



GREENSBORO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NUMBER 65
Spring 2026

NEWSLETTER

GHS Calendar Summer 2026

Museum Hours

July & August
Tues., Wed., Thurs. & Sat.
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Exhibits

Homefront Greensboro:
1939–1946
&
Hill Family Legacy

Opening Reception

Sunday, June 28
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
GHS Museum

Book Sale

Saturday, July 26
10:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Janet Long's Garage

Ice Cream Social

Saturday, July 26
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
GHS lawn

Annual Meeting

& Program

Monday, August 3
7:00 PM
Fellowship Hall, GUCC
Speaker Tim Breen: "The
American Revolution:
Where Did It Take
Place?"

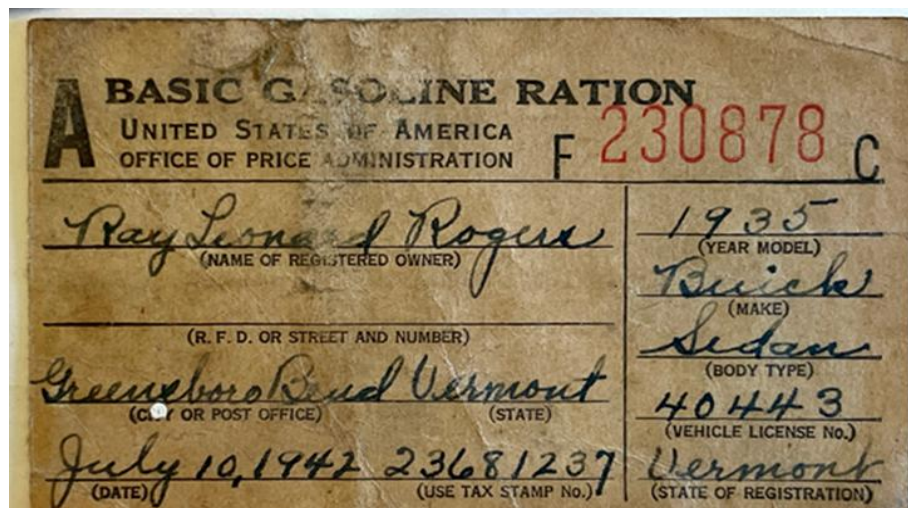
Our New Exhibit:

Homefront Greensboro: 1939–1946

Between 1939 and 1946, Vermont, along with the rest of the nation, transitioned from a society crushed by the lingering economic effects of the Great Depression into a major contributor to the Allied effort in World War II.

The new GHS exhibit, "Homefront Greensboro: 1939-1946" aims to shed light on this transformative period in Greensboro against the backdrop of World War II.

We highlight key events including mobilizing National Guard units, expanding Fort Ethan Allen, massive war bond drives, rationing, and, starting in 1946, the return home of military personnel.



Gasoline ration card from 1942

A timeline with notable local, state, national and international events will help set the background. Several panels will display information about some of those who served, how people supported the cause from home, what changed in our town life, and what stories and anecdotes from Greensboro and "away" helped characterize this period.

Our hope is that the first year of the exhibit will attract the interest and involvement of "citizen historians" to bring their own memories, stories, photos, journals or other artifacts to light to further expand this snapshot of history in Greensboro for an expanded exhibit in 2027. Please contact us if you have materials to loan or to donate.

President's Corner



BJ Gray, President

"Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or go without!" Whoa, what a great time we had with some local kids learning the real meaning of this old saying!

Our local "Learning at the Library" group visited the GHS for a tour of the Hill

Exhibit with a focus on exploring tools. The exhibit begins with Peleg Hill, an original Greensboro proprietor and a great toolmaker, who arrived at Caspian Lake in 1791.

One group met with a docent and viewed many handmade tools in the Hill Exhibit. We discussed the purpose of the tools and how they were made. Humor was included: How would you drive a nail into a board? Try your fist, or try this hammer!

The second group handled tools and tried to guess the purpose of each tool, including a gimlet, a phlebotome, and a mortar and pestle. Tobin guessed the purpose of one unknown object as an obstacle course for bugs, while Murphy guessed it was a cheese ager.

Current GHS projects include the renovation of the annex. This will be a great space for discussion, storage, and ongoing exhibits. Plans for making the front porch bulletin board an enclosed year-round space for GHS and community notices are coming together.

The *Hazen Road Dispatch* continues to capture our history thanks to Dan Penrice and his stalwart crew. This publication and many others are available for purchase at our museum book shop. Check out these titles: *The Greensboro Blockhouse Project* or *The China Journal of Captain Amos Porter*.

Speaking of the blockhouse, watch for a replica built by Jan Terweisch on the GHS float in the Funky Fourth parade in town.

Get involved, join in the fun, and help preserve our history. Our meetings are the second Tuesday of the month at 10:00am.

The Hazen Road Dispatch 2026

The forthcoming issue of *The Hazen Road Dispatch* will be the 50th since the publication became the official journal of the Greensboro Historical Society in 1977, the year of the Society's founding. The *HRD* will observe this occasion with a new article by Founding Editor Daniel A. Metraux, "The Creation of *The Hazen Road Dispatch*." Also in this issue:

- Thomas Twetten relates the background to his recent book, *Craftsbury Celebration: Old Homes, Barns, and Their Stories* (photos by Craftsbury resident Harry Miller), and tells the stories behind some of the featured buildings.
- Longtime *HRD* contributor Paul Wood presents Part II of his article "The One-Room Schoolhouse," focused on the one-room schools of Walden.
- As Hardwick awaits completion of the replacement for the town's iconic "Swinging Bridge," Elizabeth H. Dow—another veteran *HRD* contributor—tells the stories of bridges in Hardwick Village over the last 250+ years.
- Nancy Hill, one of the founders of the *HRD* and the Greensboro Historical Society, updates readers on the current status of the Greensboro Authors' Corner in the Greensboro Free Library.
- Rounding out the offerings is a review by Editor Emerita Gail Sangree of Allen F. Davis' memoir, *The Lucky Generation*, about growing up in Hardwick.



Old Sheds Can Learn New Tricks: A New Life for the GHS Annex

The former equipment shed of Lauredon Apartments, previously donated to the GHS, has been renovated to expand our exhibit and programming space. Please give special thanks to Jan Terwiesch and Emma Palumbo, who recently completed the work, including the manual excavation of a 50-foot trench to bring electricity from the GHS museum.

After clearing out years of accumulated items, Jan and Emma worked with an electrician to install outlets, interior lighting, and exterior gooseneck lamps, along with switched circuits for display lighting. The upgraded interior also features rubber flooring and historic artifacts such as an oil safe and a well-preserved traverse sled, all centered around an authentic carriage and a large horse sleigh. This revitalized space is ready to host a variety of programming, including lectures, screenings, hands-on workshops, and summer social events. Check out the new space the next time you visit!

We are grateful for the \$2,000 grant from The Greensboro Association that enabled this transformation.



Jan Terwiesch and Emma Palumbo with horse sleigh, carriage, and other GHS treasures in the newly renovated annex.

What and Where, But Who?

Thank you for the enthusiastic response to our mystery photo (left) in the fall newsletter. The consensus is that the “where” is...Baker Hill! But the “who” remains a mystery. “The Nomad” also photographed the Melvin Homestead in 1924. Please send any clues about The Nomad to collections@greensborohistoricalsociety.org.



Sugar Camp No. 1 by The Nomad 1924

∞ In Remembrance ∞

2025

- Howard Francis Abare
- Dorothy Ray Dernavich
- Sylvia J. Gates
- Beatrice Bickford Hicock
- Margaret Dexter Armstrong Igleheart
- Martha H. Niemi
- Douglas H. Steely
- Gloria Blanche White

2026

- Edward Francis Donlon
- William “Bill” “Flash” Gordon
- Dr. Clive S. Gray
- Dr. Roger Bradford Kellogg
- Karen Fochler Lyman
- Clara J. Massey
- Barbara Lightfoot Woodward

Neighbors in History: A Collaborative Discovery

How do you locate the origin of a nearly 200-year-old artifact when it arrives with no identification? This was the puzzle facing our archivist, Leslie Rowell, when an account book recently arrived at the GHS. Filled with names in attractive script, entries for items as varied as carded wool and rental of oxen in lieu of payment, and a dramatic two-page entry that appeared to be some kind of confession, the ledger sat as a witness to a past that couldn't be placed. An inserted note—"What town is this from?"—from the Vermont Historical Society librarian indicated an earlier inquiry in Barre.



Pages from the mysterious ledger

Ensuing searches in the Vermont Vital Records database and inquiries to the state archives and a neighboring historical society were unsuccessful. Finally, the 156 names in the ledger were put into a spreadsheet, sorted alphabetically, and sent with photos to the statewide VT-Local-History listserv. What followed was a collaborative effort that illustrates the curiosity and generosity of this group.

A reply quickly came from Lynne Snyder who suggested that the dramatic entry most likely was, in fact, a passage from the script of a play titled *From Pumpkin Ridge*. The play, which seems to date from the late 1800s, was performed in amateur theaters at the time. With characteristic New England thriftiness, blank pages thus seemed to have served as a notebook of sorts. The breakthrough came from Nathan Phillips. He had linked clusters of prominent names from the 1828-1831

time period to Gilmanton, New Hampshire. The Gilmanton Historical Society gratefully acknowledged that those were indeed Gilmanton names, and some of the ledger entries were from one of their fulling mills. They offered to pay return postage, and, as hoped, the ledger is now safely back from where it came so many years ago.

A Reminder about the Declaration of Independence

This year, the United States celebrates its 250th birthday. How can a land mass that has existed for billions of years be given a birthday? A birthday to mark the discovery of this land would honor the year the first people crossed the Bering Strait. One to mark the establishment of the separation of the colonies from Britain could be 1781 when the British surrendered at Yorktown. But we chose July 4, 1776. Why?

Our Declaration of Independence provides the rationale for severing ties with England as well as the foundational principles of our constitutional republic. Recall these famous words: "*We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness*" These "Truths" are followed by a list of grievances to explain the momentous step the colonists would take. The day this document was signed is recognized as the nation's birthday. The Declaration of Independence is a remarkable document, but one that is easily forgotten in the celebrations that typically mark this holiday. This year, the GHS will have a table with copies of the Declaration available. We invite volunteers to read the Declaration aloud before and after the parade. Please join us to remember what this document means for our country, then and now!



The Declaration of Independence (Trumbull, 1819)

The Vermont Homefront in Film: A Screening of *The Farm Boy*

Local filmmaker George Woodard brought his labor of love to Fellowship Hall in early March, where about 60 eager movie-goers were treated to a historically accurate glimpse into 1940s rural Vermont—complete with woodchuck hunting, “Swanee River” played on the family piano, and shy romances budding under the watchful eyes of nosy neighbors. It was a time of barn dances, Montgomery Ward catalogs, and gas rationing. Woodard deftly combined these period details into a charming portrait of a more innocent time shattered by the realities of war.

GHS President BJ Gray highlighted that this event was intended to be an introduction to our summer exhibit, Homefront Greensboro: 1939-1946. She then ceded the floor to Greensboro’s own Rosann Hickey, who plays a French peasant in the film. Rosann affectionately introduced Director Woodard.

Woodard explained that the film, set in 1944 and built around stories he heard from his parents, captures the spirit of dairy farms in transition, where horse-drawn manure spreaders worked side by side with Farmall F20 tractors. Woodard noted that while there are many WWII films about the front lines,

The Farm Boy is unique in its focus on the challenges and quiet heroics of life back home. The narrative follows Calvin Dillard and Mary Small as they grow up, fall in love, and secretly marry on the eve of Calvin’s service in Europe. The audience was on an emotional cliffhanger at intermission when Mary, working as an operator at the telephone office, painfully endures the arrival of a telegram indicating that Calvin was killed in action amidst shelling in the Ardennes. To preserve the suspense, we’ll leave the second half of the film to the imagination.

Calvin and Mary’s story provided a window into the social and economic realities of the era. In this regard, Woodard didn’t flinch in his commitment to historical accuracy, including minstrel shows, the regional history of the Ku Klux Klan, the era’s anti-Catholic sentiment, and the looming terror of a draft notice or a telegram bearing the worst of news for a family.

During the Q&A, Woodard discussed the effort required to achieve such authenticity. He recounted the difficulty of finding a functional 1940s-era switchboard, eventually discovering one in a Franklin, Vermont, office that had remained untouched since 1957. He even located a former operator to teach the actors the proper technique. The afternoon concluded with a discussion about the director’s choices—down to the historical accuracy of smoking habits presented in the film. All in all, it was a fitting lead-in to our summer season!



Filmmaker George Woodard addresses the audience at the screening of *The Farm Boy* at our Winter Meeting.

Membership Renewal Time

Thank you for your support. Your dues of \$20 and all donations paid to the Greensboro Historical Society will help preserve Greensboro’s unique past and give you a voice in our future. An envelope is enclosed for your contribution or you can donate on our website, www.greensborohistoricalsociety.org.

Newsletters by Email?

If you would like to reduce our cost for postage and receive your newsletter by email, please send your email address to secretary@greensborohistoricalsociety.org. If you prefer a paper copy, we’re happy to continue sending it by mail.

Greensboro Historical Society
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Greensboro, Vermont 05841

A 250th Birthday Celebration

Greensboro Historical Society is taking the opportunity of our nation's 250th birthday to explore the role of local communities in shaping the nation.

For our Annual Meeting speaker, we are fortunate to have noted historian and Greensboro resident T.H. (Tim) Breen to share some of his insights and research in his presentation, "The American Revolution: Where Did It Take Place?" He will provide background for today's movements for citizens to influence legislative decisions, showing ways that our

predecessors provided the political energy for creating our independent country.

Plan to join us for an enjoyable and enlightening evening, followed by refreshments.

Monday, August 3

7:00 PM

**Fellowship Hall
at the Greensboro
United Church of Christ**



**Noted historian & author
Tim Breen**

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Jane Johns, Debbie Kasper,
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