



Under the Hump

NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

- There will be no August picnic or meeting.
- We are tentatively planning on the "Let's Make a Deal" sale in September.

SOCIETY BUSINESS

Our trustees have voted to cancel our previously scheduled summer picnic and meeting in August. The decision is based on COVID-19 which has affected the lives of everyone. I commend our trustees for this action and for thinking of everyone's health first and foremost.

However, we are hopeful that we can hold our annual "Let's Make a Deal" sale fundraiser in early September. At least let's plan on it...so save your treasures for this event!

Thanks to all and I hope you remain healthy and safe. ~Donnie

DO YOU HAVE A PHOTO OF A PERSON OR PLACE WE CAN USE FOR A MYSTERY PHOTO? IF SO, PLEASE SUBMIT TO A NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE MEMBER TODAY! THANK YOU!

Archival/Preservation Committee Report

Members: Eulie Costello, Lori Morse, Bonnie Morse, Mark Morse

We are always looking for Duxbury family photos to add to our collection. Please contact us and we can scan them in and return the original to you if you wish. Today's photo is tomorrow's history!



Call for Submissions!

The newsletter committee is welcome to submissions and eager to hear from you! We would love for you to submit a story, poem, historical piece, photos, etc, that we could place in the newsletter for everyone to enjoy.

This is your newsletter—what would you like to see in it?

Do you have a story or poem about living in Duxbury or about a Duxbury resident who is special to you?

Did you write a poem or take photos when you made it to the top of Camel's Hump?

Do you have any historic photos of people, buildings, machinery, etc, that you would like to share?

These are just a few ideas—we welcome any and all submissions.

Please share your materials with a newsletter member (see names on back page) and we will place it in the next available issue.

Thank you in advance for your generosity!

VIGILANTE PLACE

This newspaper article ran in the *Burlington Free Press* on October 31, 1959. The article is about Sylvester Vigilante who lived on Dowsville Road during the summers.

This Vigilante Lives in Vermont Hills

Retired N.Y. Librarian Top Expert on West

By ANN DELLA CHIESA

SOUTH DUXBURY — There's a man living up here in the hills who once wanted to be a cowboy.

He never made it. He never even had a horse.

But if he couldn't realize his ambitions in person, he did on paper.

Sylvester Vigilante, gruff of voice, beady of eye and weather-beaten of face, became the country's top expert on the West, its gun-slingers, badmen and desperadoes.

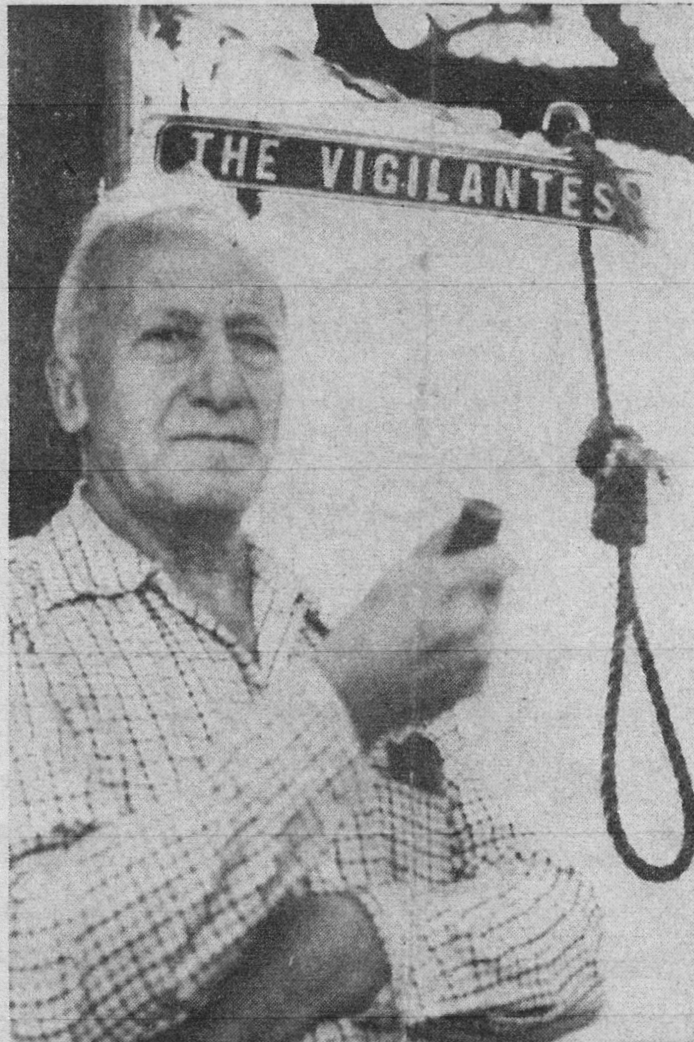
He's retired now, at 69, after nearly 50 years with the New York Public Library. His name Vigilante and his interest in the West was a coincidence which made the American History Room of the library known to Western story writers all over the world.

Vigilante now lives in a rustic house atop a dirt, weed-strewn road wide enough for just one car—and none of these low-slung sports jobs, either—to pass.

He owns several hundred acres of land up there, 12 or 13 miles from the biggest village. He lights his house with kerosene lamps and at night he says it gets mighty cozy—it reminds him of the way the pioneers must have lived when they established themselves in the West.

"Now, there's a story," Vigilante began, stopping to puff life into a pipe. "That's the true story of the West.

"But it wouldn't sell. You've got to have violence these days; that's



The noose hanging in front of the Vigilante house isn't really meant to scare people away. The owner just couldn't resist putting it there.

VIGILANTE PLACE

what attracts the youngsters. The gunman is the one who glorifies the West. You've got to have a gunman and by and by a saloon keeper, some dance hall girls, a sheriff and a cattle thief.

"But Indian fights weren't held every day, you know. What about the hard, hard work of settling the West? The drudgery.

"Why isn't there a book about the man who struggled across the plains with a wife and kids in a covered wagon? What about the man who went out west to start a bank or a newspaper?

"I'll tell you why, it's too prosaic. Not enough excitement."

Vigilante would write such a book if he had the time, money and inclination. Instead, he helps other people to write their books. He has had 150 book acknowledgements.

"If I were doing it, I would tell about the moving frontier," he said, leaning back in his overstuffed chair, "not just the cattleman, the gold miner, the gambler looking for a saloon.

"I would try to write about the actual settlement of the really important towns, the pioneers. It would take several volumes.

"But," he shrugged, "it just wouldn't go. You've got to have a cowboy slugging it out in a wild chase with a horse thief."

Nevertheless, Vigilante is happy about the current concern with the West (there are 34 Westerns on nighttime TV networks). He considers "Wagon Train" the best of the lot. The one-hour show, consistently at the top in the Niel-

sen ratings, has an estimated audience of 40 million.

"In the movies," Vigilante recalled, "Westerns used to be B picture, Saturday afternoon things for the kids. Now they're features.

"And haven't the manufacturers swung on to the deal? Now they make chaps and buckskins for the youngsters and the kids help out by carrying cap pistols, and knowing all the Indians and hold-up men by name.

"I had a letter the other day from a desperate mother who wanted a genuine Bowie knife for her son. I told her they were hard to get, but she insisted she wanted the real thing. I couldn't say that a butcher knife would have served the same purpose.

"The Westerns have not only a high rating on television, they sell in book form too. You'd be surprised to see the number of subway riders, adults most of them, who read Western paperbacks and comics."

Even though he is retired, as librarian as well as bibliographer for the New York Historical Society, Vigilante still gets letters from as far away as Scotland seeking answers to puzzling questions about the Old West. A recent one was signed Billy the Kid.

Vigilante, who never went past the 7th Grade, got most of his learning from the New York Public Library.

"Most people have history dumped into their laps and that way they think it's horrible," he said. "I discovered Western Americana for myself. And I loved it.

VIGILANTE PLACE

He Stays for Deer Season, But He Doesn't Shoot

With his wife, Edna, Sylvester Vigilante spends six months of the year in Vermont, the other six in Ossining, N.Y.

It was the Long Trail that first lured him to the eastern hills. "I spent my first summer here in 1931," he recalled.

"I like it here, with all the animals. Sometimes you can hear the bears hooting up a circus at night.

"I stay through deer season. That's when it's fun, when all the boys come by. I don't like to shoot, myself, though.

"It's more fun just walking through the woods with a stick. When you get tired of that, you can always throw the stick away.

"You can't do that with a gun."

He Gets All He Wants of Italy On N.Y. East Side

Sylvester Vigilante was born in America, but his ancestors came from Italy.

"The southern part of Italy," he said proudly.

"That's where all the fine arts and literature came from. Always around Rome, Florence and Naples.

"What have you got up in the northern part? Nothing but industrial plants and Communists."

But despite his loyalty to the Italian race, he has no desire to see the country.

"I can get all I want of Italy on the East Side of New York," he said.

West's True Tale Involves More Than TV Gunmen

"You don't have to travel extensively to learn. You can sit back at a desk in New York or Boston, read old newspapers, study county and state files and you can get as much out of it as you would by going there.

"If you write to the Historical Society of a town, or the county seats, and ask for transcripts, they'll mail them to you and you don't have to move an inch.

"After all, what happened in Tombstone other than the OK Corral?"

"But if you do go west, watch out for the old timers. They always like to tell about the time Jesse James galloped by to have a meal with their grandmother. And they're not always accurate.

"But if it's a description of the country you want, you can get it without stirring."

That's mostly what Vigilante has done. He has a 30,000-card file and if he wants to know what Wyatt Earp did at a certain time, he has only to consult it.

The former librarian has just returned from researching a new series on the West being considered for next season . . . NBC.

"I'm interested," he said, "just as long as they keep us close to the truth as possible.

"You can find highlights in the career of Bat Masterson, but after a half dozen, you're through. To keep it up for 39 weeks, you've got to use your imagination. You can't have too many stage coaches being held up.

"The true history of the West is so dramatic I can't understand why they change it."

VIGILANTE PLACE

8-11-1970

**S. L. VIGILANTE, 79,
OF PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Special to The New York Times

OSSINING, N. Y., Aug. 10—Sylvester L. Vigilante, the retired chief of the New York Public Library's American History Room in the Fifth Avenue building, died here last night. He was 79 years old and had homes here and in Moretown, Vt.

Mr. Vigilante, who was self-educated, worked for the New York Public Library for 47 years starting in 1905. His expertise in frontier history brought him in contact with numerous novelists and historians, for whom he did research.

His particular interest was in Western peace officers and the badmen they hunted on the frontier. Two of his favorite characters were Bill Tilghman, a one-time sheriff in the Oklahoma Territory who "hardly ever killed a man unless he had to," and Belle Starr, an associate of such notorious gunmen as the Dalton Brothers.

After retiring from the library, he worked in the library of the New-York Historical Society.

Survivors include his wife; Edna; a son, Albert; two daughters, Mrs. Ann Schoonmaker and Mrs. Enid Rosenblum; two brothers, two sisters and six grandchildren.

Mr. Sylvester Vigilante

9-2-1970

Sylvester Vigilante, a summer resident of Dowsville for over 30 years, died last month after a short illness. He was 79 years old.

He had retired after 47 years with the New York Public Library, having established a world-wide reputation there as an expert on American frontier history. Although he had never been to the West himself, he helped numerous Western story writers and historians, and did prodigious research for them. He was also familiar with Vermont's early history and had been one of the Long Trail's early pioneers.

He was well known to Vermont summer residents, campers, hunters, and numerous local people in the South Duxbury area (of which Dowsville is a part).

He was a respecter of the woods and its creatures. He was an avid reader and occasionally contributed to "Vermont Life." His best-known work about Vermont, was "1816 and Froze to Death." He also contributed little-known information on Vermont early history to a number of historical societies.

He was buried in Ossining, N. Y., where he has resided for many years.

9-4-1970

**Sylvester Vigilante,
Summer Vermonter,
History Expert, Dies**

SOUTH DUXBURY — Sylvester Vigilante, a well-known summer resident in Dowsville here, died early last month after a short illness.

The 79-year-old historian, who was an authority on the American frontier, summered here for more than 30 years.

Familiar with Vermont's early history and one of the Long Trail's pioneers, Mr. Vigilante had retired after 47 years with the New York Public Library.

An avid reader, he contributed to Vermont Life, his best-known work being "1816 and Froze to Death." He also contributed information to a number of local historical societies.

He was buried in Ossining, N. Y., where he resided for many years.

4-19-1979

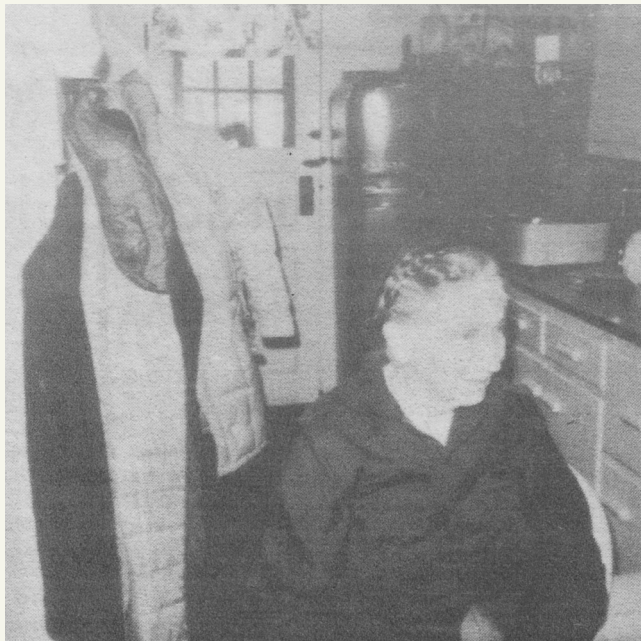


Enid Rosenblum of Montpelier has been named general manager of the Vermont Philharmonic Orchestra. She replaces Joanne Ranney, who remains with the VPO as first chair French horn. Rosenblum, whose background includes three years as executive director of Ossining Choral Society in New York, will be responsible for coordinating concert and rehearsal arrangements, budget requirements and all administrative matters.



An undated photo of the Vigilante house on Dowsville Road in Duxbury. The home still looks remarkably the same as it did during the 1940s and 1950s.

AN INTERVIEW WITH GRANNY BEATON



This newspaper article ran in *The Valley Reporter* on April 24, 1975. It was written by three students in Carol Collins' English class at Harwood Union High School as part of a project similar to the "Foxfire" project. The project involved students interviewing local people for the purpose of learning what they did earlier in their lives so that everyone could benefit from that knowledge. The person interviewed in this article was Myra Beaton ("Granny Beaton").

by Laura Callan, Jeanne Degen,
and Mary Finn

Pretty soon it's going to get to be that time when people start thinking "what will I grow in my garden this year?" After this decision is reached, they will put up with back aches and worry all summer long and never complain once. And many, in the end, will find themselves swamped with all sorts of vegetables. Being unable to eat all their produce as it ripens, these unfortunates will turn in desperation to the old art of preserving foods...

Granny Beaton has been preserving food for a long time because as she says, it is cheaper and home grown produce always tastes better. There are several ways of preserving food and at one time or another Granny has used most of them. She told us some things about this interesting subject during our interview with her.

Canning is probably the most common way of preserving food. It started in 1795 when the French government wanted to improve the diet of the men fighting in the Napoleonic wars. Having only smoked fish, salt meat, and hard biscuits, many men were falling prey to scurvy and undernourishment, so the French government offered 12 thousand francs to any one with a way for providing fresh food to soldiers. In 1810 the prize was given to Nicholas Appert. His method was to fill and cork jars, then heat them in boiling water. He worked with the theory that the food would not spoil if there were no air in the jars. This method of canning is still used for some types of food. Although now we know that the food must be heated enough to kill any bacteria or molds in food.

Many excellent instruction books on canning have been written. In doing research for this article we found a couple of cookbooks that had chapters on the subject. If you want to learn how to can, we suggest that you dig up a cookbook that is at least twenty years old. This is because during World War II, a lot of people started victory gardens, and

therefore, canning became an important skill. Many cookbooks began to include sections on canning for those who had never done it before.

Freezing is another way of preserving food, mostly because of convenience. It should be noted, that freezing merely causes bacteria in the food to go into a state of dormancy. Defrosting the frozen food must be done carefully, meats especially should be taken out of the freezer a long time before used, so that they can defrost in the refrigerator. Tomatoes, lettuce, cucumbers, and anything wanted crisp in a salad should not be frozen or it will get mushy. Again, a good cookbook will tell you how to freeze as easily, and as safely as possible.

When someone pickles most people think of cucumbers floating in some sort of brine. But pickles don't have to be made from cucumbers.

We came across recipes for pickled beets, green tomato pickles, green tomato mincemeat, watermelon rind pickles, and sauerkraut relish among others. Of course, there are many, many pickle recipes that do use cucumbers. In closing, we'd like to share with you a couple of the more un-complicated:

Old Fashion Pickles

In enamel or glass pan, let stand overnight: 5 cups water, one third cup non-iodized salt, and 3 lbs. of sliced cucumbers. Drain for 15 minutes and add ½ lb. sliced onions, and two thirds cups sugar, 1 tsp. of celery seed, 1 tsp. ginger, 2 tsp. ginger, 2 tsp. prepared mustard, ¼ tsp. tumeric, one eighth tsp. mace, and a dash of red pepper. Cover with 2 cups of vinegar and boil for 3-4 minutes. Put in sterilized jars. It will make 3 pints.

Pepper Relish

Chop 6 green and 6 red peppers together and cover with boiling water. Let stand for 10 minutes. Then add: 8 small onions (chopped), 1 cup of sugar, ¼ cups of vinegar, ½ small pkg. of celery seed, 1 T. of non-iodized salt. Let boil 20-30 minutes. Put into sterilized jars. It will make a small amount.

P O T P O U R R I

Vermont Homespun ~ As broadcast by "Old Squier" WDEV ~ Copyright Lloyd Squier

On Halloween

We've had another Hallowe'en
But next day there was little seen
To indicate 'twas much observed.
It seemed like no one got unnerved—
Townspople say this one was good
Most all the kids did like they should,
Not like the things they used to do
Before All Saints' Day eve was through!

There's lots of folks around here yet
Who braved the lickin's they would get
If they got caught at midnight pranks.
And some of these still feel the spanks,
Administered in righteous wrath
With shingle or a piece of lath,
Who've come to know the meaning, true,
Of "This hurts me more'n it does you!"

Now Hallowe'en is more controlled
There is no reason, much, to scold
About the door-steps that got lost,
And even less about the cost
Of clothes line cut and garden truck
Deposited with dirt and muck—
Once, language used next day would scorch
The cabbages upon the porch.

All down the street, most everywhere,
Each telephone pole had its chair—
And though the Parson had no horse,
His barn would hide a "rig" of course—
The hayrake stole from off the hill
Astride the ridgepole of the mill
Would look as though it took to air
And made a dead-stick landin' there.

The meat-cart owned by Wallace Green
Was 'bout the queerest thing 'twas seen,
It rode the flag pole, just about,
With Warren's dog a-lookin' out!
The chicken coops that walked away
And then got found by light of day,
Gave rise to thoughts all over town—
No kids could move those things around.

Police were out in extra force,
For there was need for them, of course.
Although they played a losing game.
Each year it happened just the same
With often something really new
Thought up since last year's ghost went through,
And mostly no one got to know
The ones who always "acted so."

The ones who thought too much of grass
Was put into a special class;
A toothpick wedge in each door bell
Would advertise the place they dwell.
The "Watch dog places" was despised,
Until the owners realized
That they was more than half to blame
For tic-tacs on the winder pane.

Some always hollered long and loud
That no one stopped this awful crowd,
But after all, the damage done
Was not so much, 'twas mostly fun
That secretly the folks enjoyed,
While seeming such a lot annoyed.
And those who'd gotten off scot-free
Would laugh and think 'twas quite a spree.

The thing each victim tried to do
Was make believe he liked it, too,
For fear he'd next year get it worse
If he should rant and rave and curse,
As well he might. But now there's not
One thing that leaves 'em really taught
Forbearance—like they used to know
When Hallowe'en was not so slow.



D U X B U R Y H I S T O R I C A L S O C I E T Y , I N C .
C O N T A C T I N F O R M A T I O N

President: Don Welch

Phone: 802-244-7558

E-mail: dmwelch136@yahoo.com

Vice President: Christian Magnani

Phone: 802-244-1915

E-mail: c.magnani@outlook.com

Treasurer: Mark Morse

Phone: 802-244-7080

E-mail: markmorsevt@myfairpoint.net

Secretary: Laura Titus

Phone: 802-496-6328

E-mail: lauratitus3030@yahoo.com

General Questions

Don Welch, President
318 Main St.
Duxbury, VT 05676

Newsletter

Kelly Welch

Phone: 802-244-5627

E-mail: welchkelly2014@yahoo.com

Alison Magnani

Phone: 802-244-1915

E-mail: a.magnani@outlook.com

Skip Flanders

Phone: 802-244-5529

E-mail: wtbskip@comcast.net

If you have any comments or contributions for the newsletter we would love to hear from you.

Membership

Mark Morse, Treasurer
804 VT Route 100
South Duxbury, VT 05660

Webmaster

Ken Spencer

Phone: 802-244-5680

E-mail: kenspencer197@gmail.com

www.DuxburyVT.com

**DON'T FORGET THE NEXT MEETING -
AUGUST MEETING IS CANCELED**

D U X B U R Y H I S T O R I C A L
S O C I E T Y , I N C .
8 0 4 V T R O U T E 1 0 0
S O U T H D U X B U R Y , V T
0 5 6 6 0