me a different leaf, a new taste, a new texture.

"Here, try this one." She hands me an inner leaf from what looks like a head of Boston lettuce, except that it is red on the outside. "Carmona. My favorite this year. Isn't it wonderful?" she says.

It is wonderful: rich and buttery, full of flavor — the best Boston lettuce I have ever tasted. Carmona, Rosalita, Kalura, Lollo Rossa. The names are no less beautiful than the flavors are exciting. Here are greens so tasty they don't even require an annointment of oil. My salad bowl will never be the same.

I have spent the past year immersed in the creation of salads, writing a book on "salad suppers" for Chapters Publishing in Shelburne, and I have read just about every magazine article and cookbook on the subject. I spent countless wintry hours cooking off-season foods in the kitchen and shopping at the Middlebury Natural Foods Co-op and in local supermarkets. When summer arrived, it was time for real field research.

The places I visited spoke volumes about the changing face of Vermont agriculture and the changing diets of Vermonters. Not so long ago, a Vermont farm was strictly a dairy operation, and a salad in a restaurant meant a watery wedge of iceberg lettuce and pink hothouse tomatoes drowning in a sea of neon orange dressing. Not only did these fail to nourish either body or soul, the ingredients weren't likely to have been grown in Vermont!

Today there are dozens of Vermont specialty growers supplying produce departments and restaurants with exotic lettuces and baby greens with names like mizuna, tatsoi, frisée and mâche. And our salads are dressed with Vermont-made dressings like Annie's

Sesame and Shiitake Vinaigrette, Drew's All-Natural Mild Red Chile Dressing, and Blanchard & Blanchard's Lemon Pepper Vinaigrette.

Marjorie Sussman and her partner, Marion Pollock, have been supplying restaurants and stores in Addison County with greens for the past 16 years. Sussman's eyes light up when she talks about salad greens. Each year she and Pollock experiment with new varieties such as radicchio, a small purple-leafed cabbage.

"Mostly we grow lettuce, but we added radicchio about five years ago and that sells really well," she says. "People seem to change what they want to buy. One year everyone wants Romaine, the next year a red Boston-type lettuce is hot. It's hard to figure out."

One thing is certain: Once people have tasted a really good locally grown lettuce, they won't stand for any shipped from far away. I look for Lollo Rossa when I shop at farmers' markets myself. The deeply curled leaves have a pale, frosty green interior with rose tips, and the flavor is richer than almost any other lettuce I've tasted.

Arugula is another green I can't do without. Its peppery mustard flavor is positively addictive in a salad. But don't take my word for it, last year The Cook's Garden in Londonderry sold 10,000 packets of arugula seeds.

The Cook's Garden seed catalog is the brainchild of Shepherd and Ellen Ogden and it is possible that no one knows more about growing greens in Vermont than they. Gardener-grower-writer entrepreneurs, the Ogdens pioneered the growing of mesclun in this country back in 1984. This past year mesclun was a staple in many Vermont supermarkets and on many restaurant menus.

Mesclun is a mix of baby salad greens — lettuces, mustards, cabbages, herbs, even flowers — developed in the French-Italian border region. "Many of the plants used for mesclun," Ellen Ogden notes, "have been in American gardens since the 1600s, for example chicory, cress, rocket [arugula], chervil and lettuce." It is a labor-intensive crop for growers that commands top dollar at the market. I generally find mesclun mixes well worth the price, and I've planted

the mesclun salad seed mixes in my garden.

When the Ogdens began their seed company, their primary customers were professional growers in California. Today their catalog reaches out to 1.5 million growers and gardeners and offers more salad greens and lettuces than any other seed catalog in the country, according to Ellen. Their orders are now filled out-of-state, and their trial gardens have moved from Londonderry to the Winooski River Intervale in Burlington, where more visitors will have a chance to see the greens.

"Vermont is ideally suited to growing greens," Ellen explained. "The cool weather is perfect for lettuce. It's one of our best crops."

Jay Vogler of Bingham Brook Farm in Charlotte has six acres of his certified organic farm dedicated to lettuces alone. He says that the climate — also good for cool-weather cabbage crops — is good for greens. "We can grow greens right through the summer — that means seeding about 14,000 heads of lettuce a week. I wouldn't want to be in New Jersey — which is where I came from — growing lettuce. It's just too hot. Of course, I never have much luck with peppers and melons. But I'd much rather be here, growing greens."

For Cecile Green of Green Mountain Mesclun, a farm sponsored by the Intervale Foundation's Small Farms Incubator Project, the greens season lasts from May to October with the help of row covers and a greenhouse. Green grows seven different mesclun mixes. All are delicious, but her finest includes such rarely cultivated varieties as bronze fennel and peacock kale. Most of her mixes also include edible flowers.

Nola Kevra is another mesclun grower who is extending the greens season well beyond its traditional Vermont boundaries. From a greenhouse in a clearing in Green Mountain National Forest in Ripton, Kevra harvests a crop of mesclun every few days, nine months a year. Home gardeners might buy a mesclun seed mix from The Cook's Garden, but professionals like Kevra and Green plant individual beds of several different varieties and harvest the young greens separately, when they are just a few inches tall.

Like many specialty growers, Kevra grows her greens organically. She uses a greenhouse to provide a controlled environment for temperature and humidity but plants directly in the soil. The

Roasted Vegetable Salad

A feast of vegetables! The sweetly caramelized vegetables sit on top a lightly dressed salad made tangy with a crumbling of salty feta cheese. The contrast of colors, textures, and sweet and salty flavors make this an enjoyable salad.

1½ pounds new red potatoes, cut in wedges
1 pound beets, julienned
½ pound baby carrots
½ pound green beans, chopped
1 small onion, slivered
1 whole garlic bulb, cloves separated and peeled
1 fennel bulb, julienned
1 red bell pepper, cut in strips
3 tablespoons chopped mixed fresh herbs (such as basil, rosemary, thyme, oregano)
3 tablespoons olive oil
¾ cup defatted chicken broth or more as needed
Salt and pepper to taste
10 cups mixed salad greens (include some radicchio for color)
1 large ripe tomato, cut in wedges
2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
½ cup crumbled feta cheese

Preheat the oven to 425° F. In a large bowl, combine the vegetables, herbs, broth, salt and pepper, and 2 tablespoons of the oil. Toss well. Arrange in a single layer on two cookie sheets or in a very large roasting pan.

Roast the vegetables for 45-60 minutes, stirring every 15 minutes or so, or until they are well browned. Remove from the oven and let cool to room temperature.

Combine the salad greens and tomatoes in a bowl. Toss with the remaining 1 tablespoon oil and balsamic vinegar. Arrange on a large serving platter. Sprinkle on the feta cheese. Spoon the vegetables on top. Serve at once. Makes 4 servings.

light is natural, which limits the growth rate in the spring and fall.

On a busy day last fall, I watched her low-tech harvesting method. She hand-cuts the greens with scissors, filling several woven baskets with a different green. Then she combines them all in one large basket to make a mix. As she hoisted the basket onto her hip, I trailed her into the house, where she began to wash the greens in a large basin. Then she pulled out a salad spinner — the same kind I have at home — to dry the greens. Everything is done in small batches to prevent bruising. Then the greens were weighed and bagged. Often Kevra will enclose a surprise for the salad bowl — baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, baby radishes.

Because the greens in a mesclun mix are so flavorful, I find I prefer the lightest of dressings with them — a whisper of fresh lemon juice, a drizzle of the most expensive olive oil I can afford, a pinch of sea salt. But when mesclun mixes are scarce or too expensive, there is always local lettuce available at farmers' markets, and it's well worth buying. Paired with some Vermont-made salad dressings, you have a worthy dish.

Often when I talk to Vermont growers I hear about how hard it is to compete with other parts of the country that have longer growing seasons, how hard it is to wrest a crop of tomatoes or melons from this frost-bitten land. So it was with pleasure that I heard so much about Vermont's suitability for growing greens.

As Marjorie Sussman commented, "We eat a lot of salads, so it's nice that we have such a long season for lettuce. In the winter we eat salads of grated cabbage and carrots. I just won't buy dead lettuce from the supermarket."

Now that I've tasted the best, neither will I.

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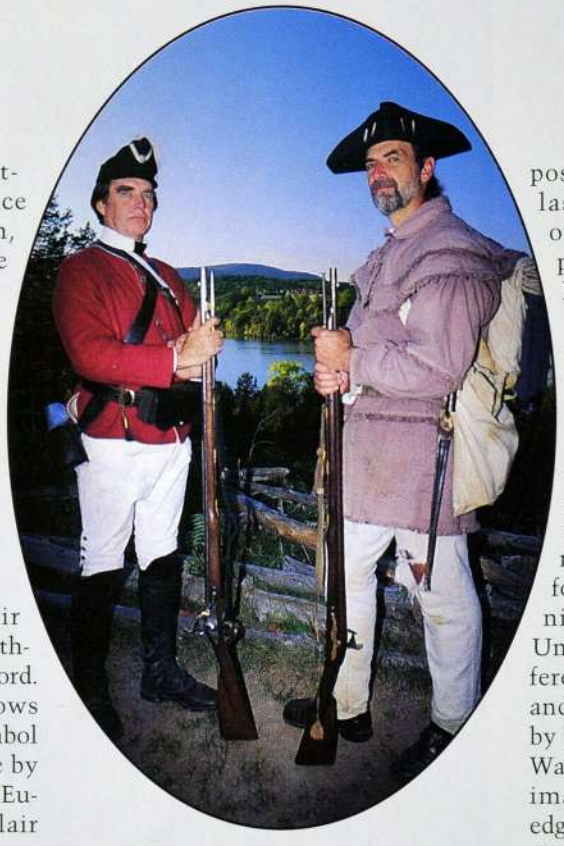
On August 10, The Cook's Garden will hold an open house at its gardens in Burlington's Intervale. For open house information, call Gardener's Supply at (802) 660-3505. For seed information, call (802) 824-3400.

Andrea Chesman lives in Ripton. Her new book, Salad Suppers, *will be available from Chapters Publishing in 1997.*

A New Welcome at Mount Independence

By HOWARD COFFIN
Photographed by C.B. JOHNSON



JULY 28, 1776: Standing on Rattlesnake Hill, a rocky eminence overlooking Lake Champlain, the colonel, once a member of the British army, took a deep breath. Then he began reading Thomas Jefferson's words, just arrived on horseback up the long, rutted roads and trails from the Continental Congress in Philadelphia:

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another ...

Before Colonel Arthur St. Clair stood the men of his American northern army, straining to hear every word. Across the Lake Champlain narrows stood Fort Ticonderoga, now a symbol of their rebellion after its capture by Ethan Allen, but long a bastion of European empire in America. St. Clair continued:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

A Boston newspaper described the scene this way:

Immediately after divine worship the Declaration was read by Colonel Arthur St. Clair, and having said "God save the free and independent states of America!" the army manifested their joys with three cheers ... The language on every man's countenance was, "Now we are a people! We have a name among the states of the world."

Ever thereafter, Rattlesnake Hill was known as Mount Independence.

This July, 220 years after the Declaration was read there, a $1 million visitors' center and museum will open on the historic ground of Mount Independence in Orwell. The 400-acre peninsula, jutting into Lake Champlain opposite Ticonderoga, will at last begin receiving long overdue credit for the important place in American history it earned long ago.

There is far more to the story than St. Clair's historic reading, for on Mount Independence's rocky acreage an American army stood in 1776 to turn back a British invasion of the newly declared nation. Then during the following winter hundreds of colonial soldiers, bravely manning the United States' northern defenses, suffered through a winter at least as bad and perhaps worse than that endured by Washington's men at Valley Forge. Walking the quiet landscape today, the imagination is tested by the knowledge that 12,000 soldiers were once encamped there. As many as 1,000 patriots may lie there now, in graves mainly unmarked.

"This was truly the site of American heroism as well as great suffering," according to the noted archaeologist David Starbuck, who has supervised digs at the Mount and other important Revolutionary War and French and Indian War sites in the Northeast. "While Valley Forge and other sites have gotten all the publicity, I firmly believe that what happened at Mount Independence was just as difficult and required as much perseverance as Val-

From rocky Mount Independence, Fort Ticonderoga can be seen across the narrow neck of Lake Champlain. Left, Revolutionary War re-enactors call to mind the year the Colonials halted the British advance from Canada.

ley Forge," said Starbuck. "Those people bought a year of time for the cause of liberty. For many people, there has to be a great battle to have a great historic site. Mount Independence is proof that greatness can come from those who wait, who persevere. Through their suffering and death, they held back the British for a precious year. The result was the decisive victory at Saratoga."

Edwin Cole Bearss, former chief historian of the National Park Service, is perhaps the leading authority on American military sites. "Mount Independence is a unique site, probably the great undisturbed Revolutionary War place," Bearss says. "It is wonderful."

Why? Early in the summer of 1776, American forces retreating from the failed invasion of Canada abandoned Crown Point, 15 miles to the north, and concentrated their defenses around Fort Ticonderoga. Following the advice of Benjamin Franklin and others, Rattlesnake Hill, just across the lake, was cleared of timber and fortified. Batteries, blockhouses, and a fort were erected. General Philip Schuyler wrote to George Washington that he found the place to be "so remarkably strong as to require little labor to make it tenable against a vast superiority of force, and fully to answer the purpose of preventing the enemy from penetrating into the country south of us."

The British, 8,000 strong under Sir Guy Carleton, came up the lake from Canada in the fall, after colliding with Benedict Arnold's small but feisty American fleet near Valcour Island. On Monday, October 28, 1776, an American militiaman wrote, "In the morning our advanced boat made the signals and the enemy were approaching, alarm guns were fired from our different batteries & in a few minutes every person able to carry a musket was at his post." Confronting the British was Mount Independence, bristling with cannon, flags flying, and with a garrison between it and Ticonderoga totaling some 12,000 men. Carleton took a long look, advanced a boat that was promptly met by cannon fire, and withdrew all the way to Canada for the winter.

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Loving Brother,

I inform you that I am & have been in a low state of health for some time past ... I earnestly intreat you not to delay in coming for me."

So wrote Matthew Kennedy, an American militiaman stationed at the Mount in the winter of 1776-77. Kennedy died before his brother arrived, and he was not alone in that fate. His letter, preserved at the University of Vermont, tells something of the suffering of the 2,500 men who

wintered there. Cold and short of food, riddled by disease, raked by the chill winds howling up Lake Champlain, their ranks were greatly reduced before the return of warm weather. With summer came the British, now led by Gen. John Burgoyne. Ticonderoga and Independence were abandoned. A fierce rear guard action was fought at Hubbardton and a big British detachment was battered at Bennington. Then came the long engagement at Saratoga and the British surrender that was the turning point of the Revolution. At Mount Independence, the year's delay in British plans that was key to American independence had been bought at a dear price.

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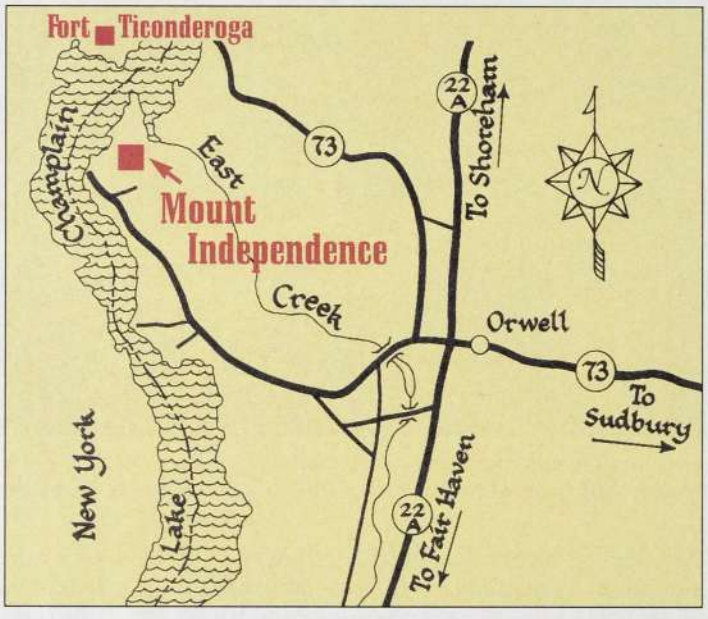
In the summer of 1996, near the 220th anniversary of St. Clair's reading of the Declaration of Independence, the new visitors' center/museum will be dedicated and opened with ceremony. The building, shaped like an upturned boat and set low and unobtrusively in the Mount's southern end, will be a dream come true for Mount Independence's many friends.

"A general recognition has developed that tourism based on history is important to the state's economy," said Louise Ransom, president of the Mount Independence Coalition, a group dedicated to helping the Vermont Division for Historic Preserva-

How to See Mount Independence



Vermont Division for Historic Preservation / Armand Poulin

The new visitors' center will formally open on the afternoon of Saturday, July 27, and Revolutionary War re-enactors will be encamped all that weekend. For information, call (802) 759-2412.

From the visitors' center, trails marked by colored blazes criss-cross the Mount, the southern half of which is owned by the State of Vermont, the northern half by Fort Ticonderoga. The Red Trail, six-tenths of a mile, leads to the stone foundations of the Mount's hospital, built to hold 600 patients. It passes on to a lookout with a view of rocky Mount Defiance across the lake. The British dragged cannon to Defiance's summit in the summer of 1777, placing Ticonderoga and part of Mount Independence in range.

The White Trail, eight-tenths of a mile, passes the stone remains of a blockhouse. At the base of a stony embankment is the massive foundation of what was probably the powder magazine. Farther along, surrounded by stone walls, is a well-preserved artillery battery that commanded the landward approach and the lake to the south. The view stretches up the narrow southern lake to the hills of New York, and across the fields of Addison County to the Green Mountains.

The 2.5-mile Orange Trail passes through the site of the star-shaped fort and its parade ground, still open due to the thousands of marching feet that packed the earth hard 220 years ago. At the tip of the Mount, a great horseshoe-shaped battery where cannon once stood looks across the lake narrows to the stone ramparts of Fort Ticonderoga. Here the strategic importance of the Mount becomes readily apparent as one encounters one of the great historic views in all America. The trail leads to the lake shore and the remnants of a road that led up from the long bridge that once connected the Mount and the old fort. Here once walked St. Clair, Benedict Arnold, John Burgoyne, John Stark, Seth Warner, Thaddeus Kosciuzko (who designed Mount Independence's defenses) and other giants of the Revolutionary War period.

The Blue Trail, 2.2 miles, follows a 1777 supply road along which American soldiers' stonework is still in evidence. The grassy areas by the lake were soldiers' gardens. Stone steps still lead down the side of a cistern, used by soldiers when dipping drinking water. None of the trails lead to the soldiers' graves. With few exceptions, the resting places of the hundreds who died on Mount Independence remain unknown and undisturbed. The many friends of Mount Independence are committed to keeping it that way.

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Anyone interested in assisting the Historic Preservation Division in interpreting Mount Independence can join the Mount Independence Coalition by contacting Louise Ransom, P.O. Box 323, Williston, VT 05495.

tion preserve and explain the site. "Since I dug here with David Starbuck I've been hooked on Mount Independence. I think a lot of other Americans are about to be hooked, too."

The Lake Champlain and Hudson River valleys are among the most historic regions in the United States, and were the focus of a series of strategic campaigns during the Revolutionary and French and Indian wars. Lately, interest has grown in establishing a history "trail"— a series of developed historic sites linked together thematically — throughout the two valleys, highlighting the momentous events that took place there. Mount Independence would be one of the most important places in such a trail, and would also attract visitors on its own.

"Together with Ticonderoga, Mount Independence was the most strategic point on Lake Champlain," said Townsend Anderson, of Vermont's Historic Preservation Division. "The new visitors' center will make the Mount accessible and allow for meaningful research and interpretation of a place described by several historians as the most significant, least disturbed Revolutionary War site in North America."

Noting that the collective 1776-77 Mount Independence-Fort Ticonderoga encampment of 12,000 soldiers rivaled the population of Colonial Boston, Anderson said that the visitors' center is a first step in developing the site for the public, as well as for researchers and scholars.

"It opens up extraordinary opportunities for a greater understanding of military life under the most arduous conditions, as well as the major campaign that shaped America's early history," he said.

The Historic Preservation Division's operations chief, John Dumville, first visited the Mount on a Boy Scout trip in the 1960s. "It is hard to imagine thousands of soldiers being here in a remote wilderness," he says, "gathered to defend their liberties. But this place forces you to become a kid again, it makes you use your imagination." ∞

Vermont writer Howard Coffin is helping to write a book on historic sites in the Champlain and Hudson valleys.

Continued from page 59

boat traffic and visitors were harassing the nests near her home on Arrowhead Mountain Lake, Zetterstrom (she likes to be called "the osprey lady") petitioned the Vermont Water Resources Board to close the wetlands near her nesting structures to all watercraft from April 1-August 15. She didn't succeed but, knowing Meeri, she will keep trying.

Ospreys have a way of touching one's heart.

"They are so beautiful, so powerful, so graceful," says Zetterstrom, "When I see them, I forget all the troubles in my life, and I just feel free. I'm out there, out there with them in the sky."

The future holds great promise for Vermont's ospreys, says Steve Parren, coordinator for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's Nongame and Natural Heritage Program. "They're going to do better," he says, "and they're going to expand."

Parren plans to develop an osprey recovery plan that will determine the best potential nesting sites in Vermont. Artificial nesting structures will be erected at those sites, and once ospreys successfully nest there additional structures will be erected nearby. Returning osprey young should eventually nest close to where they have fledged and gradually colonize Vermont's available osprey habitat.

Parren also plans to focus on protecting ospreys from predators and on promoting public education about them. Through education he hopes to minimize human disturbances at nesting locations and to encourage public participation in monitoring osprey nesting success.

"Of all the raptors," says internationally acclaimed ornithologist Roger Tory Peterson, "the osprey is the one that can live most happily with modern man, if given a chance." Vermont's ospreys are being given that chance, and because of it Vermonters' lives are being enriched.

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For information on nesting platforms and ospreys in Vermont, contact Steve Parren at (802) 241-3717.

Charles H. Willey is a wildlife biologist with the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife. He and his wife, Ruth, work together as a photographic team.

Vermont Attractions

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Out of Step in Moscow On the Fourth

By ALISON FREELAND
Photographed by PAUL O. BOISVERT

MAYBE THE AIR runs thin in Moscow, or it could be something in the water of the Little River, but for 20 years this tiny hamlet in the town of Stowe has sustained a Fourth of July parade that is undirected, unplanned, and determinedly unhinged. The brief stroll down what must be the shortest parade route in America seems to reflect town residents' bizarre sense of humor.

Although Moscow is officially part of Stowe, it acts more like a naughty younger sibling. A few miles south and traditionally the poorer side of town, Moscow takes a certain pride in not putting on airs like its famous resort neighbor. "We've been a thorn in Stowe's side," says self-styled Moscow spokesman Ed Rhodes. "They wouldn't have a parade, so we did."

The parade started innocently enough in 1976 when Moscow locals thought there ought to be some tribute to the country's bicentennial, and Stowe wasn't marching. On the morning of the Fourth, in what has now taken on the glow of legend, several families walked 150 yards down the main street wearing makeshift costumes and carrying banners. The newest family in town toddled at the end with a wheel barrow to shovel up horse manure, and there was some thought of Bloody Marys at the finish. When the group got past the general store, they turned around and walked back. There were no spectators because everyone was in the parade. It was so low-key that Anne Lusk's son slept through the event on the family float.

Two decades later, well over 1,000 people crowd onto the lawns of Moscow each July Fourth to watch the locals amble the 150 yards and back again. The attraction has something to do with word of mouth, something to do with irreverent humor, and a lot to do with irreverent Vermont, but none of the participants will comment officially because one thing is certain: No one runs this parade!

"I imagine there will be a parade this year," says Alex Nimick, who was present for the first one, "but you never know. It's awfully spontaneous."

"There are no meetings, no themes, and no organization," says Tom Hamilton, whose lawn serves as the starting point. "Before the Fourth I always get a few phone calls, but I certainly don't give out any answers." Hamilton does, however, recite the unofficial rules. Number one, of course: No one runs this parade. Number two: No one is allowed to work on his float until the morning of the Fourth. Number three: Floats can't cost much to put together.

Nevertheless, some traditions might as well be written in stone, such as the newest resident in Moscow still having to show up with a wheelbarrow. This is problematic because ever since the giant yellow fire and rescue trucks came from Stowe to join the fun, there hasn't been anyone willing to ride a horse. "It's kind of too bad about the flashing lights and sirens," says one Moscow resident. "I mean, they bring everything they own to this event. But it is their only shot in a year, and you know, Stowe doesn't have a parade."

Moscow residents are nothing if not resourceful. One new family really liked the wheelbarrow idea, so last year two of them stood on the back of a truck, dropping horse manure onto the street so there'd be something for the others to pick up. And years ago

The unusual Moscow Fourth of July Parade makes its usual progress through town before turning around and repeating the feat.

residents solved the problem of no marching band by calling the local radio station, which agreed to provide marching music for 20 minutes. Today the tradition is carried on by WDEV in Waterbury.

Starting about 9:30 a.m. on the Fourth, Moscow residents put radios out on their porches and wedge them in open windows. Some tune in in their cars. "We assume Moscow is marching this morning," says the announcer, "although we haven't heard from anyone up there." Precisely at 10, the music begins.

In general, Ed Rhodes, who has worn a progressively let-out colonial costume over the years, starts off the procession carrying a flag. He is followed by a smattering of riding lawn mowers and whim-of-the-moment floats. "They're very creative down here," says a spectator from Stowe, as if that might explain what follows.

"We don't go for the political," says Tom Hamilton, "where some candidate breezes through in a convertible." Indeed not. In fact, politicians might do well to lie very low in Moscow. There are plenty of political floats, but none of them flattering. Mixed in with in-line skates, wagons, and kids on wheels are assorted cow references, pokes at the governor, and affectionate digs at Moscow's high class reputation — one pickup truck hauls a motorboat representing the town Yacht Club. Private. Members Only. Some things you just can't understand unless you live in Vermont, like Anne Lusk in a cow costume sporting an enormous udder and carrying a sign that reads "I owe it all to BGH." Some things you can't understand unless you live in downtown Moscow.

For some, the highlight comes with the appearance of a small group of men wearing T-shirts with big black letters: MRA-MMB. These men are far from teenagers, yet each carries on his left shoulder a bulky boom box tuned to WDEV. Their expressions are dry enough to crack, and one man in front marches backward, facing the marchers and batting at the air with a conductor's wand. "There they are," says a voice in the crowd, "The Moscow Radio All-Men's Marching Band." In synch, the men lift their radios from left to right shoulder.

It turns out the men are but a prelude to an even snappier group — the Moscow Women's Lawn Chair Brigade. Stunning in their floral print shirts, shorts and sunglasses, the

HOW TO GO

Well, this is a tough one, since nobody knows for sure if there will even *be* a parade this year. But, if there is, it will be held in the village of Moscow, starting around 10 a.m. on July Fourth. Reach Moscow by turning west off Route 100 about eight miles north of Waterbury (two miles south of Stowe Village).

women march in formation, performing precision lawn chair maneuvers in time to the music. Clap! Clap! They open and shut their aluminum and plastic furniture to one side and then the other. They pause, open their chairs and sit down, still in formation. Swish. Swish. They cross and uncross their legs, and then Clap! Whoosh! they raise the folded lawn chairs above their heads in triumphant salute to all that is America and the Fourth of July.

"Is that it?" someone asks. Obviously he is a newcomer, because any veteran knows that what follows is the giant fire and rescue trucks, a chaotic about-face, and then the return trip. "It takes me six minutes to get from one end to the other," muses one participant after the parade is over. "But it takes twice that long to turn around."

Has the sight of an ever-larger crowd and license plates from Quebec to New Jersey intimidated the marchers? "I'd say there's a certain pressure each year," says Anne Lusk, "to rise to the level of your own brilliance. Sometimes it's the week of, and we're all asking each other, 'have you got an idea?' We worry that one year we'll dry up. Then something hits, and it's okay."

"I used to look down the empty street at 9:30 on the morning of the Fourth and stress out," says Tom Hamilton. "But the parade has a life of its own by now."

Now and then a rumor circulates that someone actually worked on his float the night before. And there's the annual concern with the parade's spontaneity. "I do worry," sighs one resident as he fights through the crowd to get to his house, "that one year all these people will come to watch, and no one will show up to march. You never know in Moscow."

One half hour after it begins, the Moscow parade is over. LeVeilles', the town market, has sold five hundred 25-cent hot dogs and given away four hundred balloons. Residents stand around and chat, and the spectators head for Route 100, not entirely sure what they have just witnessed. ∞

Alison Freeland profiled veterinarian Robert Treat in our Spring issue. She lives in Williamsville.

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CALENDAR OF

Summer Events

Compiled by JUDY POWELL *and* CAROLAN BATCHELDER

Note: *All dates are inclusive. Because the listings were compiled last spring, there may be changes in times or dates. Call organizers to confirm. For information about Vermont, contact the Vermont Department of Travel and Tourism, 134 State St., Montpelier, VT 05602, tel. (802) 828-3236, or visit local information booths. To submit events, contact the Travel Department. The area code for all Vermont phone numbers is 802.*

Special Events

JUNE

May 30-June 2: **Vt. Dairy Fest.** Enosburg Falls. Info: 933-2513.

May 31-June 2: **Lake Champlain Balloon & Craft Fest.** Champlain Valley Expo, Essex Jct. Info: 899-2993.

1: **Poultney Town-wide Yard Sale.** 9 a.m. Info: 287-2010.

2: **Now & Then Vehicles Club Car Show & Flea Market.** 10 a.m., Westminster Sch. Info: 257-3053. **Caledonia Classic Auto Club Car Show.** 8 a.m., Lyndonville fairgrounds. Info: 748-3678.

7-8: **Stowe Corvette Classic.** 9 a.m., Ye Olde England Inne. Info: 253-2106.

8: **Chester Alumni Day.** Info: 875-4357. **Crystal Lake Falls Open House.** 10 a.m., Pierce House, Barton. Info: 525-6251.

8-9: **Fly Fishing Fest.** American Museum of Fly Fishing, Manchester. Info: 362-3300. **Shores Memorial Museum Centennial Celeb.** Lyndon. Info: 626-8746. **Antique & Classic Car Show.** 9 a.m., Manchester. Info: 447-7754.

14-16: **Ethan Allen Days.** Arlington. Info: 375-9489. **Quechee Hot Air Balloon Fest. & Craft Fair.** Village Green. Info: 295-7900.

15: **Springfield Alumni Parade.** 10 a.m., Main St. Info: 885-8482.

15-16: **Quechee Yard Sale.** Comm. Church. Info: 295-7941.

16: **Romp on the Pomp.** Rivers celeb. 2 p.m., Thetford Ctr. Info: 785-2410. **Dorset Father's Day Celeb.** Noon, Church St. Info: 867-4013. **Huntington Summer Solstice Celeb.** 6 p.m., Nature Ctr. Sugarhouse. Info: 434-3068.

21-23: **Green Mountain Chew Chew Food Fest.** 11 a.m., Waterfront Park. Info: 864-6674. **Stowe Car Show.** 1950s & '60s cars & street rods. 9 a.m., Nichols Field. Info: 253-7321.

22: **Ben & Jerry's One World, One Heart Fest.** 11 a.m., Sugarbush, Warren. Info: (800) 253-3787. **Weathersfield Antique Show & Sale.** Meeting House. Info: 885-5517.

22-23: **Antique Gas & Steam Engine Show.** 9 a.m., Brownington. Info: 754-2022.

28-30: **Stowe Flower Fest.** 8:30 a.m. Info: 253-7321.

29: **E. Bethel Strawberry Fest. & Craft Fair.** 5, 6, 7, & 7:45 p.m., Grange Hall. Info: 763-7093. **Cavendish Sale-A-Bration.** 10 a.m., Baptist Church. Info: 226-7885. **New Brook Horse Show.** 8:30 a.m., West River Lodge, Brookline. Info: 365-7745. **Green Mtn. Nationals.** Car show. Willow Park, Bennington. Info: 447-3311. **Bennington Garden Tours.** 10 a.m. Info: 442-8139. **Waterbury Ctr. Lawn Fest.** 9 a.m., Comm. Church. Info: 244-8089. **North Air/Mt. Snow Air Show.** 9:30 a.m., Mt. Snow Airport, W. Dover. Info: 464-2196. **Dorset Historic Home & Garden Tours.** Info: 867-4455.

29-30: **200th Anniversary of Waitsfield Cong. Church & Society.** Info: 496-3477.

30: **Guilford Garden Tours.** 4 p.m. Info: 257-1961.

JULY

4: **Statewide Independence Day Celebrations.** See local listings. **Sherburne Book Sale.** Mem. Library. Info: 422-9765.

5-6: **Woodstock Summer Fest. & Craft Fair.** 11 a.m., Union H.S. Info: 457-3981.

6: **Sheldon Old Home Day.** Parade 11 a.m., chicken BBQ noon, more. Info: 933-4083. **St. Albans Bay Day.** Great race, more. 9 a.m. Info: 524-2444.

6-7: **Morgan Heritage Days.** 8 a.m., Tunbridge fairgrounds. Info: 728-9890.

Jon Gilbert Fox

Summertime and a summer event in Royalton.

7: **Brandon Tour of Underground Railroad Stations.** 1 p.m., starting at info. booth. Info: 247-6401. **Shelburne Farms Ice Cream Social & Country Dance.** Info: 899-2378.

11: **St. James Church Fair.** 10 a.m., church green, Woodstock. Info: 457-1727. **E. Corinth Flea Market.** 9 a.m., Old Fairgrounds. Info: 439-6721.

12-14: **Stoweflake Hot Air Balloon Fest.** Info: 253-7321. **Southern Vt. Highland Games.** Mt. Snow Resort, W. Dover. Info: 464-6453.

13: **Chelsea Flea Market.** 9 a.m., twin commons. Info: 685-3161. **Windsor Hidden Garden Tour.** 11 a.m. Reservations only. Info: 674-6752. **Hyde Park House & Garden Tour.** 1 p.m. Info: 888-4628. **All Breed Dog Show & Obedience Trial.** 9 a.m., Champlain Valley Fairgrounds, Essex Jct. Info: 879-5135. **Treasured Heirlooms & A Taste of the Mountains.** Antique & art auction; food samples. 5 p.m., Killington Ski Area. Info: 773-0108.

13-14: **Micro-Brew & Chili Cook-Off Fest.** Killington Resort. Info: 422-6200.

17: **Montpelier Ice Cream Social, Croquet.** 6:30 p.m., State House lawn. Info: 229-5200. **Middlebury Chicken BBQ & Auction.** 6 p.m., town green. Info: 388-1455.

19-20: **New England Agricultural Expo.** 9 a.m., Champlain Valley Fairgrounds, Essex Jct. Info: (800) 653-2700. **No. Hero Antique Show & Sale.** 10 a.m., Comm. Hall. Info: 372-5357.

20: **Bethel Flea Market.** 10 a.m. Rain date: July 21. Info: 234-5046. **Irasburg Church Fair.** 10 a.m. Info: 754-6583. **Grafton Church Fair.** 10 a.m. Info: 843-2230. **Harvey's Lake Assoc. Boat Parade, BBQ & Fireworks.** W. Barnet. Info: 633-2213.

20-21: **Victorian Ghosts & Gossamer Weekend.** Chester. Info: (800) 732-4288. **Stars & Stripes Fest.** 10 a.m., Lyndonville. Info: 626-9800.

21: **Kirkin-o-the-Tartan.** 10 a.m., Harvey's Meeting House, Barnet. Info: 985-3464. **Doll & Teddy Bear Show.** 9:30 a.m., Sheraton Burlington. Info: (704) 274-7732. **Shelburne Farms Ice Cream Social & Country Dance.** Info: 899-2378.

23: **Brandon Auction.** 4 p.m., Central Park. Info: 247-6401.

25: **E. Barnard Comm. Fair & Smorgasbord.** Comm. Hall. Info: 763-7036.

25-28: **Brattleboro Village Days Fest.** Info: 254-4565. **Swanton Summer Fest.** Noon, village green. Info: 868-7200.

27: **Newbury Cracker Barrel Bazaar.** 10 a.m., on the common. Info: 866-5518. **Middlebury Cuisine & Arts Fest.** 11 a.m., Frog Hollow area. Info: 388-7951. **Sherburne Old Home Day.** 10 a.m., Rec. Ctr. Info: 422-3932.

27-28: **Stowe Fest. of Antiques.** 9 a.m., Whiskers Field. Info: 253-9875. **Vt. Forestry Expo.** 9 a.m., Rutland fairgrounds. Info: 533-9212.
28: **Marshfield Old Home Sunday.** United Church. Info: 426-3272. **Newark Old Home Day Chicken BBQ.** 11 a.m., Comm. Park. Info: 467-3122.
30-Aug. 4: **Dowsing Convention & Workshops.** Lyndon State College. Info: 684-3417.
31-Aug. 7: **Marshfield Rummage Sale.** 10 a.m., United Church. Info: 426-3272.

AUGUST

1-3: **Vt. Maplerama.** Seminars, visits to sugarhouses. VTC, Randolph. Info: 728-6443.
1-4: **Rockingham Old Home Days.** Bellows Falls. Info: 463-4280.
2-4: **Vt. Antique Dealer's Assoc. Antique Show.** Stratton Mtn. Info: 365-7574. **Great American Teddy Bear Celeb.** Vt. Teddy Bear Factory, Shelburne. Info: 985-3001, ext. 4357.
3: **Wells Variety Day.** 9 a.m, dinner at 5 p.m., Woodman Hall. Info: 325-3038. **Waterville Old Home Day.** 10 a.m., village green. Info: 644-5851. **Castleton Colonial Day.** Tours, more. 11 a.m. Info: 468-5756. **Grace Cottage Hospital Fair Day.** 9 a.m., on the common, Townshend. Info: 365-7773. **Springfield Car Show.** 9 a.m., Barlow Field. Info: 886-8296.
4: **Vt. Antiquarian Booksellers Book Fair.** 9:30 a.m., Pomfret Sch. Info: 457-3702. **Rockingham Pilgrimage.** 3 p.m., Meeting House. Info: 463-3941. **Newport Car Show.** 10 a.m. Info: 334-6079.
6: **Island House Tour.** 11 a.m., No. Hero. Info: 796-3048.
6-7: **Irish Music Fest. & Fair.** 9 a.m., Mt. Snow, W. Dover. Info: 464-6453.
8: **Stowe Country Auction & Flea Market.** 10 a.m., Jackson Ice Arena. Info: 253-7321.
9-11: **Stowe Antique & Classic Car Meet.** 8 a.m., Nichols Field. Info: 426-3265.
10: **Brandon Townwide Bazaar.** Info: 247-6401. **Dummerston Ctr. Church Fair.** 10 a.m. Info: 254-2249. **Dorset Church Fair.** Noon, Church St. Info: 867-2260. **Burlington Latino Fest.** Music, food, more. Noon, Waterfront Park. Info: 864-0123. **W. Newbury Summer Fest.** 9 a.m., Church Hall. Info: 429-2205. **Hardwick French Heritage Celeb.** 10 a.m., Shepard's Field. Info: 434-3190. **Plymouth Old Home Day.** 10 a.m. Info: 672-3773.
10-11: **Fine Food & Wine Fest.** Killington Resort. Info: 422-6200.
14: **UVM Morgan Horse Farm Open House.** 10:30 a.m., Weybridge. Info: 388-2011.
15: **Ladies Aid Bazaar.** 10 a.m., Tyson Cong. Church, Plymouth. Info: 228-7157.
16-18: **Bennington Battle Day Weekend.** Sun. noon parade, more. Info: 442-6233.
17: **Thetford Library Antique Show and Sale.** 10 a.m., Elem. Sch. Info: 785-4361. **Morrisville Woodcarver's Exhibit.** 9 a.m., People's Academy. Info: 644-5039. **E. Poultney Day.** 9 a.m., on the green. Info: 287-4042.
18: **Old Stone House Day.** 10 a.m., Browningtон. Info: 754-2022.
24: **Quechee Scottish Fest.** 10 a.m., polo field. Info: 496-2213.
24-25: **Lippitt Morgan Country Horse Show.** 8 a.m., Tunbridge. Info: 244-6680. **Rutland Air Show.** 10 a.m., airport. Info: 773-2747. **Flower Days Fest.** 10 a.m., Basin Harbor, Vergennes. Info: 475-2311.
29: **Llamas on Parade.** Champlain Valley Fairgrounds, Essex Jct. Info: 644-2257.
31: **Chester Rotary Extravaganza & Penny Sale.** 10 a.m., Green Mtn. H.S. Info: 875-3267. **Dorset Fire Dept. Ladies Auxillary Craft Fair.** 9:30 a.m. Info: 362-1164.
31-Sept. 1: **Deerfield Valley Farmers Market.** Sat. Garlic fest. Wilmington. Info: 368-7147.
31-Sept. 2: **Northfield Labor Day Weekend Celeb.** Info: 485-8892.

Suppers, Etc.

JUNE

8: **Dummerston Chicken Pie Supper.** 5 p.m., Grange Hall. Info: 254-8182. **Fair Haven Chicken Pie Supper.** 5 p.m., Cong. Church. Info: 265-8605. **Guilford Strawberry Supper.** Fire Hall. Info: 254-9557.
19: **Richmond Supper.** 5:30 p.m., Cong. Church. Info: 434-2053.
22: **Waterbury Ctr. Dip Supper.** 5 p.m., Grange Hall. Info: 244-7431.
25; July 9, 23; Aug. 6, 20: **Walden Hot Dish Suppers.** 5:30 p.m., Meth. Church. Info: 563-2472.
29: **So. Londonderry Strawberry Shortcake Supper.** 5:30 p.m., First Bapt. Church. Info: 824-3165. **Quechee Strawberry Fest.** Comm. Church. Info: 295-3619. **Pomfret Strawberry Supper.** 5, 6, 7, 8 p.m., Town Hall. Info: 457-1014. **Dummerston Ctr. Cong. Church Strawberry Supper.** 5 p.m., Grange Hall. Info: 254-2249.
30: **Bridport Pancake Breakfast.** 8 a.m., on the green. Info: 758-2372.

JULY

6: **Newfane Strawberry Supper.** 4:30 p.m., First Cong. Church. Info: 365-7232.
6, 13, 20, 27: **Brownsville Baked Bean & Salad Suppers.** 5-7 p.m., Grange Hall. Info: 484-9741.
11: **Greensboro Bend Chicken Pie Supper.** 5, 6, 7 p.m., Parish Hall. Info: 533-2615.
13: **Fair Haven Ice Cream Sundae Supper.** 5 p.m., Cong. Church. Info: 265-8605. **E. Poultney Smorgasbord.** 5 p.m., United Bapt. Church. Info: 287-5811. **St. Johns in the Mountains Pasta Supper.** 5:30 p.m., Stowe Comm. Church. Info: 253-7578.
17: **Richmond Supper.** 5:30 p.m., Cong. Church. Info: 434-2053.
18: **So. Hero Chicken Pie Supper.** 5 p.m., Cong. Church. Info: 372-5241.
20: **Dummerston Seafood Newburg,**

SUMMER EVENTS

Swedish Meatball, & Salad Buffet. 5 p.m., Evening Star Grange. Info: 254-8182.
26: **Newbury Chicken Pie Supper.** 4:30 p.m., Cong. Church. Info: 866-5969.
27: **Newbury Buffet Supper.** 4:30 p.m., Cong. Church. Info: 866-5969. **So. Hero Roast Beef Dinner.** 5 p.m., St. Rose of Lima Church Hall. Info: 372-5265.

AUGUST

3: **E. Dorset Church Supper.** 5:30 p.m., Cong. Church. Info: 362-2456. **St. Luke's Church Supper.** Chester. Info: 875-2262.
8: **Greensboro Bend Chicken Pie Supper.** 5, 6, 7 p.m., Parish Hall. Info: 472-5711.
10: **Newfane Blueberry Supper.** 4:30 p.m., Cong. Church. Info: 365-7232.
15: **So. Hero Turkey Supper.** 5 p.m., Cong. Church. Info: 372-5241. **So. Royalton Smorgasbord.** 5:30 p.m., on the green. Info: 763-7730.
17: **Cavendish Sugar-on-Snow Supper.** 5:30 p.m., Baptist Church. Info: 226-7885. **So. Londonderry Turkey & Bean Supper.** 5:30 p.m., First Baptist Church. Info: 824-3165. **E. Poultney Roast Beef Dinner.** 5 p.m., United Bapt. Church. Info: 287-9052. **Dummerston Peach Shortcake Supper.** 4:30 p.m., Grange Hall. Info: 254-8182.
18: **Bridport Pig Roast.** Noon. Info: 758-2654.
21: **Richmond Supper.** 5:30 p.m., Cong. Church. Info: 434-2053.
24: **Guilford Peach Shortcake Supper.** Fire Hall. Info: 254-9557. **Wells Chicken BBQ.** 5 p.m., Woodman Hall. Info: 645-0881.
31: **So. Londonderry Chicken & Biscuit Supper.** 5:30 p.m., First Bapt. Church. Info: 824-3165.

Arts & Music

(See also Through the Season)

JUNE

4-9: **Burlington's Discover Jazz Festival.** Info: (800) 639-1916.
7: **Hospice Arts Auction.** 6:30 p.m., Basin Harbor, Vergennes. Info: 388-4111.
22: **The Champion Echoes.** Women barbershop singers, chorus & quartettes. 8 p.m., Colchester H.S. Info: 425-2634.
24-Aug. 23: **Fletcher Farm Sch.** Workshops & classes. Info: 228-7316.
28: **VSO Pops Concert.** 7:30 p.m., Middlebury College. Info: 388-2117.
29-July 27: **25 Years of Frog Hollow.** Equinox Shops, Manchester. Info: 362-3321.
30; July 7, 14: **Music in the Meadow 20th Anniversary.** 7 p.m., Trapp Family Lodge, Stowe. Info: 253-7792.

JULY

5: **Stowe Theatre Guild Opening Gala.** 8 p.m. Info: 253-7321.
6: **Vt. Craftsmen Crafts Fair.** 10 a.m., Fletcher Farm Sch., Ludlow. Info: 228-8770. **Burklyn Arts Council Craft Fair.** 10 a.m., Bandstand Park, Lyndonville. Info: 626-8711.
6-7: **Bridgewater Crafts Fair.** 10 a.m., Old Mill Marketplace. Info: 295-1550.
7-13: **Middlebury Arts Fest.** On the green. Info: 388-0216.
10: **Readings in the Gallery.** Novelist Paul Auster & Poet Ron Padgett. 7:30 p.m., St. Johnsbury Athenaeum. Info: 748-8291.
12-13: **Montpelier Midsummer Fest.** State House. Info: (800) 639-1383; 229-2787.
12-14: **Warebrook Contemporary Music Fest.** Irasburg. Info: 754-6631. **Brandon Bluegrass Fest.** Basin Rd. Info: 247-3275.
12, 19, 26; Aug. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: **Church Street Marketplace Concerts.** Noon, Burlington. Info: 863-1648.
13: **Art in the Park.** 10 a.m., Waterbury. Rain date: July 20. Info: 244-6648.
13-Aug. 10: **Young Artists Concerts.** Saturdays, 7:30 p.m., Smith Ctr. for the Arts, Manchester.
19-21: **Vt. Quilt Fest.** Norwich Univ., Northfield. Info: 485-7092. **Vt. Hand Crafters Show.** 10 a.m., Jackson Arena, Stowe. Info: 223-2636.
20: **Russian School Slavic Fest.** Folk music & dance. 8 p.m., Dole Aud., Norwich Univ., Northfield. Info: 485-2165. **Reggae Fest.** 9 a.m.-9 p.m., Hardwick. Info: 862-3092. **Auction Extravaganza.** 5 p.m., Fletcher Farm Sch., Ludlow. Info: 228-7316.
24: **Readings in the Gallery.** Nature writers Bernd Heinrich and Sy Montgomery. 7:30 p.m., St. Johnsbury Athenaeum. Info: 748-8291.
26: **Newbury Fiddlers Contest.** 8 p.m., on the common. Info: 866-5518.
26-28: **Killington Craft Show.** 10 a.m., Pico Ski Resort. Info: 422-3783.
27: **Hardwick Old-Time Fiddlers Contest.** 10 a.m.; gates open 9 a.m. Info: 472-6425. **Burklyn Ballet Theatre Gala.** 8 p.m., Dibden Ctr. for the Arts, Johnson. Info: 862-6466. **Rock River Artists Studio Tour.** 9 a.m., So. Newfane, Newfane & Williamsville. Concert following in So. Newfane. Info: 365-7542.
27-Aug. 11: **Art on the Mountain.** 10 a.m., Haystack Base Lodge, Wilmington. Info: 464-2110.
28-Aug. 3: **Harmony Ridge Brass Ctr. Fest.** 8 p.m., Arley Hall, Green Mtn. College, Poultney. Info: 287-9171.

AUGUST

2: **Danville Street Dance.** 7 p.m., on the green. Info: 684-2576.
2-4: **Islands Craft Fair.** 11 a.m., Shore Acres Resort, No. Hero. Info: 372-5136. **Champlain Valley Summer Folk Fest.** UVM, Burlington. Info: (800) 769-9176.
3: **Orleans County Arts & Crafts Fair.** 10 a.m., Barton. Info: 334-7325.
3-4: **Mid-Summer Crafts Fair.** 10 a.m., Quechee Gorge Village. Info: 295-1550.
10: **Westminster Craft Fair.** 9 a.m., Main St. Info: 722-4255.
10-11: **Arlington Craft Fair.** 10 a.m., rec. field. Info: 375-2800. **Rutland Art in the**

Park Fest. 10 a.m. Info: 775-0356.
14: **Readings in the Gallery.** Poets Kate Barnes & Maxine Kumin. 7:30 p.m., St. Johnsbury Athenaeum. Info: 748-8291.
21: **Readings in the Gallery.** Novelist Ernest Hebert & short story writer Rebecca Rule. 7:30 p.m., St. Johnsbury Athenaeum. Info: 748-8291.
24: **Vt. Craftsmen Fair.** 10 a.m., Fletcher Farm Sch. Info: 228-8770.
24-25: **Vt. Craft Fair.** Killington Resort. Info: 422-6200.
31-Sept. 1: **New England Crafts Fest.** 10 a.m., Quechee. Info: 295-1550.

Outdoors & Sports

(See also Through the Season)

JUNE

1: **Killington Fun Slalom.** Info: 422-6253. **Quechee Golf Tournament.** Quechee Club. Info: 295-7900. **Burlington Kids Fishing Derby.** 8:30 a.m., Boathouse. Info: 864-0123.
8: **Free Fishing Day.** Statewide. Info: 241-3700. **Mountain Challenge Golf Tournament.** 1 p.m., Haystack Country Club, Wilmington. Info: 464-3768.
9: **Canoe & Kayak Demo Day.** Noon, Burlington Boathouse. Info: (800) 985-2992.
15-17: **Lake Champlain International Fishing Derby.** Burlington. Info: 862-7777.
16: **Canoe & Kayak Fest.** 11 a.m., Commodore's Inn, Stowe. Info: 253-2317.
22-23: **Green Mtn. Challenge Soccer Tourn.** Island fields, Weston. Info: 824-3865.

JULY

2: **John Langhans Road Race.** 7.2 miles. Woodstock. Info: 457-1502.
7: **Mountain Bike Classic.** Three Stallion Inn, Randolph. Info: 728-5747.
20-21: **So. Woodstock 100-Mile Endurance Run & Ride.** 4 a.m., Smoke Rise Farm. Info: 484-3525. **Sugarbush Cricket Fest.** 9 a.m., Brooks Field, Warren. Info: 583-3211.
21: **Goshen Gallup.** 10-K x-c run. 4 p.m., Blueberry Hill. Info: 247-6735. **Stowe Eight-Miler.** Whiskers Field. Info: 253-9009.
22: **King Street Youth Charity LPGA Golf Tournament.** Noon, Country Club, Burlington. Info: 862-6736.

AUGUST

2-4: **Futures Classic Golf Tournament.** Killington. Info: 422-3241.
3: **Discover Sailing Day.** Free sailboat rides. Noon, Malletts Bay, Colchester, Info: 864-9065. **No. Hero Croquet Tournament.** 10 a.m., Shore Acres Resort. Info: 372-5136.
4: **Green Mtn. Road Race.** 10 a.m., Killington. Info: 422-3535.
10: **Craftsbury 5-K Walk & Run Races.** 9 a.m., Sports Ctr. Info: (800) 729-7751.
17: **Big Air Open.** Half-pipe in-line skate contest. Stowe Mtn. Resort. Info: 253-3000.
24: **Apple Country Century.** 25-, 50- or 100-mi. bike ride. Brandon. Info: 247-3078.
29-Sept. 2: **Killington Stage Race.** Bike race. Info: (800) 621-6867.
31: **Jeffersonville-Cambridge 5-K Run & Walk.** Info: 644-8282. **Dual Slalom Series Championship.** Mt. Snow Resort, W. Dover. Info: (800) 245-7669.
31-Sept. 1: **Wicked Wild Mountain Bike Fest.** Mt. Snow Resort, W. Dover. Info: (800) 245-7669.

Through the Season

American Precision Museum, Windsor. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Fri.; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sat., Sun. and holidays. Info: 674-5781.
- Thru Nov. 1: *Maxfield Parrish: Machinist, Artisan, Artist,* exhibit. Also, *The Cutting Edge: Machines Shape Our World,* exhibit.

Art Cache Gallery, E. Burke. Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Info: 626-5711.
- June 11-28: Spotlight on Sports.

Bennington Center for the Arts. Tues.-Sun. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Info: 442-7158.
- Aug. 5-Oct. 29: Artists' Reception.

Billings Farm & Museum, Woodstock. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Info: 457-2355.
- June 1: Heirloom Seed Day.
- June 22: Cow Appreciation Day.
- Aug. 1-25: Quilt Exhibition.

Chandler Music Hall & Cultural Ctr., Randolph. Aug. 14-24, Chamber Music Fest., 8 p.m. Info: 728-9133.
Craftsbury Chamber Players Concerts. 8 p.m. Info: 800-639-3443.
- July 7: Craftsbury Common, 7 p.m.

Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium, St. Johnsbury. Museum, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun. 1-5 p.m. Planetarium, Sat.-Sun. 1:30 p.m. Info: 748-2372.
Forests and Parks Summer Series. Afternoon & evening performances at state parks. Info: 241-3655.
Green Mtn. Cultural Ctr., Joslyn Round Barn, Waitsfield. Info: 496-7722.
- June 24-28: Watercolor Workshop.
- July 15-17: Landscape Drawing.
- Aug. 11: Pianists from the Adamant School.
- Aug. 12-15: Watercolors Workshop.

Helen Day Art Center, Stowe. Daily 12-5 p.m., except Sun. and Mon. Info: 253-8358.
- June 15-Aug. 25: Nieves Billmyer.

Hildene, Manchester. Daily 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Info: 362-1788.
- June 9: Garden Party, 5:30 p.m.
- July 13: Antiques Fest., 10 a.m.
- Aug. 1-4: Southern Vt. Craft Fair, 10 a.m.
- Aug. 12: Thum Memorial Concert, 7 p.m.

Killington Music Festival. Sunday Concert Series. Info: 773-4003.
- June 30; July 6, 14, 21, 28; Aug. 4, 11: Sherburne Elem. Sch., 7:30 p.m.

Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, Vergennes, Daily 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Info: 475-2022.
- July 6-7: Small Boat Show.
- Aug. 24-25: Lake Champ. Through the Lens.

Lamoille County Players, Hyde Park Opera House. 8 p.m.; Sundays 2 p.m. Info: 888-4507.
- June 27-30; July 4-7: *A Little Night Music.*
- July 29-Aug. 3: Children's Theater Workshop.
- Aug. 15-18, 22-25: *Grease,* 7 p.m., except Sundays.

Middlebury College Center for the Arts. Tues.-Fri. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sat. & Sun. noon-5 p.m. Info: 388-3711.
- July 5-Aug. 18: Voyages & Visions: 19th Century European Views.

Montgomery Historical Society, Pratt Hall. 8 p.m. Info: 326-4404.
- July 6: Craftsbury Chamber Players.
- July 20: Quintessential Brass Concert.
- Aug. 3: Jazz Concert.
- Aug. 17: Toledo Piano Tri Concert.
- Aug. 31: Annual Heyday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Montshire Museum of Science, Norwich. Info: 649-2200.
- June 23-Aug. 4: The Hundred Languages of Children, exhibit.

No. Danville Lamplight Service & Hymn Sing. Old North Church. Info: 748-9131.
- June 30, Aug. 25: 7:30 p.m.
- July 28: 164th Anniversary and Old Home Day, 6:30 p.m.

Rokeby Museum, Ferrisburgh. Info: 877-3406.
- July 21: Wool Fest, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Aug. 18: Pie & Ice Cream Social, 1-4 p.m.

Shelburne Museum. Info: 985-3346.
- June 1-2: Vintage Auto Exhibition.
- June 28-29: Oliver & Gannon Antiques.
- July 23-28: Big Apple Circus.
- Aug. 16-18: Craft Fair, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Southern Vt. Art Center, Manchester. Info: 362-1405.
- July 6-31: Members' Exhibition.
- July 11-Aug. 22: Manchester Music Fest., Thursdays, 8 p.m.

John Thade's Broadway All-Time Favorites. Concerts. 7:30 p.m. Info: (800) 559-7070.
- June 22: Smith Ctr. for the Arts, Manchester.
- July 13: Unitarian Church, Montpelier.
- July 20: St. Peter's Catholic Church, Rutland.
- Aug. 3: Middlebury Cong. Church.
- Aug. 17: Charlotte Cong. Church.
- Aug. 31: Unitarian Universalist Church, Woodstock.

T.W. Wood Art Gallery, Vt. College, Montpelier. Noon-4 p.m., Tues.-Sun. Info: 828-8743.
- June 1-30: Faculty reunion show.
- July 5-31: Paintings by Wosene Kosrof, Ellen Langtree & Hal Mayforth, Main Gallery. Photographs by Robert Streicher.
- Aug. 23-Nov. 1: Presswork: The Art of Women Printmakers. Lang Collection.

Vt. Historical Society Museum, 109 State St., Montpelier. Tues.-Fri. 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sun. noon-4 p.m. Info: 828-2291.
- July 9-June 15, 1997: Tourists Accommodated: Visiting Vermont, 1895-1995.

Vt. Institute of Natural Science, Church Hill Rd., Woodstock. Info: 457-2779.
- June 8: Backroad Biking Trip, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., and Bird Conference at Mt. Mansfield Resort, Stowe.
- June 15: White River Paddle, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- June 24-28: Summer Discovery Day Camp.

Vt. Mozart Festival Concerts, Burlington. Call for times. Info: 862-7352.
- July 14, 20, 27; Aug. 3: Shelburne Farms.
- July 16; 23: UVM Recital Hall, Burlington.
- July 17: Robert Frost Cabin, Ripton.
- July 19: Basin Harbor, Vergennes.
- July 21, 28; Aug. 4: Trapp's, Stowe.
- July 24: Lake Champlain Ferry.
- July 26: Joslyn Round Barn, Waitsfield.
- July 30: Sheraton Burlington.
- July 31: St. Paul's Cathedral, Burlington.
- Aug. 2: Shelburne Farms.

Vt. Special Olympics. All ages and abilities. Info: 863-5222 or (800) 639-1603 (Vt., except Burlington).
- June 1-2: The Shoot Out, UVM.
- June 5-7: Law Enforcement Torch Run.
- June 7-9: Summer Games.

Vt. Symphony Orchestra Concerts. Info: 864-5741.
- June 27-July 7: Summer Fest.

Yellow Barn Music School & Fest., Putney. Info: 387-6637.
- July 6: Garden Tour. Rain date: July 7.
- July 9, 13, 19, 20, 23, 27, 30; Aug. 1-3, 6, 8-10: Ensemble Concerts.
- July 12: Amherst Saxophone Quartet.
- July 13: Children's Concert.
- July 16: John Harbison, composer.
- July 26: Scholarship Benefit Concert.
- July 29: Intro. to Chamber Music with Christopher Wellington.
- Aug. 4, 8: Free Concert.
- Aug. 5: Master Class with Christopher Wellington.

Fairs & Field Days

Bondville Fair, Winhall. Aug. 23-25. Info: 297-1882.

Caledonia County Fair, Lyndonville. Aug. 6-11. Info: 626-5538.

Champlain Valley Fair, Essex Jct. Aug. 24-Sept. 2. Info: 878-5545.

Connecticut Valley Fair, Bradford. July 18-21. Info: 429-2184.

Danville Fair. Aug. 3. Info: 684-2576.

Franklin County Field Days, Highgate. Aug. 9-11. Info: 849-2901.

Lamoille County Field Days, Johnson. July 18-21. Info: 635-7113.

Norwich Fair. July 5-7. Info: 649-1149.

Orleans County Fair, Barton. Aug. 14-18. Info: 525-3555.

Pownal Valley Fair. At Green Mtn. Park. July 19-21. Info: 823-7943.

Thetford Hill Fair. On the common. July 27, 1:30-4:30 p.m. Chicken BBQ 4:30-6 p.m. Rain date: July 28. Info: 785-4178.

Vt. Agricultural Museum Field Days. Randolph. July 6-7. Info: 728-5274.

Vermont State Fair, Rutland. Aug. 30-Sept. 8. Info: 775-5200.

Washington County Field Days. Rte. 2, E. Montpelier. Aug. 3-4. Info: 229-4851.

Windsor County Agricultural Fair. Barlow's Field, Springfield. July 27-28. Info: 885-2779.

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Fourth of July fireworks over the State House in Montpelier./Sandy Macys

Celebrate with Us!

THIS FALL marks *Vermont Life*'s 50th birthday, and we're inviting all our readers to the party!

We'll start the celebration this summer with a large and very special exhibit of 50 years of *Vermont Life* photos — photos that chronicle not only the magazine's history but that also capture the revolutionary changes that have swept the state since the 1940s. Next comes the Autumn 1996 issue, full of the best Autumn photos from 50 years of publishing. Then, the Winter, Spring and Summer issues of 1996-97 will each bring you special photos and stories that highlight the best of 50 years of *Vermont Life* and carry on the *Vermont Life* tradition of pictorial excellence.

This will be a truly special year in the history of Vermont's favorite magazine, so don't miss it! And don't let anyone who loves Vermont miss it, either!

The summer photo exhibit will open June 21-23 at the Green Mountain Chew-Chew on Burlington's waterfront. On June 27, it will move to the Vermont State House in Montpelier, where it can be viewed until September 15. And from September 21-October 20, it will be on display at the Southern Vermont Art Center in Manchester. Later venues will be announced in our 50th Anniversary Autumn issue.

The 11th Annual Vermont Food Fest:
Green Mountain Chew Chew

Vermont's First Festival of Flavor • The 11th Annual "Back to the Waterfront" Edition

Celebrate!
Vermont Life 50th Birthday Party

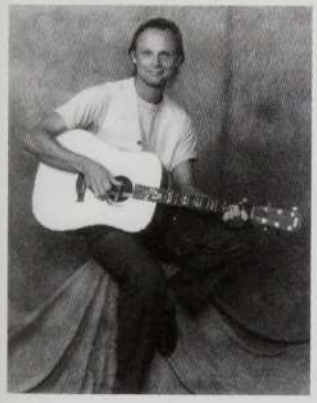
All Weekend! Special 50-Year *Vermont Life* Retrospective! See the debut of the interactive show that will grace the Vermont State House in Montpelier and tour Vermont during 1996 & 1997!

Saturday Night!
Vermont Life Fireworks Show!

Catch the free fireworks show lighting up the Vermont sky in tribute to 50 years of colorful service to Vermont and Vermonters everywhere!

Sunday Afternoon!
Vermont Life Birthday Party!

Meet the *Vermont Life* staff (past & present) and join the party as the entire state of Vermont honors Vermont's premier magazine!



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The 11th Annual Vermont Food Fest: The Green Mountain Chew Chew is a three-day, family-oriented festival of flavor showcasing over 60 area restaurants, Vermont food producers and Vermont lifestyle exhibits. Each restaurant or food producer booth will offer samples of two different food items from their menu specialties; no duplications allowed. Food and beverage purchases are by brass tokens only. Tokens are sold in quantities of nine for $5 and no food items will be priced at more than four tokens. Festival admission is free.

1996 Entertainment

Friday, June 21:
Price Chopper Supermarkets Day

From Putney, Vermont, The Stockwell Brothers; Hay Holler recording artists from New York, The Gibson Brothers; Sanache recording artist from Northampton, Cliff Eberhardt; Airflyte recording artists Rick & The Ramblers

Saturday, June 22:
WCAX-TV Day

Rounder recording artists from Nashville, Barry & Holly Tashian; Hit songwriter/Vermont Native from Nashville, Leroy Preston; Internationally-acclaimed recording artist Jonathan Edwards; From Boston, The West End Blues Band;Fireworks at dusk!

Sunday, June 23:
John McKenzie Packing Company Family Day

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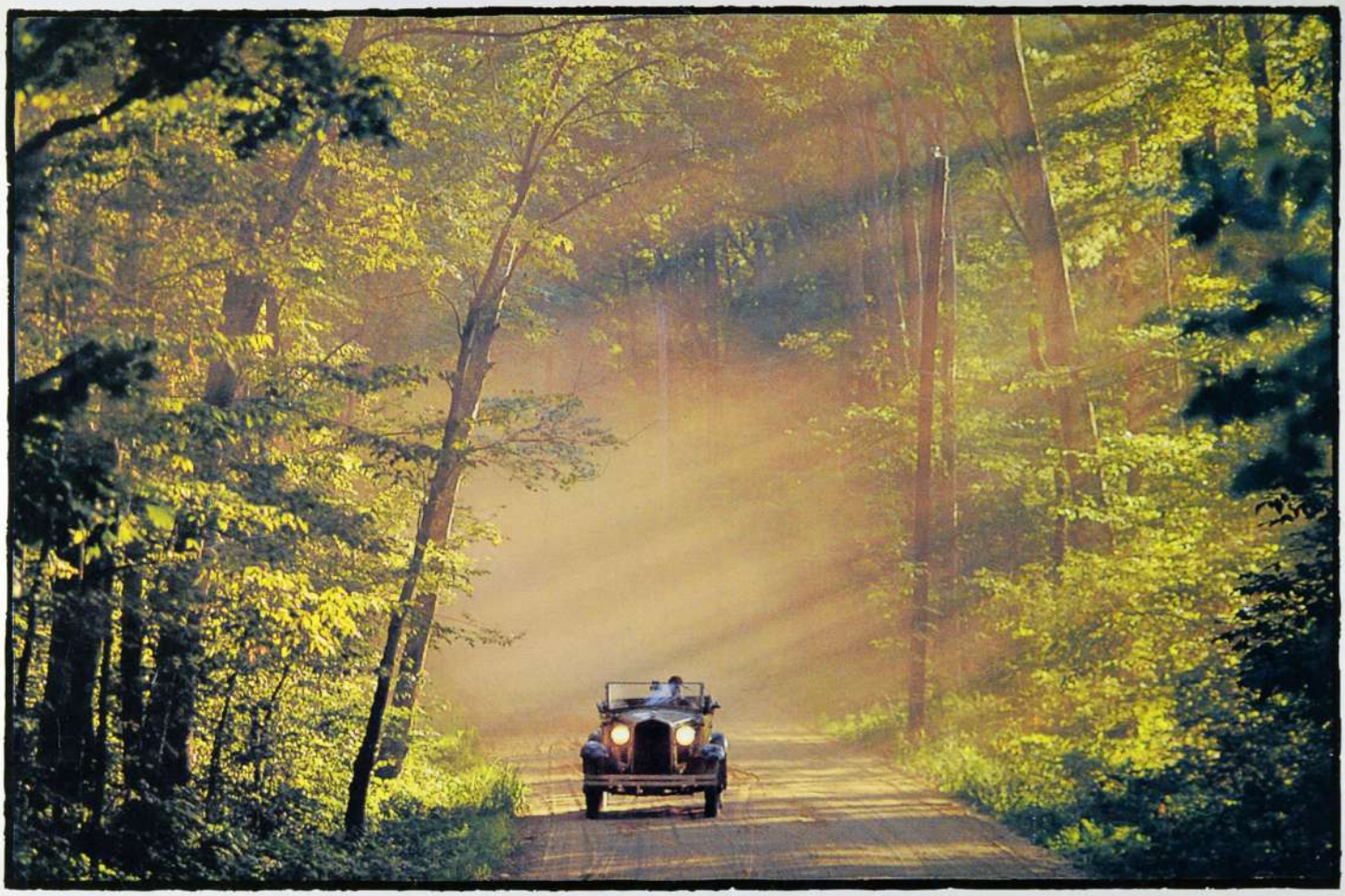

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