



GREENSBORO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Fall 2025

NEWSLETTER

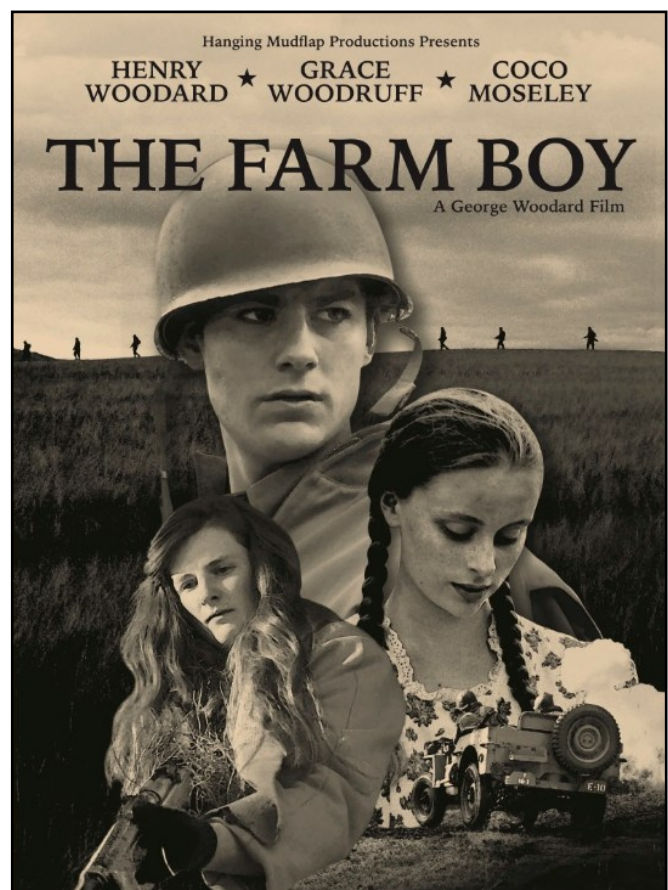
March Meeting:

The Farm Boy & Conversation with Director George Woodard

On Sunday, March 1, 2026 at 2:00pm, we will host a special screening of *The Farm Boy* at Fellowship Hall. *The Farm Boy* is a black-and-white, WWII-era love story written and directed by Vermont farmer-filmmaker George Woodard. Part love story, part adventure, the film follows a young milk-truck driver who falls in love at a barn dance only to be drafted the very next day and sent to fight in the Battle of the Bulge. The first half of the film offers a historically-accurate glimpse into the Vermont homefront, while the second half whisks us a world away to the Western Front. During intermission, Mr. Woodard will share behind-the-scenes stories and his extensive historical research that inspired this touching film. And, Greensboro can enjoy an extra dose of local pride, with several local actors taking part in the film.

This screening is a poignant lead-in to our summer exhibit, *Homefront Greensboro: 1939–1945*. As we prepare to explore how our town weathered the war, we invite you to share your own WWII-era memories, photos, and memorabilia. Your stories and artifacts will help shape the exhibit and bring Greensboro's wartime heritage into view.

Come for the film, stay for the conversation—and help us build a richer picture of Greensboro during that most challenging time. Thanks to a generous anonymous donor, the screening fee is covered. All are welcome!



Thank You for Your Support

This is a wonderful time to become a new member or continue your support to help preserve Greensboro's unique heritage. An envelope is enclosed for your contribution.

If you'd like to receive your newsletter by email, send your email address to secretary@greensborohistoricalsociety.org

President's Corner A Look at Our Year



BJ Gray

Our museum presents a new exhibit every two years of informative local history. For the last two years we've invited visitors to come aboard for our exhibit of *Rails to Trails*. What an exhibit it was! Twelve panels of information on our local railroad and much, much more. The panel topics included: trails, anecdotes, people, industry, train wrecks, trains, the maps, and the station. A history timeline showed StJ & LC Railroad Stations from the early days up to the recent Lamoille Valley Rail Trail.

An early representation of the mural painted in the Bend by Tara Goreau showed *The History of Greensboro Bend, the Village the Railroad Built*. A careful look showed a native paddling on what is now named the Lamoille River, local farm produce transported by the railroad, the engines, Smith's Store, an upside down ice cream cone, "quoin" architecture of the Methodist church, a dog eating an ice cream cone and today's trail. The mural was made possible by the Bend Revitalization Committee.

The Kids' Corner included a light board of train car matching, an interactive train table, coloring pages with activities and a Lionel train exhibit.

Heartfelt thanks to the many who prepared the exhibit, especially Renee Circosta, Kyle Gray, Leslie Rowell, Jane Johns and Mark Snyder.

The next exhibit will be *The Homefront, Greensboro 1939-1945*. Contact us if you have stories or artifacts about life in Greensboro during WW II. You can be a part of the next historical presentation.



Exhibit 2025
Rails to Trails

To learn more visit our website at www.greensborohistoricalsociety.org

Mystery Photo

In this photo labeled Sugar Camp 1924 you can see Caspian Lake and a structure. Can you identify where it is? There's a copy of the Greensboro history waiting for anyone who can reply to collections@greensborohistoricalsociety.org



Sugar Camp No 1 by The Nomad 1924

Annual Meeting Great Maple Sugar Bubble

What do tulips, cryptocurrency, and maple sugar all have in common? Bubbles!

At our Annual Meeting on August 4, Timothy Breen, Professor Emeritus of American History at Northwestern University, treated the crowd gathered at Fellowship Hall to the strange tale of New England's maple sugar bubble in the late 1700s. In what amounted to far more hype than actual success, clever profit-seekers began promoting maple sugar as a substitute for cane sugar, ostensibly to help halt the slave trade, which thrived in large part due to sugarcane plantations in the Caribbean.

Newspapers exhorted citizens to avoid the blood-and-sweat-soaked sugar of the slave trade and switch to maple sugar as the moral, patriotic choice. Popular self-help manuals appeared announcing that just about anyone could make maple sugar with a few simple tools, and misleading testimonials alleged not only that it was easy but that a mere four pounds of sap could generate a pound of maple sugar.



Dr. T. H. Breen speaking at our
Annual Meeting

The reality, of course, was quite different. People who tried to cash in on the bubble found themselves in need of expensive copper kettles, augers and taps, buckets, special casks, and a lot of fuel (which, ironically, often came from maple trees). As anyone who has nostalgically attempted old-fashioned sugaring can attest, even with all the right gear, the sugar-making process is anything but quick and easy. Boil-overs, air-borne ash and forest debris, and long, cold nights outside tending the fire proved to be unpleasant stops on the road to sweet and sellable maple sugar. Even worse, there did not seem to be any way to actually ship and sell the final (heavy) product. It seems that the only people to profit from the bubble were in fact the copper kettle suppliers.

Happily, Greensboro's founding families were able to turn the burst bubble and the end of the related real estate speculation to their advantage, acquiring the land needed to start the settlement of our town.

The evening wrapped up with audience questions followed by maple-themed refreshments. Thank you to everyone who attended!

Website & Facebook

*Check out our growing website:
www.greensborohistoricalsociety.org for videos of presentations, research tools, photos, events, past newsletters and much more.*

And follow us on Facebook and Instagram!

You can find our Facebook page by typing **@GHSVT** into the search bar of your Facebook web browser.

Looking for Christmas Gifts?

Two of the Historical Society's award-winning publications, this year's *Hazen Road Dispatch* and *40 Years of the Hazen Road Dispatch 1975-2015* are available at Willey's and also through the mail with a check for \$11 for the *HRD* and \$31 for *40 Years of the Hazen Road Dispatch* to the **GHS, PO Box 151, Greensboro 05841**.

Another great choice with local connections is Allen Davis' book, *The Lucky Generation*. (see page 4).

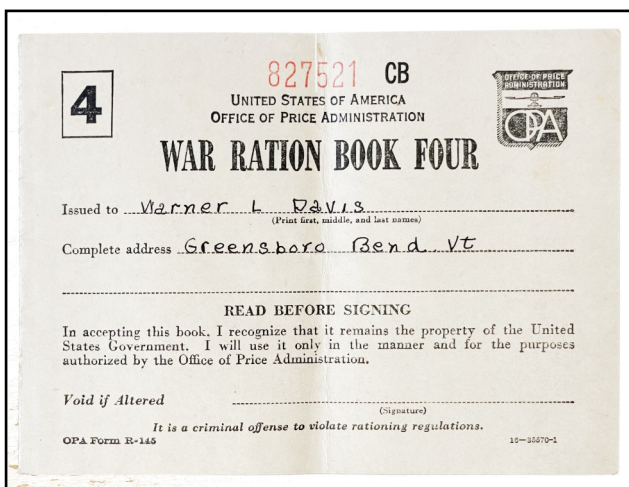
Homefront Greensboro: 1939–1945

Next summer, GHS will open its newest exhibit, *Homefront: Greensboro 1939-1945*, a vivid exploration of daily life in a small rural Vermont town during World War II. While stories of the front lines often dominate the narrative of the 1940s, this exhibit turns attention to the daily lives of families, farmers, and the broader community whose adaptation and quiet resilience helped to sustain society.

Drawing on diaries, letters, photographs, scrapbooks, and donated household artifacts, the exhibit will recreate the rhythms of a town transformed by a distant war. Visitors will see how rationing food and gas reshaped meal planning and mobility in a community that supported farms, small businesses, and vacationers alike.

The Historical Society hopes the exhibit will remind visitors that wartime sacrifice extended far beyond the battlefield. In quiet valleys and village centers across Vermont, ordinary people rose to the challenge of maintaining a homefront into the future.

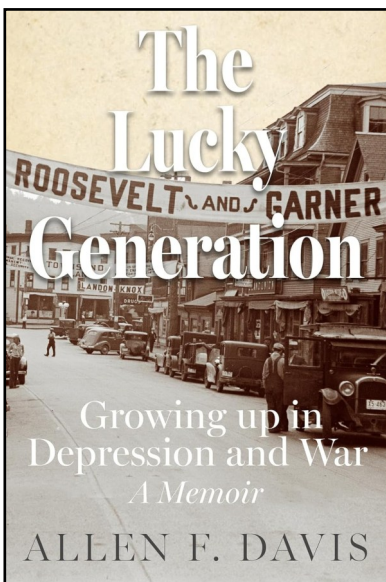
The exhibit opens to the public on July 4th and will run through August 31st.



The Lucky Generation

Growing up in Depression and War: A Memoir

By Allen F. Davis



An insightful perspective on the subject we'll be exploring next summer with our exhibit on the impact of WWII on life in Greensboro is provided in our own Allen Davis' fascinating memoir on his life in Hardwick and Greensboro.

The Lucky Generation: Growing up in Depression and War: Memoir is about memory and history and the ways they intersect and sometimes conflict. It is about growing up in the 1930s and '40s in Hardwick with summers in Greensboro, caught between the old ways and the emerging modern world. It contains both a provincial story and a universal experience, a personal story and the story of a generation. This is a book about food and material culture, movies and radio, dancing and baseball. Finally, it is about breaking away from small-town ways into a world shaped by the Depression and War.

To send inquiries or contact us, email us at collections@greensborohistoricalsociety.org

Bend Methodist Church Project Underway: Historic Building Looking at a New Future



The Methodist Church in the Bend replaced the first meeting house built in 1882 by people from the Bend, West Wheelock and Stannard and served for over a century. In January 2024 it was deconsecrated by Rev. Robinson, pastor of the Methodist Conference who said, "...we gather today with sorrow as we say goodbye to what this building has been, but we have great hope in our hearts that it will be repurposed into a useful and meaningful part of this community."

To meet this challenge a new organization, the Greensboro Community Trust (GCT), building on the work of the Bend Revitalization Initiative (BRI) to manage and fund projects to improve the social and economic conditions of the Greater Greensboro Community accepted the church as their first project.

Bend Methodist Church

This past year, the group hosted community engagement sessions which included opening the church to community members to envision the building and property's future. Following organizational work, the GCT signed an "Option to Purchase" agreement with The New England Conference of the United Methodist Church, Inc. on October 13, 2025 for a 12-month term.

The GCT is part of the inaugural cohort of Village Trust Initiative (VTI) participants. The Village Trust Initiative is a partnership program made possible by Preservation Trust of Vermont, Vermont Council on Rural Development, Vermont Community Foundation, and a Congressionally Directed Spending award from former Senator Leahy.

Board members are now working to assess water and septic issues for the property. "We are excited to be planning another great project in Greensboro Bend following the success of the Bend Revitalization Initiative with the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail," said Jane Johns, GCT Board member.

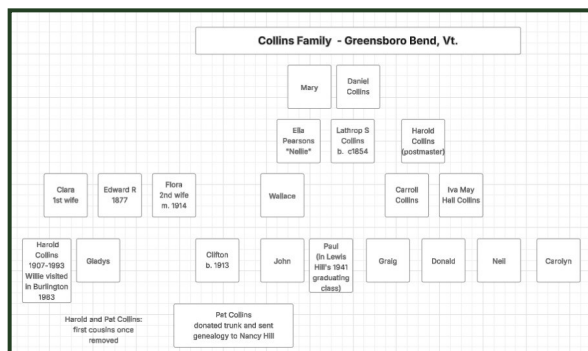
Building the GHS collection

How do we learn the story of items given to our collection? It is often a many stepped process. Here's one example.

This story began when we opened a metal box of unknown origin donated to GHS. In it were many photographs, all pertaining to Greensboro and its residents. After an extensive search, we found that the original donor was Harold Collins of Greensboro Bend.

Searching "Collins" in our catalog, a collection from another local Collins family member uncovered another collection, one also containing photographs, many identified, which helped us.

How were the donors related? Could cross referencing help with identifications? Emerging questions were solved with a genealogical chart that we constructed. The two donors were first cousins, once removed (different generations). The story continues, with more family members, and related Collections, at the Greensboro Historical Society. eventually learning even more.



Collins Family Tree constructed from research

Greensboro Historical Society
P. O. Box 151
Greensboro, VT 05841
www.greensborohistoricalsociety.org



Tom Hurst Memorial Bench
Dedicated August 11, 2025

Thank you Docents

Who are our docents? They are supporters of GHS who volunteer to open and staff our exhibits, ready to answer questions and host all who come to visit. Each one participates in a training session to become familiar with the building and both our ongoing Hill exhibit and the annual exhibit and then shows up on exhibit days. It's a wonderful way to volunteer and have interesting conversations with visitors.

I would like to give a heartfelt Thank You for this year's Docents. Your willingness to volunteer your time has once again made it possible to bring our wonderful *Rails to Trails* exhibit to those near and far. You are all greatly appreciated.

Thank you: Lise Armstrong, BJ Gray, Nancy Hill, Clive Gray, Debbie Kasper, Jane Mercaldi, Mary White and Elizabeth Garcia.

Gratefully,
Paula Harmon
Docent Coordinator



Martha Niemi (1944-2025)
was a docent for many years

GHS Newsletter

PO Box 151
Greensboro, VT 05841

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