



Corporation Hall

Gamelin Homestead

Saint Francis Xavier Church

Winooski Block

St. Louis Convent

Winooski Historical Society

Quarterly Newsletter

Summer 2014

OFFICERS

Rita Martel
President

Mary Ellen Fitzgerald
Vice President

Jean DeVarney
Secretary

Leslie Turner
Treasurer

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to the public.

Annual Dues are:
\$7 (Individual)
\$10 (Family)
\$5 (student or 65+)

See reverse for application



MUSEUM HOURS

Monday - Friday
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Closed Saturday, Sunday
& major holidays

CONTACT US

E-mail:
winooskihistory@yahoo.com

Website:
winooski.org

MEMORIAL SCHOOL

by Al Blondin



A petition was circulated on September 19, 1927 that read as follows: The undersigned voters of the Winooski Graded School District believe the time is opportune for the erection of a new school building and that the crowded condition of the schools and the sanitary conditions require additional school buildings. Therefore, the undersigned voters of said District request the School Trustees of said Winooski Graded School District to call a special School District Meeting to submit to the voters of said District the matter of whether said District shall erect such new School Building and whether it shall be financed by Bonding or otherwise.

February 12, 1928, the School District met and decided on two lots of land for this future school, with the first being a lot of land on the corner of Union Street and North Street, belonging to Mr. Rosaire Piche, and second being a lot of land on Spring Street bordering the current School. The School District set a limit of \$95,000.00 for the purchase of this land and new school to be voted on by the legal voters, to be paid for in a Bond.

March 1, 1928, a vote was taken by the legal voters of Winooski in reference to this school, with the following results. The vote was 390 in favor of a new school and 136 against. The vote for bonding this was 376 in favor and 143 against. The vote on the location was a tie with both parcels of land receiving 206 votes each, and a recount showed 205 in favor of the Piche lot and 202 in favor of the Spring Street location.

May 10, 1928, sealed bids were opened for the construction of the proposed new School. They were as follows, Harris Forber & Co of Boston, Mass. \$98,033.00, Champlain Trust Co., Winooski, Vt. \$100,334.00, E.H. Rollins & Sons, Boston, Mass \$99,278.00, and the Atlantic Merrill Oldham Co. for \$99,210.00. No action was taken on these bids at this time.

May 22, 1928, Mr. F. A. Villemaire presented a motion before the School District to take land by condemnation for the new school as voted on by the legal voters of said District. This motion was seconded by Mr. J. P. Allard.

June 9, 1928, the Trustees of the Winooski School District after being unable in trying to purchase this land from Mr. Piche, at a reasonable price, for the construction of this School and grounds have petitioned the Winooski City Council to take the necessary action to acquire title to this land for such School.

September 4, 1928, a petition was filed and recorded with the District Clerk to rescind the vote to purchase the Piche lot for the new school building, stating that Mr. Piche did not wish to sell, and to avoid paying an exorbitant price for the land. The petition was for the School District to call for another vote on the former action favoring the Piche site. This petition was signed by 41 legal voters of said District.

Construction began in 1929, and the school with its 12 classrooms opened for the beginning of school on September 15, 1930. Enrollment at the school was at four hundred thirty-five. The new school would now receive students from Grades 1 through 7. The School was named The Memorial School in honor of the four hundred and fifty young men from the city who joined in the defense of our Country during World War I.

(Continued on page 3)

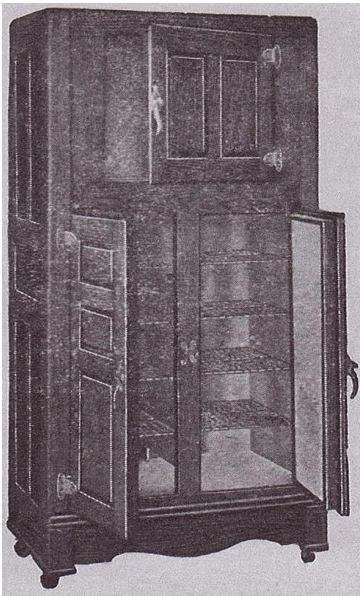
Mystery Photo

Revealed!



The Mystery Photo, in our last edition, was the gas filling station and repair shop of Frank and Angelina Bissonnette. Mary Racicot wrote: The photo was taken on the corner of Main and Steven Street. The three men in the photo were my grandfather, Frank Bissonnette and his sons Pete and Donald. They were my mother's father and brothers. It was a combination store and gas station and my "memere" and "pepere" lived in the apartment above it. The business operated from 1927-1965.

John Houle wrote: The mystery photo in the latest Winooski historical society newsletter is the old Bissonnette gas station on the corner of Stevens Street and Main. I used to stop there and buy candy bars when I was a kid on my way home from school when we lived on Niquette Court in the late 40s.



The other day my friend asked me "do you remember the "glaciere" in the "30's? This reliable oak furniture held two blocks of ice in the top section and the bottom was for the food to keep it cold and safe. The inconvenience was to empty the water pan at the bottom. If you did forget you had a big catastrophe. Ice was delivered two or three times a week. Placing a red card in the window indicated one block was needed. A blue card was for two blocks. Ice and milk was delivered throughout the year.

I remember the men delivering those huge blocks of ice on their shoulders. In Winooski Peter Handy was known as "the Ice King of Vermont". Ice was harvested in winter from lakes, rivers and Handy's Pond on East Allen Street and stored in ice houses.

The icebox was invented in 1840 for use in the home by Thomas Moore. Shortly thereafter, NYC saw the establishment of regular delivery routes for natural ice.

In 1911, GE, made the first mechanical icebox. It wasn't until the early 1930's that the usefulness of the "electric icebox" was realized when newly discovered Freon was introduced as the refrigerant. ~ Al Blondin

WANTED

OLD PHOTOS

Don't throw them out!
Throw them our way!

Contact: Leslie Turner at
802.238.3909 or
jturnerii@yahoo.com.



The new School was the pride of the city with its 12 classrooms, an auditorium and community stage. The school was often referred to as Union Memorial School like its predecessors, the Elm Street School and The Spring Street School. I would guess this was a way of identifying them by the Streets they were located on.

The city continued to grow, and the need for more classroom space became evident again by 1938, with the closing of the Elm Street School. Eight more classrooms were added on to the current Memorial School. The construction was completed on June 8, 1939, and the addition was dedicated. The Memorial School could now accommodate up to 800 students with its 20 classrooms. The school was the first in the State to be fitted with glass chalkboards. The addition was done by W.M. Adams and Sons for the sum of \$70,000.00

In July of 1948, it was announced that the Union Memorial School would have its first Kindergarten class in the fall. The class would accommodate 25 students, and the teacher would be Mrs. Justine Smyle.



Fifty years after construction had started on the Memorial School the need was expressed to either upgrade the present school to meet State standards or build another school. The subject was explored in depth and the decision was made to add another building to the Winooski High School location, and call it The Middle School. The Memorial School on Union Street was officially closed on June 30, 1981, and later sold in October of 1983 and converted into apartments.

A personal note, I recall the 7 years I spent attending classes at the Memorial School and some of my favorite teachers, along with the many basketball games, community talent shows, graduations and other events held there. We encourage our members and readers to share their memories and photos of Memorial School by sending them along to the Winooski Historical Society, 20 Winooski Falls Way Suite 42, Winooski, VT 05404, or to Alalfie@comcast.net

UPCOMING EVENTS IN THE FALL

Sunday, September 14, 2014, 1:00 P.M.

Winooski Senior Center

Al Blondin, local historian and archivist at the Winooski Historical Society will present a video of the history of St. Francis Xavier Church.

Sunday, October 5, 2014, 1:00 P.M.

Winooski Senior Center

David Clavelle, will give a presentation regarding the Clavelle and Bergeron Families.



Consider becoming a member of the Winooski Historical Society and receive our quarterly newsletter with articles on the rich history of Winooski.

WINOOSKI HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Amount _____

E-mail _____

Date _____

2014 Annual dues \$7 (individual), \$10 (family), or \$5 (student and 65+) are payable to:

Winooski Historical Society, c/o Leslie Turner, 119 Bellevue Street, Winooski, VT 05404

Please note: Any question regarding your membership call Leslie (802.238.3909) or Rita Martel (802.655.1846)

Mystery Photo



Here's another great "mystery photo" (two different views) from our archives. Look familiar? Ring any bells? If you have any information about the building, please contact Leslie Turner at 802.238.3909 or you can e-mail: jturnerii@yahoo.com.



**Winooski Historical Society
Champlain Mill
20 Winooski Falls Way
Suite 42
Winooski, VT 05404**