



**WELCOME EVERYONE!!!**

*Thank you all for coming and for helping us celebrate the reopening of this schoolhouse. During these past ten years this building has stood quietly with no laughter, no music and no storytelling. So many people have been waiting for this day!*

*It's so heart warming to know that a small band of dedicated neighbors can make a difference and create a reason to celebrate in our local community. With your help we saved this building from the ravages of water and time. It has been a delightful and sometimes overwhelming experience.*

*I find I have a lot to say.....*



*With so much going on in the world as people get displaced because of conflict and climate change, we are proud to call this schoolhouse a place for community resilience.*

*With respect for the original inhabitants of this land I wish to acknowledge the Abenaki people, people of the Dawnland, the traditional land caretakers.*

*These words are taken from the Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs. "We pay our respects to (the) ancestors who were here for all time, their elders and their relations... past, present, and emerging. We honor with gratitude this land and all it gives us. Their relationship to the land calls us to be better caretakers of the land ourselves."*

*A fox family lives on the hill and one of them has been spotted several times at the schoolhouse. Bluebirds, crows, cat birds, wild turkeys, woodchucks, deer, bats and chimney swifts and even a young bear spotted north on Union Village Rd all make Goodrich Four Corners their home along side the farm animals. The cats, chickens, sheep, turkeys, pigs and horses and the people who tend to them contribute to the specialness of the Goodrich Four Corners National Historic District.*

*Thank you Leslie O'Hara of Hogwash Farm for preparing a large parking area and path for the schoolhouse celebration in the heat of the last week.*



*I would like to acknowledge all the inhabitants of this Norwich hamlet past, present and into the future. As I have spent time here over the past 7 years helping with the schoolhouse restoration, I have come to know the rhythms of the days, the positions of the rising and setting sun and remarkable aspects of the four different seasons.*

*I've gotten to know many people I wouldn't have met if I hadn't participated in this restoration project. I've heard stories of the one-room schoolhouse days and of the various clubs who have called this their very own meeting place. Of the 20 original one-room schoolhouses in Norwich, this and the Beaver Meadow Schoolhouse are the only ones remaining in tact. The reason there were 20 schoolhouses was so that no child had to walk more than 2 miles to get to school.*

*This building has been very special to so many people. Many children, teachers, families and neighbors, and recently contractors and volunteers have found community and friendship here. It makes me proud to be part of its renewal as I'm sure everyone on our board must feel. One choice of many was to just let it go the way of other older buildings, but we didn't,..... we saved it!*

*I'd like to give a special thanks to all the board members for their camaraderie and leadership in this endeavor.  
As I see it, the schoolhouse is our symbol of resilience.*



*I'd like to acknowledge two special guests from the Vt Division of Historic Preservation who guided us through this process and awarded us a historic preservation grant. Caitlin Corkins and Laura Trieschmann. Thank you*

*I'd like also to thank Preservation Trust of Vermont for their inspiration and enthusiasm for this project, especially Lisa Ryan, Ann Cousins, Lyssa Papazian, Jennifer Lapachinski and the late Paul Bruhn.*



*A special thanks to the generosity of Graham Webster who orchestrated much of the contract work charging us only for his cost of the materials. Graham is a truly generous member of our community. We are so pleased to have him and his family living nearby.*

*The building was lifted, the old foundation was scraped away, the new foundation was poured and the grading was completed in 2019. It was quite a thrill to see it raised over 4 feet and held up with cribbing. You can see photos in our scrapbook and on our website.*

*Thanks to the team of architect, John Vansant, DeWolf Engineering, volunteer project manager and former board member John Vincent, and Graham Webster the schoolhouse now is on solid footing with its redesigned drainage system for future generations.*

*Thanks to Blake Spencer for building the ramp and for doing final touches on the front porch and the siding before Bruce Monmaney did an expert job of painting. Thanks to Chad Whitcomb for the ramp railing just completed last Tuesday!*

*Thanks to Tom McLoughlin from Brattleboro who carefully restored the windows and painted them their original black color.*

*Thanks to Kyle Martino for rewiring the building and for hanging the refurbished schoolhouse globe light fixtures.*

*Thanks to Rye Keller for the beautifully constructed and much needed front porch railings.*

*And thanks to neighbor Paul Derksen of TurningLeaf builders for widening the back door.*

*Thanks to the generosity of several contractors and artisans for their work at cost, their donations-in-kind and their reduced rates.*

*We are now fully ADA access compliant!*



*Thanks to former president Brian Cook for having the vision that this schoolhouse could be saved and to the enduring board members, especially to Jean and John Lawe and Suzie Wallis who have stuck with the process for well over 11 years and have shared in the history and leadership of the schoolhouse for decades. Their dedication and that of the entire board has been monumental!!*

*Thanks to Ken Turino and Historic New England, CATV along with Brian Cook for the film about Norwich's One-Room Schoolhouses available to take home with you to enjoy. Please also take a puzzle or two and a pencil as our gifts to you.*

*Thanks to all of the donors and granting institutions, especially to Jack and Dorothy Byrne, the Norwich Women's Club, the Lions Club and Mascoma Bank all whose generosity is deeply appreciated by so many in the wider community.*

*You can find the names of all the donors on the artistically constructed donor tree inside the schoolhouse as well as our list of all the contractors who have been wonderful to work with on this project. There is more work to be done, but for now we take a deep breath express our gratitude for all who have made this possible.*

*And last but of course not least to ALL the volunteers who have cleaned, mowed, removed trees and helped energize each other during this historic restoration process. If there was such a thing, David Taplin deserves a Volunteer of the Year Award.*

*The poison Ivy will receive its final treatment by Chippers tomorrow. Please avoid the fenced off areas.*

*And just to say, the virus is not done with us yet.  
So please keep each other safe today.  
For many of our participants, school year is just starting.*



*In this spirit, we open the doors of the restored Root Schoolhouse to the community at large as a unique, welcoming and vital space in which to enjoy each other, to replenish, rejuvenate and sustain ourselves and our community.*

*Now it's up to you to create your own events and to carry on the schoolhouse community tradition. ....*

**"We are open for business"!**

*Thank you so much for coming and enjoy the music!*



August 28, 2021

Remarks and Appreciations made at the Root Schoolhouse Reopening Celebration by Courtney Dobyms, President of the Board

The Root Schoolhouse: A Community Space  
987 Union Village Rd  
Norwich VT 05055

Donations can be made to:  
The Root District Game Club  
PO Box 42  
Norwich VT 05055