



Vermont Old Cemetery Association Founded by Prof Leon Dean (1899-1982) Oct 18th 1958

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President's Report Spring 2017

According to the calendar, it is spring. As I look out of my Rutland, Vermont window at the high snow banks and with the Vermont temperatures in the single digits, it is hard for visualize mowing my lawn or planting my garden in the near foreseeable future. The flocks of geese that usually fly over my house as the precursor to spring, have also chosen to stay in the warmer climes for awhile longer. However, I did see a red-winged black-bird and the first robins of the season today so hope springs eternal (pardon the pun).

Spring must be on quite a few Vermonters' minds as I have received inquiries in the last couple of weeks from many communities requesting assistance with their upcoming cemetery projects. Bridgewater, Plymouth, Rutland, and Burlington are just a few that are requesting VOCA's help this year. The Comcast volunteers have also contacted me regarding what projects they can take on for this season and I am looking forward to the second year of working with these over-the-top volunteers!

I have received more inquiries this year on cemetery projects than I have ever had previously in my many years of being an officer with VOCA. Hopefully, we will have record-breaking season with VOCA events this 2017 year! Now is the time to get organized with your town's cemetery project. Line up your volunteers and set a date(s) for the event. Contact the local media and publicize your event. We also have VOCA signs that are available to highlight our involvement in a project. VOCA officers have them available upon request if interested.

I will be doing a VOCA presentation at the West Rutland Historical Society on April 11th, at 7:00 pm at their town hall. If anyone would like to attend to cheer me on, it would be appreciated. In addition, my yearly cemetery projects with the Rutland Middle School and (hopefully) Flood Brook School in Manchester are on my schedule for June. VOCA Grant Administrator, Diane Leary, has a project in progress at the Greenmount Cemetery, which is Burlington's oldest burial ground, coming up. If interested in helping out, please contact her at dleary123@yahoo.com

Vice President and Grant Administrator, Diane Leary, continues to receive grant applications for communities that are dedicated to restoring their burial grounds. If you know of a town that is looking for a grant, please direct them to Diane.

Please check your expiration date on your newsletter and if expired, please renew your membership. If you have news items or events you would like to put in the newsletter, please contact VOCA Editor, Jane Fletcher. VOCA is always looking for new members to join our organization. If you could recruit one (or more) members for our organization that would be wonderful! I am also available for presentations on VOCA. If an organization is in need of a speaker, please call/email me.

Our spring meeting will be on Saturday, May 6th in Newfane. The details are in the newsletter and posted on the VOCA web/Facebook sites. I hope to see many of you there! If you have agenda items, please give me call at (802) 773-3253 or email tgifvt@msn.com.

Tom Giffin
VOCA President

SPRING MEETING

May 6, 2017 10AM (coffee hour starting at 9am)

at Newbrook Fire Department, Newfane, VT

located 1/2 mile north of the center of Newfane on Route 30

For reservations send the form below and a check to the address below.

Telephone Charles Marchant 802-365-7937 if you have questions.

** a vegetarian option is available : note preference for vegetarian with the check**

The program is on the restoration of the Scott Covered Bridge and 3 stone arch bridges in the Townshend area, which will be conducted at each location, presented by Charles Marchant. We'll be driving from site to site, but be sure to bring an umbrella in case of inclement weather.

(The rededication as mentioned in the last newsletter will take place at the Scott Bridge in the late afternoon, unfortunately the State Highway department will not allow square dancing in the bridge.)

RESERVATION SLIP

Name for reservation: _____

_____ **Chicken Parmesan \$12.00 per meal**

_____ **Vegetarian option \$12.00 per meal**

_____ **Total enclosed**

Enter the number of meals being reserved on the lines above and mail with a check payable to Charles Marchant to :

Charles Marchant
PO Box 132
Townshend, VT 05353



Recommended Reading

The poet, Arthur Guiterman, in his collection of poems entitled *Death and General Putnam and 101 other poems*, published by EP Dutton & Co Inc in 1935 has a lovely verse titled *Vermont Churchyard*. Here is a quote to peak your interest.

“Who make Death meet and comely, resting here
Among the calm green hills where they were bred,
We like to be good neighbors with our dead.”

PHOTO GALLERY

Cemeteries may have, tucked away in the corners, such substantial monuments as those shown here in Morningside Cemetery, Brattleboro. This large (30 acre) cemetery is so situated that even the towering monument of Levi Knight Fuller, Governor of Vermont from 1892—1894, cannot be seen from any town road, and even when one is in the cemetery itself the monument is not obvious.

The beautiful stone mausoleum shown below stands next to the Fuller monument and also may be completely overlooked by a visitor to the cemetery. This private mausoleum was bracketed by evergreen



IDA MARKOFF WAS A RUSSIAN IMMIGRANT BORN IN 1873 WHO DIED AT THE HUDSON COUNTY HOPITAL FOR MENTAL DISEASE IN SECAUCUS, NEW JERSEY IN 1948. BELOW IS PART 1 OF THE STORY OF HOW HER FAMILY, WHO NEVER KNEW OF HER EXISTENCE, LEARNED ABOUT HER AND FOUND HER FINAL RESTING PLACE.

Finding Ida Part 1

By Ellen Donkin

This story begins with a request to help track down information about my paternal grandmother, Leah Gaden Donkin. Family history has it that Leah escaped from Russia during the pogroms, probably in the 1880's (in the 1920 census she is reported as having immigrated in 1886, and been naturalized in 1911). She is listed in many of the official documents as Jewish, and having been born in Russia. She married my Canadian grandfather in 1904, and they had three sons. Whether because of poverty, marital conflict between his parents, or lack of interest, my father spoke very little about growing up in New York. He remembered his father with affection, but he was reserved on the subject of his mother, and we only knew from him that she was "well-spoken," that she had no accent, and that she liked to paint and had taken painting classes in New York.

Over the years, we have spent many hours trying to fill in the blanks, and were able to piece together a fairly detailed history of my father's paternal line. The Canadian documents, including wills and military service records, were carefully preserved, and we knew with certainty what had happened to my grandfather's siblings, and even several previous generations of his family in Nova Scotia, back as far as the 1770's. But in the case of his wife, my grandmother Leah, information was almost non-existent. There was a 1904 marriage certificate at City Hall in New York City naming Leah's parents as Teresa Balin and Oscar Gaden, but it didn't say where the Gadens lived, or if they ever immigrated to this country. Leah stated in the document that she lived in Guilford, Connecticut, but there was no address, there is no trace of her in the Guilford town records or newspapers. In Madison, Connecticut, is the birth record of their oldest son in 1904, and wondered if Leah had gone back to Connecticut (from New York) to have her first child. But days of searching newspapers, phone books and public records proved fruitless. I even speculated that she had been part of a Jewish farming movement in Connecticut in the early twentieth century and lived in one of the Jewish boarding houses, but I found no trace of her in the records of the archives of the Jewish Historical Society of Greater Hartford, Connecticut.

This sense of a shroud over part of a family history is not uncommon, especially where Jewish ancestors are concerned. The documents in some cases are starting to surface in Europe (I learned this watching Skip Gates's "Finding Your Roots" one evening), but the challenges for genealogists are considerable, even well before the ravages of the holocaust. In all the years, we have never been able to find out how Leah came over (or if she was born in this country), what happened to her parents, and where exactly she came from. My father thought she came from Lithuania, but the surviving census records in this country are never that specific; they reference Russia, and sometimes Pennsylvania. She survives in a couple of family photographs. She is striking and poised: fair-haired and stylishly dressed, but unsmiling. She died in 1959, at Pilgrim State Hospital in Long Island. She never did meet my mother, and did not attend my parents' wedding in New York City in 1948. I have a small, elegantly written card from her welcoming me into the world, signed "Granny Leah."

Then came this email in 2012, and the news that a search for "McKay Donkin" --which had been incorrectly transcribed to "Lontin" in the original 1910 census--had turned up new information. The census accounts for my grandfather McKay, my grandmother Leah, their three boys, and at the tail end, someone named Lucy Markoff, who was living with the family. Single? Yes. Age? 13. Family relation: *niece*.

Alphabet Soup: Use one letter from the alphabet to complete a word across each row. The letters will be used only once, and just a hint, all of the words can be found in the Stories in Stone index.

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| E | P | I | G | M | | S | T | E | R | Y |
| T | U | B | E | L | | D | D | E | R | T |
| Q | J | O | M | E | | U | S | A | C | E |
| L | I | R | T | A | | O | R | N | U | S |
| E | N | G | O | L | | E | R | D | L | E |
| P | O | M | S | K | | L | L | B | I | T |
| A | C | H | T | O | | C | H | W | O | D |
| E | L | P | E | S | | U | E | E | N | A |
| R | E | G | L | A | | I | N | E | S | S |
| C | D | T | R | O | | E | L | I | S | K |
| I | K | V | A | P | | B | B | L | E | S |
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| V | O | P | W | A | | P | E | N | I | L |
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| Z | A | R | R | O | | U | N | H | E | Q |
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| U | T | S | P | L | | Y | A | L | T | Y |

TRIVIA



AN UNKNOWN GIRL FOUND IN THE RIVER SEINE, PARIS IN THE 1880S IS THE MODEL FOR A MODERN LIFE SAVING TRAINING DEVICE. HOW WAS SHE THE MODEL AND WHAT IS THE DEVICE?

(THE ANSWER TO THE JANUARY TRIVIA IS THAT EUGENE SHOEMAKER'S ASHES ARE BURIED ON THE MOON.)

DUES

Dues are for a calendar year: 1 year \$10.00, 5 years \$40.00, and lifetime is \$200.00 (individual members ONLY). A new member joining in Oct, Nov, or Dec will have the dues paid applied to the following year.

I want to make a donation to the Leon Dean Permanent Fund in the amount of \$_____.

Make check payable to VOCA and mail to:

Barry Trutor

31 Matthew Avenue

Burlington, VT 05408



FOOTSTONES: As provided by the VOCA Bylaws, Article VI-ASSISTANTS TO BOARD, Section 1: A panel of six members shall be appointed by the executive board, shall be invited to board meetings , and may vote with the executive board.

| | | | |
|------|------------------|---|--|
| 2015 | Wesley Mowry | P O Box 297 Hartland, VT, 05048 | whit05048@gmail.com 802-436-3383 |
| 2015 | Richard Howrigan | P O Box 16 Fairfield VT, 05455 | 802-827-6513 |
| 2016 | Ruth Barton | P O Box 309, Putney, VT, 05301 | 802-254-1128 |
| 2016 | Charlie Marchant | PO Box 132, Townshend, VT 05353 | cemassoc@svcable.net 802-365-7937 |
| 2017 | Nicole Vecchi | 318 Rt 5 South Norwich, VT 05055 | nsvecchi@yahoo.com 802-649-7117 |
| 2017 | Clayton Trutor | 31 Matthew Avenue Burlington, VT 05408 | ctrutor@gmail.com 802-658-3273 |

VOCA County Representatives (These are people who will come help you with your VOCA grant application.)

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| ADDISON | Diane Leary | 802-881-2754 | Dleary123@yahoo.com |
| BENNINGTON | Jean Kosche | 802-447-2241 | |
| CALEDONIA | VACANT | | |
| CHITTENDEN | Robert Hooper | 802-862-0708 | hooper9999@aol.com |
| ESSEX | VACANT | | |
| FRANKLIN | VACANT | | |
| GRAND ISLE | Clayton Trutor | 802-658-3273 | ctrutor@gmail.com |
| LAMOILLE | Deanna French | 802-522-2050 | deannafrench41@gmail.com |
| ORANGE | David Phillips | 603-252-7363 | davephillips61@gmail.com |
| ORLEANS | Wanda Webster | 802-525-3550 | |
| RUTLAND | VACANT | | |
| WASHINGTON | Nicole Vecchi | 802-649-7117 | nsvecchi@yahoo.com |
| WINDHAM | Charles Marchant | 802-365-7937 | cemassoc@svcable.net |
| WINDSOR | Ken Barrett | 802-875-2941 | |

For our readers that have internet access, be sure to visit the VOCA website at www.voca58.org. It is chock full of interesting stories, pictures and general cemetery information.

Barry Trutor
 31 Matthew Ave
 Burlington VT 05408

| | Headstones | |
|--|---|--|
| Thomas Giffin, President | 61 East Washington St. Rutland VT, 05701 | tgifvt@msn.com 802-773-3253 |
| Dianne Leary, 1 st VP & Grants Administrator | 4670 Greenbush Rd. Charlotte, VT 05445 | Dleary123@yahoo.com 802-881-2754 |
| Robert Hooper, Assistant Grants Administrator, Membership & Assistant Newsletter Editor | 3 Grey Meadow Drive Burlington, VT 05408 | hooper9999@aol.com 802-362-0708 |
| Chris Book, Treasurer | 44 North Main St. Rutland, VT 05701 | 802-773-6252 |
| Whit Mowry, Asst. Treasurer | P O Box 297 Hartland VT 05048 | whit05048@gmail.com |
| Jeni Newman , Secretary | 146 St. Peter Street Winooski, VT 05404 | newman.jeni@gmail.com 802-999-6031 |
| Jane Fletcher, Newsletter Editor | 535 Sunset Lake Rd Brattleboro VT 05301 | janesinterests123@gmail.com 802-579-6903 |
| | | |
| | WEBSITE | |
| Barry Trutor | Webmaster | btrutor@burlingtontelecom.net |
| Tom Ledoux | Cemetery Database Administrator | Tomledoux.civilwar@gmail.com |
| VOCA Website | | www.voca58.org |