

[Home \(http://www.vnews.com/home/\)](http://www.vnews.com/home/)

[News \(http://www.vnews.com/news/\)](http://www.vnews.com/news/)

[Obituaries \(http://www.vnews.com/obituaries/\)](http://www.vnews.com/obituaries/)

[Opinion \(http://www.vnews.com/opinion/\)](http://www.vnews.com/opinion/)

[Sports \(http://www.vnews.com/sports/\)](http://www.vnews.com/sports/)

[Life & Times \(http://www.vnews.com/lifetimes/\)](http://www.vnews.com/lifetimes/)

[Calendar \(http://calendar.vnews.com\)](http://calendar.vnews.com)

[Photos \(http://www.vnews.com/photos/\)](http://www.vnews.com/photos/)

[Marketplace \(http://classifieds.vnews.com\)](http://classifieds.vnews.com)

[Reader Services \(/contact-us\)](/contact-us)

Tufted Teal  
65% off today!



Joss & Main  
SHOP NOW

## Film About Norwich's One-Room Schools Raises Money to Save One



(/csp/mediapool/sites/dt.common.streams.StreamServer.cls?

STREAMOID=GMWq7\_xNU6\_c9to3Egk2zM\$daE2N3K4ZzOUsqbU5sYsk4baEaROrQ2CNtUAOddLWWCsJLu883Ygn4B49Lvm9bPe2QeMKQdVeZmXF\$9I\$4u CZ8QDXhaHEp3rvz  
&CONTENTTYPE=image/jpeg)

The Root District School in Norwich was built in 1937 and closed only eight years later because of low enrollment. The building is now a subject of the film "Back to School: Lessons from Norwich's One-Room Schoolhouses," which will be screened at the Wilder Center on Sunday, June 28 at 7 p.m. and at Marion Cross School on Tuesday, June 30 at 7 p.m. (Valley News - James M. Patterson)

Copyright © Valley News. May not be reprinted or used online without permission. Send requests to [permission@vnews.com](mailto:permission@vnews.com).

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW](#)

**VALLEY NEWS  
PHOTO GALLERIES**



Joss & Main  
SHOP NOW



START FRESH  
UP TO **70% OFF**  
storage & organization

**ENTERPRISE**  
*Read online now!*  
(<http://enterprise.vnews.com>)

**Just Posted**  
(<http://www.vnews.com/news/li>)

- 03:12AM  (<http://twitter.com/nhdoti93>)  
nhdoti93 (<http://twitter.com/nhdoti93>)  
right lanes close
- 02:21AM Police: Teen was high on marij  
(<http://hosted2.ap.org/NHWLV06-26-VT--Double%20Fatal-To>)
- 12:24AM Burlington leaders seek public  
(<http://hosted2.ap.org/NHWLV06-26-VT--Bike%20Path%20Fu>)



By Nicola Smith  
 Valley News Staff Writer  
 Friday, June 26, 2015  
 (Published in print: Friday, June 26, 2015)

The former Root District School in Norwich is tucked off to the side of Union Village Road near the junction of Goodrich Four Corners Road. Built in 1937, it hasn't been used as a school since 1945, but the black slate board is still at the front of the room, and sun still pours through the east-facing windows, which were designed to let in ample light so that students could see their work in an era before electricity.

Email

Print (/home/17473272-95/renovation-required?print=true)

Like 1

0

An American flag hangs from a wall, there's a framed print of George Washington hanging over a bookcase, and over on a counter is a collection, somewhat improbably, of old 78 rpm recordings of Wagner's *Die Gottedamerung* and *Siegfred* . A small collection of old textbooks is tucked into the book case: *Living Geography* , *Safety in the World of Today* , *Elementary English in Action* and other math and grammar primers.

The building, which was sold for \$5 by the town in 1952 to the Root District Game Club, is one of two one-room schoolhouses in Norwich that remain in largely original condition and in public hands; the other, off Beaver Meadow Road, is still in use as a community center .

The history of Norwich's schoolhouses is explored in the 30 minute documentary *Back to School: Lessons from Norwich's One-Room Schoolhouses* , which has its premiere Sunday at 7 p .m. at the Wilder Center, followed by a reception and performance by the Norwich band Fresh Straw. It will be screened again on Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the Marion Cross School in Norwich. Admission is by suggested donation.

The film is a co-production of the Root District Game Club, the Beaver Meadow Schoolhouse Association, and the Norwich Historical Society, which also collaborated with CATV in White River Junction and the Boston-based Historic New England to make the documentary. (CTV and Historic New England also made the 2013 documentary *Connecting The Threads: Overalls to Art* , about the history of the H.W. Carter overall factory in Lebanon, now the home of AVA Gallery and Art Center.)

AdChoices

**Joss & Main** SHOP NOW

START FRESH  
 UP TO **70% OFF**  
 storage & organization

The purpose of the screenings is to help raise \$80,000 to shore up the Root District schoolhouse's foundation, which is crumbling, said Brian Cook, a Norwich resident and Realtor who is the producer of the documentary. The foundation predates the current structure; the original school house was built in 1925 and burned down in 1936.

"If we can make it to \$80,000, the foundation can be fixed and the building's future is assured," Cook

said.

- 757073a7e06b45878e7929736
- 12:08AM Film About Norwich's One-Roc (<http://www.vnews.com/news/t-norwichs-one-room-schools-rai>)
  - 12:08AM Jesse M. Stanley, Sr. (<http://www.vnews.com/news/t-95/jesse-m-stanley-sr>)
  - 12:08AM Daniel W. "Dan" Mullen (<http://www.vnews.com/news/t-mullen>)
  - 12:08AM Orange Is Without Selectboard (<http://www.vnews.com/news/t-95/orange-is-without-selectboard>)
  - 12:08AM Jamie T. Barton (<http://www.vnews.com/news/t-95/jamie-t-barton>)
  - 12:08AM Elaine L. (Cantlin) Norris (<http://www.vnews.com/news/t-norris>)
  - 12:08AM Windsor Man, 58, Charged With

**artistree**  
 community arts center & gallery

*Art, Music, Movement & Exhibits!*

[www.artistreevt.org](http://www.artistreevt.org)  
[info@artistreevt.org](mailto:info@artistreevt.org) ~ 802.457.3500

ArtisTree & Purple Crayon ~ 2095 Pomfret Road  
 South Pomfret, VT 05067 ~ 802.457.3500

**PURPLE CRAYON**  
 PRODUCTIONS art & music center for children

Classes for Children Under 5

[www.artistreevt.org/purple-crayon](http://www.artistreevt.org/purple-crayon)  
[info@artistreevt.org](mailto:info@artistreevt.org)

ArtisTree & Purple Crayon are 501(c)3 non-profit organizations. To learn more visit [www.artistreevt.org](http://www.artistreevt.org) or call 802-457-3500

**Today's E-Edition**  
<http://westlebanonvalleynews.nl>

To date the campaign has raised approximately \$12,000, with the promise of a \$40,000 match from the Byrne Foundation of Hanover. Once the foundation is repaired, Cook said, the game club can look at further improvements to the septic system and water supply. Monies raised will also go to maintenance of the Beaver Meadow schoolhouse.

An effort begun in 2004 to replace the foundation and perform other repairs raised enough money to put a new roof on the structure and to paint the exterior, Cook said.

Cook is the president of the Root District Game Club, which has used the building for community events, weddings, potlucks and birthday parties, including the 14th birthday party of Olympic skier and gold medal winner Hannah Kearney. At times, the group has called itself the Root District Community Club, but is retaining the Game Club name in keeping with the original deed from the town, Cook said.

Regardless of the name, the building hasn't seen any events since 2011, because of safety concerns about the foundation.

"This time around there's a new sense of urgency, because the insurance company finally stepped in" and decided the foundation had to be replaced before the building could be used, Cook said.

The new fundraising effort should be helped by the Game Club's nonprofit status, which it acquired last year, and by the school's recent inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

The film also should help. "I hope so," Cook said. "I'm really, really happy with the film. We're hoping that there might be interest from Vermont Public Television." The Norwich Women's Club stepped in Thursday to cover the rent of the Wilder Center on Sunday, Cook said.

The filmmakers were able to track down 10 former students, most of whom are still in the area, to interview them about their experiences in the one-room schoolhouses. They also combed through the Norwich Historical Society's archives for old photographs and video interviews with older Norwich residents involved with the schools.



In the mid-1800s there were, Cook estimated, as many as 20 schoolhouses in Norwich, which is about 45 square miles in area. By the 1940s, that number had shrunk to five. By 1952, all Norwich students attended the Marion Cross School in the village. Talk about consolidation!

Cook, who took the presidency of the Game Club just before the insurance company took action in 2011, was born out West. He went to the Marion Cross School, Hanover High School

and left the area for college and work. He came back to Norwich six years ago.

"I love the history of the buildings in Norwich," Cook said. "Growing up here I was completely unaware of the one-room schoolhouses."

The recollections of the former students, now in their 70s and 80s, are of walking from their farms to school daily, pranks played in the classrooms, and their teachers, some of whom were quite formidable.

One of the women interviewed, Rockcey (pronounced Roxie) Ruby attended the Root District School from 1932 to 1939. She walked 3/4 of a mile to the school from her parents' farm on Union Village Road, where they milked Guernsey cows and raised pigs,



(<http://westlebanonvalleynews.nh.newsmemory.com>)

Read the E-Edition on your iPhone, iPad or Android device:



(<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/valley-news/id813780319?mt=8>)



(<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.westlebanonvalleynews.android.prod&hl=en>)

## Popular

Most read stories in the past 7 days.

1. No One Hurt in Bradford, Vt., Fire (<http://www.vnews.com/photos/inthenews/95/no-one-hurt-in-bradford-vt-fire>) (1368 reads)
2. West Lebanon Man Who Hid Camera Gets Prison Time (<http://www.vnews.com/news/17447374-95/west-lebanon-man-who-hid-camera-gets-prison-time>) (1363 reads)
3. Hanover Co-op to Reinstate Employee, 64 (<http://www.vnews.com/news/17466195-95/hanover-co-op-to-reinstate-employee-64>) (1245 reads)
4. Fire Marshal Says Kids Caused Bradford, Vt., House Fire (<http://www.vnews.com/photos/inthenews/95/fire-marshal-says-kids-caused-bradford-vt-house-fire>) (1181 reads)
5. Vermont State Police Say Fire in Bradford, Vt., Started by Kids (<http://www.vnews.com/home/17449760-95/vermont-state-police-say-fire-in-bradford-vt-started-by-kids>) (1161 reads)
6. Lack of Zoning Rules Spurs Solar Plan's Move to Canaan (<http://www.vnews.com/news/17437489-95/lack-of-zoning-rules-spurs-solar-plans-move-to-canaan>) (1056 reads)
7. Windsor Solar Proposal Would Be Largest in Vt. (<http://www.vnews.com/news/townbytown/95/windsor-solar-proposal-would-be-largest-in-vt>) (991 reads)
8. Claremont Car Dealer In Limbo (<http://www.vnews.com/news/17398443-95/claremont-car-dealer-in-limbo>) (905 reads)

goats, horses and sheep. She was, at one point, just one of two students attending the Root District School.

"I loved the winters, although they were severe," Ruby wrote in an email. "Sometimes my father would take me to school on his sled pulled by horses. Other times when the weather was bad, my teacher would pick me up."

The hope, Cook said, is that the school will once again be used for community events, and perhaps even house a preschool one day, which would bring the building full circle.

For information or reservations for the screenings, email [rootschoolhouse@gmail.com](mailto:rootschoolhouse@gmail.com) or call 802-331-0677. Tickets are suggested donations of \$10 per adult, \$5 for children and \$20 for families. For information on the documentary go to [historicnewengland.org/events-programs/everyes-history/everyes-history-projects/back](http://historicnewengland.org/events-programs/everyes-history/everyes-history-projects/back) (<http://historicnewengland.org/events-programs/everyes-history/everyes-history-projects/back>) to school or [facebook.com/rootschoolhouse](https://facebook.com/rootschoolhouse) (<http://facebook.com/rootschoolhouse>).

Nicola Smith can be reached at [nsmith@vnews.com](mailto:nsmith@vnews.com).

**Share:**

Email Print (/home/17473272-95/renovation-required?print=true) 0

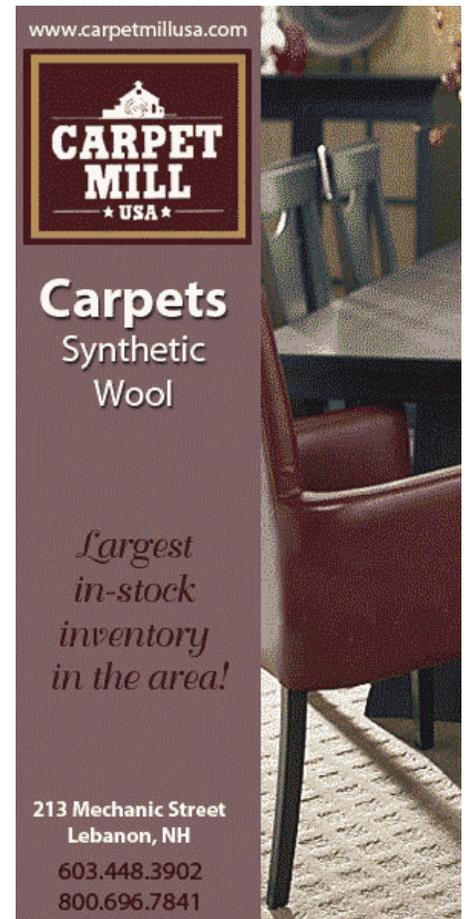
Like Share 1

**Contribute:**

- Suggest a correction (<http://drupal.vnews.com/forms/correction>)
- Send a photo (<http://drupal.vnews.com/forms/photo>)
- Suggest a link (<http://drupal.vnews.com/forms/link>)
- Send a news tip ([http://drupal.vnews.com/forms/news\\_tip](http://drupal.vnews.com/forms/news_tip))
- Letter to the Editor (<http://drupal.vnews.com/forms/letter-to-the-editor>)

reads)

9. Dartmouth Dashes Frat's Housing Plan (<http://www.vnews.com/news/dartmouth/95/dartmouth-dashes-frats-housing-plan>) (851 reads)
10. New London Barn Playhouse Experiences a Rebirth (<http://www.vnews.com/lifetimes/17386595/new-london-barn-playhouse-experiences-a-rebirth>) (813 reads)



www.carpetmillusa.com

**CARPET MILL**  
★ USA ★

**Carpets**  
Synthetic  
Wool

*Largest  
in-stock  
inventory  
in the area!*

213 Mechanic Street  
Lebanon, NH  
603.448.3902  
800.696.7841



AdChoices [i](#)

**Joss & Main** [SHOP NOW](#)

START FRESH  
UP TO **70% OFF**  
storage & organization

**Tufted Teal**  
65% off today!



**Joss & Main** AdChoices 

**SHOP NOW**

### Categories

- Home  
(<http://www.vnews.com/home/>)
- News  
(<http://www.vnews.com/news/>)
- Obituaries  
(<http://www.vnews.com/obituaries/>)
- Opinion  
(<http://www.vnews.com/opinion/>)
- Sports  
(<http://www.vnews.com/sports/>)
- Life & Times  
(<http://www.vnews.com/lifetimes/>)
- Calendar  
(<http://calendar.vnews.com>)
- Marketplace  
(<http://classifieds.vnews.com>)

### Newspaper & Website

- Terms of Service (/terms-of-service)
- Privacy Policy (/privacy-policy)
- Copyright Notice (/copyright)
- Reader Services (/contact-us)
- Contact Us (/contact-us)
- Submit an Obituary (/submitting-obituary)

### Advertise

- Advertise (/advertise)
- Place a classified ad (/place-classified-ad)

### Contribute

- Suggest a correction  
(<http://drupal.vnews.com/forms/correction>)
- Send a photo  
(<http://drupal.vnews.com/forms/photo>)
- Suggest a link  
(<http://drupal.vnews.com/forms/link>)
- Send a news tip  
([http://drupal.vnews.com/forms/news\\_tip](http://drupal.vnews.com/forms/news_tip))
- Letter to the Editor  
(<http://drupal.vnews.com/forms/letter-to-the-editor>)

### Connect With Us

- RSS Feeds  
(<http://www.vnews.com/feed>)
- Subscribe  
(<http://www.vnews.com/subscribe>)
- Facebook  
(<http://www.facebook.com/Vnews/246562>)
- Newsletters  
(/newsletters/)

**Main Office**  
24 Interchange Drive  
West Lebanon, NH 03784  
603-298-8711

### Our Newspaper Family Includes









<http://www.gazettenet.com>
<http://www.amherstbulletin.com>
<http://www.recorder.com>
<http://www.valleyadvocate.com>
<http://www.concordmonitor.com>
<http://www.ledgertranscript.com>
<http://www.vnews.com>