

Fundraising Corner

BY JOHN ROE

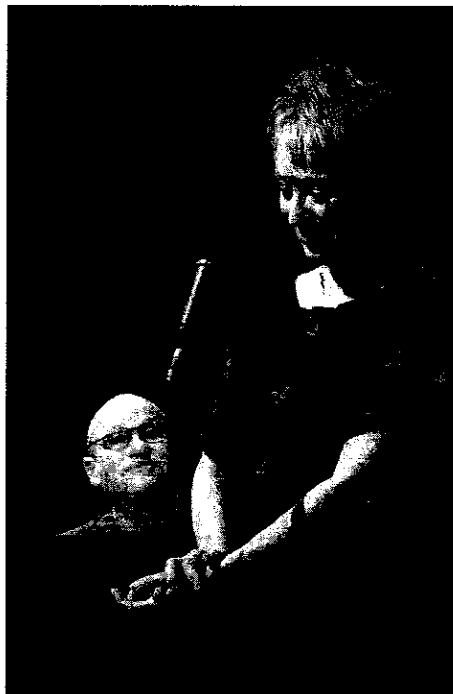
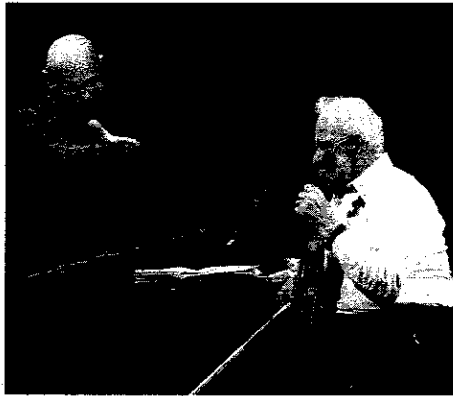
The Fundraising Committee continues the capital campaign, quietly working to raise the money needed to convert the Old Town Hall into a community center. Our latest gift was a generous donation of \$10,000 by the Northfield Savings Bank Foundation toward building acquisition. The September concert by Bobby Gosh, Carol Hall, and Harold Luce raised approximately \$5,000. We are now within about \$10,000 of owning the building outright! Maybe the most amazing statistic is that we've raised almost 20% of the estimated project costs in just over a year.

A request for a year-end operations gift to the Brookfield Community Partnership (BCP) was sent out in December. While our major focus is on the restoration of the building, BCP is also a nonprofit that aims to build community cohesiveness through a variety of community activities (remember the skating party and Summer Festival?). The year-end appeal, which will help with the costs of those activities, and with the expenses (like insurance) of running a non-profit, had brought in about \$3,500 as of the beginning of February this year!

It has been an amazing year of support from the Brookfield community – lots of volunteers as well as donations! Thanks to you all.

Gala Concert Benefits Brookfield Town Hall

Brookfield's own Bobby Gosh, a nationally renowned songwriter and music producer, organized a spectacular concert to benefit the Town Hall last September 27. He performed with Carol Hall of New York and Harold Luce, the veteran fiddle player of many a Saturday night dance in Brookfield's Town Hall, at Chandler Music Hall in Randolph. Several area "angel" businesses sponsored the concert, and many, many volunteers worked hard to produce a very special evening that raised about \$5,000 for Town Hall renovations! Some of that money will go towards renovating the two hand-painted curtains from the Old Town Hall (see p. 3), which were on display at Chandler during our concert. Many thanks to all for a memorable evening!



photos by Robert Eddy

Thanks to Brookfield benefit concert sponsors!

Great thanks to Chandler Center for the Arts for the use of the Hall on September 27, and to Becky McMeekin for her kind cooperation. We also gratefully acknowledge our sponsors who helped make this concert happen:

- Anichini
- Ariel's Restaurant and Pond Village Pub
- Bethel Mills and Central Supplies
- Boardway and Cilley Funeral Home
- Central Vermont Public Service
- Century 21 - The Mill Stone Agency
- Green Trains Inn
- L.W. Greenwood and Sons
- Northfield Savings Bank
- Randolph Savings Bank
- Vermont Butter and Cheese Company

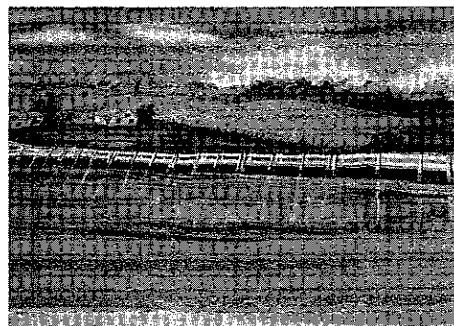
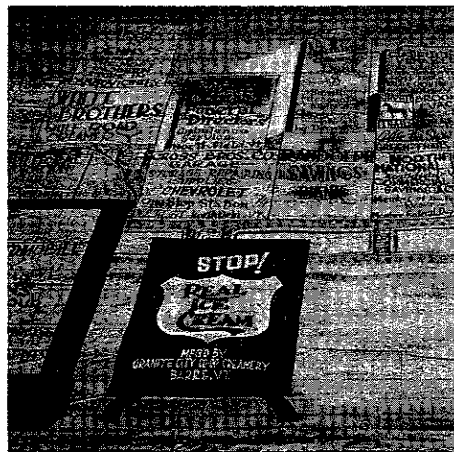
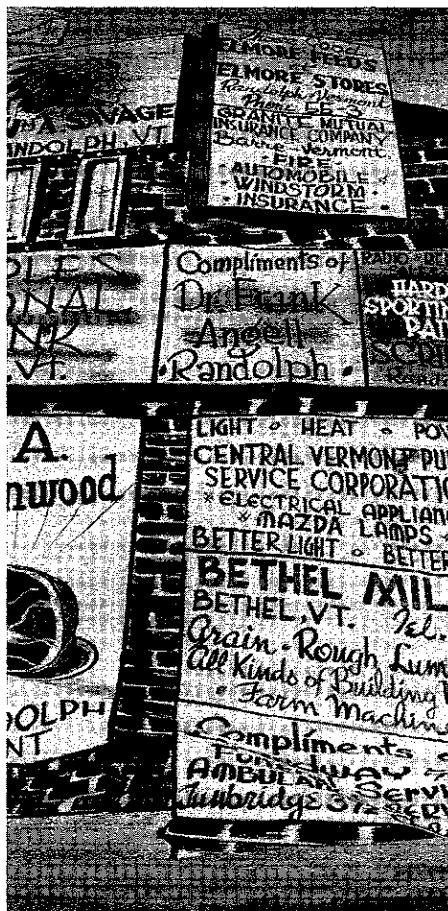
Black Town Hall tee shirts with an elegant blue logo make great gifts! They are available for \$10 each in sizes S, M, L and XL. Call Curtis Koren at 276-3103



Painted Theater Curtains from the Town Hall to be Conserved

When volunteers cleared out the Town Hall, one of the prizes found were two hand-painted theater curtains in the stage area. Now these treasures will be conserved as part of the Painted Theater Curtain Project. One of the curtains found in Brookfield's Town Hall is an ethereal view of the floating bridge; the other is an advertising curtain documenting the emerging relationship between local business sponsors and the arts by the turn of last century. Both of Brookfield's curtains were painted by Robert Naves, a professional artist and salesman who painted many curtains. In the early 1940's Naves joined the Flying Tigers (and designed their logo) and went to China, where he died in 1944.

Each Town Hall curtain will cost approximately \$3,000 to conserve, and the BCP will use funds raised by the benefit concert last September to contribute \$500 per curtain for that effort. The rest of the funding has been raised by the Painted Theater Curtain Project, which is part of the Vermont Museum & Gallery Alliance, and has received \$150,000 from the "Save America's Treasures" grant program towards the cost of preserving Vermont's 120 curtains. The curtains, found in town halls, grange halls, theaters and opera houses, were painted between 1880 and 1930. Their romantic, historical or documentary nature reflects a time when people in even the most rural towns endorsed the concept that entertainment should not only delight but also instruct. Other sponsors of the Painted Theater Curtain Project include the National Endowment for the Arts, the Windham Foundation, the Vermont Community Foundation and the Walter Cerf Fund.



Details of the advertising curtain (left & top) and the floating bridge curtain (above) painted by Robert Naves.

SECRETS OF THE OLD TOWN HALL

RUTH GOODALE REMEMBERS...

I HAVE FOND MEMORIES OF THE TOWN HALL HAVING ATTENDED DANCES THERE IN THE 40'S-50'S. UNCLE JOHN HARFORD PLAYED DRUMS AND MOSTLY I JUST WATCHED. I DID GET TO DANCE SOME BUT THE STRONG FARMERS WERE ROUGH AND SWUNG US OFF OUR FEET. WE COULD NEVER HAVE POP AS WE COULDN'T AFFORD IT. MY UNCLE RAN THE DANCES SO WE GOT IN FREE. I CAN STILL HEAR THE MUSIC, FEEL THE FLOOR VIBRATIONS, SEE PERLEY KEYES SPRINKLE MORE WAX ON THE FLOOR - SEE MY UNCLE, MOUTH OPEN, PLAYING. I HAVE THE PIANO THAT WAS THERE AS I BOUGHT IT OFF RUTH COOKE. SUNDAY A.M. WE USED TO PICK UP BOTTLES, SODA AND BEER - CASH THEM IN AT THE STORE - ALSO HOPEFULLY FIND SOME COINS. CARS PARKED ALL ALONG THE STREET AND MY FATHER PUT BARBED WIRE ACROSS OUR DRIVE. THE "HAPPY" DRINKERS (BEER) WERE ROWDY AND THE CONSTABLE HAD TO BE ON DUTY. I FORGET HIS NAME.

Ruth Goodale has spent every summer since the 1930's in Brookfield, first in her grandmother Ruth Harford's house in Pond Village, and now in her own home on Ralph Road. Her uncle was John Harford, who played drums at many town dances in Brookfield's Town Hall, and her aunt was Mary Harford, Brookfield's Town Clerk for many years.

The Year Begins with a BCP Tradition

BY MAIA BINHAMMER,
12, OF BROOKFIELD

Cars holding snow gear, skates and hockey sticks lined the road in Brookfield's Pond Village on New Year's Day. The cars held no people, but a large group of skaters could be found on Sunset Lake enjoying the wintry weather and terrific ice. More than 60 Brookfield residents showed up for the annual New Year's Day skating party, organized by the Brookfield Community Partnership.

Skaters of all ages gathered to celebrate the New Year, figure skate, join in a hockey game and enjoy hot cocoa and home-baked sweets. There were dedicated skaters, as well as some beginners and adventurous first timers. A few people came not only to skate, but also to snow-shoe or ski on the southern end of the pond.

This year's skating party was the fourth annual celebration. Upon taking off his skates, one skater could be heard saying, "This is a great annual tradition. See you next year!"



The party officially ended at 5 p.m., but a small group of skaters kept going until there wasn't any light left to play by. By around 6 p.m., everyone had left, and the lake was bare and lonely. The scratch marks in the ice were the only telltale signs of the afternoon's goings on.

Don't Forget – For regular updates, notices of events, and other Town Hall news, send your email and/or phone number to Curtis Koren at curtisk@sover.net, or 276-3103

Brookfield Community Partnership
P.O. Box 452
Brookfield, VT
05036