



Middletown Springs Historical Society, Inc.  
Middletown Springs, Vermont 05757

**Newsletter**

February, 1987

Dear Friends:

As we enter our 19th year, let's give a look backward - then one ahead.

Starting out with a firm resolve to save and restore one of the town's oldest buildings, The Society has tackled these projects: the Community House over half restored; indexing the Old Cemetery to help the research for family grave sites; developing the Mineral Springs Park and building a replica of the old Springs House; collecting antique objects and displaying them in a museum room open to the public.

The Society has also furnished material for several articles about Middletown Springs in Vermont Life and Yankee magazines; is collecting documents, personal recollections and tape recordings for a new history of the town since 1867; and was the principal moving force behind the two-year successful effort to get the town on the National Register of Historic Places.

Looking ahead, the Society hopes to: have the second floor of the Community House finished off for meeting and work rooms; locate a talented writer willing and able to record the town's history for the past 120 years; help the town develop a good plan to encourage orderly growth, and yet retain its historic charm; and, finally, continue working with the several organizations that sponsor activities that enrich the life of Middletown Springs.

---

Now is the time to renew your membership for 1987. A few have done so since our last Newsletter. If you have renewed, there will be a '87 following your name on this Newsletter. Please make checks payable to the M.S. Historical Society and mail to Mrs. James Webber, South St., Middletown Springs, VT 05757. The dues are: Individual-\$4; Family-\$5; Contributing-\$10; Sustaining-\$50; Life-\$100.

**CHRISTMAS ON THE GREEN**

Sponsored by the Grange, this year's celebration was again a huge success. The large spruce was ablaze with lights, the crowd was large, and the caroling was even better because song sheets had been thoughtfully provided.

To be sure that this event would become an annual celebration, a smaller but live tree had been planted nearby to be used in years to come. It was also decked with lights.

Early that afternoon the Museum was open for visitors, and an exhibit of antique music boxes were set up and demonstrated by Doyle Lane. After the singing the Community House dining room was open for light refreshments.

**PLATES AND BOTTLES**

Remember the limited edition of pewter-like plates picturing the Old Spa Shop, Mineral Springs House, School, Community Church, and Monument on the Green? They were bought up several years ago, but we are still getting letters asking about them.

If any of our members or other friends have plates that they would be willing to part with, we have eager buyers who would gladly pay the \$10. Let us know.

There may also be a few Mineral Springs bottles available in a few weeks.

Name

Address

Zip

Amount

## TOWN PLAN HEATING UP

Since the town's bicentennial in the fall of 1984 there has been growing interest in developing a plan that could serve as a guide to encourage orderly growth in Middletown Springs without losing its charm as a recognized historic town.

In late summer of last year the Selectmen appointed a five-man Planning Commission, headed by Daniel McKeen. After several meetings, a proposed town plan was submitted at a public hearing on November 12. This was well attended, and there were many comments pro and con. It was suggested that more details were needed, with possibly more information from the plans of neighboring towns.

After making a few suggested changes, the Planning Committee set February 4 at the Community House for the second public hearing, at which invited members from Castleton, Clarendon, Wells, Poultney and Wallingford will discuss their experiences with town planning and zoning regulations.

It is hoped that Middletown Springs will have a workable town plan this year!

### WHY HAVE A TOWN PLAN?

Nationally the word doesn't mean much. As our country's population grew, there was no need for planning or restriction. But national pride also embraced respect for historical events and objects. Old buildings, and even towns were revered.

Middletown Springs Historical Society  
Middletown Springs, VT 05757

The National Register of Historic Places! Among the objects deemed worthy of membership are towns or section of towns that have a historic background, well-preserved old buildings, a well-layed-out area, and townspeople who are proud of their town.

### MEASURED DEVELOPMENT

No town could, or should, be kept unchanged, but it would be to the town's best interests to have a carefully made plan to avoid overcrowding in close town areas, or residential buildings on flood plane, fragile soil or sky-line areas. There is much land suitable for houses or shops south and west of the town center that is prime for development. A well-formed town plan is needed.

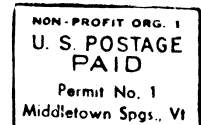
### VERMONT TOWNSCAPES

A new book with the above title, authored by Norman Williams, Jr., Edmund Kellog and Peter Lavigne, features the situation of small Vermont towns in an era of fast development. They feel that "unchecked population growth is beginning to affect towns which until recently were not touched by growth, and if they are not protected soon, important historic and economic resources will be lost."

There are over 650 Vermont towns, but they focus on "30 of the state's best examples of traditional villages." Included among them is Middletown Springs.

*Norbert M. J. Davison*

For the Trustees



Mr. David Wright  
Town 05757