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Memorial Auditorium Progress Update

By Devin Colman

Ever since the city closed Memorial Auditorium in December 2016, the question of what to do with the building has generated much interest amongst the members of Preservation Burlington. In December 2017, Mayor Weinberger directed the Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) to begin the task of developing an adaptive re-use plan for the building. It is to remain a publically owned, public assembly space for use by the citizens of Burlington and others.

In July and August 2018, CEDO conducted a survey of Burlington residents to gauge the level of interest and commitment to saving Memorial Auditorium. With over 2,600 survey

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The Sentinel

Fall 2018

The New Soda Plant Goes with the Flow in Burlington's Booming South End

by Alexander Lavin

Beer, Candy, Nails! Beef, Headstones, Cigars! Ice!! In the last quarter of the 19th century, at the southern edge of Burlington's waterfront, just ashore from Lake Champlain and the Rutland Railroad Company's Roundhouse, industry buzzed along in city's Maple-Kilburn district.

Steve Conant landed here in 1979 after graduating from UVM and by his reckoning the South End has been buzzing the whole time since. "There's always been a lot going on here, but now with the dining and entertainment it's been discovered." Turns out you have to go back a very long time to when there wasn't a thick din in this corner of town.

Biscuits and Concrete Blocks! Ovens and Boxes! Electric Wire!! In the early 20th Century and well into it, a conversion from one industry to another kept each property in this extended cluster of buildings... a stones' throw from the prestigious Van Ness House (where two presidents laid their heads) full of workers rapt with their makings.

One of the last to move in was the M.&F.C. Dorn Soda Company of Pine Street, although the Dorn Brothers didn't so much move in as break ground, locating the new construction of their initially modest 75 by 40 foot bottling concern "with iron external cladding" between the Venetian

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NEWSLETTER DESIGN: Andrea Gray

Memorial Auditorium

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respondents, the support for repairing and finding new uses for the building is overwhelming. These results were revealed at a public meeting at City Hall on August 23, which also included public comments about the future of the building. One person said it should be torn down, and another said it should be sold for private development. Several others, however, spoke eloquently about the history of the building and its role in the community over the past 90 years. They also noted that it's a solid building, better than anything that could be constructed today.

On August 30, the first of an ongoing series of public workshops took place at City Hall. Several Preservation Burlington board members and supporters were present to advocate for the building. CEDO staff explained that any redevelopment plan must meet a community need, must be economically viable, and must be sustainable for the long-term. Attendees were then divided into small groups and asked to brainstorm ideas for uses,

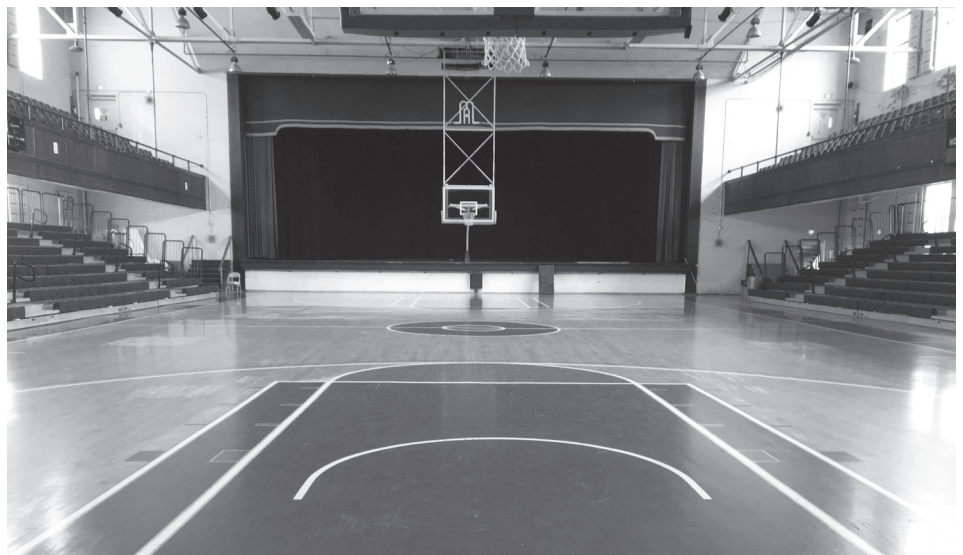
based on the results of the survey. At the top of the list was the need for a large, flexible, open space that could host large gatherings, performances, and concerts. The main floor, presently occupied by the basketball court, would serve this purpose well. Smaller spaces on the third floor would be ideal for offices, studios, or meeting rooms. The lower level could be subdivided into smaller spaces with temporary walls, and reconfigured as necessary depending on the use of the space. Other ideas included spaces for a display about the history of Burlington; a tourist welcome center; an emergency shelter; and a polling place.

The next public workshop will take place on Thursday, October 11 from 5:30–7:00 PM at City Hall. It will build on the ideas generated at the first workshop, and look at different models for how to rehabilitate, use, and maintain the building. For more information, please visit the CEDO website at <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CEDO/Memorial-Auditorium>.

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Preservation Burlington relies on donations and volunteers to continue its mission of protecting our community's character and livability. Visit our website to donate, volunteer, join our mailing list, share ideas, and get up-to-date information about our events and programs.



Behind the Green Marker

Marge Allard

241 LOOMIS STREET

This house is one of the iconic John Roberts houses beloved of Burlington architectural buffs. Interestingly, when the State of Vermont made its Historic Sites and Structures Survey in 1978, the house, unlike its next door neighbor #239 Loomis, was considered non-contributing and was not listed. Asbestos siding covered the original Roberts millwork, and asphalt roof shingles had replaced the original slate.

The house had been a family home for various people for decades, until a doctor bought it for his daughter to live in as a student. After which it became a student rental property. The present owner tells of his son, then a student, attending a party there. The entire first and second floors were crammed with partiers: the band was in the cellar. One can imagine the effect on the neighborhood.

Greg Chioffi bought the house in 2015, determined to restore it, a truly Herculean task. He enlisted Brezzy Hill Builders of Colchester, remaining fully engaged.

Removing the asbestos siding was a full-scale hazmat operation, from removal to disposal. Happily, the original clapboard and shingle siding was underneath. Its lead paint was the next problem, dealt with by a painter from the city's lead paint abatement program.

Mr. Chioffi was on the lookout for missing replacement parts like moldings and porch half-posts that had rotted or been removed. He had a lucky find, rescuing some half-posts on the way to the



dump from another site. They were an exact fit for the footprints of the missing ones on Loomis Street. Some moldings were manufactured on site. The house was insulated, and made energy-efficient with advice from Burlington Electric and Vermont Gas Systems. Energy-efficient two-over-two windows were installed, since many of the original windows had already been replaced.

The inside of the house was in worse shape than the outside. The kitchen had six layers of flooring; holes had been cut in the upstairs flooring for heat access. The floors were restored; many of the original moldings and window surrounds were retained. Doors needed replacement. Landscaping was done.

The house is again a family home, contributing beautifully to its upper Loomis Street neighborhood. This restoration project won a Historic Preservation Award from Preservation Burlington in the residential category for the year 2016.

John W. Roberts was an Essex, Vermont native. He moved to Burlington as a young man with his wife Amelia. He

is first mentioned in the city directory of 1881–1883 as a carpenter boarding at #245 North Willard Street. *Child's Gazetteer* (1883) calls him a carpenter and builder employing about twenty men. By 1889–1890 the city directory lists him as a contractor and builder. Burlington was growing fast, and, as today, there was a need for affordable housing. People were speculating in real estate and housing, from the established wealthy to hard-scrabble but ambitious newcomers. They bought land and built houses, either selling or renting in hopes of increasing their investment. The houses John Roberts built were ideal for this. They could be made for \$900 to \$1100. Roberts built over fifty houses around the city; not all of them were his classic design, but most were, in the Queen Anne stick style.

A typical John Roberts house is a one and a half story cottage, gable end facing the street, patterned shingle decoration on the gable, a first floor bay window, narrow double second floor window, side entrance from small side porch, decorative millwork, and a patterned slate roof.

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2018 Preservation Burlington Homes Tour

By Matt Viens

Preservation Burlington's 2018 Homes Tour was a day I won't forget anytime soon. I've been heavily involved in the group's Homes Tours for about a decade, pretty much ever since my husband and I had our home on the tour back in 2008. For the last few years I've been heading up the Homes Tour committee, the group of volunteers responsible for scouring our city's neighborhoods for historic homes (and willing homeowners) for the tour. As my colleagues on the committee will attest, that's no small task. Some years we are still looking for a home or two as our tour booklet and publicity materials go to print. This year, we were fortunate in that we had a solid group of homes for the tour by April. Even with that major detail settled, and having had a wealth of publicity surrounding the tour, my stomach was still in knots the morning of the tour. No matter how much you plan, I've learned to expect the unexpected.

This year's tour was unique, in that the homes on the tour were more widely dispersed across the city. Getting to

each home would require effort, and we were aware of that. Additionally, unlike with previous tours, this year's tour included a large structure, the former St. Joseph's Orphanage on North Avenue, that required special considerations. The orphanage, now known as the Liberty House, was converted to residential units the previous year. We were only permitted to conduct tours in relatively small groups, and under the supervision of three dedicated tour guides (whereas in the other homes tour participants can come and go as they like, and the tours are self-guided). Surely, we thought, each tour guide could take between 7–10 people in at a time, and cover the building in staggered, 20-minute tours. What we didn't anticipate, though, was that many tour-goers would opt to start the tour at the former orphanage building.

Add to this the fact that this year's tour was a massive success in terms of tickets sold. The tour was sold out by the morning of the tour! By the time tour began at noon, there was a line stretch-

ing the length of the Liberty House (when constructed in the late 1800s, the building was the largest structure in the State of Vermont). The line stayed that way for the first two hours of the tour. To accommodate the crowd, we increased tour sizes to around 20 people and urged the tour guides to pick up their pace. I

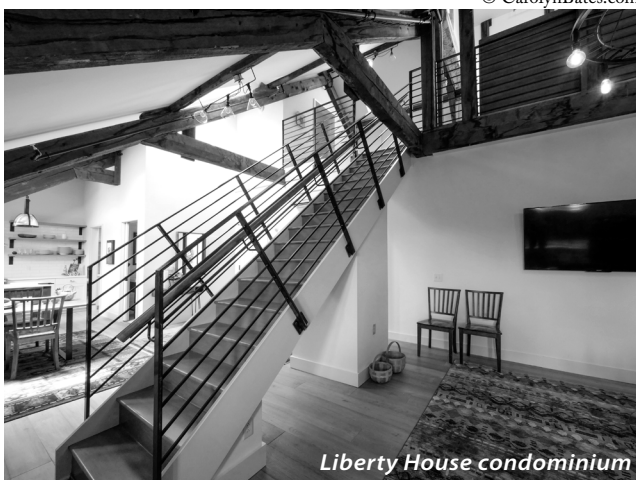


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even started to lead tour groups myself, though I was admittedly less knowledgeable about the building than our trained tour guides. By 4:00, our last group of about 25 people were able to make it to the top of the building to take in the incredible view of Lake Champlain from John and Martha Hoehl's rooftop deck.

Many people were understandably unhappy with the long wait at the Liberty House. We understand that this likely impacted your ability to see the other homes on the tour. For that, I sincerely apologize. Thankfully, I had several people tell me that in the end viewing the Liberty House was worth the wait. I also received very positive feedback about the other homes on tour, and want to extend our thanks to those homeowners for allowing us to showcase their historic homes.

From my point of view, the Homes Tour is a learning experience. We may never get the opportunity to have a structure the size of the Liberty House on the tour again. If we do, we will certainly be better prepared. In the meantime, we want to apologize for any inconvenience the wait may have caused and thank you for your continued support of our organization. We've already set the date for next year's tour, so please make plans to join us on Saturday, June 8, 2019!



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Liberty House condominium

President's Corner – Karl Lukhaup



I began my career as a carpenter in rural Maine with a crew of fundamentalist Christians. The timber frame homes we built were not just a means to make a living, but a search for truth. From my fellow crew members I learned that the lines I cut had to be accurate to a machine edge, knife scored 1/32th of an inch. However, over my time with this group, I watched their definition of what was absolute, divide further and further into new forms. One coworker began cutting his lines to the 1/64th of an inch, while converting from Calvinism to Greek Orthodoxy. Greek, of course was a more original language of the bible, and 1/64th of an inch is the finest measurement on a Starrett ruler. In short, I found the further we made divisions in absolute truth, the more relative that truth became.

Since then, I have worked with many crews, and met many an oddball carpenter. The truth I now understand is

that a line can never be straight. This bold statement is due to many factors: Wood is imperfect. It warps and shrinks. However most importantly, there will always be finer incremental measurements to be drawn on wood.

The buildings I work on are imperfect structures. Overtime whole sections have been hacked away, added on to, or been replaced with the “best” brand new materials of 50 years ago. Lines that at one point were straight and plumb, now sag so the roofline looks like it is smiling at you. The goal of doing repair work on these homes is not to bring them back to the year they were built because honestly, when is a house ever “done?” A house’s appearance is a fluid quality. My goal is to make whatever repair or new work harmonize or look “right.”

The field of Preservation Carpentry has helped me reconcile with the search for absolute truth. This field has pushed me to know a canon of New England architecture which spans over 250 years. Certainly stylistic details evolve, however certain rules of proportionality, and

interrelation stay true. Development of a strong sense of aesthetics may take time. However, at a basic level it is easy to know if a building looks correct and even easier to know when it looks just plain wrong.

Trying to figure out what is “right” is the basic crux of my work. I dig under layers of aluminum siding to find the original trim work which defines how elements of the house interrelate. I work with modern building codes that require certain sizing and spacing of design that do not relate to the original house. I use modern energy standards that require walls to be built to a certain thickness to accommodate insulation. I follow the Secretary of the Interior’s standards of historic preservation to complete my work under a certain code of ethics.

None of these rules were created with the other standards in mind. However it is the work of the builder to unite them though such skills as reveals, tapers, shadow boards, clip cuts and “cheated lines.” I do so with the

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Meet the Board Member – Rebecca Reese



A transplant to Vermont, Rebecca has lived in the greater Burlington area since the summer of 2010. Her love of history brought her to the University of Vermont Historic Preservation masters program. Originally from West Virginia, Rebecca moved with her now husband, Josh

Bayer. They both fell in love with the area and decided to stay put, buying a 1930s bungalow in Colchester. Recently, their family has grown with the birth of their daughter, Naomi Rose, in the summer of 2017.

Throughout Rebecca’s career, her love of history has also developed into a love of community. She has worked with the residents of Burlington in various capacities and is currently employed at the Community and

Economic Development Office of the City of Burlington. Rebecca has served on the Preservation Burlington board since 2011 and is thankful that it has brought her closer to the community and those living in it.

Josh, Rebecca and Naomi love to spend time exploring and soaking up all things Vermont. They enjoy sprucing up their historic home, discovering breweries and restaurants, and keeping in touch with new and old friends.

Soda Plant

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Blind Company and the Goodell and Company Marble and Granite Finishing Factory. In another era's version of creative branding, the Dorns' regionally beloved Venetian Ginger Ale handily borrowed its moniker from the company next door on Kilburn Avenue.

While the age of invention swept some industries into Maple-Kilburn, the soda plant flew in on prohibition. The Dorns' opened up shop in 1918, the inaugural year of that unfortunate historical detour known as the 18th amendment. You could still get drunk, probably drunker, but even the upright guests of the saloon-less Van Ness House needed something bubbly to toast in their fine clink-ables. The Dorn soda plant's Venetian Ginger Ale was the viable proxy.

Later on, at the onset of the United States' war effort against the axis powers, the Dorns partnered with Coca-Cola and the soda plant produced the ubiquitous pop (and later its tangy cousins) there until 1977 when, as the company pushed for mergers amongst its many bottlers, one such deal left the plant silent.

Steve Conant kept going by it every day and saw potential. After working previously out of his garage and then renting a small space tucked away behind Howard Street, the trailblazing designer and manufacturer of lighting fixtures and metal work sought a place that would fit his business. Amongst the district's rambling network of brick buildings that now included a proliferation of artists' studios and the Ben and Jerry's home base across the street (in the old headstone maker) Conant found himself at the soda plant. "Phil George owned it, and I rented it for a while... then in 1999 I got the chance to buy it."



If it's hard to imagine that anyone would design such an extensive and meandering labyrinth of spaces as do compose the plant, it's because this is not just one building but a tandem sequence of additions, connections, and renovations. After an auspicious run of ginger ale, the Dorn brothers expanded their plant in 1926, then again in 1938 and still again in 1942. The complex, as it stands today with paint still drying on a spiffy new bunch of renovations, remains one of the enduring landmarks of a district.

"I didn't buy it to start up a maker hub; I bought it to fill it up." This uncanny bounty of space, though, clearly came with its own preference for association. After Conant refocused his energy a decade ago away from wholesale lighting supply manufacturing and toward artisanal production, it became apparent there was extra room to let. For the last ten years it's hosted a litany of businesses apart from Conant's including Burlington's iconic Recycle North. Recently, when their lease came up, the full-grown community hub—something of a colossal thrift department store—left the nest.

If you visit today, it's a veritable hive with a recent doubling of individual spaces for establishments. Whoever mistakenly declared the South End a withering postindustrial junkheap clearly hasn't popped their heads in here lately. In 2018 this new round of renewal finds the knotty jumble; already

home to an art gallery, art market, coding lab, and vintage shop in addition to Conant's anchor Metal and Light workshop and gallery, hosting a new round of innovators. If it feels like the soda plant has come full-circle this time around, that's because five of the spaces within are now home to beverage producers of practically every stripe.

Neighborhood redoubtables Brio Coffeeworks and Tomgirl Juice will be joined by Shacksbury Cider, Zaffa Wines and a tantalizing new edible fragrance producer called Alice and the Magician whose spritzes promise new frontiers in mixology. "That's a great example of exciting things going on in this space, this concept of aromatics that you add to drinks. Alice and the Magician and all of the new tenants are innovators."

So the soda plant is flowing with fine refreshments once again although a literalist might contend that not one of them actually bottles soda. We at Preservation Burlington, with a nod to the past and sweet expectations for the future in Burlington's South End, raise our cups anyway with this salutation: spaces for rent are still available.

This article extensively references Kate Hovanes article "Manufacturing in The Maple-Kilburn Area of Burlington, Vermont."

President's Corner

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acknowledgement that my work will eventually be modified, torn out or repaired by some future carpenter. As I don't want this to happen in my lifetime, I always try to do my best. Thinking to my introduction to carpentry, I do wonder if they now are measuring their lines to the 1/128th of an inch in Maine.

Battle Front and Home Front: Lakeview's Great War Tour

David Ian Lightbody

Just over one hundred years ago, in April 1918, American troops began fighting alongside allied soldiers on the "Western Front" in France. The giant German "spring offensive" of early 1918 had left towns across northeast France and Belgium in ruins, but with US forces arriving on the front lines, Paris was saved from the imminent threat of invasion. The tide was slowly turned in favor of the allies by the "doughboys" in their beige uniforms, who counted many Vermonters in their ranks.

To commemorate the centennial of the end of the Great War, the Friends of Lakeview Cemetery and Preservation Burlington are organizing a WWI tour of the cemetery. Lakeview is located between North Avenue and the lake shore in the North End of Burlington. The guided tour will take place on 20th October at 1PM, and the lives of several local veterans interred at Lakeview will be presented and reenacted by local people. All are welcome to this free historical event.

Those interred at Lakeview include Vermonter Admiral Henry T. Mayo, recipient of the Distinguished Service Medal for his outstanding operation of the US Atlantic Fleet in wartime. Mayo was an advocate of a convoy-based anti-submarine policy, where destroyers would act as armed escorts, and he was also instrumental in the construction of an anti-U-boat minefield sunk across the North Sea between Scotland and Norway. By late 1918, more than 150 German U-Boats had been sunk in and around the Atlantic, and the threat was receding.

Over the course of 1918, US medics had to deal with a mortal threat that proved to be more lethal than the battlefield, and far more difficult to control. The second wave of the Spanish Flu outbreak, which peaked in October 1918, killed no fewer than 43,000 American soldiers out of the 110,000 who fell during the Great War. One of the nurses sent to France with the American Expeditionary Force was Luella Wheeler of South Burlington.

Luella worked at an American field hospital near the front lines in eastern France, but sadly contracted Spanish flu during its third wave, and died shortly after the end of the war. The following year her body was transferred back to Vermont for burial alongside



her family, in their plot at Lakeview Cemetery.

One of the Vermont soldiers Luella may have treated in France could have been Frederick V. Burgess, a 1st Lieutenant in the 15th Machine Gun Battalion. He was wounded during the earliest American engagements that took place in July 1918, only 50 miles from Paris. By September 13th 1918, Burgess had recovered and was back fighting on the front lines near St Mihiel, a hundred miles further east. After being painfully wounded again by a machine gun bullet, Burgess remained with his platoon, visiting his guns and directing their fire throughout a determined counter attack. He refused to be evacuated until the attack was over. Burgess survived the war and lived on South Willard Street, Burlington, Vermont. He was awarded a Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism in the fighting that took place in September 1918.

The American Expeditionary Force on the ground depended on good intelligence, mostly supplied by

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Courtesy of Brennan Gauthier

Battle Front and Home Front

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reconnaissance aircraft operating in the skies above the battlefields. The US forces did not bring many aircraft across the Atlantic with them, but they set up a base near Paris to receive new British and French aircraft for the American Air Service. "Acceptance Park No. 1" was established in the spring of 1918, and a Vermonter, Sheldon Harley Wheeler, was placed in charge of the field near Paris. By the end of the war, only seven months after the airfield was established, the facility had fitted out more than two thousand aircraft and sent them to the front lines. Major Wheeler later died in a flying accident in Hawaii, but was buried back in Burlington.

Of the 15,000 Vermonters who signed up, 6,000 were killed by military action and illness, and another 1,000 were wounded. 2,000 Vermonters were killed at home by the Spanish flu. On the home front, women's club members sewed and knitted clothing, and made bandages to send to the soldiers and hospitals in Europe. Emma Votey of Burlington was one such woman who organized weekly sewing circles for the UVM Alumnae Association to create hospital garb for injured soldiers in French hospitals. Thirty thousand Green Mountain Guard girls and boys signed up to help increase local food production, urged on by the Committee on Public Information's slogan: "Food will win the war!"

World War I, the Great War, impacted every Vermont community, and Vermonters young and old. At Lakeview Cemetery this fall, we can pay our respects and learn about the many local people who served in, and supported, the national effort in that "War to End All Wars."

Behind the Green Marker

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Some of these features may have been altered by homeowners, but the Roberts house can still be recognized.

Urban A. Woodbury, businessman and a Mayor of Burlington, (later Governor of Vermont) owned a large tract of land on upper Loomis Street and Mansfield Avenue. He had Roberts build the three houses, #235, #239, and #241, probably circa 1889, since they are on the Hopkins 1890 map of Burlington. #239 and #241 were rental properties at first.

Urban Woodbury sold the house to William F. Fitzgerald in July of 1894. Fitzgerald owned a grocery store at 59½ N. Champlain Street, and lived over the store. The deed states that E. H. Vancor had been living in the Loomis Street house. Edwin Vancor was a night operator for New England Tel. and Tel., first listed at #241 in 1892. The 1894 city directory notes "Edwin H. Vancor removed to New Haven, Conn." In September of 1894, Mr. Fitzgerald sold the house to Miss Florence Colby.

The city directory never gives a workplace for Miss Colby, but in the 1900 Burlington census she is boarding with a family, and describes her occupation as "capitalist." Apparently, buying the house was part of her capitalist plan. After living at the house for a couple of years she seems to be renting the house, boarding out at a new place every year, and according to the Jonesville town news in the Free Press, visiting relatives were there frequently. In 1902 she sold the house to Albert C. Smith, a realtor, eventually moving to Boston.

Maria Smith is listed at #241 in 1903, John Gainey in 1904. The following year Martin Barry, an employee of the nearby Mount St. Mary's Academy, is living there with his wife Mary. The Barrys will make Loomis Street their

home until 1937. Martin also worked as a watchman, and for a Captain Frank Parker on Williams Street. His widow sold the house to David J. Leonard and his daughter Catherine Lafayette. They and the next three owners used the house as rental property. One of the tenants in the early 1940s was William A. Wheeler, custodian of UVM's Ira Allen Chapel.

In August of 1945 Clyde and Gertrude Boisselle and their family became owner/residents. Clyde was the owner of Star Cleaning Services. Their daughter, Sister Mary Boisselle of the Sisters of Mercy, was able to keep an eye on her former home from nearby Mount St. Mary's; she has many other memories to share.

In March of 1972 William E. McNeil and his wife Geraldine moved into #241. William was a counselor with UVM's counseling and testing services. Gerry McNeil also was a UVM employee.

In 1987 Michael W. Breen and Andrew D. Ryan were the new owners, followed by Kevin and Brenda Leary, and, in 2001, the Moss family. At some point the house became a rental property catering to students, which brings us back to the start of this story.

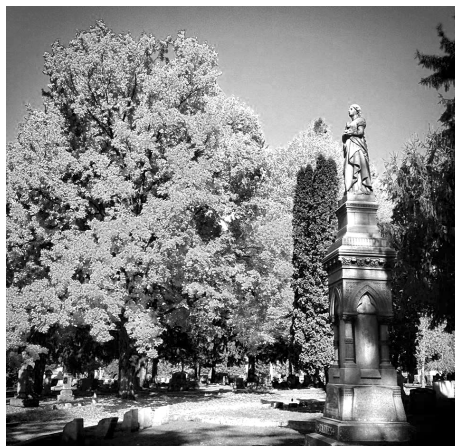
Happily, #241 Loomis Street is again a welcoming John Roberts single family house, and a welcome contribution to the neighborhood.

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- Vermont State Historic Sites and Structures Survey, 1978
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- John Roberts' Houses: A Walking Tour,* continued on page 9

Battle Front and Home Front: Burlington and WWI Lakeview Cemetery Tour

Join the Friends of Lakeview Cemetery and Preservation Burlington for tour of Lakeview Cemetery to commemorate the centennial of the end of WWI, featuring stories of WWI Burlingtonians laid to rest there and their acts of patriotism. The tour will begin in the Louisa Howard Chapel with a brief introduction to the war and America's role in it, as well as a temporary exhibit of WWI artifacts and ephemera. After the introduction, we will take a guided walk of the cemetery during which we will visit with living history re-enactors who will share their personal experiences with the Great War.



The youngest of Burlington's municipal burial grounds, Lakeview Cemetery was established in 1867 and is the resting place for many notable Burlingtonians. Designed as part of the rural cemetery

movement of the mid-19th century, Lakeview offers picturesque views of Lake Champlain, diverse plantings and meandering paths, beautiful monuments and the High Victorian Gothic-style Louisa Howard Chapel.

When: Saturday, October 20, 2018. Rain or shine. Tour starts with a brief introduction at 1:00 PM. In addition, for those not taking the Tour, the Louisa Howard Chapel will be open from 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM.

Where: Meet at the Louisa Howard Chapel near the main entrance to Lakeview Cemetery. Parking is available at the cemetery.

Free and open to the public, no registration necessary.

NOT TO SCALE *by Ron Wanamaker*



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.

For more information please email info@preservationburlington.org or call 802-522-8259. See you on the streets!

Green Marker

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Burlington VT: Tara Harrison, October 2003, Preservation Burlington
Map of the City of Burlington, Vermont: Hopkins, 1890
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Burlington, VT, 1912 and 1919
Historic Burlington, University of Vermont Historic Preservation Program 2004
Interview with Gregory Chioffi, 2017.

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