

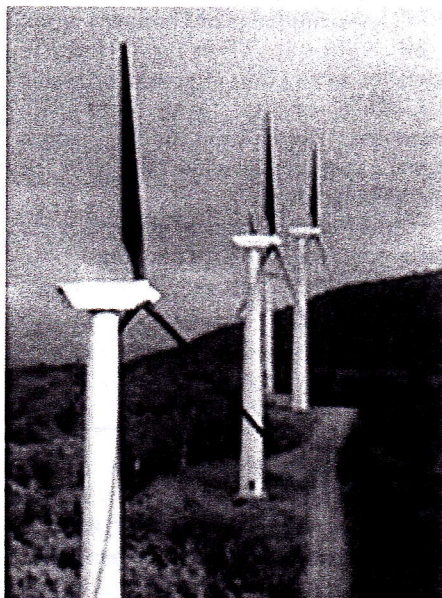
WINDHAM NEWS & NOTES

VOLUME I, ISSUE 6

WINDHAM, VERMONT

MAY - JUNE 2004

Windham ponders windy issues



Turbines at Searsburg

by Maggie Newton

A debate has heated up over whether Windham should support a wind-powered electric utility on Glebe Mountain. When asked her thoughts about the proposed wind farm, one lifelong Windham resident and grandmother said without blinking, "If I don't see one of them towers from my kitchen window, I'll be pissed." Some of her neighbors are as passionately opposed, seeing the windmills as an eyesore on the mountains. Others are still trying to sort out the many complex issues.

While most Windham residents support the idea of "clean energy," they also recognize that the windmills would produce only a small percentage of Vermont's electric needs. We don't know how much impact they would eventually have on the environment.

Windham's homegrown fuel has always been wood; and the idea of an electric utility in town, powered by wind, is novel indeed. This is also a new frontier for our nation and our state. Vermont has only one operating

wind utility, in Searsburg, which opened in 1999. Some here say our windmills might lead the way for the rest of the country; others ask why we should be the guinea pig. (In fact, several states now have huge wind-farms.)

Local decisions are not helped by the U.S. government, which has no well-formulated energy policy to address global warming and future energy shortages. It continues to subsidize and encourage expanded production of non-renewable fossil fuels--oil, gas and coal--while minimizing the importance of renewable energy and energy efficiency. That leaves states and towns with little guidance to develop workable policies.

Windham faces some immediate practical issues. The community needs to know what control it has over a decision to construct the wind farm. The Planning Commission has been revising the Town Plan to address a possible wind utility. Since the access road would be in Windham, policies on road building, maintenance, and financing

are important to establish in advance.

Windham has notified Catamount Corporation that the town line must be resurveyed, since it was last done two centuries ago. This is necessary to establish which township will host the towers. Why? Utility plants are taxed as businesses, which pay taxes to the town(s) hosting the towers. Such income could be welcomed by a small town which must pinch pennies. There are other tax issues, too.

The Town might also consider whether property values will be affected by nearby wind turbines. How visible and audible would they be? Potential disturbance to our valued wildlife is another unresolved issue. Opinions cover the full spectrum.

The prospect of generating clean energy fits well with our Vermont environmental awareness, but the erection of huge wind turbines on our precious ridgeline causes pain and conflict in many hearts. Windham wants to do the right thing without comprising its most precious assets. There are no easy answers.

Newsletter is one year old

We are delighted to have survived our first year, often a precarious time for babies. A big burst of initial energy and a very supportive community made it possible. Initially we received many encouraging comments from old friends and new subscribers; and these fueled our momentum. Many contributors and subscribers, both residents and vacation homeowners, have sent articles, letters, and wonderful ideas and have made the newsletter a going concern, with the flavor of Windham.

We have a new and exciting possibility. A relatively recent year-round resident who can design web sites has generously offered to help us establish a web site and underwrite the first year of expenses.

We face one especially big challenge which may determine if the newsletter can

be published (comfortably) for another year: staffing. Three of us started the newsletter. One resigned and another has reduced her involvement. During 2004, we have had the wonderful and indispensable help of Mary (Mac) McCoy, an editor and writer by profession, who has skillfully reviewed most of our material and contributed articles.

We'd like to add several volunteers to serve on our editorial board. This group meets once or twice every other month, to decide on the next lead article and focus, discuss policy issues, brainstorm on ideas for material, help solicit material, and sometimes write something. News events pop up daily and thus partially determine what is written, but we need several interested people who can share the responsibilities, decision-making and the workload. If you'd like to consider this, please call Maggie Newton at (802) 254-3484.

Letters about wind towers and woodland walks

Dear Neighbors,

I have some concerns about the proposed Glebe Mountain Industrial Wind Tower Project (with up to 27 turbines). I would like our town to host some informational meetings, so we can have some informed discussions before this \$58 million dollar project takes off. (Catamount expects to get its application to the Public Service Board before September 1, 2004). Some very important long-term tests and surveys need to be done by the Catamount Energy Corporation before this project proceeds.

According to the specs dated February 24, 2004, the expected wind turbine height would be 212 to 262 feet. The blade length would be 126 feet making for a total height of 338 to 388 feet. These very tall towers would have to be lit 24 hours a day, according to the FAA.

I would like to know:

What will the noise level be like? One-hundred decibels each at site? (Windham

is on the lee side of the mountain and sound can travel.)

How will the noise, clear cutting and lights affect the wildlife (rare plants, bear habitat, bird migration routes and bats)?

How will the towers, being in such a prominent location, affect housing values?

Who will benefit financially from this project, the owners and investors or Vermonters?

Once these towers are in place, will there be more towers built to the east of Windham on the power lines? Is this just the beginning? What does our Town Plan have to say about this project and future development?

Will the constructed roads to the towers along the ridgeline open our mountaintop to more ATV use as the power lines have done?

What impact will the towers have on our Class A Cobb Brook watershed?

Ultimately, what impact will these towers

have on the residents who will have to live with them for the next 25+ years (scenic beauty for eco tourism)?

The energy from this project would go the New England Collecting Pool (Massachusetts and other). The Green Credits, from producing clean energy, would be sold out of state, so other energy producers could continue using fossil fuels.

In 1993, the whole state of Vermont was put on the National Trust for Historic Preservation in an effort to protect its scenic and historic beauty from large-scale development. Do we want the first, largest proposed experimental wind project in the Northeast in our town?

Let's come together to insure that this is the direction we want Windham and Vermont to go. We have to be the voice for our scenic vistas and small towns.

Sincerely,
Kelly Wicker

Dear Editors,

I'm your new neighbor from 700 Horsenail Hill Road. You are continuing to do an exceptional job with the *News & Notes*. I remember that last summer someone mentioned that her husband had a wonderful experience in the environment, forests and nature in general. How about organizing a late spring hiking with him as a nature guide to explain to those neighbors interested and their children the names of plants and trees populating our local forests? Just a suggestion. A Saturday morning for 2-3 hours would be great.

Best regards, Claudio Denoya

(Editor's note: See page 3 for suggested walk-hike.)

Strong Living classes on hold during summer

There will be no Strong Living exercise classes held at Windham Meeting House during spring or summer. With sufficient enrollment and a co-leader available, we hope to hold a class in late August or

after Labor Day. Newcomers must complete some forms and provide their physician's written approval beforehand. Call Maggie Newton at (802) 254-3484 for information.



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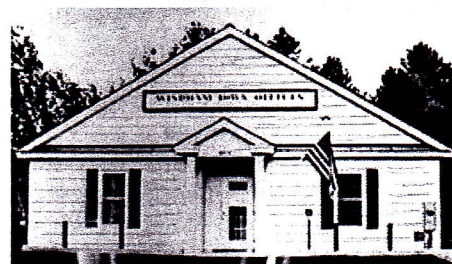
Cindy Kehoe; Bob Kehoe; Lynn

Levine; Mary (Mac) McCoy; Margaret

Newton; Sally Newton; Kelly Wicker

(letter); Margaret Woodruff

Windham Town Office News



Select board

by Helen George, Chair

Helen encourages residents to attend Select board meetings, for greater information and participation in town affairs.

Planning Commission

by Bob Kehoe, Chair

The Planning Commission is currently working on our revised town plan. We are educating ourselves about wind power and are evaluating, in conjunction with the Conservation Committee and Selectpersons, what impacts wind turbines may or may not have on the Town. We currently meet on the second Thursday of each month and welcome walk-ins. We have a space in our agenda under new business to work with all who have input on any Town concerns.

Farming, gardening at Windham elementary school

by Sally Newton and Cindy Kehoe

Although we live in a rural area with a history of farming, there are many Vermont children who have never had the opportunity to spend time on a farm or plant and tend a garden. These experiences are important in helping children understand that the food they eat doesn't just come from a grocery store and that there are good reasons to grow your own. They are also important in helping children learn about the history of our state and think about the future. Windham Elementary has received a grant from the Strolling of the Heifers Foundation in order to teach about farming and gardening in Vermont.

We have begun our project by tapping some maple trees in front of the school. We collected the sap and boiled it on the stove to make our own maple syrup. We visited Coleman's sugar house, Coleman Hills, in Jamaica. We will be visiting Taylor Hill Farm in Londonderry. This is an active dairy farm. They also have draft horses and a small cheese factory. We will go to Dutton's vegetable and fruit farm in Brookline. We hope to visit Partridge's farm in Windham to observe sheep and goat farming. We have a trip planned to Billing's Farm Museum in Woodstock. The older students will interview farmers and people who grew up on farms in Windham.

The second part of our project involves creating a vegetable garden behind the school. The children have already begun by starting vegetables in our Grow Lab. When the ground is ready to be worked, we will have it roto-tilled and prepared for planting. The children will plant the garden, tend the young plants and mulch



them for the summer. In the fall, when school begins again, we will harvest the vegetables. We plan to use our school compost in the garden. We may also be able to use some of our produce in the weekly school lunch program.

We are looking for members of the community who may be willing to share their expertise in farming or gardening and their experiences growing up in Vermont. Our project will go to the end of the school year. Anyone interested may call the school at 874-4159.

On May 14, we will have a traditional potluck supper and contra/square dance at the school. The community is invited.

Graduation for Windham students

Windham Elementary School graduation day will be June 15 at 6 p.m.

Sixth graders graduating are Jennie Newton, Jimmie Campbell, Corryn Clay and Tressa McKinney.

Leland and Gray Union High School will hold graduation ceremonies on June 19 at 10 a.m. Windham's graduating seniors are Eva Pare and Kyle Farace.

Congratulations and best wishes to them and their families!

Friends and families are cordially invited.

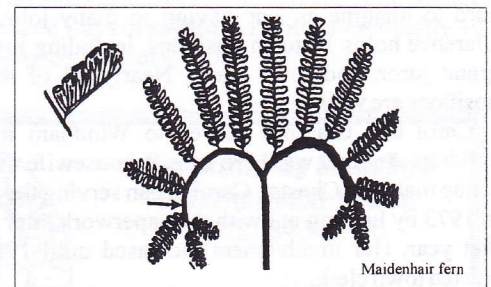
Kids helping kids

by Sally Newton

For the past three years the Windham School children have participated in a "Walkathon" to raise money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, an organization that makes it possible for terminally ill children, anywhere in this country, to do something they have dreamed of that their families could never afford. Wishes granted are anything from getting a computer or a pony, to taking a trip or meeting a sports star.

You may have seen us in May out on the roads after school, walking or running to get in shape for the Walkathon. Children collect pledges, and then, in early June, we hold the Walkathon. Children can choose to run or walk distances from one to four miles.

It is a fun event, great exercise, and a chance for our kids to help other kids who aren't so lucky. We welcome any community members who would like to help. Come join us once a week after school in May for our walking and running "club", help with the Walkathon by walking with kids or handing out drinks at check points, or sponsor a participant. Call us at the school if you are interested, at (802) 874-4159. The Walkathon will take place this year on the afternoon of June 7.



Discover Stiles Brook Forest

Discover Stiles Brook Forest on Windham's east side during summer walks with forester Jeremy Turner. For information, call (802) 254-3484, (802) 874-4302, or email windhamvtnews@adelphia.net.

Town Clerk Carol Merritt Works!



Carol Merritt (left) laughs with a resident.

by Mary McCoy

When Carol Merritt describes her job as town clerk by saying, "I'm the keeper of the archives," she reveals more about herself than her job. This unassuming woman would more aptly be described as the town's glue, the one who holds everything together, past and present.

You can't meet Carol Merritt and not remember her or like her. "She's always pleasant," said Carolyn Chase, "always willing to help and to go beyond what's necessary." Nancy Dyke said, "I'd describe her as very competent. She resists pressure, going at her own pace until she gets the job done."

Which says a lot, because Carol has much to do. As town clerk, she oversees 200 years of records (land records, property transfers, certificates of marriages, deaths and births, powers of attorney, etc.). Even for a small town like Windham, the paperwork is extensive, and the record-keeping requirements are constantly changing. Carol must read frequent government decrees in order to keep up with the new regulations. She also provides assistance for all sorts of town activities, including relaying messages for the road crew.

Yet town clerk is not Carol's only job. She also serves as town treasurer, the presiding officer of elections, clerk of the board of civil authority, clerk and treasurer of the Windham school district, a library trustee, and a North Windham Cemetery commissioner. It's hard to imagine anyone having so many jobs, yet her husband Clarence holds 12 town positions, including justice of the peace, grand juror, and town agent. Nearly all of their combined 20 positions are volunteer.

Carol and Clarence moved to Windham in 1968 with four children. Another was born here. A housewife who had worked for a map maker in Chester, Carol began serving the town of Windham in 1973 by helping out with the paperwork after a disastrous flood that year. Her involvement increased until 1980 when she was elected town clerk.

She has seen many changes during her tenure. "When I started," she said, "all the town and land records were handwritten. For a few years, I typed everything." This meant that all minutes, notices, certificates or other documents had to be reproduced on the typewriter and carefully proofed and corrected before being filed in the official records. "Finally, we got a photocopier, and I could simply copy documents for the records. That saved a lot of time."

Another time-saver was Carol's system of indexing land records in a card filing system rather than in the old, large, bound index book. This made it much easier to organize records of property changes. Each property now has its own number, used on all its records.

"When I started, we had 20 books of land records for the town's first 185 years. We've added another 20 books since then. So many farms have been divided and sold and sold again." In addition to managing the new records, Carol coordinated the preservation of the old records, which had deteriorated badly over time.

In 1980, Carol began in a town office that was new and had one safe for the town records with four shelves that were two books deep. Besides the safe, which was soon overflowing, Carol had a desk, a chair and two filing cabinets. With the addition of the copier, more filing cabinets and eventually a computer, that office was outgrown in 20 years. The new office, our current one, was built behind the old one. Opened for business in October 2001, it is wheelchair accessible and has three computers, a walk-in vault with numerous selves and filing cabinets, a room for meetings, an office for the town's listers and other volunteers, and a paved parking lot.

"I love this office," Carol says. "It is bright, cheerful, and roomy, with good equipment, lots of space, and plenty of supplies. I like where it sits between the cemetery and the school. The cemetery is the past. The school is the future. We're the present."

The office is not the only thing about her job that Carol likes. "The people of Windham are wonderful. Everyone gets along and works well together. Many people are involved, giving their time to the town and doing a good job. I love to work with them. And I like to meet the new people, to greet them and welcome them to town. I love all the other residents, too. Folks come in once a year to pay their taxes, and I get to see them all."

Carol says that what makes her job exciting is that every day is different. "I have lots of bosses, but I'm my own boss, too." The demands upon her are many, but Carol relishes the challenge of figuring out how to get the work done. And what does she do in her time away from the job? Carol answered, "I rest up for the busy activities ahead at the office."

Carol Merritt is the unique combination of a "people person" who loves her neighbors and a "numbers person" who takes pleasure in making sure records are precise and perfectly organized. But no description of Carol is complete without mentioning her delightful sense of humor. Asked to describe Windham, Carol said, "We're a small town with two electric power companies, two telephone companies, and two post office deliveries, but no post office, no stores, and no garage or gas station. If you visit here, you better have gas in your tank, because if you don't, you're never leaving."

Town of Windham Hours

(802) 874-4211

Town Clerk: (at Town Office)

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
And by appointment.

Meetings (at Town Office):
(Call to verify meeting times.)

Select Board:

First and third Monday of
month, 6:30 p.m.

Planning Commission:

Second Tuesday of month,
7:15 p.m.

Conservation Commission:

Schedule varies.

Call for time of meeting.

Meetings (at Elementary School):

School Board:

First Monday of month,
4:00 p.m.

The joys and woes of April

by Mary Newton Western

Robert Frost said it all in these words taken from his poem, "Two Tramps in Mud Time."

"The sun was warm but the wind was chill.

You know how it is with an April day.
When the sun is out and the wind is still,

You're one month on in the middle of May.

But if you so much as dare to speak,
A cloud comes over the sunlit arch,
A wind comes off a frozen peak,
And you're two months back in the middle of March."

After the bright, sunny days of March and the excitement of melting snow and running sap, the gray chilly days are an anti-climax. Will spring ever come? Then one morning I see the first robin or hear the bright and cheeky song sparrow. Surely they know. And inches away from the receding snow on the lawn, the green

shoots of daffodils appear. These assure me that the miraculous warming and flowering of the earth is starting its annual show.

Part of this show is the appearance of wild flowers. I cannot list them all. I'll start with the earliest ones that appear in the West Windham valley. The fragrant trailing arbutus often grows on moist ledges. The coltsfoot pops up on sandy edges of dirt roads or along brook beds as soon as the spring floods recede. Many of the earliest flowers are members of the lily family and have parallel-veined leaves: wild lily-of-the-valley, whose emerald leaves carpet the woodland floor; bellwort, also called wild oats; trout lily, whose leaves resemble the spots of the brook trout; Clintonia, whose flowers turn into poisonous blue berries; Solomon's seal and false Solomon's seal; the dainty Canada lily; and cucumber root, with its two layers of swirled leaves.

More roadside beauties here include the star flower, foam flower, spring beauty, and red and painted trilliums. We also see early yellow violets, tiny white violets, and

several shades of blue violets, such as the common blue and the marsh violet. There are many blue violets, which need close observation to tell them apart. I confess to being lax about this.

In my front yard I find lots of small flowers that often are seen as weeds, but which are beautiful too, such as bluets, saxifrage, cinquefoil, brooklime, wild strawberries and, yes, even dandelions.

By late April and into May, there will be many more new faces. Those I've mentioned are mostly seen as you walk or drive slowly along a bumpy road.

My favorite reference book is "A Field Guide to Wildflowers of Northeastern and Central North America," by Roger Tory Peterson and Margaret McKenny. It is arranged by color, form, and detail. The first pages of each section are in color, followed by pages of black and white drawings, which have all the fine details to help you identify the most modest of flowers. If you keep looking, you will find everything.

Happy hunting and happy spring!

Maple syrup

by Margaret Woodruff

When the first settlers arrived here in Vermont they were pleased to find an abundance of sugar maple trees. In those early days maple syrup along with the wild honey was what was available to sweeten foods. The sugar maple, and the syrup it yields, is still very important to our economy.

I was born in 1924 so I grew up during the Depression. The little flowered pitcher full of maple syrup was a staple on the table at every meal, along with the salt and pepper. Once in a while we had some white sugar for a treat but we were urged to keep it for special occasions. We did use the white sugar for baking and canning of fruit, as the syrup didn't taste quite right in that capacity. However all pickles were made with the maple product.

Unlike white sugar, which has only empty calories, maple syrup does contain a variety of minerals such as calcium, potassium and

small amounts of magnesium, manganese, phosphorous and iron.

I remember we always had a large earthenware crock in the pantry with soft maple sugar in it. It was so tasty on a slice of homemade bread as an afternoon snack when we arrived home from school. This was made from the darkest or end-of-the-season syrup, as the best grades were placed in gallon cans and sold to the public. The going price was about \$1 per gallon. Compare that with today's price!

The nice thing to know is that, other than some of the equipment used to make syrup today, the process is essentially the same: tap the trees, gather the sap, boil it down until it reaches just the right concentration, then check for grade. Grades are determined by the color of the syrup, with fancy grade being the lightest. And, despite today's more mechanized ways of sugaring, it still takes roughly 40 gallons of sap to make one gallon of syrup.

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Wind turbines can kill bats

by Margaret Newton

When I was five my parents bought the old Hamilton place in West Windham, and our family began a new life. We woke to the murmur of Cobb Brook and Hamilton Falls.

Our 1780 farm had been vacated by old John Hamilton a decade earlier, but it was home to many critters. They became our new friends. Among the residents were bats, birds, porcupines, skunks, weasels, mice, and rats, all manner of spiders, insects and crawling things. Our Mom loved the spiders most of all and named the fat ones Charlotte. My favorites were the bats, who'd swoop around at dusk and devour insects and never bump into anything. They'd visit our bedrooms, too. During the barns' restoration, exposed bats fell to the ground, blinded by daylight. They felt soft and warm in my palms, and their hearts were racing.

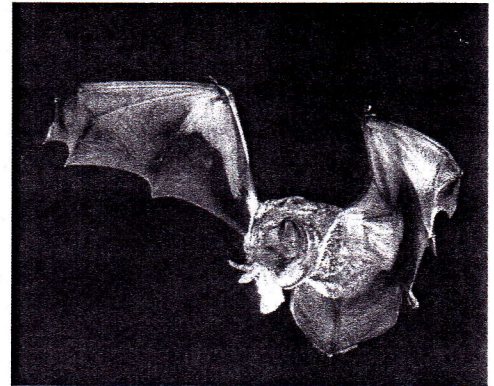
Bats worldwide have had a rough time during the past century. Vermont is home to nine species of bats, including the hoary bat (photo). Populations of many species have dwindled; and some face extinction. This is the result of human activities, including: 1) human population increase, development, and destruction of forests that encroach on bat habitat; 2) worldwide pesticide use which destroys their food; 3) closure of caves and mines where bats

hibernate; 4) adventurous cave and mine buffs who disturb hibernating bats. Bats deplete their fat reserves when thus roused and often cannot survive the winter. Bats are mammals and have one pregnancy/year and often one baby per pregnancy.

Also, much deliberate slaughter results from people's irrational fear of bats as transmitters of rabies. They call the exterminator.

Wind turbine blades are the latest threat to bats, with the wind industry now operating huge wind farms in many states and eager to expand. With respect to bat damage, the wind industry is unregulated and poorly studied. A 2003 study of a 44-wind turbine site in West Virginia concluded that 400 bats died from turbine collisions during fall migration. But bat scientists estimate the bat kill was underestimated by several thousand, due to faulty study design. No bat surveys were done at the Searsburg, VT wind farm.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published Interim Guidelines in March 2003. Their advice on bats: "Avoid placing turbines near known bat hibernation, breeding, and maternity/nursery colonies, in migration corridors, or in flight paths between colonies and feeding areas." This advice had limited value because so little is known; well-designed studies at proposed turbine sites are needed before



Hoary bats, which eat large quantities of flying insects, are among the three most common bat species involved in collisions with wind turbines.

Photo copyright Merlin D. Tuttle, Bat Conservation International

construction, not after the fact.

To address this unexpected side effect of renewable energy, a collaboration has just been formed between Bat Conservation International, US Fish and Wildlife Service, American Wind Energy Association, and the US National Renewable Energy Laboratory. The team will review study plans for proposed wind-farm sites, collect and share information, and discuss what is needed to understand and resolve issues involving bat mortality at wind turbines.

Memorial for Civil War veteran Captain Charles G. Gould

by Chris Fitch, Windham Center Cemetery Commissioner

On Memorial Day, May 31, at 11:30 a.m., at Windham Center Cemetery, the late Captain Charles G. Gould will receive recognition he has long deserved. A Civil War veteran, he received the nation's highest military award, the Congressional Medal of Honor. To help recognize this honor, a Civil War re-enactors' group from the Living History Association, Wilmington, VT, headed by James Dassatti, will be present to give Captain Gould a proper salute.

Captain Gould was born in Windham on May 5, 1845. He grew up during a troubled time in American history. Like many young Vermont men he felt it his duty (Ed. note: many were drafted) to protect and defend the Union. He walked to Bellows Falls to enlist in the Union Army. Attached to Company M 5th Vermont Infantry, he was in some of the war's fiercest battles. His letters from the front to his home in Windham, as well as a profile of Charles himself, can be read in the book, "Full Duty," by Howard Coffin, which contains a tribute to Vermonters in the Civil War.

During the spring of 1865 Union forces had spent eight months of siege/conflict at Richmond and Petersburg, Virginia. Early in April Captain Gould, with his company, was ordered to approach a section of the enemy's entrenchment; and, on hearing cannon fired

about dawn, was to attack the Confederate line.

Captain Gould was the first Union soldier to reach the enemy line. As he crossed the line he was stabbed with a both a bayonet and a saber; he was also shot. He lay there wounded while his troops forced their way into the enemy line. Confederate forces were overrun. The long siege of Richmond and Petersburg would soon be over.

Captain Gould was removed and nursed back to health. He returned to Windham and lived to be 71 years old. He died on December 6, 1916.

This year, Captain Charles G. Gould will receive a plaque to be placed at his gravesite. On Memorial Day we will honor and salute a brave Windham man.

A few of Windham's Civil War draftees

The Brattleboro, July 17, 1863: Vermont "Phoenix", EXTRA, (forerunner of the "Reformer") reported the following recent Civil War draftees from Windham: Geo. A Bagley, Augustus E, Dutton, Silas W. Steward, Elmer H. Lawrence, Cyrus Coleman, Marcus Lamphere, Asahel Upham, Orlando F. Farr, Geo. A. Mason, Nelson J. Baker, John Stewart, Eben W. Stowell, Henry C. Whitcomb, Elias F. Farr, and Phiny H. Gay.

Country House welcomes friends and families

Windham has a new vacation rental property called the Windham Country House, evolved from the former Windham Gardens Bed and Breakfast. Explains owner Michael Simonds, "I ran the B&B for six years and enjoyed it. But things change. When my partner Mary McCoy moved here, I renovated the house to create a separate apartment for us. That meant I could rent out all four bedrooms and the main kitchen and living space as one unit for up to 10 people. It's more income and less work, and that makes sense to me."

Among those staying at the Windham Country House have been relatives of Glenn and Rose Boyton who were here for a family celebration last Thanksgiving. The Boyton house was full to capacity, and having their "overflow" staying a mile away was convenient for everyone. Glenn said, "It's great to have such a nice, delightful place close-by for family to stay."

In addition to guests with connections to town residents, the Windham Country House has been rented by a variety of other

visitors. During color season, three couples used the place for the weekend and one of the couples eloped to be married by Michael, who is a Windham justice of the peace. A couple from Rhode Island brought together their parents and siblings from different parts of the U.S. and Europe to celebrate the year-end holidays. Early this year, a family rented for two months, driving up every weekend from Delaware to ski. Most recently nine fun-loving New Yorkers stayed, and the house is already booked for much of the summer.

Nearly all of advertising for the Windham Country House takes place on the web, which is updated by Mary and managed by Windham resident Howard Iris of Hill Interactive. For more information, you can visit the website at www.windhamcountryhouse.com or call Michael or Mary at 874-4790. They also have a printed brochure.

We've got good earth!

by Lynn Levine

Have you ever wondered about the ground beneath your feet? Lynn Levine, consulting forester and environmental educator, offers the following information.

Granite, phyllite, schist, and slate are some of the common bedrock types in Vermont. Within the schist is sometimes a calcareous mineral that raises the Ph of soils, making them more basic and buffering the acidity of soil. The area located near here contains calcareous rock that is interbedded in the schist and phyllite.

Geologists named it the Waits River Formation. This rock was formed during the Silurian period (408 to 438 million years ago) and has weathered to a brown, soft rock that easily crumbles. The Waits River Formation is located around north and northwest of Brattleboro. Geologists originally called this rock series the Waits River Limestone Formation because of the presence of calcareous rocks, i.e. impure marble. According to the "Bedrock Geology of the Brattleboro Quadrangle, Vermont - New Hampshire," this rock underlies many of the best farms in Vermont.

This rock with its more neutral Ph is where such plants are growing as maiden-hair fern, Dutchman breeches, hepatica, leeks, wild ginger, columbine, baneberry, blue cohosh, and elderberry. Finding two or more of these species indicates that this is a good growing site. It is common for sugar maple and ash to grow on these sites because they demand significantly higher nutrients than other tree species. When walking on this bedrock, one can see that all the trees are exceptionally tall for their age.

For more information visit www.heartwoodpress.com or email forest@sover.net.

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Windham News & Notes welcomes submissions. Send articles of 75 to 225 words and signed letters to the editor at the above address.

**GET INVOLVED
IN WINDHAM!**

Community Calendar

May-June, 2004

May 5, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. Library open. Windham Meeting House

May 5, 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. Book Club. Windham Meeting House

May 14, Time TBA. Windham Elementary School pot luck supper and contra dance. The community is invited.

May 18, 5:00 p.m. Glebe Mountain Wind Power Collaborative. South Londonderry Town Office

May 31, 11:30 a.m. Memorial Service for Civil War veteran Captain Charles G. Gould at Windham Center Cemetery

June 15, 5:00 p.m. Glebe Mountain Wind Power Collaborative. South Londonderry Town Office

June 15, 6:00 p.m. Windham Elementary School graduation, at the school.

June 19, 10:00 a.m. Leland and Gray Union High School graduation, at the high school.

Council on Aging

Monthly Dinners

Chester Congregational Church: Second Tuesday of the month, 11:30 a.m. Call 875-2524 to reserve a place by the first Thursday of the month.

Londonderry Congregational

Church: Second Thursday of the month, 11:30 a.m. Call 824-6521 by the second Monday to reserve a place.

Grafton Cares: Every Wednesday noon at the chapel. Call Twila Anderson at 843-2461 for reservations.

Townshend Congregational

Church: First and third Thursday at noon. Call Ardis Smith at 824-6521 for reservations.

Newfane Congregational Church:

Second Thursday at noon. Call Barbara Brooks, 365-7045

Suggested donation: Age 60 and over - \$2.50; Under 60 - \$4.00