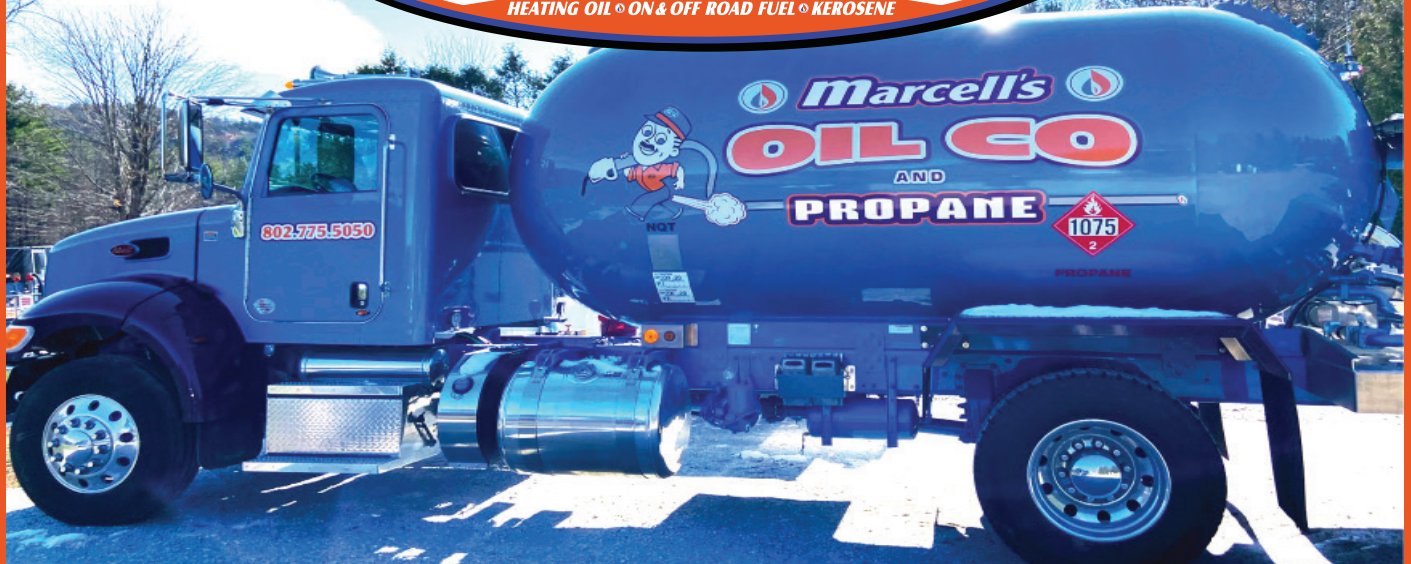


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## EDITOR'S NOTE



In many ways, spring is my favorite season. I look forward to watching the transformation from a monochromatic winter, to the browns of stick (and mud) season, to the emergence of crocuses, daffodils, and the greening of the landscape.

As much as Vermont's autumn can be a spectacular patchwork of colors, spring in Vermont is made up of shades of green. It is equally breathtaking.

The warmer weather also signals "getting out more" for those of us who do not take part in that love for winter sports. That "emergence" is important to our psyche. The transition is seismic in its importance, because in a matter of weeks, we are making that list of garden, lawn and DIY projects. We are making a separate list of "places to see," and yet another list of "things to do with the kids."

This edition of Explore can help you with some of that planning. While COVID-19 continues to make it tough

for venues to firmly schedule openings and events, there is still plenty to see and explore. And do.

This season's Explore takes you to fun places around the state where you enjoy the natural landscape, history, geology, natural science, and so much more. There are "inside" places to visit, and plenty of "outdoor" activities in all corners of the state. We encourage you to use Explore as a guide to this marvelous state. With an eye toward summer, Explore sets the stage for adventures of all levels.

We hope – as you deep breathe the fresh (and sometimes manure-rich) air of springtime, and take in that springtime foliage display that is the rebirth of our gorgeous ecosystem here, you can find places and people across Vermont that make your experience here richer.

Happy spring, friends. Enjoy and Explore.

**Steven Pappas**  
Editor

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### On the Cover

Photo by Jon Olender.  
Daffodils add a splash of color to a gray rainy day on in front of the First Congregational Church of Orwell.

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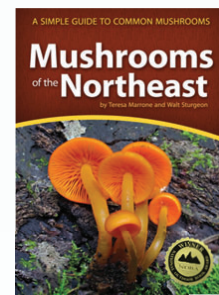
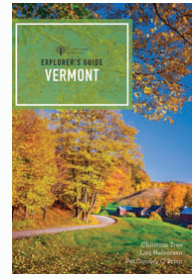
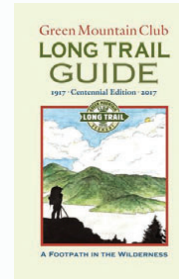
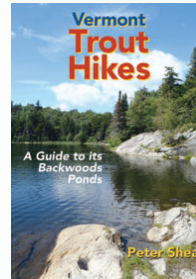
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# Spring 2021 Explore Magazine

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# Explore Magazine

## Summer Photography Contest



### Have a great summer scenic photograph?

If so, we may publish it in our next edition of Explore Magazine and maybe even use it on the cover. Specifically, we are interested in photo submissions that depict the spectacular outdoor scenery of Vermont. Each entrant is invited to submit up to six of their favorite summer outdoor scenic photos, each labeled with the photographer's name and a short description. Photographs may include flora, fauna, landscapes, close-ups or panoramic views. People and/or animals can be included in the photo but should not be the subject of the shot.

We are looking for high resolution photo submissions of 300 dpi or higher in .jpeg format. The more vibrant the colors, the better. Judging will be done by our editors taking into consideration exposure, focal point, color and contrast as well as subject matter.

**The deadline for submissions is May 7, 2021.  
Winners will be announced in our next edition.**

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*\*By entering this competition, entrants agree that Brunswick Publishing, LLC has permission to publish submitted photographs in print, in special promotions and online with credit to the photographer. All photos must be taken in Vermont.*



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ST. JOHNSBURY



# THE ATHENÆUM

*Art in the hills of the Kingdom*



## By PETER COBB

If the 19th century oil painting “The Domes of the Yosemite” by Albert Bierstadt were the only painting in the St Johnsbury Athenaeum, it would still be worth a trip to Main Street art gallery. But the painting is just one of a 100 or so works in the permanent collection.

The Hudson River School, a mid-19th century American art movement of landscape painters, is well represented by such celebrated artists as Asher B. Durand, the father of American landscape painting; Jasper Cropsey, known for autumn landscapes; Sanford Gifford, a luminist painter whose works include effects of light on the landscape; James and William Hart, known for their pastoral landscapes with cattle; Samuel Colman, a portrait painter and drawing master; and Worthington Whittredge, known for his Western landscapes.

“The Domes of the Yosemite,” a colossal 10-foot by 15-foot painting, dominates the back wall of the gallery. Natural light from the gallery skylight enhances the effect of looking down into the valley from the artist’s vantage point.

“The Athenaeum is a beautiful building, with magnificent woodwork.

The gallery is hung salon style, so it is a true example of an 1870s gallery,” said Bob Joly, Athenaeum director.

In 1965, Time magazine called the Athenaeum “The United States’ oldest unaltered art gallery still standing.” The Athenaeum intentionally retains the gallery’s original style and atmosphere. Paintings are displayed in the heavy gilded frames of that era hanging one above another; white marble statues and busts sit atop pedestals; oak bookcases contain gold-tooled leather bound books.

The Athenaeum also serves as the town’s public library, and houses 8,000 finely bound books from the collection of noted bibliographer W.F. Poole, a pioneer in the public library movement.

Citing its remarkable architecture, well-preserved gallery of American paintings and Poole’s original book collection, the U.S. Department of the Interior designated the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum a National Historic Landmark in 1996.

Former Vermont governor Horace Fairbanks (1866-1868) and partner and later president of the E. and T. Fairbanks Company, the scale manufacturing company whose development influenced the history and growth of St. Johnsbury, presented the Athenaeum to the people of St. Johnsbury in 1871. Noted New York architect John Davis Hatch III

designed the Athenaeum in French Second Empire style. The building is characterized by a mansard roof, tall arched windows which brighten the interior, elaborate woodwork, floors with alternating strips of ash and walnut and spiral staircases.

This November, the Athenaeum celebrates its 150th year.

“We are planning a series of in-person readings, music, talks and gatherings in October and November. We believe gathering will be safe by then. This summer we will partner with other organizations for live, COVID-safe Children’s events for summer reading,” Joly said.

Last year was a challenge for the gallery.

“Like many organizations it has been hard. The building was closed to the public for three months. We couldn’t hold our spring fundraiser. We lost income from gallery admissions. We did make library materials available in the lobby the entire time. We spent thousands of dollars on sneeze guards, air filters, and the necessary PPE. I am very grateful to board members for fully supporting the staff,” Joly said.

The gallery follows all Vermont pandemic mandates.

“If masks are required, that will be enforced. We ask visitors to clean their hands with supplied alcohol or by washing, and contact tracing forms must be completed. Again, whatever Vermont is requiring we will enforce,” Joly said.

Groups larger than a family should call ahead to be sure a guide can be available.

“St. Johnsbury has become a food and beverage destination with great restaurants, a brewery, a distillery, and excellent coffee shops. There are lots of reasons to come to St. Johnsbury including the Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium and Catamount Arts,” Joly said.

The gallery is open for business with COVID-19 protocols in place, Monday through Friday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday from 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Admission is free for St. Johnsbury residents and library card holders; \$5 for an individual and \$10 for a family.

For more information visit [www.stjathenaeum.org](http://www.stjathenaeum.org)

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# A Vermont barn's revival

By **BILL WALSH**

**H**ow many times do we drive by old barns and wonder about their lives, their stories, and their work? How many have outlasted their usefulness and slouch in the spots where they once stood tall and strong? We wonder what they were like when they were young and were the fortresses of farms' livelihoods.

They stored, protected and stood proudly at their posts during decades of Vermont's four seasons.

We'd like to turn back the hands of time to the days and seasons when they were vibrant. When a barn's work is done and the families and animals who depended on the building are gone, the barn – no matter its condition, still stands. And maybe it waits for the curious to open its cranky and heavy doors and say, "If only these walls could talk. What stories would they tell us?"

Many Vermont barns still stand tall and continue to endure the heat of summers and the winds, snows and freezing temperatures of winters.

One barn has been lucky and strong enough to keep working.

When driving up Route 63 in Barre Town, on Miller Road there is a red brick house (circa 1825) on the left, now owned by Kathleen Miller. Fifty or so yards behind that house is a huge bank barn.

Built in 1900, the barn served five families: the Boyces, the Martinettis, the LaFailles, the Pribbles, and the Lavignes. The barn housed farm animals, feed, hay, as well as milking and farm equipment.

The Millers have lived in the house since 1969. If you drove by the barn on a summer morning in 1970, you might

---

**"When a barn's  
work is done and the  
families and animals  
who depended on the  
building are gone, the  
barn – no matter its  
condition, still stands."**

---

have seen one of the Millers' sons, Jim, and his good friend, Mark Booth, painting the bank barn's roof with a silver paint and tar base. They climbed tall ladders to the top of the gambrel roof, more than 50 feet high.

One morning, as Jim was coming down the ladder, the paint bucket he was carrying spilled all over him. He remembered vividly, "Luckily, the paint and tar mixture came off in the shower because an hour later, I had to leave to be a camp counselor in New Hampshire. The kids at the camp thought it was really cool that my huge belt buckle had a silver sparkle to it."

Mary Miller, a daughter, kept horses in the barn's stalls. Jim recalled that one morning, one of the horses became excited, wrapped itself in some of the tack, and ran out of the barn. A piece of the tack kept hitting a rear hoof which made him keep running.

The horse finally stopped when it exhausted itself.

The huge barn – 120 feet by 34 feet – is a "bank barn" (a multilevel barn built into a bank), where the upper floor is accessible to a vehicle, the Millers could use the barn for different uses other than farming, especially since the barn had a tall and wide sliding front door.

Bank barns were first built in 18th century Europe. Their success led to their popularity in the U.S., especially from 1850 to 1900 or so. The two-story barns provided access on two levels and at the top and bottom of the bank (the hill). Two of the benefits of a bank barn are that the access points can act as exits in case of an emergency. Also, on the ground level, there are access and exit points on the sides of the barn for farm animals.

Marty Miller, a home builder, built more than 300 homes during his career. He wondered what else he could use the barn for since the family wasn't going





to farm. During one winter in the early 1970s, he dismantled the barn's hayloft and installed a rail system similar to railroad railing, as well as a hoist system. He built components and wall sections for pre-fabricated houses and moved the sections down the rail system as the work progressed.

After Marty stopped building components and walls sections houses in the barn, the barn was used to store up to 15 cars, trucks and boats for the winter. One of Marty's sons, Steven, owns an excavating, site work, and hauling business. Brother Brian, works with Steven. They used the barn to store their mechanical equipment and tools.

In late-2020, Kathleen Miller sold the barn and 3 acres to Dave and Ana Chappelle of Williamstown. Matt Lumsden, owner/broker of Matt Lumsden Real Estate in Essex Junction, said, "The size of the barn really stands out. ... When you walk through the doors and look up, it still amazes me how something so large could stand the test of time."

Dave Chappelle echoed similar sentiments: "You can really get lost standing on the second floor, gazing up



into the rafters. I grew up on a potato farm in Williamstown and our family's potato storage is a converted dairy barn that has an almost identical design and rafter structure. So there may be a little bit of nostalgia there for me."

He continued, "Our business, Carachingo Foods LLC, is a Hispanic food business that we began approximately 12 years ago. We source all of our authentic products from New York and sell them throughout Vermont, New York, and New Hampshire. The barn will

be used as dry storage for our business: primarily supplying our main customer base, the Hispanic worker population employed on Vermont dairy farms with authentic Mexican ingredients. We will also supply some local businesses. We will deliver all of our products directly to our customers. ... We won't use the barn as a retail location."

The banked barn on Miller Road lives on because of the excellent design of the classic bank barn and the imaginations of many Vermonters.



WOODSTOCK

# BILLINGS FARM & MUSEUM

*a gem in Vermont*



By **PETER COBB**

**T**he Billings Farm in Woodstock is celebrating 150 years in operation. Established in 1871, the farm is known for its Jersey breeding, sustainable agricultural practices, and educational programming. Operating as part of a nonprofit institution since 1983, the farm is open to the public, giving visitors an opportunity to experience Vermont's farming life first hand.

Today, Billings Farm & Museum is a thriving dairy farm, breeding an award-winning herd of Jersey dairy cows, as well as Southdown sheep, oxen and draft horses. The farm combines a fully operating Jersey dairy farm with educational exhibits and interactive programs and events.

"Billings Farm and Museum offers a unique the opportunity to experience Vermont's rural culture both past and present. Through engaging programs, learn about our working dairy, our farm history and Vermont's rural heritage. Enjoy our scenic landscape with safe, family friendly outdoor activities, events, and ice cream and other treats from our dairy bar," said Marge Wakefield, community relations coordinator.

Sheep Shearing & Herding is scheduled for April 24-25. Visitors will meet herdsman Jim McRae and his team of Border Collies and watch demonstrations of herding sheep in the farm fields during narrated programs. Each day the farm's Southdown ewes will be sheared for spring. Spinning and carding demonstrations will highlight the skills needed to turn fleece into yarn. Families can enjoy sheep stories and craft activities.

Basic Bread Making with Chef Emery Gray is scheduled for April 17, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Chef Emery will demonstrate basic bread making with two very different and unique recipes: savory cheddar herb and caramelized onion quick bread and a crusty yeast bread.

Billings Backyard is a series of workshops designed to teach sustainable



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WOODSTOCK INN & RESORT, PHOTO BY EVAN KAY  
Sunflower House: Aerial view of the Billings Farm & Museum's Sunflower House in early August.



BILLINGS FARM STAFF PHOTO

Lining up for the "Slow Race" at Billings Farm's annual Antique Tractor Day.



BILLINGS FARM STAFF PHOTO

Visitors enjoying a tractor-drawn hay ride around the Billings farm fields.

living skills to adult participants. To register for this workshop go to: [www.billingsfarm.org/classes-workshops](http://www.billingsfarm.org/classes-workshops).

The anniversary will be highlighted during Dairy Celebration Days, June 26-27. The 35th Annual Quilt Exhibition will be held July 17-Aug. 22. Antique Tractor Day is Aug. 1. Pollination Celebration is Aug. 28-29.

The annual Sunflower House will be blooming starting July 31 and will feature more than 100 sunflower varieties along its winding paths.

The Billings Farm walking trail is a gentle one mile loop through the farm field and along the picturesque Ottauquechee River.

Depending on the pandemic

restrictions (at press time all indoor activities were still closed), visitors also can explore the 1890 Farm Manager's House, originally built as a modern, multi-purpose addition to Frederick Billings' expanding farm operation, now meticulously restored to its 19th century heyday. Extensive displays are exhibited in 19th century barns and use artifacts, oral histories, and photographs to depict the seasonal round of activities that shaped the lives and culture of rural Vermonters.

Billings Farm also runs the Farm Discovery Camp, a hands-on program for young people, ages 11-14 (sixth- to ninth-graders), who want a deeper understanding of farming and all that it encompasses.

Campers meet local professionals and farmers who are leaders in their fields including the Billings dairy farm manager, local beekeepers, and a large animal veterinarian, experience the daily rhythms of farming and learn firsthand how farmers make decisions about caring for the herd and the land.

Billings enforces all safety standards in compliance with State of Vermont guidelines. For more about the safety rules visit [www.billingsfarm.org/safety](http://www.billingsfarm.org/safety).

"Like other cultural destinations, the pandemic significantly impacted our visitation. We were not able to open until the end of June. Determined to support to our neighbors and community through this extraordinary time, the team, working from home, quickly shifted gears creating virtual programs and experiences to share. Once we were open, because of site capacity limitations, we only welcomed about 31,000 visitors, about half of our regular annual attendance," Wakefield said.

Billings Farm is open daily May 31-Oct. 31, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is: Adults, \$16; ages 62 & up, \$14; Children ages 3-15, \$8; and free for children 3 and under.

For list of all events go to: [www.billingsfarm.org](http://www.billingsfarm.org).

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| *tossed in bbq, buffalo or bam bam sauce. Add .50 |      |

## CHICKEN SANDWICHES

SERVED WITH LETTUCE, TOMATO, AND FRIES

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Grilled Chicken Breast - lettuce, tomato, bacon and cheese | 10.99 |
| *bbq, Cajun, teriyaki, honey mustard or lemon garlic       |       |

## FRIED CHICKEN THIGH SANDWICHES

SERVED WITH LETTUCE, TOMATO, AND FRIES

|                    |       |
|--------------------|-------|
| Plain              | 10.99 |
| Buffalo            | 11.29 |
| Chicken Cordon Blu | 12.99 |

\*topped with ham and swiss

## SEAFOOD ROLLS | SERVED WITH FRIES

|                     |        |
|---------------------|--------|
| Shrimp              | 11.99  |
| Clam Strips (Fresh) | 10.99  |
| Scallops            | 14.99  |
| Lobster (seasonal)  | 19.95  |
| Whole Belly Clams   | Market |

## SEAFOOD BASKETS | INCLUDES FRIES AND SLAW

|                             |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Shrimp (10)                 | 13.99  |
| Fresh Clam Strips (1/2 lb.) | 13.99  |
| Haddock (8oz)               | 12.99  |
| Scallops (8)                | 21.99  |
| Whole Belly Clams           | Market |

## HOUSE FAVORITES

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Calamari Fries - with banana peppers and parmesan cheese.   | 9.99  |
| Bam Bam Shrimp - lightly breaded creek shrimp tossed in our tangy bam bam sauce with fries and slaw | 12.99 |
| Fish Bites - fries, cod pieces with tartar and lemon  | 8.99  |
| Fish Tacos - mahi mahi grilled, fried or blackened with lettuce tomato and a sweet chili slaw       | 11.99 |

## SIDE ORDERS

|                       |      |
|-----------------------|------|
| Mozzarella Sticks (5) | 5.99 |
| Fried Pickles         | 5.99 |
| Fried Cauliflower     | 5.99 |
| Zucchini Sticks       | 5.99 |
| Fried Mushrooms       | 5.99 |
| Pasta Salad           | 5.99 |

## SODA

|  | SML  | LRG  |
|--|------|------|
| Pepsi, Diet Pepsi, Mountain Dew, Sierra Mist, Crush Orange, Lemonade, Ice Tea, Root Beer | 1.99 | 2.49 |

## MILKSHAKES

|  | SML  | LRG  |
|--|------|------|
|  | 3.99 | 4.99 |

SUB SWEET FRIES, ONION RINGS OR CURLY FRIES - \$2.00  
EXTRA SAUCES - \$0.25 ea

Prices do not include State of VT and Rutland City meals tax

Rutland's landmark snack bar is open for the season! Serving up all your favorites and some new menu items too. Wilcox Dairy Hard Ice Cream and Real Vermont Maple Creamies. Stop by and present this coupon for 10% off your entire meal. \*\* Ice Cream Excluded.



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RUTLAND

# Chaffee ART CENTER

*'A vital part of well-being'*

By **PETER COBB**

**W**ith the COVID-19 restrictions end in sight, Chaffee Art Center is planning a busy 2021, according Executive Director Sherri Birkheimer Rooker.

"The Chaffee Art Center has been the heart of our community for 60 years. The building is an 1890's Queen Anne Victorian mansion that showcases and preserves the history of the community





and the historical significance of that time period. Community members and visitors come to the Chaffee to experience the talent of the art within, as well as the history and beauty of the architecture. The Chaffee and the arts are a vital part of the well-being of our community and enrich the lives of those living here, as well as those visiting,” Rooker said.

The Chaffee Art Center, like so many other galleries, had to struggle with the pandemic restrictions. The building closed from March to June last year and many of its core activities, including classes, exhibits, memberships, building rentals, and art sales, were cancelled.

“During this time, we focused on developing systems, revenue streams, grant opportunities, educational programming, and benefits for artist members and general members, so that we are a stronger organization, positioned to implement planned programming and events as things open up. This allows us to continue to inspire and cultivate creativity, while positively impacting the vitality of our community through the arts,” Rooker said.

“An example is our two major fundraisers, Annual Art in the Park, summer and fall festivals. These two events that are celebrating 60 years and

the designation of being Vermont’s Oldest Continuing Arts Tradition, make up almost half Chaffee Art Center’s revenue. With a lot of planning, guidance from (the Agency of Commerce and Community Development), Rutland City government and many volunteers, we were able to hold our events safely and successfully. These festivals impacted many people from revenue for artists and creatives to a safe venue for attendees desperate for something to do with some sense of normalcy, to much needed revenue for the Chaffee,” Rooker said.

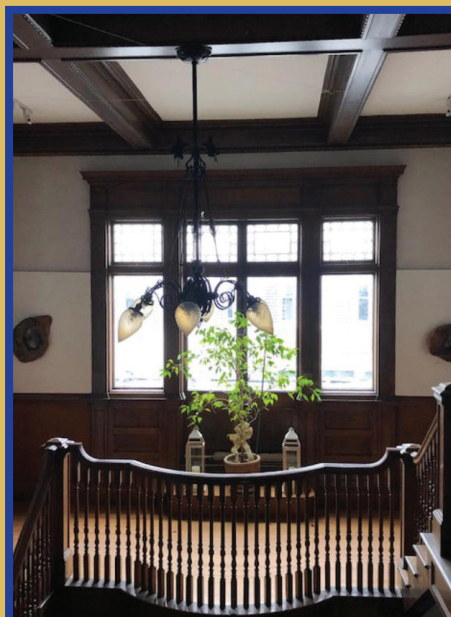
The summer season will begin with the Annual Student Exhibit & Digital Expression titled “Expressions of Me,” which includes the gallery’s Annual Amateur Photo Contest, April 23 to June 4. The Artisan Marketplace will run May 8 to Oct. 23.

Booths exhibits will feature all forms of the arts, crafts, specialty foods and more and the art will be featured on the front lawn, side yard and on the grounds near the Carriage House. The gallery also will be cross promoting with the Farmers Market in Depot Park.

“Four Strong Women,” featuring artists Carolyn Shattuck, Sandy Mayo, Christine Holzschuh and a Retrospective of Sally Keefe, will run June 11 to July 23.

The Pop Up Gallery in the mansion will featuring works by Kelly Gearwar during June and July.

“Reflecting on the Past and Future” will run July 30 to Sept. 10, and the 60th Annual Art in the Park Summer Festival





is set for Aug. 14-15 (Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

Rutland County Audubon Society Wildlife Art Exhibit" is set for Sept. 17 to Oct. 29, and the Annual Barn Yard Sale is Sept. 18.

The 60th Annual Art in the Park Fall Foliage Festival is Oct. 9-10 (Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

The Chaffee will be publishing its first calendar this year. The 2022 calendar will feature 14 talented artists and photographers including: Ann McFarren, Carolyn Shattuck, Louis Scotellaro, Kevin Ruelle, Robert Black, Roz Daniels, Betsy Moakley,

Karen Seward, Mary Crowley, Fran Bull, Christine Townsend, B.Amore and Lisa Walker.

The calendars will be ready for distribution in early August and will be pre-sold at \$10 each. Reserve copies at [info@chaffeeartcenter.org](mailto:info@chaffeeartcenter.org). After publication, the cost will be \$15.

Summer hours at the Chaffee are Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, from noon to 4 p.m.; Saturday from 10 a.m.-to 2 p.m.; or by appointment. Admission is free and donations are appreciated.

For more information is available at [www.chaffeeartcenter.org](http://www.chaffeeartcenter.org)

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY CHAFFEE ART CENTER



By Mikaela Foster

Life's a squeeze when you get juiced to eating oranges. I've been buying bags and bags of them every time I go to the store. I don't know why I didn't notice them last year, but I'm just so focused on oranges right now, it's hard to concentrate! We're eating so many, I'm scared we're turning orange – hopefully it's just a pigment of my imagination.

This year I was clued into the term "Citrus Season" and I'm amazed I have never noticed this delightful time of year to do some winter canning. In regards to the Citrus Season, I learned that most citrus fruits ripen to their sweetest and juiciest (in their temperate regions) during our winters. Don't forget, here in the North Country, that's all the time

them from getting splattered when the jam unexpectedly bubbled up over the pot. But I think it would be a great recipe to do with older kids who are used to being cautious and can react quickly on their own to unexpected happenings. Especially if they have an interest in a certain fictional bear found in London, near Paddington Station.

I originally found this recipe at [culinaryhill.com](http://culinaryhill.com), (but reworded some of it here), and it is so good, I'm tempted to keep an emergency sandwich under my hat, just in case.

## INGREDIENTS:

- 4 large seedless oranges, scrubbed clean – about 3 lbs.
- 2 lemons about ½ lb., scrubbed clean
- 8 cups water
- 8 cups granulated sugar

**\*Notes on the Oranges: First batch I used CaraCara oranges, 2nd batch I used Organic Navel oranges. They tasted different! Both very delicious, but the CaraCara marmalade was sweeter, and the rinds tasted like candy.**

**\*Note on the sugar: I used All Natural Pure Cane Sugar. I highly recommend it. I'm not an expert, but I am convinced the type of sugar you use affects the taste of jams and marmalades.**

## HELPFUL TOOLS:

- A food processor, if you have one, to slice the oranges
- 10-quart or bigger stainless steel pot with lid. I used a 6-quart stainless steel pot but extra inches in height would have prevented

- Canning Funnel – reduces spills when filling containers
- Jars or containers – I didn't do my usual water bath canning process for this. This marmalade was so popular, it wasn't worth canning since they were being opened immediately. I simply put the marmalade into clean containers and refrigerated them until I gave them away.
- Candy thermometer – If you don't have one, you can use a meat thermometer and guesstimate. The right temperature is crucial when trying to get it to gel properly. I have made a lot of runny but yummy jams by not following this.

## DIRECTIONS:

1. Gather your citrus and scrub them to remove any wax on the skin.
2. Cut scrubbed oranges and lemons in half crosswise, then into very thin half-moon slices (around 1/8"). Cut all of the orange-skin, fruit and all, but discard seeds. Place the sliced fruit along with their juices into a stainless steel pot.
3. Add water and bring the mixture to a boil, stirring often, until the fruit is softened. Remove from heat and stir in the sugar until it dissolves. Cover and let stand overnight at room temperature.
4. The next day, bring the mixture back to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and simmer uncovered for 2 hours. Turn the heat up to a medium and boil gently, stirring often, for another 30 minutes, so the marmalade can reach 220 degrees.
5. Skim off any foam that forms on the top. Cook the marmalade until it reaches 220 degrees. (For the natural pectin to gel with the sugar. If you go past 220, you may end up burning or caramelizing it.)
6. If you want to be doubly sure the marmalade is ready, place a small amount in a dish and put it in the refrigerator until its cool. If it's runny, keep cooking, if it's hard, add a little more water.
7. Pour the marmalade into clean jars and chill in the refrigerator. It may take 24-48 hours for the natural pectin to set up.
8. Enjoy! This is delicious to spread on toast or an English Muffin with butter. 🍯

COOKING...

with kids!

# Orange MARMALADE

within the calendar's Fall to Spring. Ha Ha...

During the earlier months of our winter, I learned that my father-in-law loves orange marmalade. I tried making it once years ago, but I did it all wrong and never thought to try again until now. As it turns out, he is not the only one who loves it. My life is surrounded by orange marmalade enthusiasts. I had no idea! And boy am I excited to make this every Citrus Season.

When I made this recipe, I didn't include my kids very much since I felt they are both still on the young side for this. I tried making jam with them last year, but I had to rush them out of the kitchen to keep

some spills.

- Wooden spoon – stir often!
- Ladle





# FAIRBANKS MUSEUM

## *From curiosities to treasures*

By **PETER COBB**

**V**ermont Public Radio's Eye on the Sky weather forecasts from the The Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium is likely the best-known thing about the St. Johnsbury museum. What most people don't know is that the museum is northern New England's largest museum of natural history.

The museum holds more than 30,000 objects from an eclectic permanent collection, including natural science specimens, historical artifacts, archival photographs and documents, and ethnological treasures.

"The Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium inspires wonder and curiosity about the natural world. It's rooted in the Victorian "Cabinet of Curiosities" tradition with artifacts from around the world that were brought to St. Johnsbury by Franklin Fairbanks and his business associates. Today, the natural history collections have fresh interpretations that highlight our understanding of ecosystems, biodiversity, and the effects of a changing global climate," said Anna Rubin, director of external relations.

This summer the museum is presenting "Hidden Beauty" in its Natural History Collections. The exhibit

will feature X-ray images of taxidermy mounts and shells.

"This unique view peels back the surface to offer a glimpse at the mysterious inner composition of objects that are usually only seen from the outside," Rubin said.

The museum also is offering Discovery Camps for young children, and the Shippee Family Butterfly House will open in June with native species along with host and food plants.

The exhibit "Balancing Science and Wonder" introduces guests to the history of the Fairbanks family and their legacies, including the Fairbanks Museum, the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum

and St. Johnsbury Academy. This exhibit includes a timeline of leading voices who shaped the museum through its long history.

The museum is home to the Lyman Spitzer Jr. Planetarium, the only public planetarium in Vermont. The planetarium has been closed due to the pandemic restrictions, but the museum staff is hopeful it can reopen for the summer. If so, visitors can journey through the cosmos, guided by one of the museum's astronomy experts.

The permanent collection also includes a full-habitat dioramas created in the late 19th-century by the local taxidermist, William Everard Balch, which rivals anything from that period.

"We have recently refreshed several displays including birds, mammals, insects, shells and fish from Africa, Europe and North America. Many of the taxidermy mounts in these displays were created over 100 years ago by skilled artisans whose vision was to capture the features and characteristics of animals that are difficult to see in the wild. Our natural history exhibits are arranged to offer insight about biodiversity and habitats. A new display focusing on Arctic animals includes fresh interpretation about the threats these species face because of climate change," Rubin said.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the museum was temporarily closed from mid-March through June 2020 but reopened with safety protocols in place, with a maximum capacity of 75 people in the main gallery at any time.

"We got creative and moved our astronomy programming from the planetarium, which could not reopen safely, to an 'Astronomy Deck' where our educators gave guided tours of the cosmos outside. The pandemic allowed us to refocus on our courtyard, where we installed a new playground for young explorers and a Butterfly Migration trail, leading to the Butterfly House," Rubin said.

"We're eager to welcome more visitors this summer. Many of the changes we



**"You don't want to miss the only place to see John Hampson's 'Bug Art,' an enormous moose, and several iconic bears ... as well hummingbird trees and Wilson 'Snowfalke' Bentley prints."**

put in place last year strengthen our programs and offer new dimensions to the experience," Rubin said. "You don't want to miss the only place to see John Hampson's 'Bug Art,' an enormous moose, and several iconic bears ... as

well hummingbird trees and Wilson 'Snowfalke' Bentley prints."

Admission is free to members; \$9 for and adults; \$7 for seniors (65+) and children (5 -17); and free for children ages 4 and younger. The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday.

The maximum capacity of 75 individuals is based on the State of Vermont's guidelines. Groups of eight or more must reserve tickets in advance of your visit. Smaller groups may visit without a reservation. For more information visit: [fairbanksmuseum.org](http://fairbanksmuseum.org)

# Highland Arts

## keeps on trekking

**By PETER COBB**

**T**he Open Air Gallery Ski & Snowshoe Trail at Highland Center for the Arts in Greensboro was such a success this past winter, the gallery and arts center plans to keep the trail open this summer and will add a hands-on activity for all ages: “A Bug’s World” which will explore the lives of bugs.

Visitors can walk the 1.8-mile trail through the grounds and adjacent Wilson Farm fields. The art along the trail includes 17 art works from 10 artists. The trail will be open from dawn to dusk every day this summer.



“Highland Center for the Arts is a new kid on the block among Vermont museums and arts galleries, opening in 2018.”

“The Highland Center for the Arts is planning for a summer of diverse arts programs in both the gallery and with our outside series featuring Vermont artists. We are also thrilled to be adding back classes in art-making this summer,” said Keisha Luce, executive director.

Last summer, in response to the need for pandemic-related social distancing, Highland created “pods” on the lawn and distanced the patio tables to allow people to enjoy performances safely. The pods will be back this year and offer a great space to picnic, to enjoy a performance and to be with the community in a safe environment.

“We’ve had to re-envision how we connect to our community and provide art experiences in a new way. During the warm months we were able to hold outdoor concerts and theater productions. When the snowflakes started to fly, we decided to embrace winter and created a series of outside events like our open air gallery ski and snowshoe trail and related events. With our Snowlights event we lit up the trail in

awash of artful color and had bonfires to warm people. Throughout the season the lawn was adorned with snow sculptures and snow shelters from workshops we held with family pods and warming fires to keep everyone toasty. It has been a difficult year, one of the highlights has been watching people find moments of joy through the art experiences at HCA,” Luce said.

Highland Center for the Arts is a new kid on the block among Vermont museums and arts galleries, opening in 2018. HCA is known for its Main Stage and its outdoor and indoor art galleries. The complex includes a state-of-the-art main stage theater, with seating for 250 people, and a more intimate 100-seat Performance Studio. The facility also includes a spacious, curated art gallery with rotating exhibits and the Hardwick Street Café, a full-service restaurant serving fresh, locally sourced ingredients.

“HCA is known for its main stage, which was modeled after the Globe Theater, but I find the outdoor space, looking over the beautiful town of

Greensboro and Caspian Lake, equally enchanting. At HCA you can start your afternoon on the patio with lunch from the Café featuring Northeast Kingdom produced fare, see the work of visual arts from around Vermont and in the evening spread out in a lawn pod with a picnic and enjoy a performance,” Luce said.

All summer activities will follow COVID 19 guidelines set by the State of Vermont.

“We have a commitment to keeping our patrons, staff and community safe. This summer we expect similar restrictions and protocols to last year. The current guidance from the CDC is continued mask wearing and social distancing in public and most likely that will be in effect for the summer,” Luce said.

Due to COVID 19 restrictions, the full slate of summer concerts, and exhibits was not available at press time. For an up-to-date listing go to [www.highlandartsvt.org](http://www.highlandartsvt.org).

Admission to the art galleries is free. The fees for concerts and other events will be listed on the website.

## New England MAPLE MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP



By Lou Varricchio

Tom and Rhonda Gadhue are the proud owners of the New England Maple Museum and Gift Shop in Pittsford, Vermont. They've got a good reason to be excited about their museum. They have continued a fun and educational tradition, a popular destination that's a unique experience for all ages.

The Gadhues purchased the 40-year-old maple sugaring exhibit and gift shop in 2019. They wanted to sell their maple syrup and products, meet new guests coming to Vermont and offer an amazing selection of specialty Vermont-made items which include thoughtful (and fun) gifts and food.

"We've had tremendous support from the local community who are more than pleased to have local sugar makers who have 'saved' the museum," the Gadhues note. "We are excited about this new venture and continue to add new ideas to our list of future possibilities for the museum."

According to the Gadhues, their museum is the one-stop locale to learn and experience the history of maple sugaring. The tradition, which began with Native Americans, is displayed in 115 feet of stunning murals, all hand-painted by a local artist.

It's hard to imagine a better place to view a complete collection of maple sugaring artifacts. Several 3D dioramas and

a short film help tell the fascinating story of maple sugaring. And when you've rambled through the museum, try a free sample of local maple syrup, the official flavor of Vermont, and check out all kinds of maple-themed gifts and keepsakes including books, confections, and comfy clothing. Best of all, of course, is the pure, unadulterated Vermont maple syrup offered.

Solar Sweet Maple Farm in nearby Lincoln, Vermont, is where all of the syrup sold at the New England Maple Museum is made.

"We have 48 solar panels on our roof that runs our sugar house along with energy-saving features, LED lighting, and a list of other environmentally conscious practices

we use to make 100% pure Vermont maple syrup. We are what is known as a 'sole source' producer...," the Gadhues stress on the museum's website.

NCL picked up several of the museum's maple goodies when we visited. This included syrup, creams, candies, cookies, caramels, popcorn and amazing maple jelly beans. We can truthfully report that we were dazzled by what is likely the best maple product selection in all of New England.

The Gadhues carry other locally produced food items, too; Vermont-made souvenirs, and hand-crafted artisan gifts, so even if you don't like maple (is that possible?) there's literally something for everyone and it's all made in Vermont.

Don't want to carry your New England Maple Museum treasures back home on a tour bus? Just ask: The staff will be happy to ship any items home (or to family and friends) for you for your convenience.

Tom and Rhonda say that the perfect ending to your trip to the New England Maple Museum is a group photo with the world's largest jug of maple syrup. And when



(Left) A fascinating collection of Vermont maple syrup products, from the 1800s to the 2000s, are on display at the New England Maple Museum & Gift Shop in Pittsford, Vermont. (Center Top) You'll find a fantastic selection of locally made maple syrup products and confections at the New England Maple Museum & Gift Shop in Pittsford, Vermont. (Center Bottom) Welcome to the New England Maple Museum & Gift Shop in Pittsford, Vermont. (Right) Detailed exhibits explain the history of Vermont maple sugaring at the New England Maple Museum & Gift Shop in Pittsford, Vermont. Photos by Lou Varricchio.



the outside weather is ideal, you will enjoy your sweet treats by the little covered bridge and pond (and don't forget to practice social distancing when it's in place).

As the Gadhues tell it on their museum website, "in early years Vermont's agricultural farmers began sugaring as a way of supplementing their income during the winter months. In Vermont, the February school break was derived from the farmer's need to have their children help tap the trees and get ready for the sugaring season. During these times, buckets were hung from the trees and gathered with horse-drawn sleds with big wooden holding tanks to dump the sap into. Days would be spent feeding the evaporator and boiling the sap into maple syrup. Nowadays, modernization has made sugaring more efficient with the use of tubing, vacuum pumps, Reverse Osmosis machines, and state of the art evaporators. Maple sugaring has evolved into an industrious commodity with its many uses and nutritional qualities. Each sugar house and farm is unique in various ways. The maple sugaring community is tight-knit

and welcoming of all who visit. There is a solid consistency between each and every maple sugaring operation and that is – it is deeply rooted in the family tradition and whether using buckets to gather sap the "old traditional" way or by using tubing and modern technology – it remains hard work."

The New England Maple Museum is located at 4578 U.S. Route 7 in Pittsford. Find the museum on Facebook and on the Web at [maplemuseum.com](http://maplemuseum.com). Call 802-483-9414 for days and times to visit. The museum is open now with safe COVID social distancing protocols in practice. 🦋

Special thanks to the New England Maple Museum for the kind assistance of its staff.

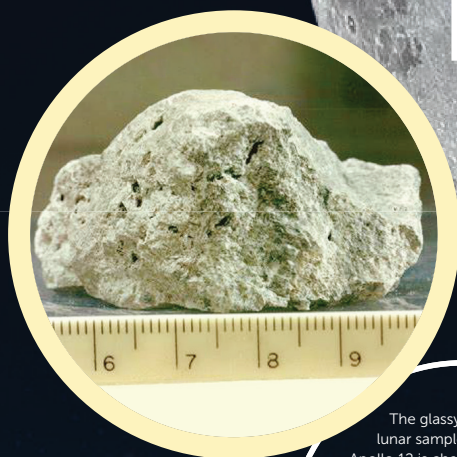


**"We can truthfully report  
that we were dazzled by what is likely  
THE BEST MAPLE PRODUCT SELECTION  
IN ALL OF NEW ENGLAND."**

BARRE

# NY AND VT MOONROCKS ARE OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD TREASURES

This outstanding view of the full Moon was photographed from the Apollo 11 spacecraft during its trans-Earth journey homeward in July 1969. When this picture was taken, the spacecraft was already 10,000 nautical miles away. (NASA/public domain)



The glassy portion of lunar sample 12013 from Apollo 12 is chemically more like some tektites from Java than like any terrestrial igneous rock. It satisfies all the chemical criteria for a tektite. Tektites are relatively recent and acid rocks, whereas the Moon is chiefly ancient and basaltic; hence, tektites are probably ejected volcanically, rather than by impact, from the Moon. (NASA/public domain)

By Lou Varricchio

Everybody wants a piece of the Moon. NASA is hoping to return men and women to “Luna” in the coming decade. Even the Chinese want a piece of our nearest neighbor in space; their space agency recently returned lunar samples to Earth via a robot spacecraft.

An investigation by a Texas attorney, and former NASA security officer, revealed that some of U.S. President Richard Nixon’s goodwill gifts of Project Apollo lunar rock “chips” to all 50 states have gone missing.

Thankfully, Vermont’s specimens, from both Apollo 11 and Apollo 17, are safe and secure in the Vermont Historical Society’s (VHS) holdings in Barre.

“We honestly believed that going back to the Moon was going to be a regular occurrence,” ex-NASA employee, attorney, and law professor Joseph Gutheinz has said. That’s likely why some of the states were so cavalier in preserving their lunar specimens for prosperity while others were out-right pocketed.

Apollo moon rocks are a national natural treasure and cannot be sold legally. However, some meteorites, and tektites found in southeast Asia, are believed to be of lunar origin. These examples are, technically, “Moonrocks” as well, but experts will always quibble.

In the case of the southeast Asian tektites, the late NASA researcher Dr. Dean Chapman used advanced computer modeling to trace the obsidian-like stones back to where they were ejected, before landing on Earth, at lunar escape velocity: the Moon’s giant crater Tycho.

## “EVERYBODY WANTS A PIECE OF THE MOON”

Other lunar meteorites more closely match the Apollo specimen geochemistry; these out-of-space rocks have been found in Africa and elsewhere.

"Most of the Apollo Moonrocks that show up at auction or on eBay are fake, and from time to time I have exposed these con artists," Gutheinz noted. "Apollo Moon Rock' thieves know that NASA OIG and the FBI are tracking them."

Actually, the bulk of the lunar rocks are stored carefully at the Johnson Space Center and Brooks Air Force Base for posterity as well as for select scientific research.

But overall, here's what Gutheinz discovered in his years-long search for President Nixon's specimens to the states:

159 of the Apollo 11 specimens (lunar soil, called regolith) and Apollo 17 goodwill specimens given to the nations of the world by the United States are presently missing, lost, stolen, or destroyed

Three of the Apollo 11 specimens (lunar soil) given to the states and territories are missing, lost, or stolen, including New York's, Delaware, and the Virgin Islands.

## MOON-ROCK SLEUTH

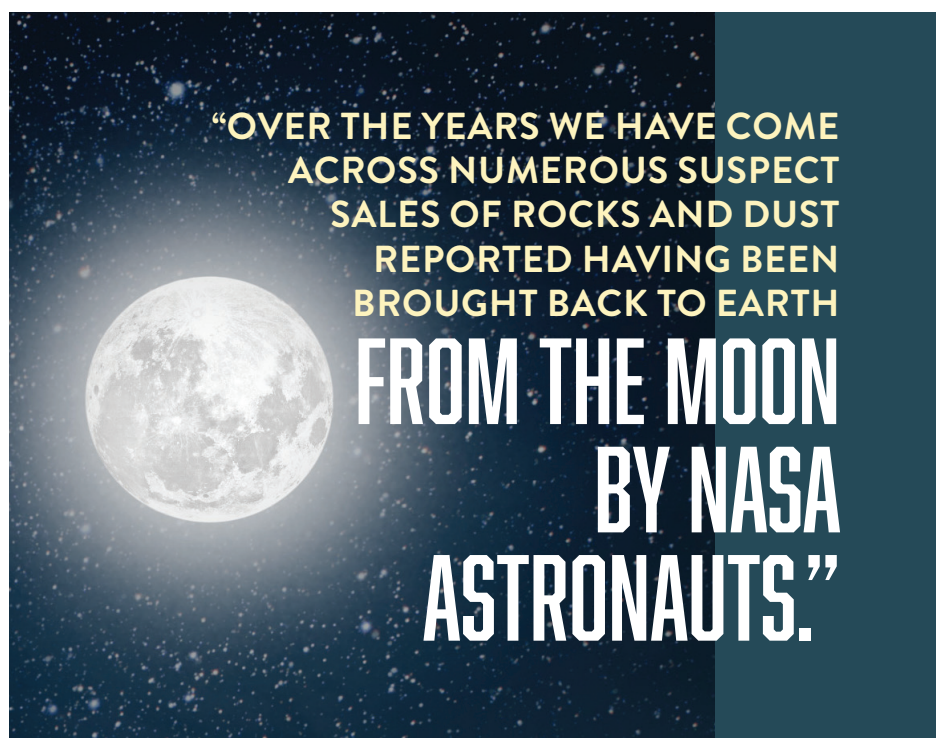
Gutheinz spent years tracking down the whereabouts of the 50-state Project Apollo treasures. He initially found 40 missing lunar specimens when he started in 2002.

"Apollo 17 'Goodwill Moon Rock' gifts given to these states and U.S. territories or stolen: Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio, South Carolina, and Puerto Rico," Gutheinz told *The Eagle*.

Apollo 11 lunar rocks gifted to these states or territories are stolen or missing: Delaware's missing in 1977, New York (once in the possession of Gov. Nelson Rockefeller), and the Virgin Islands."



Moon-rock sleuth Joseph Gutheinz. (NASA)



Gutheinz started the Moonrock Project at the University of Phoenix. It was a hands-on way for multiple classes of his criminal justice graduate students to practice their investigation skills. Over several years, they tracked down missing Apollo 11 and Apollo 17 lunar samples around the nation and Puerto Rico.

"Over the years I had over 1,000 students track down these Moonrocks," Gutheinz told *The Eagle*. "I believe some may have been stashed away in storage and forgotten, some stolen and kept and some placed on the black market, like Nicaragua's Apollo 11, Spain's Apollo 11 and Cyprus Apollo 17, Honduras Apollo 17 were. Spain's Apollo 11 is still missing. I recovered the Honduras Apollo 17 in Operation Lunar Eclipse."

According to Gutheinz, students located 79 missing Apollo 11 and Apollo 17 specimens and plaques. They uncovered three that were "retained" by Gov. John Vanderhoof of Colorado, Gov. Arch Moore, Jr. of West Virginia, and Gov. Kit Bond of Missouri. As one example, ex-Governor Vanderhoof admitted he had his state's Apollo 17 lunar specimen in his home for more than 35 years. However, he did turn it over to the Colorado School of the Mines.

No federal charges were brought against the governors. Why?

"When my students tracked down Colorado, West Virginia and Missouri's moon rocks I stressed we did not want to

make the governors look like bad guys," Gutheinz told NCL/OSV. "Why? We wanted to encourage other former governors who had Moonrocks to turn them in.

"Over the years we have come across numerous suspect sales of rocks and dust reported having been brought back to Earth from the Moon by NASA astronauts," Gutheinz added. "We have reasoned with some of these sellers, reported others, and in one case had an unexpected encounter. In 2012, we saw a sale of what was reported to be an Apollo-era Moon rock on eBay for \$300,000."

## NEW YORK VS. VERMONT: LUNAR SPECIMENS

Regarding Vermont's Moonrocks, Gutheinz and his students found them to be safe and sound. But the whereabouts of some of New York's lunar specimens is quite another story.

"New York's Apollo 17 Goodwill Moonrocks plaque display is now located at the New York State Museum in secure storage," according to Sean Ahern of *Spotlight News*. "The 1 gram Moonrock particle specimen in its Lucite ball has been taken off or came off, its place on the commemorative wooden plaque display. It is unknown why the Lucite ball is separated from the top of the lunar wooden display. The Lucite ball with the Moonrock particle specimen is not in a public viewing area at this time. The museum keeps

the Apollo 17 Goodwill Moonrock in a high-security vault and not on public display due to its high dollar value that some say could be worth as much as \$10 million."

But the location of New York's prized Apollo 11 Goodwill Moonrocks plaque display remains a mystery.

The online publication Collect Space reports, "...There is no record of the location of the New York Apollo 11 lunar sample display as of 2012. The New York State Museum also has no knowledge of its whereabouts."

However, NCL is happy to confirm that Vermont's specimens are well-curved, as a valuable part of the state's heritage.

Teresa Teixeira Greene, Vermont Historical Society collections manager, confirmed Gutheinz's findings.

"We (just) don't know a whole lot of details about them," Teixeira Greene told NCL. "They were presented by NASA to the state of Vermont, who in turn donated them to us. (We're a semi-private institution.) As far as I can find in our records, there was little to no fanfare when they were transferred into our collection."

It is unknown if the state had the legal authority to donate its specimens to a semi-private entity. But since half a century has passed, no one seems to be quibbling about it. But according to Gutheinz, "When the Moonrock is gifted to the state it becomes state property subject to state law. That said, it is still a national treasure and cannot be bought or sold."

VHS' Teixeira Greene noted that the Apollo 11 pedestal of samples were given to the organization in 1970 through Gov. Deane C. Davis. It contains four, 50-milligram fragments sieved from the lunar surface brought back by Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin, Jr. on the historic first-landing Apollo 11 flight in July 1969. This gift was presented to Vermont by President Richard Nixon.

"The lunar fragments (in Vermont) are encased in resin, and the whole front of the pedestal is covered in plexiglass. The small flag on the front was carried on the mission," Teixeira Greene said.

Another lunar specimen in Vermont, also presented by President Nixon, is from the Moon's Taurus Littrow Valley. It appears to be basalt, similar chemically to Hawaiian lava rock.

"It was brought back as part of the Apollo 17 mission, on the spacecraft America, Dec. 7-19, 1972," Teixeira Greene said. "The flag on the plaque was also carried on the craft as part of the mission."

Apollo 17 was the last

lunar-landing mission.

VHS has another Apollo-related plaque, too, and it's from the Apollo Applications Program's Project Skylab.

"The plaque was given to us along with a poster that is inscribed, 'To the people of the State of Vermont. For their contribution to making the dream of a manned earth-orbiting space station a reality,' and signed by Skylab 3 astronauts Alan Bean, Owen Garriot, and Jack Lousma. The flag attached to the poster was carried onboard the Skylab. The (Skylab) logo on the poster is printed on nylon, cut out, and applied to the poster board."

Can Vermont taxpayers, who footed the bill for NASA's lunar missions and the collecting of rock samples, get an up-close, personal look at the rare extraterrestrial rock specimens?

"Unfortunately, COVID restrictions make an in-person visit difficult (right now)," she told NCL. "(But) we were lucky enough to receive some grant funding to cover an inventory project that includes rephotographing the collection."

Gutheinz believes all the Apollo lunar rocks donated to the states should be on permanent public view.

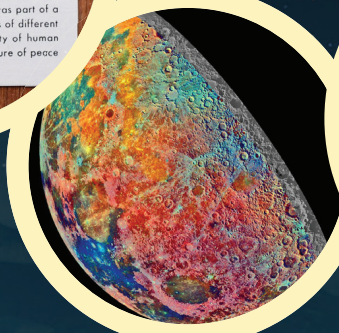
"The intent behind the United States of America gifting Apollo 11 and 17 Moon rocks to the nations, states, and territories is to share history with the public and inspire the young," he said. "A state can display its Moon rocks or not, but when they don't, they ignore the motivation behind why the Moon rocks were gifted." 🦋

"VERMONT'S SPECIMENS ARE WELL-CURATED, AS A VALUABLE PART OF THE STATE'S HERITAGE."



◀ An Apollo 17 lunar rock specimen is preserved by the Vermont Historical Society in Barre. It was a gift to the state by President Richard Nixon. (Vermont Historical Society)

This false-color mosaic by NASA's Galileo spacecraft flew over the Moon on Dec. 7, 1992. Pinkish areas are highland rock, such as those surrounding the Crisium impact basin (bottom of picture). Blue to orange shades indicate lava flows. (NASA/JPL)



(Photo provided by NASA)



Apollo 17 crew. (NASA)



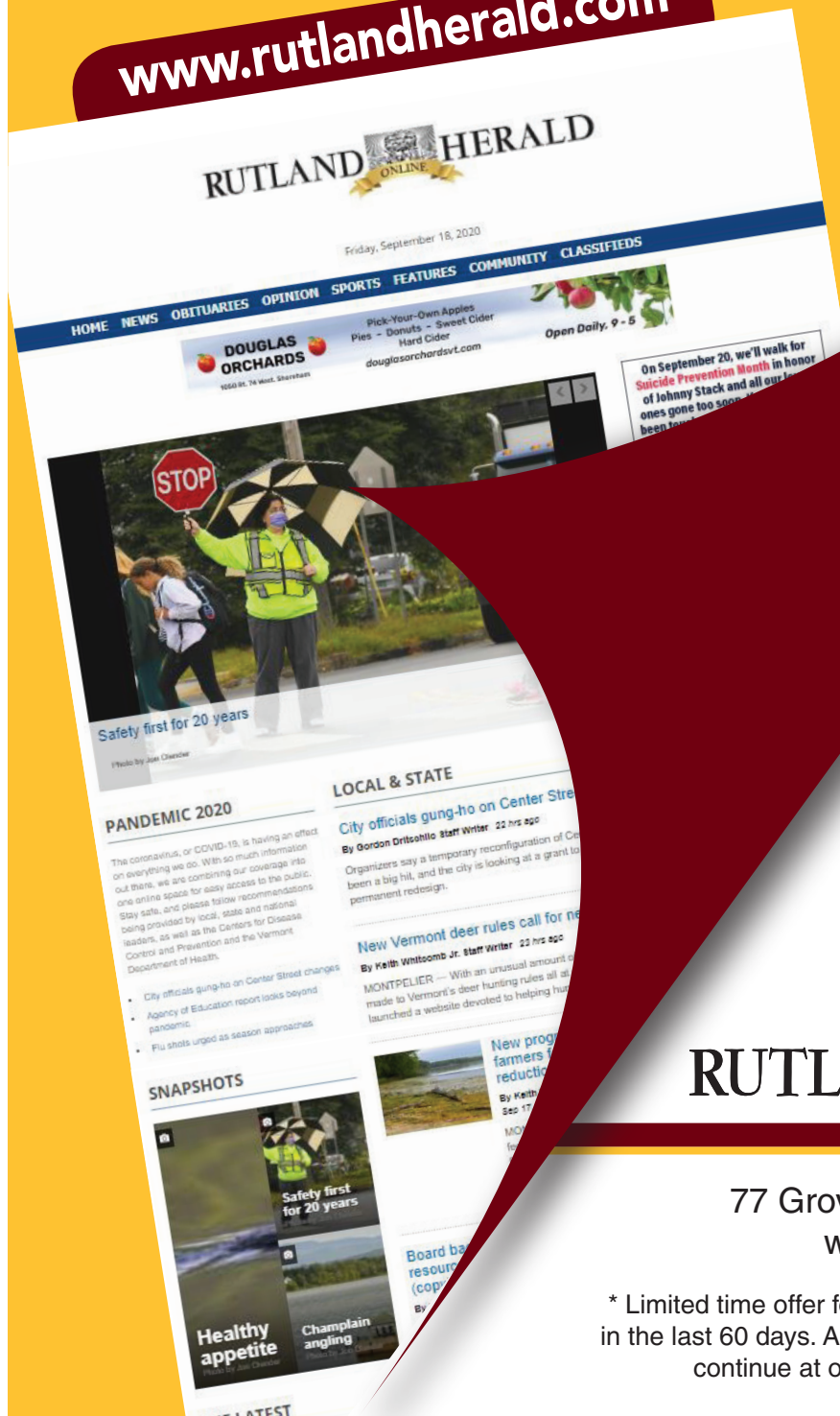
Apollo 11 crew, 1969. (NASA)

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NORWICH

# MONTSHIRE MUSEUM

## BIG SCIENCE IN LITTLE NORWICH

By **PETER COBB**

One of the first rooms many children run to at the Montshire Museum of Science is the bubble room, where they make bubbles the size of pumpkins, catch bubbles falling from a bubble machine, spray dozens of bubbles into the air, stretch a bubble sheet four feet or more before it bursts and occasionally get a bit soapy. Bubble-making and children are a perfect fit.

The bubble room is just one of more than 150 exhibits relating to the natural and physical sciences, ecology and technology. Located on 110 acres, with more than 150 STEM-based exhibits, and three miles of nature trails, the Montshire offers opportunities for science

exploration, both inside and outdoors. Outside the main building, there is a 3-acre science park, including a scale model of the solar system and interactive exhibits on water, light, sound and motion.

"At the Montshire, we aim to awaken and encourage a lifelong interest in science through experiences dedicated to hands-on discovery and education for people of all ages," said Trish Palao, marketing and communications manager.

This summer, the Montshire is featuring a special exhibition, "Summer of Dinosaurs." Through this exhibition, visitors can explore the lives of dinosaurs, big and small, through hands-on exhibits about dinosaur eggs and babies, dramatic dinosaur fossil specimens, and a series of special events and programs for children

and adults. This exhibition includes the exhibit "Amazing Allosauruses," featuring a life-sized adult (23 feet long) and a juvenile Allosaurus, in the Montshire's main atrium gallery.

On the second floor, visitors can catch a rare and glimpse at the lives of dinosaurs through their eggs, nests, and embryos in "Tiny Titans: Dinosaur Eggs and Babies." This hands-on exhibition offers an array of authentic dinosaur eggs and nests collected from all over the globe, including those of each of the major plant- and meat-eating dinosaur groups.

Visitors also can observe a variety of greenery at the Prehistoric Plant Life exhibit, and learn about the origins of current-day plant species.

The Montshire, like all museums and art galleries in Vermont, has made



PHOTOGRAPH BY SETH POMERANTZ

Above, A-mazing Airways exhibit from the exhibition Air Works. Right, Giant Bubbles exhibit from the exhibition Bubbles: Science in Soap.

significant adjustments to deal with COVID 19 rules.

“In the interest of public health, the Montshire has implemented health practices and modified our gallery spaces to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for visitors,” Palao said.

Masks are required at the museum for all visitors over the age of three. All exhibits are appropriately distanced to make sure that visitor groups can effectively practice social distancing. There are multiple hand-sanitizing stations at various areas, and continual air exchange through its heating and air ventilation systems. The museum is closely observing the guidelines from the State of Vermont, and will adjust its visitor guidelines as the situation changes.

“While the pandemic has limited the number of visitors we can have at the Montshire, it has also presented new and creative ways for us to connect with



PHOTOGRAPH BY SETH POMERANTZ

### Ribbons at The Play Grove.

people and to help them experience science learning in exciting ways,” Palao said.

During the pandemic, the museum launched Montshire at Home, which offers online resources, such as videos and activity sheets, that are developed, hosted and curated by the Montshire’s education team. Montshire at Home also includes virtual science workshops, a multi-week virtual learning program

designed to engage learners in hands-on inquiry at home.

Members can take part in the museum’s monthly Animals Up-Close live webinar, where Montshire educators introduce a different animal every month and answer questions about them.

Starting June 1, the Montshire is open Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets must be purchased or reserved in advance for a morning arrival (10 a.m. to 1 p.m.) or afternoon arrival (1 to 5 p.m.). Visitors may arrive at any time during the session chosen and may stay until the museum closes at 5 p.m. Masks will be required at the museum this summer.

Admission fees (June 1 through Sept. 5) are \$18 for adults; \$15 for children 2-17; and free for members and children under 2 years of age.

For the most up-to-date information check the museum website at [www.montshire.org](http://www.montshire.org)



PHOTOGRAPH BY SETH POMERANTZ

### Water play at David Goudy Science Park.



**SHELBURNE**

# SHELBURNE MUSEUM

*‘Unique experience in history’*

By **PETER COBB**

**A**bout 20 years ago I was in Washington, D.C., for work. I went there every spring to attend a legislative conference on home health. Each year I made a point to visit the special art exhibits at the Smithsonian. One year, I did a double take when I learned the special exhibit was a huge exhibition from the Shelburne Museum in Vermont. That exhibition affirmed what many Vermonters already knew: the Shelburne Museum is not only an important museum in Vermont but a nationally recognized museum of fine art and American history.

Shelburne Museum’s world-renowned collections of art and Americana span four centuries, and include some of the most outstanding examples anywhere of fine and decorative arts, folk art, circus collections, textiles, toys, carriages, decoys, paintings from French Impressionism to American ingenuity and more.

Founder Electra Havemeyer Webb

described the museum as a “collection of collections.” The museum’s extraordinary holdings, numbering more than 100,000 items, defy simple description.

“What other museum in the world displays paintings by Claude Monet and Andrew Wyeth alongside duck decoys, carousel animals, and a completely intact side-wheel steamboat?” said Leslie Wright, director of advancement.

“Shelburne Museum is an unparalleled and unique experience of American history, art, and design. Designed to allow visitors the pleasure of discovery and exploration, the museum includes 39 distinct structures on 45 acres, each filled with beautiful, fascinating, and whimsical objects. Among these are 25 significant examples of historic New England architecture, relocated to the Museum grounds to provide a historic setting for the Museum’s treasures. From our lush gardens and historic New England architecture, to American folk art and French Impressionist paintings, this unconventional and totally immersive

museum experience will delight visitors of all ages,” Wright said.

This summer the museum has planned a variety of exhibitions and programs, including exhibits that provide visitors with special opportunities to engage with the work of contemporary artists and designers, loans from important collections in America and beyond, and selections from the museum’s expansive collections.

The two major summer exhibitions are “Revisiting America: The Prints of Currier & Ives” and “New England Now: People.”

The Currier and Ives exhibit will explore how the largest printmaking company in 19th-century America visualized the nation’s social, political and industrial fabric.

New England Now: People will feature regional contemporary artists and celebrate the communities and people of New England. This multi-media exhibition is designed to facilitate rich conversation on a variety of socio-political issues and topics relevant to our region and beyond.



This past year the museum was hit hard by COVID 19.

“For the first time in Shelburne Museum’s 73-year history, we were forced to close the campus last spring. COVID 19 was the single biggest challenge the museum has ever faced,” Wright said.

Because of the pandemic, 154 programs were canceled and revenue dropped by \$2.5 million, 24 percent of its operating budget.

“Even with these sizable challenges, the museum did not stop delivering on its mission. In fact, in some ways our mission was more important than ever. We just had to figure out new ways to serve our audiences,” Wright said.

Some changes included adding online exhibitions, educational activities and webinars. The museum also used its space for community service. It opened the property for a National Guard food distribution event, handed out art kits to school children, delivered its famous peonies to area nursing homes, and harvested apples for an emergency food provider.

“We emerged from the experience with a renewed appreciation of how the museum is woven into the fabric of the community. When we reopened, tickets were initially offered free as a gesture of appreciation, and we were sold out in a matter of days,” Wright said.

The Shelburne Museum will follow all State of Vermont health guidelines for gatherings and building occupancy and will publish these guidelines on its website. Due to the pandemic, the hours of operations for the summer had not been determined by press time.

Wright said she expects a robust schedule for the summer. Check the website for virtual and in-person events related to exhibitions, events, lectures, concerts, demonstrations, and family days.

For the latest information concerning the operating schedule and admission fees visit [www.shelburnemuseum.org](http://www.shelburnemuseum.org)

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QUECHEE

# VINS

*Getting to know raptors*

By **PETER COBB**

**T**here are few sights more captivating than seeing a raptor up close. Visitors to the Vermont Institute of Natural Science experience the power and majesty of these birds on a daily basis. As soon as the restrictions lift for travel to Vermont, VINS plans to start its bird programs for the spring, summer and fall.

“We are an educational resource connecting one to nature. We offer a sense of relaxation and connection to the outdoors. We offer relevant environmental education programs for adults, families, and school children; partner with leading conservation organizations to promote environmental science field research; and operate New England’s premier avian wildlife rehabilitation clinic at the VINS Nature Center,” said Mary Davidson Graham, assistant executive director.

VINS’ mission is to motivate individuals and communities to care for the

environment through education, research, and avian wildlife rehabilitation.

“Our programs and services engage and instill in people of all backgrounds a desire to care for the wildlife and diverse natural habitats they encounter in their daily lives,” Graham said.

“We are planning several events including insect festival, mammal day, and owl festival assuming the states guidelines are allowing these group sizes. These events are not confirmed. We will be offering yoga on the Canopy Walk this summer as well,” Graham said.

VINS has been a leader in environmental education and wildlife conservation and care since 1972, and is known nationally for innovative natural science curricula and education programs for learners of all ages.

The exhibits are open including the new Forest Canopy Walk, which provides

a “bird’s eye view” of the forest, and the trails, live bird exhibits, adventure playscape and nature store.

VINS also offers virtual programs for families with one of its raptors as a private experience. This program will continue after the COVID restrictions are





lifted. VINS hopes to be back in schools this coming fall and is offering virtual learning with schools.

Due to the pandemic, VINS was closed from mid-March through mid-June of last year.

“Starting in July our live bird programs became daily with smaller time-frame for presentations, nature camp opened later than usual and we had smaller group sizes as well. The Forest Canopy Walk was a good draw for us being new, unique and outdoors,” Graham said.

Visitor totals were solid at the facility last July, August and September, but decreased dramatically in the fall when the state imposed stricter COVID rules. The visitors’ shop saw a significant decrease in business; there were fewer school field trips, and a drop in in-person learning and memberships.

But there is more to VINS. “Our live bird rehab center was the busiest it has ever been. We received over 1,000

patients last year. We predict that people seemed to be more connected to nature due to the restrictions and ventured outdoors more frequently feeling a sense of connection to nature. We are very grateful for this,” Graham said.

All state mandated pandemic-related restrictions will be in place for the spring and summer, including mask wearing and social distancing. There will be no exceptions. Tickets are available online, which allows less time at the admissions window.

The VINS Nature Center campus is accessible for wheelchairs and strollers. The McKnight Trail and the Forest Canopy Walk are ADA-accessible, allowing visitors of all abilities and ages to experience the outdoors and get eye level with the treetops.

Summer hours are daily operation from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. To plan a visit, or attend educational programs, Graham suggest visitors first check the VINS website at [www.vinsweb.org](http://www.vinsweb.org), or call 802-359-5000.

All activities are included with general admission to the VINS Nature Center: Adults, \$17.50; Seniors (62 plus), \$16.50; College Students, \$16.50. (ID Required); Educators & Veterans, \$16.50; Youth (4-17), \$15; children 3 & under and are VINS members are free. Tickets must be purchased in advance.



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# Explore Magazine

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We are looking for high resolution photo submissions of 300 dpi or higher in .jpeg format. The more vibrant the colors, the better. Judging will be done by our editors taking into consideration exposure, focal point, color and contrast as well as subject matter.

**The deadline for submissions is May 7, 2021.  
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**BARRE**

# A PETRIFIED FOREST IN BARRE CEMETERIES

“Little Maggie” 1907 Hope Cemetery



Alvah Hutchins monument  
in Wilson Cemetery



Marforio Hope Cemetery



William Blake Elmwood Cemetery

## By PAUL HELLER

**A**s many will attest, cemeteries in Barre – the Granite Capital of the World – have a remarkable selection of artistic and noteworthy monuments. They run the gamut from historically significant to breathtakingly beautiful with works of extraordinary creativity and sculptural expertise on rampant display.

Amid this garden of sculpture there is one genre that was familiar 100 years ago that today seems, at first glance, eccentric, but nevertheless has origins in a bygone artistic movement.

These unusual monuments are sometimes called “tree stump tombstones,” and, while more common in the Midwest, there are representative examples in cemeteries throughout Vermont, with several impressive specimens around Barre.

A prime illustration of this monumental form in Wilson Cemetery on Quarry Hill in Barre Town marks the remains of Alvah B. Hutchins and family. Hutchins was born in West Fairlee in 1860 and moved to Barre in the 1890s. He had been a businessman in Barre but, at the time of his death, he was employed at the quarry of Marr & Gordon. He was only 53 when he succumbed to heart disease. In the fashion of many tree stump tombstones, the family plot is marked with a large (at least six feet tall) tree trunk bearing the family name

carved in large block letters. Then, in a naturalistic fashion, specific family members’ graves are indicated with short sections of limbs bearing the individual names. There are four rustic bolts of wood (carved in granite) in front of the Hutchins tree trunk.

One notable feature of the monument is a small iron medallion indicating that Hutchins was a member of the International Order of Odd Fellows. This fraternal organization has a long history in Britain and the United States and, like many of the early fraternal lodges, operated as a benevolent organization dedicated to the support of widows and orphans, at times, providing “insurance policies” for their members. One of their first orders of a member was to “visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead and educate the orphan.”

Interestingly, the origins of the tree stump tombstone began with the same obligation of a different fraternal order that saw its founding in Omaha, Nebraska.

In 1883, Joseph Root organized the Modern Woodmen of America as a mutual aid society, according to writer Jim Davenport. The main benefit to being a member was “that, upon death, the other members would pass around a hat and donate money to the widow.” Eventually, the fraternal order became a mutual benefit society bearing a greater resemblance to a typical insurance company.

By 1890 Root formed a spin-off group, Woodmen of the World. The WOW organization developed conventional life insurance products for its members that included a free tombstone fashioned to resemble a tree trunk. One provision in the policy stipulated that the logo of the organization be incorporated in the monument's design. The organization had detailed drawings, which were mailed to tombstone dealers nationwide, ensuring that all of the grave markers had a uniform appearance. To this generic motif, individuals could add lettering or symbols of their own choosing, allowing for a degree of customization. Modifications could be made to the standard design depending on a customer's preference or budget.


A specific design, for example, could be made more affordable just by reducing its size or eliminating certain features. Near the eastern edge of Hope Cemetery in Barre stands a miniature version of a granite tree stump that bears only the epitaph "Little Maggie – 1907." A grief-stricken mother and father memorialized their infant daughter in this fashion with a miniature monument carved in the rustic style. While the Woodmen organization is not prevalent today in Barre, the city hosted the Modern Woodmen statewide convention in 1917. The organization's local headquarters were in the Scampini Block on North Main Street.

Only one of the tree stump monuments in Barre suggests an affiliation with a fraternal order. It is possible that, when the stonecutters in the local granite sheds were commissioned to produce these tombstones for members of the fraternal lodges, they were inspired to replicate these designs to mark the graves of their friends and family who were not lodge members.

By the early 20th century, the Vermont Marble Company offered a version of the tree stump tombstone in its catalog of designs. The monument was available to those who were not members of the fraternal order. In fact, the early 20th century Sears and Roebuck catalog had a Tombstones and Monuments supplement that offered a four foot tall version in Proctor marble for \$28.75.

Rusticism, or the rustic style, was a design phenomenon in 19th century

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WRITE US FOR FREIGHT RATES, and we will give you a guaranteed freight cost to your home station. The illustration does not do this monument justice, although it is engraved from the monument itself. It must be seen on your cemetery lot to be fully appreciated.

See pages 60 and 61 for some popular verse inscriptions.

**DIMENSIONS:** Nos. 22P900 and 22P901. Total height over all, 4 feet. Size of base, 1 foot 5 inches by 1 foot 5 inches by 1 foot. Size of tree trunk, 3 feet by 1 foot by 1 foot. Weight, 825 pounds.

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| No. 22P900 Price, Acme Blue Dark Vein.....        | \$28.75 |
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**DIMENSIONS:** Nos. 22P902 and 22P903. Total height over all, 4 feet 4 inches. Size of base, 1 foot 7 inches by 1 foot 7 inches by 1 foot 2 inches. Tree trunk, 3 feet 2 inches by 1 foot 2 inches by 1 foot 2 inches. Weight, 1,200 pounds.

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| No. 22P902 Price, Acme Blue Dark Vein.....        | \$36.43 |
| No. 22P903 Price, White Acme Rutland Italian..... | \$44.18 |

**DIMENSIONS:** Nos. 22P904 and 22P905. Total height over all, 4 feet 10 inches. Size of base, 1 foot 10 inches by 1 foot 10 inches by 1 foot 4 inches. Tree trunk, 3 feet 6 inches by 1 foot 4 inches by 1 foot 4 inches. Weight, 1,750 pounds.

|   |         |
|---|---------|
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PROVIDED IMAGE

Sears catalog advertisement.

America that idealized the fundamental values of rural life. One need only think of Adirondack-style furniture to imagine this quality as a design type. The aim was to emulate nature and blend in with the natural forms of the surrounding countryside. For a rustic tombstone, the tree motif would have been a natural choice for a vertical monument.

Gaudenzio Marforio has a beautiful monument in Hope Cemetery. He was just 27 when he died in a fall from a streetcar near Benjamin Falls. He was a stone cutter for Marr & Gordon and had emigrated from Italy in 1903. He married the next year but soon died trying to rescue his hat. According to the Barre Times: "Marforio was standing on the running board of a Barre bound car, talking with some companions who were in the seats, when the wind suddenly took his hat. Witnesses say that he turned and, looking back for an instant, jumped from the platform. The car was going at a fast rate and when the man struck the ground a few feet from where the car passes over the brook which comes down from the falls, he was thrown backwards and down into the brook, a distance of four or five feet."

Marforio's beautifully rendered monument features a photograph inset of the handsome young man.

Joseph (Giuseppi) Bielli was born in Italy and came to Barre in 1917 to work

as a stonecutter. He had been in Quincy, Massachusetts, another granite town, before taking a job in a Barre stone shed. In October 1918 he succumbed to influenza during the deadliest weeks of the virus. In Barre, 200 men, women, and children died during a three-week period. His rugged tree trunk monument in Hope Cemetery is beautifully carved and perfectly expresses the rustic style in this form.

In St. Monica's Cemetery on Beckley Hill on Barre there is just one example of this type of design. As, perhaps, befits a Catholic Cemetery, the Chioldi monument is in the form of a cross and, as with a surprising number of memorials, it is dedicated to the tragedy of an infant dying in childbirth. In this case, Antonio and Emilinda's infant son lived but a few minutes after a birth complicated by a difficult presentation. The sad result was asphyxiation. Antonio Chioldi was a Barre granite manufacturer.

Amazingly, there is a book on this topic. "Tree Stump Tombstones" by Suzanne Ridlen underscores the fact that "cemeteries and grave markers are mirrors of culture. In the same sense, a single style of gravestone – the tree stump tombstone – may be said to reflect the social and religious values of their time."

This is, perhaps, nowhere more true than in Barre.

# *How to* **GROW** & use **HERBS**

**By Deena Bouknight**

MORE CONTENT NOW

USA TODAY NETWORK

**G**ardening experienced a resurgence last spring when so many people found themselves at home because of COVID-19 precautions. And cultivating herbs is a way for gardening newbies to test their green thumbs.

Herbs can be grown not only in the ground, but in pots on patios, decks and porches, as well as in windowsill planters and self-irrigating high-tech hydroponic devices equipped with grow lights.

In late April 2020, gardeningknowhow.com pointed out that herbs primarily require just the necessities: light and water. Some easy-to-grow-in-pots herbs that can be used to spice various recipes are parsley, chives, basil, thyme, cilantro and dill.

Other herbs, such as oregano, creeping rosemary and mint, spread out when they grow and are ideal for ground cover.

Food Network's "Guide to Fresh Herbs" shared the culinary versatility of many common herbs, noting they add distinction and a flavor boost to

egg dishes, spreads, sauces, soups, vegetables, meats, fruit and even some desserts. Food Network's lemon-dill butter spruces shrimp; homemade potato chips are dressed with blue cheese and chives; and pesto can be

made with several different herbs.

Herbs like basil and mint add a unique flavor profile to vanilla ice cream; and, paired with lemon juice and zest, several different fresh herbs make creative and delicious shortbread cookies. Tablespoon.com's recipe, for example, suggests rosemary, thyme and sage, either chopped or left in a sprig or leaf, to cook into and adorn the tops of the cookies.

Gardeningknowhow.com added that herb growers should choose herbs not only for taste but aroma

as well. Lightly rubbing and then smelling lemon thyme, peppermint or lavender leaves, for example, can provide a pick-me-up, whether at home or in a workplace.

And when herbs grow too quickly to use while fresh, drying is easy.

HGTV.com last April instructed: "Place herb leaves on a cookie sheet one inch deep or less.

Leave them in an oven on less than 180 degrees

F for 2-4 hours." Or, tie herbs at the stems and hang them upside down in a dry spot. Dried herbs can be crumbled and kept in jars — or tied in a satchel.

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## The Frontier Spirit of

# FORT VENGEANCE



Fort Vengeance was built, on the other side of Pittsford Ridge, in the wake of the 1777 Battle of Hubbardton. Pictured: Hubbardton War of Independence Battlefield (Petersent/public domain).



Locals got to know Davies via her byline appearing in several local papers, as well as her "Neighborly Notes" column (which appeared in *The Sun-Vermont Eagle* during the 2000s). She penned "Camp With A Song In Its Heart", a history of Pittsford's Camp Betsey Cox, a girls summer camp founded by Davies and her husband Charles Davies in 1953. She also co-authored another local history volume, titled "Pittsford's Second Century: 1872-1997".

Davies lived in the same Pittsford house since the year of her birth, 1927; as a graduate of Middlebury College, she was respected for her dedication to the preservation of Pittsford's past as well as for her scholarly work related to the history of Rutland and Addison counties.

Among Davies' many areas of study was the frontier fortress known as Fort Vengeance. She was likely the most knowledgeable person regarding fort personalities and lore, as scant as this history may be.

Located along what would become U.S. Route 7, Fort Vengeance stood on guard in a valley that in the 1770s was the wild west of New England. Across Lake Champlain were New Yorkers, not always welcome by the fiercely independent Vermont settlers, and those loyal to King George III across the Atlantic Ocean in England. Even in the years immediately after the American Revolution, western Vermont was the scene of Native American attacks and troublemaking by white smugglers.

In the case of the Abenaki people, it was natural for them to defend their homeland from the encroachment of settlers arriving from Connecticut. In those days, Pittsford was a makeshift frontier town, freshly hewn out of the dense forest of the valley of the Otter Creek.



Middlebury College graduate, historian, and Pittsford native Jean Davies (1927-2018) was the foremost authority on the history of Vermont's Fort Vengeance. (The Davies Family)

By Lou Varricchio

The late Pittsford, Vermont-based historian and writer Jean S. Davies is fondly remembered by many local residents. Davies possessed a wealth of knowledge about the people, places, and historic events of Rutland and Addison counties.

When Davies passed away in 2018, locals were deeply saddened by the milestone event. In addition to serving many years on the local planning commission, she is perhaps best remembered as the long-time, dedicated curator of the Pittsford Historical Society.



Fort Vengeance sported four corner log towers used by observers and sharpshooters. Pictured: Apple Fort in Illinois (Ivo Shandor/public domain).

## REVOLUTIONARY WAR

According to Davies' account, in 1777, immediately following the Revolutionary War's Battle of Hubbardton (which was fought as a rearguard action by American troops against British General John Burgoyne's troops on the west side of Pittsford Ridge), local residents were evacuated to Rutland for protection.

Within a few months, residents returned to the frontier settlement. Many of the settlers realized that they were being asked to serve as a "safe refuge" should the British ever cross the ridge and attack the Otter Creek Valley. Thus, something needed to be done in the area of defense. This first serious response saw the hasty construction of Fort Mott. (Fort Mott preceded Fort Vengeance by three years and stood about a mile from it.)

British Maj. Christopher Carleton's terror raid down Lake Champlain in the autumn of 1778 also shook up the local settlers; however, Carlton's mixed band of Redcoat and Mohawk raiders didn't attack as far south as Pittsford. While they burned farms and a sawmill in Middlebury, Carlton went north to terrorize Vermonters, including

attacks on Shoreham, New Haven, Monkton, and Shelburne. A second British terror campaign, known as the "Burning of the Valleys" also took place along Vermont's Connecticut River Valley the same year.

"Volunteers fortified three-fourths of an acre at the residence of William Cox, on the east bank of Otter Creek, with a high breastwork of hemlock logs set endwise on the ground. A log dwelling sat in the center, Named Fort Mott, after John Mott who often acted as fort commander, the fort was later strengthened at the expense of the government (the Republic of Vermont but also called the Republic of New Connecticut)," according to Davies' account.

A small garrison of soldiers from Rutland occupied Fort Mott but it wasn't long before the fort was plagued by mosquitoes, excessive damp, and rotting timber. Pittsford settlers demanded a better fort at a better-defended location that was less prone to flooding.

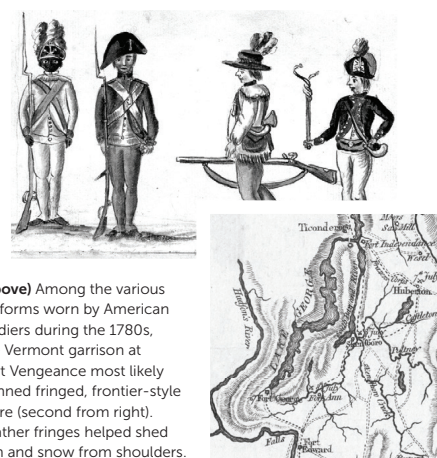
By late 1779, a local surveyor plotted out the site of a new fort, and construction began, employing many local lumbermen. Women helped, too, some swinging axes with the men, while others provided the construction team with meals and freshwater.

Fort Vengeance was plotted on an upland a few hundred feet above Otter Creek. The site was approximately one mile northeast of the crumbling Fort Mott, in a narrow part of the valley between the Green Mountain and the Taconic ranges.

And while the new fort would have a commanding view to the west, its eastern backside was outflanked by the Green Mountains. Thankfully, no aggressor ever attacked the log fort from the Green Mountain side of the valley.

## A WOODEN CITADEL

"Like other Vermont forts, Fort Vengeance was a picket fort with trunks of hard maple and beech sunk closely together into



(Above) Among the various uniforms worn by American soldiers during the 1780s, the Vermont garrison at Fort Vengeance most likely donned fringed, frontier-style attire (second from right). Leather fringes helped shed rain and snow from shoulders. (Jean-Baptiste-Antoine DeVerger). (Right) A map of British Gen. John Burgoyne's 1777 Champlain Valley campaign. It shows roads and approaches used before and after the Battles of Ticonderoga and Hubbardton. Fort Vengeance was later built above the Otter Creek, southeast of Ticonderoga, on the right side of the map. (Boston Public Library Digital Map collection).

**"Stand your ground. Don't  
fire unless fired upon, but if they  
mean to have a war,  
LET IT BEGIN HERE!"**

Capt. John Parker, 1775

According to Davies' brief history of Fort Vengeance, one of the few published accounts of the fort, the wooden citadel was small and primitive. In "Defending Vermont's Western Frontier", which appeared in *The Vermont Eagle's The Lake* special issue in July 2002, Davies reported that the Pittsford stockade was built in response to the neglect of Fort Mott, located a few miles to the south, in Rutland.

"The settlers resolved to build a new fort with a large garrison," according to Davies. "They agreed with the Vermont Board of War in 1779 to contribute liberally to the expense. The new fort was near the north line of Pittsford on Caleb Hendee's farm and had a barracks for 150 men."

Many travelers along Route 7 in Pittsford speed by the site of Fort Vengeance, most likely unaware of the turbulent frontier history that took place at the site. A 19th-century marble monument, still tended by the Pittsford Historical Society, stands on the west side of the highway, just north of the New England Maple Museum. The fading inscription on the monument tells the story of the fort and those who sacrificed their lives in Pittsford's defense.

**“By the 1870s a stage road (today’s U.S. Route 7) to Brandon and Middlebury covered the acre**

# WHERE THE FORT ONCE STOOD.”

a trench five or six feet deep,” Davies wrote. “They extended 16 or 17 feet above the ground and were sharpened at the top.”

In turn, the fort’s breastwork was composed of packed dirt, actually sticky clay, and rot-resistant coniferous logs. This breastwork stood six feet in height.

Fort Vengeance was not a large fort by the colonial standards of Forts Ticonderoga and Crown Point. It was square in shape and enclosed at least an acre. Four two-story log towers stood at each corner of the palisaded fort with enclosed platforms and gun ports for Vermont’s best sharpshooters.

Pittsford’s new fort was completed in June 1780 with extra work done by five men to fire chimney bricks made from local clay.

The new commander of Fort Vengeance, Maj. Ebenezer Allen, was on hand to oversee the citadel’s finishing touches.

Up until the completion of the fort in June, it still remained unnamed. Probably a few residents figured the place would retain the “Fort Mott” appellation. But in fact, its official name was yet to come and would be inspired by an act of frontier violence.

“Soon after the men were established at the fort,” Davies wrote, “a local soldier named Caleb Houghton went unarmed to the house of Mrs. Joshua June to pick up his laundry. Shortly after he left her house Mrs. June heard a gunshot and saw an Indian killing Houghton. Major Allen, furious at the loss of a good soldier, made strenuous but unsuccessful efforts to find the Indian. He publically vowed

‘vengeance’ against all Indians that should come within his power and as a memorial of his vow, he smashed a bottle of rum against the fort’s gate and christened the place, Fort Vengeance.”

The killing of Houghton sent verbal alarms up and down the valley of the Otter Creek.

Small raiding parties of Indians and local Tories (still loyal to the King of England) harassed the settlers of Pittsford for months. Musket fire was often heard and tomahawks were found hurled at unsuspecting cabin doors and fence posts. Meanwhile, the men of Fort Vengeance stood guard with skilled sentries posted in the corner towers.

Small groups of soldiers patrolled outside the palisade walls, checking in on residents to gather intelligence on Tory and Indian guerilla movements in the region. Thus, during the rest of the summer of 1781 and into the following spring and summer, armed sentries were seen out in the fields as the settlers planted their crops of wheat, rye, corn, and table vegetables.

## THE BATTLE OF FORT VENGEANCE

In May 1781, according to Davies’ research, Pittsford settler Jabez Olmstead was out in his field when he saw Indians creeping in nearby brush. Without soldiers close at hand, Olmstead, too far from his cabin, hid in the woods until the next morning. He deemed a retreat to his home or the nearby fort to be too dangerous. But at dawn, when he returned, he found his cabin destroyed.

“(Fort Vengeance) soldiers immediately went in pursuit of the destroyers and during their absence, the Indians attacked the fort. With only three men in it, women seized muskets and fought successfully with the men to defend the fort.

A month later, Fort Vengeance faced a possible second serious assault.

In June, a large force of St. Lawrence Coughnawaga Mohawks, under the command of the skilled warrior Chief Tomo, were in the nearby

hills planning an attack on the fort. For the local settlers, luck played a factor in the incident. An Army scout from Fort Vengeance spied the war party and surmised a surprise attack was in the offing. The intelligence was reported to Captain Brookins at the fort.

Brookins was able to plot a secret plan and ambush the Mohawks before a second battle at the fort could take place, according to Davies.

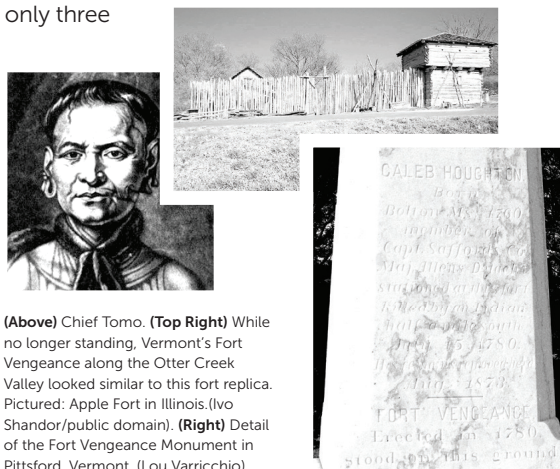
Preemptive fighting ensued with several Mohawks receiving wounds. But more than a few of the fort’s soldiers were rattled psychologically by the threat of the powerful Native force.

“After the war, Chief Tomo opened a public house where Captain Brookins chanced to stop in 1800,” according to Davies. “Brookins asked the cause of the landlord’s limp and Tomo replied, ‘Me wounded at the Pittsford fort.’”

By the first decade of the 19th century, Fort Vengeance was in shambles. The Vermont frontier had been settled and many of the local Indians moved on to the north or into the Adirondacks. In a short time, settlers picked the bones of the old fort, removing logs, bricks, and tools left behind by Major Allen’s men.

By the 1870s a stage road (today’s U.S. Route 7) to Brandon and Middlebury covered the acre where the fort once stood. In a short time, all surface signs that a fortified stockade stood there vanished into the earth.

To date, only one artifact of Fort Vengeance has been identified; it’s a segment of a surprisingly well-preserved palisade log dated to 1780. Fortunately, it is preserved for posterity in the Pittsford Historical Society Museum. 🦋



(Above) Chief Tomo. (Top Right) While no longer standing, Vermont’s Fort Vengeance along the Otter Creek Valley looked similar to this fort replica. Pictured: Apple Fort in Illinois. (Ivo Shandor/public domain). (Right) Detail of the Fort Vengeance Monument in Pittsford, Vermont. (Lou Varricchio)

# Make a great impression with dessert



## PLANNING AHEAD

The cake may be made a day in advance. Wrap in plastic wrap and store at room temperature.

**E**ntrées might be the focal point of a meal, but dessert provides the final impression people will have after sitting down to break bread together. Home cooks who want their guests to leave the dinner table patting their bellies in appreciation of a fine dessert can try the following recipe for ‘Espresso-Chocolate Chip Angel Food Cake’ from Emily Luchetti’s “Classic Stars Desserts” (Chronicle Books).

### Espresso-Chocolate Chip Angel Food Cake

Serves 10 to 12

- 2 teaspoons instant espresso powder
- 1 1/3 cups cake flour, sifted
- 1/8 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 3/4 cups (about 12 large) egg whites
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1 3/4 cups granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 1/4 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 3/4 cup bittersweet chocolate chips, coarsely chopped

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Have ready an ungreased 10-inch nonstick angel food cake pan.

Sift together the espresso powder and flour onto a piece of parchment paper or into a bowl. Add the salt and set aside.

Put the egg whites in the large bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whip attachment and whip on medium speed until frothy. Add the cream of tartar, increase the speed to high and continue whipping while slowly pouring in the sugar until the whites are firm and satiny, about 3 minutes.

Reduce the speed to low, add the vanilla and lemon juice and then add the dry ingredients. When the flour mixture is almost completely incorporated, remove the bowl from the mixer stand and fold in the chocolate chips with a spatula. Make sure that the chips are spread evenly throughout the batter and that the flour mixture is evenly incorporated. But be careful not to overmix, or you will deflate the batter and the cake will not rise fully in the oven.

Pour the batter into the cake pan. Cut through the batter a few times with a table knife to break up any air pockets. Bake until a skewer inserted into the center comes out clean, 40 to 45 minutes. Invert the cake and let cool completely upside down in the pan. (If the pan does not have feet, balance the inverted pan on the neck of a bottle or rest the edge of the pan rim on 3 or 4 ramekins.)

To unmold the cake, run a long knife around the inside edge of the pan. Then, holding the center tube, free the cake from the pan sides. Slip a knife between the cake and the bottom of the pan to loosen the cake and gently flip the cake over, letting it fall onto a platter. (If the pan does not have a removable bottom, release the sides with the knife, then place a platter on top of the cake. Gently invert the platter and the cake together. Lift off the pan.) To server, cut into slices with a serrated knife, using a gentle sawing motion.

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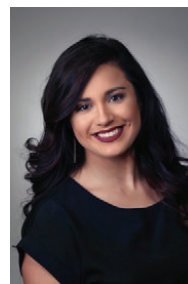
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