

VOCA to have its own web site!

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More on this can be found in the vault.

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Sen. Justin S Morrill, Vermont's Senator for 44 years, 1854 to 1898.

Here is a preview of what's to come in our fall (October 2nd, 2010) meeting to be held in Strafford, Vermont.

The above photo on the left is Sen. Morrill's Mausoleum and to the right is his 17 room cottage. In 1999 there was a .55 cent postage stamp issued with Sen. Morrill's photo on it. The Morrill Act was introduced in 1857, and approved in 1862, this provided that the federal government would give each state land to be used for the establishment of colleges.

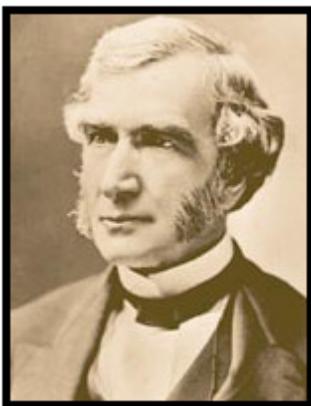
Another page in history has passed and the next page, number 2010, is now open before us. It's time to get your favorite beverage ready, maybe sit by the stove in that chair that you find so comfy, or if the sun is out it might feel good sitting near a window to enjoy the warmth.

We hope you have all enjoyed good health in the year past, if not we wish you well in your recovery. For those who have lost a loved one we offer our sincere sympathy.

In the pages to follow we will learn a little about US Senator Justin Morrill (1810-1898) a life long resident of Strafford Vermont, a report from our president, some trivia, a story about the evolution of the hearse, and a look in the vault, check your membership renewal date!

VOCA 2010 spring meeting will feature Charlie Marchant on GPS location of Vermont Cemeteries, and guess who raised more than \$7,000 for the Vermont Cancer Center!

~~~~~ Sen. Justin Morrill of Vermont by Andersen Thorp ~~~~~



It is through death that we often reflect on life. 2010 will mark the 200<sup>th</sup> birthday of Vermont's native son US Senator Justin Morrill (1810-1898) to honor this great Vermonter, VOCA's annual fall meeting for 2010 will take place in Stafford, the home of life long residence of Sen Morrill. Guests will have the opportunity to tour the Justin Morrill Vermont State Historic Site, the restored gardens and the Morrill Mausoleum.

Andersen Thorp, one of VOCA's *Stones & Bones* volunteer education consultants and former president of the Friends of the Morrill Homestead, will be our guest speaker and guide.

The son of a blacksmith, Justin Morrill was obliged at the age of 15 to leave school and take employment as a merchant's clerk. He proved so successful in the world of commerce that at the age of 38 he decided to retire and devote his life to study horticulture and the leisurely pursuits of a country gentleman.

In 1848, before entering politics, Justin Morrill built his 17 room cottage in the popular Gothic Revival style. The charming Morrill Homestead, Vermont's *first* National Historic Landmark, remains as it was when Morrill designed it, with gardens and extensive outbuildings reflecting his far-reaching interests. Furnished with original Morrill family artifacts and surrounded by its historic landscape, the Morrill Homestead attests that Senator Justin Morrill was a man of substance, supreme practicality and sophistication.

Sen. Morrill served 44 years in Congress from 1854 to 1898 in both the House and Senate. He is most well known for fathering the Land-Grant College Act, signed by President Lincoln in 1862. The goal of this legislation was to create in each state a college which would provide a liberal and practical education for farmers, mechanics, artisans and laborers. Inspired in large part by Morrill's own lack of a formal education, these colleges and universities were to teach courses in science, agriculture and engineering in addition to the classics. Vast tracts of Federal land, 30,000 acres for each member of Congress, were set aside as an endowment for each college. The sale of this land raised enough money for the colleges to operate. The University of Vermont is one of 105 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities.

The timeliness of the Land-Grant Act cannot be overemphasized. Encouraged by the construction of the first transcontinental rail road and the offer of reasonably priced land to settlers, westward

expansion was creating a need for new and improved farming techniques to tame the vast farmlands of the West, as well as to restore the overworked farmlands in the East. The newly created land-Grant colleges supplied that need by developing the scientific research programs that discovered and tested the methods which help revolutionized American agriculture. Hybrid seed, crop rotation and chemical fertilizers are among the best known results of these programs.

Morrill's legislation and vision of higher education for America's working class people evolved into the system of Land-Grant colleges and universities that remains vital to the hopes and opportunities of so many American citizens today. Land-Grant institutions were the first to advance educational opportunities for women and minorities in the United States. Today Land-Grant institutions award one-third of all U.S. bachelor's degrees, one-third of all master's degrees, 60 percent of all PhD's, and 70 percent of all engineering degrees. Thanks to this Vermonter over 25 million people from all over the globe have had the door to higher education opened for them.

Justin Morrill is one of America's great humanitarians whose impact on our democracy and way of life has lasting importance.

To learn more about the life and times of Sen. Justin Morrill and the Morrill Homestead visit [www.morrillhomestead.org](http://www.morrillhomestead.org) Our next newsletter will include an article on the design and construction of the Morrill mausoleum.

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Trivia: Charles James Bell (1845-1909), graduated from Peacham Academy and at 17 enlisted for the Civil War in Company B, 15th infantry Regiment. Wounded in Appomattox in April 1865. Mustered out in June 1865. He returned to Walden as a farmer. Became active in politics and served as Vermont Governor from 1904 to 1906

The president's Report

As I write this report during the first week of December, it is hard for me to believe we are supposed to be looking forward to Christmas and snow. The current temperature in Rutland is about 55 degrees and for the first time I can remember the Killington Ski Area was not open for business on the Thanksgiving holiday, due to literally no snow cover on the slopes. This is a temporary reprieve as a snow storm is pending within the week. The winter is the time for communities and organizations to plan for cemetery restoration projects for next summer. Requesting financial grants from VOCA, signing up volunteers and making a realistic plan for your efforts are just a few undertakings you can accomplish while you warm your feet by the wood stove in the coming months.

The highly controversial Aldrich Cemetery court case has been settled by a Vermont Environmental Court ruling. The two page decision issued by the court will allow the landowner to move the remains in the 27 foot by 41 foot private cemetery that is on the landowner's 148 acre farm (*see Rutland Herald, Tuesday, November 24, 2009*). This has been a contentious issue for VOCA and it is regrettable that the court will allow this small historic burial ground to be disinterred and the remains left to the discretion of the landowner. VOCA has legislation pending this legislative session to address this issue.

On a positive note, VOCA's Essex County Representative, Richard Colburn, recently voiced his displeasure regarding the condition of the oldest cemetery in Canaan Vermont to the Canaan Select Board. Due to his efforts, the select board had the burial ground cleaned up of debris and is bringing the burial ground issue to the Canaan's March Town Meeting for funds to repair the road that goes to the site. In addition, the town is looking at ways to restore the old monuments. (*See the News and Sentinel, November 4, 2009*). Richard utilized the publication [Digging Deep](#), which lists the laws regarding VT cemeteries and burial grounds.

This is available on line at the Vermont Secretary of State's web site. Thanks Richard for all your work and for being a VOCA volunteer.

The Vermont Department of Correction's (DOC) work crews continue to provide much needed maintenance work in Vermont Cemeteries. Burlington DOC work crews spend 7 months of the year providing necessary maintenance and upkeep for the city's 3 municipal cemeteries. We also have work crews in Weston, Rutland, Poultney and other Vermont communities. If you are interested in this successful program, please contact Rutland Field Office Director, Mike O'Malley at 802-786-5196.

Harman Clark Jr. with the Sheffield Historical Society has put together a CD of the seven Sheffield Cemeteries in Caledonia County, Vermont. At the beginning of each cemetery segment on the CD, he has included a topographical map and the GPS location. The CD also includes genealogical information. If interested in this wonderful project, he can be contacted at hrclarkjr@kingcon.com.

I am scheduling VOCA presentations for 2010 and if you are aware of any organization that would be interested, please let me know. I am always interested in any feedback and/or issues members have regarding VOCA. Please do not hesitate to contact me at tgifvt@msn.com or 802-773-3253. Hope to see many of you at our May meeting in Springfield, Vermont.

Tom Giffin
President

Trivia: Charles Bronson (11/3/1921-8/30/2003) buried in
Brownsville Cemetery, West Windsor, Vermont

Trivia: Ellen Thompson aka Ellen Demming, played Meta Bauer on the *Guiding Light* (1954 to 1974). Born 11/10/1922, died 2/7/2002. Burial Oak Hill Cemetery Bellows Falls, Vermont.

Evolution of the Hearse

The hearse started as a simple horse drawn wagon. As they evolved over the years, many of the early traditions have lived on when it comes to the funeral hearse.

Casket bearers first carried coffins to the gravesite, but as distances between the locations of funerals and cemeteries increased, there was a need for simple vehicles, such as open horse drawn wagons. These wagons evolved into elaborate, ornate vehicles in conjunction with the carriage and coach making industries.

Larger horse drawn carriages could accommodate the casket and featured a closed in area for the driver. The wheels could be removed and replaced with runners in case of winter weather.

Innovative members of the funeral industry built the first non-commercially produced motorized hearses around 1905. The first commercially produced motorized hearses appeared in 1909.

The first all motorized funeral procession took place in Chicago in 1909 months before the release of the first commercially built motorized hearse. Although motorized hearses were slow to gain acceptance, by the end of the first decade of the 1900's the transition from horse drawn vehicles to motorized vehicles was inevitable.

In 1913 the practicality of the motorized hearse was proven to the public with a trip across the United States. The horse drawn carriages disappeared eventually, although there are still some funeral homes in the U.S. that utilize horse drawn vehicles.

The early motorized hearses closely resembled the horse drawn carriages, although they soon took on an appearance of their own. They were plain, black, had a closed in area for the casket and an open area for the driver. They featured electric headlamps and oil coach lamps. The maximum speed was 30 miles per hour. These vehicles commanded a fair amount of respect and dignity. Although the looks have changed over time, a lot of the traditions of funeral carriages or hearses have been carried on, such as the coach lamps and curtain windows. The modern casket won't fit in the old horse drawn vehicles. People have generally become physically larger than they used to be.

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## Let's look in the Vault

- 1- VOCA is in the process of establishing their own web site and domain. The web address is [www.voca58.org](http://www.voca58.org) . I tried just using [www.voca.org](http://www.voca.org) but this is taken by a company in Rotterdam. You can log on and get an idea of what it will be like. We may make changes or modifications as time goes on, but this is a good starting point. Our Web Master is Darryl Harris who is a VOCA member and resides with his wife and son in Ohio. This is a Yahoo Small Business account with the domain name of *voca58.org*. No set up fee, web-hosting fee for 12 months is \$111.94, private Domain Registration fee is \$11.88 for 12 months also. Our Yahoo address is [voca58@yahoo.com](mailto:voca58@yahoo.com). Yahoo Small Business was named Editors Choice by PC Magazine. There is much that can be done with this new site. We need a few members to volunteer to work on it to enter the information as it is presented to VOCA and keep it up dated. It will have a Q&A section, news and stories, fun, facts, and tidbits. A special link for teachers, special link for grants, VOCA events, genealogical info, and a photo album.

It will have a section for the general public and one for members. The general public section will include a copy of a back issue of one of our news letters, and that will be changed periodically. The member area will have the current news letter and back issues. This will save us money on postage and printing costs. These two items are our largest operating expenses. Between now and the spring issue of the news letter in April, please let me know if you are going to use the web site for your news letter. You will also be able to enjoy the news letter in color! Member area log in: wully&whitey .

- 2- Does the name Keith Schaffer sound familiar? He was the Grave Dowser that was our guest speaker for our meeting last spring. I spoke with him a few days ago and he is going to be in Lyndonville early next summer!
- 3- Please check your address label to be sure your dues are paid up. The line just above your name starts with your membership number, followed by the date your dues are up for renewal.
- 4- If you are able to contribute to the Leon Dean fund it would be greatly appreciated!
- 5- The Moss Glen Grange of Granville VT made a much appreciated contribution in memory of Sister Eleanor Norton.
- 6- Our newest members are: Alan & Penelope Bodily of Naperville IL., Jane Krat-Duda of Wallingford VT., Courtney & Adalerto Silva of Brownington VT., Janet Muff of South Pasadena CA.. We welcome you aboard!!
- 7- VOCA member Eleanor Pratt sent the editor an article about a fund raiser for the Vermont Cancer Center. The article states that braving strong winds and cold choppy water, Vermont

native Tyler Brown swam a challenging 9 mile stretch of Lake Champlain on July 25<sup>th</sup> honoring the memory of three family members who died of cancer recently and raised more than \$7,000.00. Tyler currently, of Fort Collins, Colorado, entered the lake in Westport NY and swam the five miles to Kingsland Bay State Park in Ferrisburg VT in about 5 hours as a tribute to his uncle Frank Leary Jr, and aunt Arloa Dean Leary, both University of Vermont alumni, and their son, Tyler's cousin, Michael Leary. Each had died of cancer within a 15 month period. Several family members accompanied him by boat including his sister Deanna a nurse.

Tyler's grandfather, Prof Leon Dean founder of VOCA, purchased a group of islands in lake Champlain in the early 1920's and named them *Dean Islands*.

- 8- Let us not forget the spring meeting. It will be held at the UU Church in Springfield Vermont. Directions are from I-91 get off at exit #7, head west into Springfield, continue thru town. After passing thru town the next traffic light you will see a McDonalds to your left. Go past the McDonalds (just a short distance) on Rt 11 and take your first right (Fairgrounds Rd) the UU Church is at 21 Fairgrounds Rd, near the school. Refreshments will be available at 9 AM, meeting to begin at 10 AM. Lunch of Chicken & Biscuits (a vegetarian option will be available) to be served at noon. Meal is \$11.00 per person, make check to "UU Church", send to Rebecca Tucker, 72 Paddock Rd, Springfield, VT 05156 or call the church at 802-885-3327 to make a reservation, deadline is April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

Charlie Merchant will give a talk on the new revised Burial Grounds book and the proposed GPS locations of Vermont cemeteries. Charlie is also in need of members all over Vermont to help in this program. Please contact Charlie and let him know that you can help. His contact information is on page 11.

**2009-2010 Headstones**

Thomas Giffin, President, 61 East Washington St, Rutland Vt, 05701 [tgiftv@msn.com](mailto:tgiftv@msn.com) .....802-773-3253  
 Betty R Bell, 1<sup>st</sup> VP, 89 North St, New Haven Vermont, 05472 ..... 802-453-3947  
 Ruth Barton, Grants Administrator, P O Box 309, Putney, Vt 05301..... 802-254-1128  
 Arthur Hyde, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP&Grants Admin Assist, 1991 Upper Plain, Bradford, Vt 05033 ..... 802-222-4088  
 Harry Fisher, Treas & Newsletter Ed, P O Box 266, Weston Vt. 05161.. [merci@vermontel.net](mailto:merci@vermontel.net)...800-675-8815  
 Merci Fisher, Assistant Newsletter Ed., PO Box 266, Weston, Vt 05161..[merci@vermontel.net](mailto:merci@vermontel.net)...800-675-8815  
 Justin Giffin, Asst Treas, 61 E Washington St, Rutland, Vt [justingiff@hotmail.com](mailto:justingiff@hotmail.com)..... 802-779-1671  
 Charles E Marchant, Sec, P O Box 132, Townshend Vt, 05353 .....802-365-7937  
 Edmund Wilcox, Exe Board, 4996 Georgia Shore Rd., St Albans Vt, 05478 .....802-524-3318

**WEB MASTER**

**Darryl Harris** ..... [webmaster@voca58.org](mailto:webmaster@voca58.org)  
**VOCA Website** ..... [www.voca58.org](http://www.voca58.org)

**FOOTSTONES**

2012 **Wesly Mowry, P O Box 297, Hartland, VT, 05048** .....802-436-3383  
 2011 **Richard Howrigan, P O Box 16, Fairfield Vt, 05455** .....802-827-6513  
 2010 **Robert Hooper, 44 Charity St, Burlington Vt, 05401** [hooper9999@aol.com](mailto:hooper9999@aol.com) .....802-862-0708  
 2010 **Laura Griggs, P O Box 252, Reading Vt, 05162** .....802-484-5738  
 2010 **Ruth Barton, P O Box 309, Putney, Vt, 05301** .....802-254-1128  
 2011 **Chris Book, 44 N Main, Rutland, VT, 05701** .....802-773-6252

Vermont Old Cemetery Association is a non-profit organization founded in 1958 to “encourage the restoration and preservation of neglected and abandoned cemeteries in the State of Vermont”. Meetings are held twice yearly on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in May and October. The VOCA newsletter is published by the editor four times a year to coincide with the seasons. The IRS granted VOCA tax exempt status 3/21/1969 (Ref BUR EO59-26)

**VOCA Books For Sale**

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of “Burial Grounds of Vermont”, lay-flat binding \$35. Addendum to 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> editions \$4.00, “Stones&Bones”, a teacher’s resource packet \$24.00. These prices include shipping costs; we are not required to collect Vt sales tax. Send check made out to “VOCA” and a return address label, if possible, to “ Charles E Marchant, VOCA Secretary, P O Box 132, Townshend, Vermont, 05353”**

**VOCA County Representatives**

\*\*\*\*\* These are people who will come help you with your VOCA grant application \*\*\*\*\*

**Addison- Betty R Bell 802-453-3947                      Grand Isle- vacant**  
**Bennington – Jean Kosche – 802-447-2241      Lamoille- Deanna French 802-888-4537**  
**Orange- Arthur Hyde 802-222-4088**  
**Caledonia – Louise Lessard – 802-684-3404      Orleans- Wanda Webster 802-525-3550**  
**Chittenden- Robert Hooper- 802-862-0708      Rutland- Cliff Giffin 802-773-3743**  
**Essex- Richard Colburn- 802-723-4833              Washington- vacant**  
**Franklin- Edmund Wilcox- 802-524-3318      Windham- Charles Marchant 802-365-7937**  
**Windsor- Laura Griggs 802-484-5738**

Circle One

Renewal + member number / Change of address / New member

Name \_\_\_\_\_ member # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town/City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Dues are for calendar year: 1 year \$10.00, 5 years \$40.00, and lifetime is \$140.00

**\*\* A new member joining in Oct or Nov or Dec will have dues applied to the following year \*\***

**Make check payable to VOCA, mail to: Harry Fisher, VOCA Treasurer, P O Box 266  
Weston, Vermont 05161**

Vermont Old Cemetery Association  
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