



"Every Individual is an Historical Figure"
 Founded 1974

APRIL MEMBER MEETING
COMMUNITY HISTORY PROJECT PLAY
APRIL 13TH and 14th

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Mud season



In place of an April meeting, all members are invited to attend the play, "Our Hands on the Land—Williston Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow", which will be performed by Phoenix House students from Williston Central School at 7 p.m. on April 13th and 14th in the school auditorium.

Everyone is welcome, so bring a neighbor, friend, relative.

\$3 donation is suggested.

The play, under the direction of the playwright, Ethan Bowen, is the final product of a joint venture between the school and the Williston Historical Society over

the past year and a half.

The play will be videotaped, with copies sent to the Vermont Historical Society, the Town library and the Williston Historical Society. (See page 3 for an outline of the play).

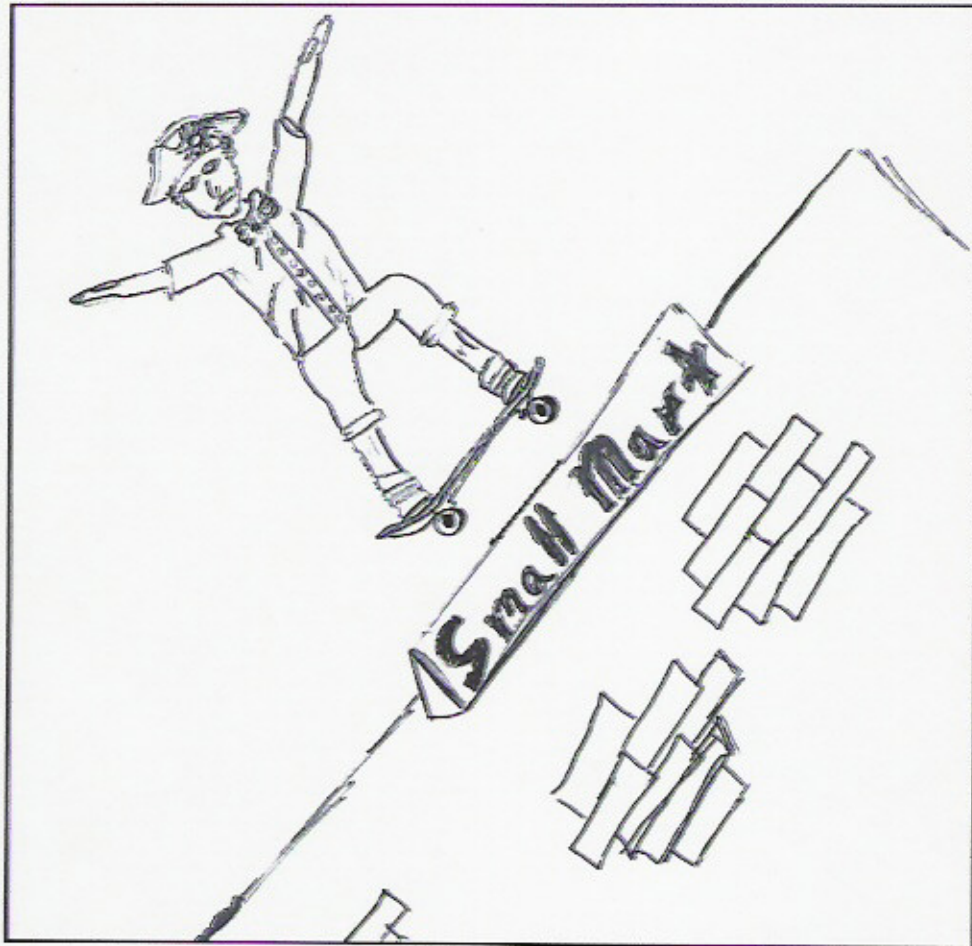


Renewal membership dues paid by May 1st insure that you will continue to receive the WHS newsletters.

Our Hands on the Land

Williston Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

A play written and performed by Phoenix House
of Williston Central School

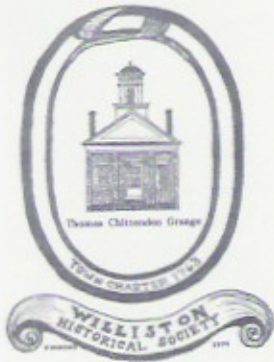


7:00 p.m. April 13th & 14th, 2005

Williston Central School Auditorium

Suggested donation at the door, \$3.00

*A Community History Project involving
the Williston Historical Society and Phoenix House*



Phoenix House—CHP Play Outline

Overview—In Act I historically indifferent Williston kids waiting for a skate park to be built are taken on a time traveling Historical and Cultural tour of Vermont and Williston by Thomas Chittenden operating a bulldozer. As they travel back they meet a Native American boy and the children of Thomas Chittenden, who join them on their tour. They visit early pre-history with the Abenaki, such Vermont events as the selling of the grants, the troubles with New York, the creation of the Constitution, and such Williston events as the bear hunt, the Eagle Tavern and the settling of North Williston, where they join in a hoedown at the Ice House. They then invite their Abenaki friend and the Chit-

tenden children to come to the future with them.



Gov. Thomas Chittenden

In Act II, Thomas Chittenden starts the 20th century tour on the site of a beautiful Williston farm, leading the colonial friends to believe nothing except farming technology has changed. But our friend Ethan Allen arrives on his bulldozer and we witness the bisecting of the Johnson farm, the arrival of IBM, the box stores and the proposed Circ Highway. The colonial friends are overwhelmed in the wash of change as the present Williston kids reveal scenes from their own lives in relation to this change. The whirlwind finally settles the kids back at the site of the skate park, the Thomas Chittenden statue, and they are faced with some challenging questions about the future.

Williston Historical Society web site

WILLISTON
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



Promoting the historical and cultural heritage of Williston, Vermont since 1974

In January we began working with Scott Lowe, a web designer, who works with Glennweb. He is new to the community and has done some work with the town library. We were very impressed with his professionalism and the depth of knowledge he has in his field of work. He has been able to speak with several members who conveyed what they thought the site should convey about Williston history and the Williston Historical Society and we are

happy with the results. The web address is: <http://www.whsvt.org/>. On the site you can read about Our Town History—Williston and Williston Historical Society, our Mission and Vision Statements, the By-Laws, Officers and Board Members, Activities of the Society, the latest Newsletter. You can also browse our photo gallery, fill out a membership form and click on Contact Us. Also available are historical and Williston-related links, books

for purchase through the Society, such as *Thomas Chittenden's Town*, by Willard Sterne Randall and Nancy Nahra, and *A History of the Town of Williston 1763-1913*, published by the Historical Committee. There are drawings to view of the Society founders and listing of founding members. It truly is an outstanding Vermont web site that all of us can be proud of. If the opportunity is available, please go online and see this site.

Scrapbooks Now Available

There are several scrapbooks in the collection, which came from Marion Smail and are in very rough condition—very brittle. They are kept in the glass book case and away from public viewing. However, these scrapbooks are a valuable source of information for the public. One scrapbook in particular is about the World War II years for Williston residents. There are many newspaper clips from this time period with lists of draftees, as well as papers listing servicemen and where they are posted. Many of these papers include a note from the serviceman listing what they want sent to them in care-packages. Also in the scrapbook are several postcards. One card is to Sylvia Warren from Dorothy Alling.

"Dear Sylvia, if the following boys have families

whom you can approach for pictures of their sons would you mind? Seldon Stevens, Ira Dewing, Kenneth Sadlier, Jack Bradish, Burnett Rawson. Just urge them to send or give them to Marguerite or me right away as I'd like Velma to complete the printing before she goes. Thank you. Why don't you stop in to see us sometime—love to have you. Have you any material we could use for Scrap Books for the Military Hospitals?

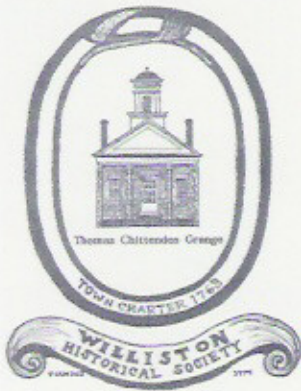
Truly, Dorothy -A-

I will try to make these folders available soon. Please stop over and take a look if the opportunity arises.

—Steve Robinson



Top: Sylvia Warren
Bottom: Dorothy Parker Alling



Sylvia Warren, Secretary Unim Circle of The King's Daughters, helped maintain a "List of Williston Boys in the Service" during World War II. Among the papers sent to her were the names of servicemen, their posts, and their requests.

It's Good To Be Alive Poems by Eleanor F. Ferguson "Spring Rain"

How I'd hate to know I was city-bound
On a night like this when the lovely sound
Of rain on the roof sings of flowers and spring,
Of robins and snowdrops and everything
That is stirred with life in the still-cold ground.

How I hate the smell of a city street
And the endless pounding of restless feet.
How dearly I love the sharp tap of rain
That strikes in short gusts 'gainst my window pane,
And the night air blowing so clean and

sweet.

I'm glad that my feet can feel good clean earth...

I'm glad I am close to the spring rebirth
Of growing things roused from their wintry rest.

And always I know that this life is best
When I hear the sound of the rain's soft mirth.

Middle Island, March 1934

Williston Ski Association by, Art Tuthill

In the fall of 1960, Howard Carpenter and Arthur Tuthill thought that they would like to have a small family-oriented ski slope for family skiing in Williston. They looked around for a site and found a likely spot on Marvin (Bob) and Peg Chapman's farm in North Williston. It faced north and was across Chapman Lane from the house. Bob was agreeable to such a venture, so Howard and Art proceeded to form an organization to develop the idea.

They eventually involved nine men in an organization called the Williston Ski Association. The members were: Howard Carpenter, Art Tuthill, Marvin Chapman, Len Mercia, Charles Pillsbury, Marvin Clark, John Lantman, Herb Painter, and Dave Yandell.

One necessity of a ski slope was a convenient means to get to the top of the hill. The obvious answer for a small slope was a rope tow. A tow consists of a rope from top to bottom running over pulleys on "sheaves" and driven by some power supply. In order that it be least intrusive (visibly) it was decided to power the tow by a car and its engine located out of sight at the top of the slope. This was inconvenient for starting the engine and for getting fuel to it as it necessitated a climb up the hill on foot,

but was thought to be considerate of the Chapmans, and so was done.

The first work session was on a Saturday afternoon at which time the slope was cleared of what little brush was in the way and in setting poles, which Marvin donated.

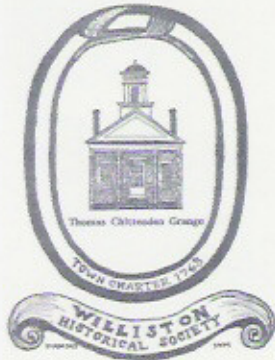
The car for the drive force was an old Chevy sedan that Gil Marshall, friend of Art and Howard, donated. It had to be moved from the University so Howard and Art towed the unregistered car early one Sunday morning to the Chapmans. Bob then towed it to the top of the hill with his tractor. There it was mounted on blocks, the hind wheels, tires removed, were lined with a heavy rubber strip to form a "vee" to act as drive pulleys so the rope came down from the final high pole, west around the first car wheel, back out around the idle pulleys and then around the second drive pulley. From there it proceeded up to a leaving high pulley, through a take-up mechanism and finally back down the hill. In order to be less visible it returned to the downhill start by a route through a grove of trees. This introduced a new problem. This arrangement put the rope in a triangular course with trees in the center. As the rope couldn't be lifted over the trees, to take it down in the spring it had

to be cut and then respliced in the fall when it was installed.

The first rope was one that had been used at Hogback Ski Area (near Brattleboro) and obtained through the compliments of John Dunham.

The sheaves (pulleys) over which the rope ran were obtained from various sources. One came from the first ski tow built in this country (near Woodstock). Quite a few others came from an abandoned ski slope above Manchester. All were made from wheels and rims of an automobile.

By Christmas the whole set-up had been completed and ready to run. The initial splicing of the rope was done by Ken Moody, then the pastor of the Williston Federated Church.



"The car for the drive force was an old Chevy sedan..."

