Church Gains Ground in Steeple Chase

Norman C. Williams

The College Street Congregational Church now hopes to hoist a new stone and red slate clock tower next August, replacing the landmark that was destroyed by arson in October 2013. The new steeple will be built horizontally on a gigantic spindle over the winter by steeplejack Jay Southgate in Barre, said Dr. Nick Hardin, a member of the church’s building and grounds committee. The spindle can be rotated, he explained, so all faces can be worked on at the same time.

The rebuilding process has been fraught with engineering appraisals and re-appraisals, cost overruns, and questions of insurance coverage, Dr. Hardin explained. Because of the unexpected costs, he said, the congregation at one point considered just capping the base of the steeple, though that also would have been expensive. The church is now committed to going forward, however a concerted fundraising effort will be needed.

After firefighters deluged the steeple to put out the blaze, the first floor sanctuary and basement assembly room suffered serious water and smoke damage. Sheetrock and all electrical systems had to be replaced as a result. Engineers then questioned whether the remainder of the stone steeple, weakened due to the combination of the extremely hot fire (accelerant was used) and very cold water, could bear the weight of a new clock tower. After being lifted by crane to inspect the stonework firsthand, they concluded that the steeple had to be repointed, some stones replaced, and the top three courses lifted and reset. In addition, a square concrete collar will be laid for the replacement steeple to rest on.

“Originally,” Dr. Hardin said, “we thought the work would be completed this summer.” The engineering report forced the church to take a step back and reconsider whether it should even proceed, however. Now that it has determined to do so, he said, “the fun part will come next summer when the cranes hoist the new steeple up in three or four parts.” Dr. Hardin said the work will happen when the YMCA schedules its annual one-week closing sometime next August.

Board Member
Commended as
One of Vermont’s
Great Historians

Karl Lukhaup

In a recent Burlington Free Press article, Preservation Burlington Board Member Britta Fenniman Tonn was recognized by Robert J. Resnik as one of Vermont’s five great historians. The individuals highlighted in the article were validated due to there “big picture” view of history, and the epic work they have put forth to research and educate others making an “enormous impact on Vermont History.”

Tonn, who has served on the board since 2011, was recognized for the walking tours program she leads for Preservation Burlington. In addition to this, she has created a Historic Plaque program for the Church Street Mar-
Great Historian
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Burlington College Property Update

On July 28, the City of Burlington’s Design Advisory Board (DAB) reviewed an updated proposal for the Burlington College property and forwarded it to the Design Review Board (DRB), with a conditional recommendation for approval. The DRB discussed the matter at their August 18 meeting. Staff notes and meeting minutes resulting from both sessions are available online at www.burlingtonvt.gov. The proposal currently includes rehabilitating the historic orphanage building into 63 residential units, as well as creating common and assembly spaces for the college, along with new parking areas and updated landscaping. Physical exterior changes to the orphanage include window replacement; the addition of skylights to the rear (west) roof slope; replacement of the contemporary east entrance with one that is more sensitive to the building’s style and era; and removal of non-historic porches on the rear. A number of new elements, such as a rooftop viewing deck, are to be added to secondary elevations. Staff notes indicate general support for the proposal, which seeks to retain a residential use for the building and in many cases restores or enhances historic features.

Several local residents and city councilors voiced concerns during a public hearing (part of the August 18 DRB meeting)—these too are documented in the meeting documents and minutes. The proposal was further discussed, and subsequently conditionally approved, by the DRB in a deliberative session on August 24. Full details and conditions are available upon request at the Department of Planning and Zoning.
Beer, Cheddar, and Burlington Brewing History Evening at Switchback

Karyn Norwood

There are few things that go as well together as beer, cheddar, and history—we believe, at least. Preservation Burlington therefore was quite delighted to host historian Adam Krakowski at the Switchback Brewing Company on Thursday, July 23rd, for an evening talk, complemented by Cabot cheddar samples and pints of Switchback beer. A sizable audience turned out for Krakowski’s presentation on Burlington’s brewing past—starting from its earliest breweries in the 1800s to the present day. It turns out Burlington has had quite the pivotal role in Vermont brewing history: from being home to the only brewery in the state operating through state prohibition to helping relaunch the current brewing renaissance. Burlington has seen the rise, fall, and resurrection of the state’s brewing industry.

Preservation Burlington was able to raise well over two hundred dollars from the event’s proceeds, all of which shall go toward our education and advocacy events. This would not have been possible without the generous cheddar donations from Cabot, the assistance of Dani, Amy, and the rest of the Switchback staff, the great space at Switchback, and the knowledge and time given by Adam Krakowski, our speaker. Thank you, too, to all those who came out!

Want to know more about Vermont beer history? Krakowski’s most recent book, *Vermont Beer: History of a Brewing Revolution*, is available online and in bookstores near you!

Sharing in the International Preservation Trades Workshop

Ron Wanamaker

The 19th-annual International Preservation Trades Workshop took place July 22–24, 2015, at Shelburne Farms, a National Historic Landmark and one of the finest examples of a Victorian era model farm and country estate. Occurring in the beautiful Coach Barn, the space provided ample room for events and offered incredible views of Lake Champlain.

The International Preservation Trades Workshop is the only annual event in North America that brings the foremost practitioners of the traditional trades together in a single venue dedicated to sharing the skills and knowledge of all trades employed in conserving the built environment.

Having had the fortune to attend and demonstrate at this years IPTW, our board member Ron Wanamaker was pleased to see how many interested folks came to learn, share, and bond over a love of all things old and traditional. In addition to local homeowners and tradespeople, there were students from as far away as Michigan in attendance. Everyone was there to watch experts showcase talents in timber framing, monument restoration, stone carving, and window restoration. Interspersed with the generous sponsors displays, ongoing workshops showcased subjects as diverse as Traditional Scribe Rule Layout, Portfolio Design, Stained Glass Restoration, and Ron’s favorite, Decorative Paint and Gilding.

After three days of bonding and learning, Ron is already looking forward to next year. The tentative plan places the next conference in a beautiful and historic setting in or near Chicago, Illinois. If you missed this years event then keep up with the planning at www.iptw.org.
This attractive vernacular Greek Revival home, commonly referred to as the Derway House, is one of the few remaining farmhouses from Burlington’s early agricultural days.

The farm was originally called the Bigelow Farm. The Bigelows were an old Massachusetts family. The father of the Vermont branch of the family, Levi Bigelow, was born in Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1773. As a young man, he became interested in trade with Canada. He moved to Derby Line, Vermont, where his son, Lawrence Goodhue Bigelow, was born in 1810. The family soon moved over the border to Stanstead, Quebec, and then to Buckingham, Quebec, where Levi built the first house in town and operated Bigelow and Sons sawmills. The Bigelows did a great deal of traveling for business reasons, and eventually settled in Burlington.

According to Burlington’s land records, in October of 1839 Elizabeth Bigelow, Lawrence’s wife, bought property in the center of town as well as a parcel of farm land at the mouth of the Winooski River. The farm land included the north half of what was known as the “Ministerial Lot,” 103 acres set aside by Benning Wentworth in Burlington’s 1763 charter for the use of Burlington’s first settled minister. The owners of the land were to pay an annual rent to the church. Eventually this arrangement led to a great deal of confusion and litigation concerning who lawfully owned the land in this area of the city.

Despite their purchase of land in Burlington, the Bigelows did not relocate to the area until 1849. By that time, they had hired John S. Derway to manage their farm. In fact, it was Derway who most likely oversaw the construction of the farmhouse (given the evidence of early construction details and the need for housing for a resident farmer, the house is believed to have been constructed around 1848). Derway had come from Grand Isle in 1847 to work on Judge Leavenworth’s farm, later known as Starr Farm.

In 1864, Derway purchased the farm from the Bigelow family. According to Derway’s 1899 obituary, “under his careful management it became one of the most prosperous in this part of the state.” In 1881, the farmhouse was moved a short distance to a new foundation to make room for a right of way for North Avenue.

In 1899–1900 the Rutland Railroad built through the property with a bridge to the Champlain Islands. This route, and the bridge, ceased with the railroad’s bankruptcy in the 1950s. At the end of 1912, Derway’s daughter Fannie sold her part of the farm, including the house, to Ernest and Belle Patterson.

It is difficult for the next few years to determine who, if anyone actually lived in the house. (The houses on North Avenue Extension had no numbers, so there is only a list of names in the city directory.) In the mid-1920s, the farmhouse was given the listing of 2131 North Avenue. Interestingly, Raymond Derway, a farmer and likely descendent of John Derway, is noted as living nearby at 2129 North Avenue.

Between 1929 and 1959, the home was successively owned by two UVM professors, Fred W. Householder and Howard G. Millington (with his wife Ruth). In 1959, the Millingtons sold the house to Richard and Jeane Keith. Richard was a truck driver and salesman for Shell Oil. Jeane worked for the Pease Grain Company. In 1989, the Keiths sold the property to Dr. John Brooklyn and his wife Rebecca.

In 1994, the Brooklyns sold their home to Brian Joyce and his wife Lorraine Siciliano. Brian and Lorraine recently hired Rob Ricketson of Resourceful Renovator to work on the house. While Rob is quick to continue on page 5
UVM Goes with Bald Look at Alumni House

Norm Williams

On July 26, what looked to be a convention of woodsmen in no mood for sparing trees assembled at the UVM Alumni House at the corner of Summit and Maple. By day’s end, some 36 large trees were no more. Stunned residents soon began expressing shock and outrage on Front Porch Forum, and they recently gave UVM representatives an earful at a Ward 6 NPA meeting. Now that the sawdust has settled, it appears that UVM’s tree removal plan did not meet the requirements of the Development Review Board’s permit decision, and that UVM went beyond what its plan allowed in any event.

The saga begins with the Burlington zoning code. In general, it states that “existing trees shall be retained and incorporated into a landscape plan to the extent possible.” Specifically, it requires a zoning permit for any tree removal “involving six or more trees, each of ten inches or greater in caliper” or “ten or more trees, each of which is three inches or greater in caliper during any consecutive twelve month period.” The UVM Alumni House needed a permit under either test.

UVM did apply for a zoning permit for the tree removal and other work in January 2015, but the Development Review Board found its application wanting. In a decision issued this June, it noted that UVM had failed to identify specimen trees and said it would be “clearing existing brush” in an area that “has plantings that are so large as to escape definition as brush.” The DRB’s decision stated that no zoning permit would be issued until UVM submit-

Behind the Green Marker
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point out that he is not a preservationist by training, he states that he does “love old houses,” and always tries to “reuse as much material as possible to preserve the charm and character of an old house.” In the case of 20 Derby Drive, Rob has succeeded in doing just that! The home retains its original wide plank pine floor, each board having been removed, squared, and reinstalled over a new subfloor. Similarly, doors likely original to the home were carefully restored and replaced. Additional work included the installation of historically appropriate replacement windows and insulation throughout the house (the walls of the home were originally lined with brick to serve this purpose). Brian and Lorraine are ecstatic with the results in that they’ve maximized their home’s comfort while preserving its unique qualities.

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The Preservation Burlington Board would like to thank our members for their continued support of our organization. We truly appreciate your work and contributions. The Board keeps working diligently to promote the organization and our mission.

Over the summer, the Board experienced some changes as several of our esteemed officers stepped down from their posts. President Matt Viens, Vice President Norm Williams, and Secretary Dan Goltzman passed their leadership roles to a new group of board members in July. I am more than excited to announce that I have been elected president and am thrilled to lend her skills to the organization in a new capacity. As a graduate of the Historic Preservation program at the University of Vermont, I have the preservation background and community connections to serve Preservation Burlington well. Karl Lukhaup steps into the role of vice presidency with great confidence and support from the board. Karl is a preservation contractor and active community member contributing greatly to the organization and City of Burlington. The secretary position, which keeps us organized, has been filled by Karyn Norwood. Karyn is also a graduate of the UVM Historic Preservation program and is currently working for the University of Vermont Library’s Vermont Digital Newspaper Project and archives. In addition to her off-

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Meet the Board Member – Ron Wanamaker

A Preservation Burlington board member since 2000, Ron Wanamaker is an active member of the historic preservation community in Vermont. He enjoys being on the Education Committee and hosting Preservation Burlington’s “Live at 5:25” TV show on Channel 17.

Ron began his career as a contractor in New York City working on historic buildings and in the scenic design industry. Old Brownstones and Long Island Victorian homes piqued his interest in architecture and the preservation field. After almost 12 years in the NYC area, Ron decided to move to Burlington, Vermont. He loved the town and was pleased that it provided ample opportunities to continue his career in historic preservation. After settling in Burlington in 1998, he renamed his construction company Wanamaker Restoration and embarked on a long and satisfying range of projects for homeowners, institutions, and the State of Vermont. Those projects have included computer labs in a historic carriage barn, adaptive reuse of a Second Empire hotel, and interpretive exhibits for a runaway slave museum.

Ron says, “Being on the Preservation Burlington board has given me a chance to educate people on the importance of our shared heritage and the nuts and bolts of our old buildings.” He has accepted a position with Shelburne Museum continuing the work he loves and also expanding his opportunities to teach and write. Looking forward to many more years with Preservation Burlington Ron says, “I’m proud to contribute to the PB mission statement and hope to be a part of this great group for a long time.”
The PB Architectural History Toolkit’s First Class

Rebecca Reese and Karyn Norwood

Preservation Burlington is very excited to announce that we have scheduled our first class using the newly created Architectural History Toolkit. The After School Program at Hunt Middle School, in collaboration with the Sara Holbrook Community Center, will run a local history after-school class focusing on our built environment and using the materials and information in the toolkit. Our own Karyn Norwood will be teaching the course in November and December, but it is designed so all educators can efficiently and effectively teach the material.

Throughout the course, students will learn the history and development of our own town of Burlington through the built environment.

UVM Alumni House

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President’s Corner

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President’s Corner

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We at Preservation Burlington are very excited about these changes and look forward to what the future holds for the organization. Please feel free to reach out to anyone of us. We hope to see you at some of our upcoming events!
Did you know that Preservation Burlington is now holding its monthly board meetings at the Champlain Club, formerly the old Goethe Lodge on Crowley Street in the Old North End?

We love it and we think you will, too, so we’re inviting you to join us there for our first annual Oktoberfest celebration on Saturday, October 24, from 1:00 pm until 6:00 pm. The event is free and open to all members of Preservation Burlington, the Chittenden County Historical Society, and the Champlain Club.

In addition to German beer, pretzels, an Oompah band, and a shuffleboard tournament, Preservation Burlington is putting its own twist on Oktoberfest by inviting two prominent local historians to speak about their new books.

At 2:00 pm Robert Mello will discuss his book Moses Robinson and the Founding of Vermont, which PB board member Tom Simon considers the best book on early Vermont that he has ever read. Mello, a current Superior Court judge and a former trustee of the Vermont Historical Society, will tell the story of Moses Robinson, a man who led a revolt against New York, negotiated statehood for Vermont, and crafted the state’s legal system. Robinson was Vermont’s first chief justice and senator, and also served as the state’s governor for a year.

Then, at 4:00 pm, Vincent E. Feeney will speak about his book Burlington: A History of Vermont’s Queen City, the city’s first comprehensive history. A former president of the Chittenden County Historical Society and Adjunct Professor of History at the University of Vermont, Feeney explains how Burlington became the Green Mountain State’s most dynamic and largest city, home of its state university and a thriving commercial and retail center that draws national media attention.

Both authors will have copies of their books for sale and will be happy to autograph them for you, so break out your dirndls and lederhosen and we’ll see you on October 24th. Prost!
October is Cemetery Month

Liisa Reimann Rivera

We’re designating October as “Cemetery Month.” It’s the perfect time of year to indulge in a little spooky history, as well as to recognize our city’s burial grounds as windows to the past. Much information can be gleaned about our city’s development and historic figures from the three city-maintained cemeteries: Lake View, Elmwood and Greenmount. To that end, Preservation Burlington will host a series of events to celebrate these treasures and their contributions to Burlington’s rich fabric.

Preservation Burlington
Walking Tours

Burlington’s fascinating history and alluring architecture come alive through guided walking tours. Our knowledgeable guides will entertain you with stories of the past and introduce you to Burlington’s diverse architectural styles. We offer a number of different types of tours and cover a variety of Burlington’s neighborhoods including:

- Downtown Burlington
- The Waterfront
- The Old North End
- Willard Street
- Pine Street

Preservation Burlington Walking Tours
info@preservationburlington.org
802-522-8259

Epitaph-Writing Contest – October 1–31

Good epitaphs are short and concise, evoke strong feeling, can be humorous or serious, celebratory or tragic. They can be written from the point of view of a friend, or relative, or even the deceased themselves. Select entries will be posted online once the competition concludes. Winner will also be featured in our next newsletter and receive a Preservation Burlington T-shirt.

Epitaph-Writing Contest
October 1–31
Submission Details:
preservationburlington.org

Short (Very Short!) Horror Story Contest – October 1–31

Write a three-sentence horror story that features a historic Burlington building, cemetery or park. Please no gore. Select entries will be featured on our website once the competition concludes. Top three entries will also be featured in our next newsletter. Winner will receive a Preservation Burlington T-shirt.

Short Horror Story Contest
October 1–31
Entry Categories:
Youth (under 18) and Adult
Submission Details:
preservationburlington.org

Cemetery Tour – October 31

Tours will conclude with a cash bar reception at the Champlain Club at 20 Crowley Street, 1:00–4:00 pm. The Director of the Granite Museum in Barre, Vermont, and UVM professor Scott McLaughlin will be on hand at 2:00 pm to talk about Vermont cemetery history and the role of burial grounds as social documents.

Cemetery Tour
October 31, 12 noon and 1:00 pm
Lakeview Cemetery
$10 members & students
$15 non-members or $20 per couple
$5 if you come in costume!
Preservation Burlington T-Shirts

Looking to the Future with Respect for the Past

Only $15. Available in Forest Green unisex adult sizes S-XXL
Contact info@preservationburlington.org

Historic Building Markers

Preservation Burlington Historic Markers celebrate the age of your home!

Cost: $100 includes:
- basic research on your home,
- a marker, and
- one-year membership to Preservation Burlington.