



Looking north up Monument Ave., 1892-1898, Madison Watson (1885-1946), Collection of the Bennington Museum

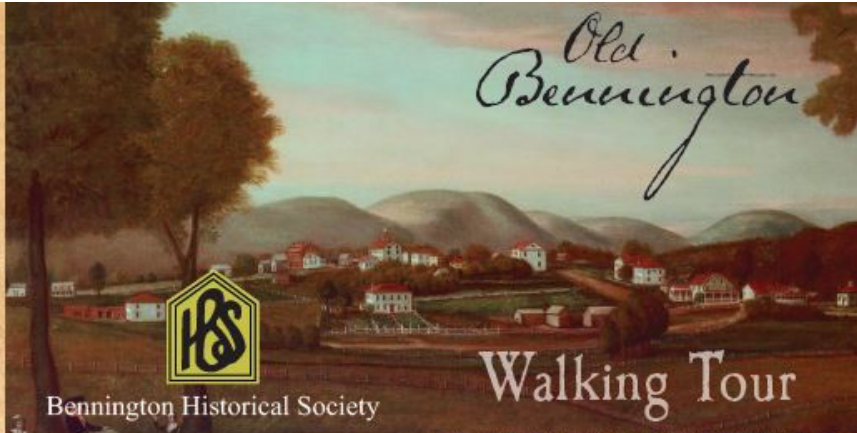
Old Bennington

Chartered in 1749, Bennington was the first town created in Vermont. In June of 1761 twenty-two settlers from Massachusetts came to Bennington, in the wilderness of Vermont, under the leadership of Captain Samuel Robinson to form a Congregational community centered around a village green and a meeting house. The community grew rapidly, hosting many fine homes, schools, a cemetery, post office, and courthouse. It was a self-contained community with many local artisans and merchants to provide services.

The Green Mountain Boys ventured out from here to fight for their land and freedom in the Battle of Bennington. In July of 1777, the Council of Safety met in Bennington and wrestled with the affairs of the newly created Republic of Vermont. At the meeting house they discussed the new Vermont constitution, prohibiting slavery and offering near universal male suffrage. Bennington produced six Vermont governors.

However, as industry grew, activity began to shift downhill along the Walloomsac River, which provided power to operate mills and machinery. Government offices and business soon followed. The quiet residential community left behind formed the Village of Old Bennington.

Old Bennington reflects a history of change; homes have been taken down, moved, and renovated but the character of individualism and freedom remains and continues in the spirit of Bennington and of Vermont.



Old Bennington



Bennington Historical Society

Walking Tour

View of Bennington, 1798, Ralph Earl (1751-1801), Collection of the Bennington Museum

The Bennington Historical Society is a volunteer-run program of Bennington Museum. Its mission is to research the history of Bennington and surrounding communities and share our insights with the public. We hope to foster a greater understanding of our common heritage.

The society conducts approximately eight monthly meetings per year in Bennington Museum's beautiful Ada Paresky Education Center. Our monthly presentations are usually on the third Sunday of the month at 2:00 p.m. in the Ada Paresky Education Center at the Bennington Museum, located at 75 Main Street in Bennington.

benningtonmuseum.org/programming/bennington-historical-society



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Follow the tour with your phone

Discover the Stories
of Twenty-Seven
Buildings & Monuments
in Vermont's
First & Oldest Town



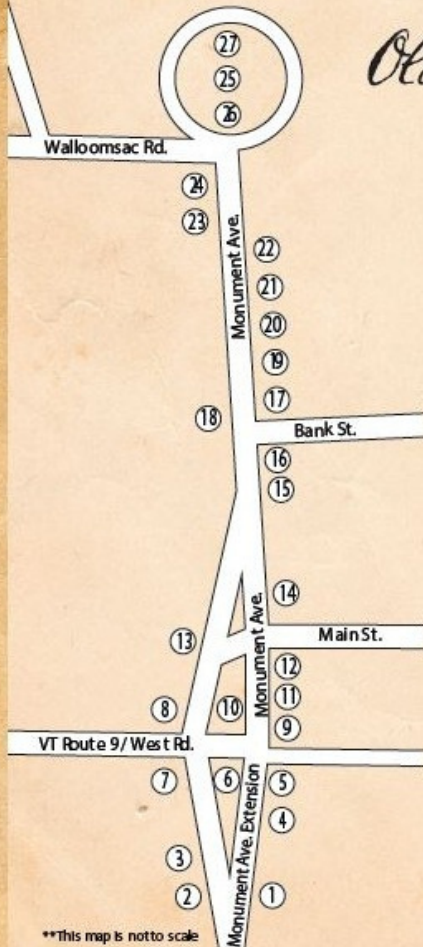
Bennington Historical Society
~ Bennington Museum ~

History Timeline

- 1749 Charter granted to Bennington by New Hampshire Governor Benning Wentworth
- 1761 Bennington settled by families from Massachusetts and Connecticut
- 1762 Benjamin Harwood, first child born in Bennington
- 1763 Meetinghouse built, first Protestant church in Vermont
- 1777 Vermont declares itself an independent state
- 1777 Battle of Bennington on August 16
- 1791 Vermont joins the United States as the 14th State after fourteen years as an independent state
- 1806 Old First Church dedicated
- 1828 William Lloyd Garrison publishes *Journal of the Times*
- 1841 Downtown Bennington, called "Algiers," develops
- 1891 Dedication of Bennington Battle Monument celebrating the Battle of Bennington in 1777 and the Centennial of Vermont statehood

Old Bennington

Map and Key



- ① Pliny Dewey House
- ② Hiram Waters House
- ③ Isaiah Hendryx House
- ④ Jedidiah Dewey House
- ⑤ Roberts House
- ⑥ Monument to William Lloyd Garrison
- ⑦ Colonel Nathaniel Brush House
- ⑧ Walloomsac Inn
- ⑨ Old First Church
- ⑩ Site of the Meetinghouse 1763
- ⑪ Site of the County Courthouse 1847
- ⑫ Site of Ethan Allen's House
- ⑬ Asa Hyde House
- ⑭ Catamount Tavern 1767
- ⑮ Old Academy
- ⑯ Site of Samuel Robinson's log cabin
- ⑰ Samuel Raymond House
- ⑱ General David Robinson House
- ⑲ Richard Carpenter House
- ⑳ Uel Robinson House
- ㉑ Ellenwood-Daniel Conkling House
- ㉒ Fay-Brown House
- ㉓ Governor John Robinson House
- ㉔ Captain David Robinson House
- ㉕ Bennington Battle Monument
- ㉖ Monument to Colonel Seth Warner
- ㉗ Monument to General John Stark

**This map is not to scale



Pliney Dewey House 1800
Built by son of Jedidiah Dewey, first pastor of the First Church. Pliney ran a cider mill by the brook behind the Federal style house.



Hiram Waters House 1826
Waters was a carpenter and built the house at left. The shop, built in 1822, was connected to the home. Both buildings are in the Greek Revival style with the carpenter's own embellishments such as the sunburst on the pediment.



Isaiah Hendryx House 1830
In this brick house the front door and the fanlight are in the Federal style while the Gable with its pediment reflect the Greek revival style showing the changing architectural styles of the period. Hendryx

was a tailor, one of the many tradesmen and merchants that worked in Old Bennington providing goods and services to the community.



Jedidiah Dewey House 1763
Built by Jedidiah Dewey, a carpenter and the first pastor of the First Church, this is one of the oldest frame buildings in Vermont. The house was located in the original "Minister's Lot" of 320 acres

that was granted to him by the town proprietors and stretched all the way to the Walloomsac River.



Roberts House 1895
Built in the Colonial revival style it reflects the earlier Federal style of the other buildings on the street. It was the home of novelist John Gardner while he taught at Bennington College.



William Lloyd Garrison Marker
William Lloyd Garrison, the great abolitionist, briefly ran a newspaper, *The Journal of the Times*, in Bennington from 1828 to 1829 before moving on to establish *The Liberator*.



Col. Nathaniel Brush House 1775
Colonel Brush commanded two companies of Vermont militia at the Battle of Bennington. The home was renovated in 1824 and again in the early 1900s.



Walloomsac Inn 1771
Originally the Dewey Tavern, it was built by Elijah Dewey, son of Reverend Jedidiah Dewey. During Bennington's heyday as the jumping-off point for settling the Vermont frontier, the Walloomsac Inn was an

important stage stop and one of the village's commercial and social centers. Prisoners captured at the Battle of Bennington were fed from its kitchens, Presidents Thomas Jefferson and James Madison stayed here in 1791, and President Rutherford B. Hayes held a reception at the Inn celebrating the centennial of the Battle of Bennington in 1877. Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt and her family and later Walt Disney were guests as well. The Inn was in continuous operation as an inn into the 1970s and may be the oldest inn in Vermont. It is currently a private residence.



Old First Church 1805
The first Protestant congregation in the New Hampshire Grants was gathered on December 3, 1762 at the Meetinghouse. The First Congregational Church, built in 1805, was dedicated in

1806. Designed by noted architect Lavius Fillmore, with its Palladian window and open belfry, it represents the best of Federal church architecture. It was restored and rededicated as Vermont's Colonial Shrine in 1937; Robert Frost read a poem at the ceremony. The adjacent cemetery, which predates the church, contains the graves of many of the founders of Bennington, Governors of Vermont, and a mass grave of German and American soldiers killed at the Battle of Bennington. The earliest grave is that of Bridget Harwood who died in 1762. Robert Frost, although not a member of the congregation, is buried here with members of his family.

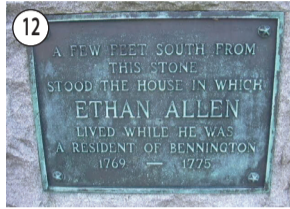


Site of Bennington Meetinghouse 1763
On this site stood the original Meetinghouse. The building was 40 x 50 feet and served as a school, a church, and Town Hall.

Prisoners from the Battle of Bennington were held here. The Vermont legislature convened here in 1778. It was dismantled after the completion of the new church and parts used in other dwellings in the area.



Site of County Courthouse 1847
This was the third Courthouse to be built in Old Bennington. It burned in 1869 and was rebuilt in a location on South Street, moving the base of power from Old Bennington to what is now downtown Bennington. In Vermont a Shire Town is a county seat, and Bennington and Manchester both share that distinction. The June term of the County Court convenes at Bennington and the December term at Manchester. Ethan Allen's home, built in 1769 was next door.



Site of Ethan Allen's House 1769
Ethan Allen lived here from 1769 to 1775. He is best known as one of the founders of Vermont and for the capture of Fort Ticonderoga early in the

Revolutionary War. This historic marker is located a few feet north of the homesite.

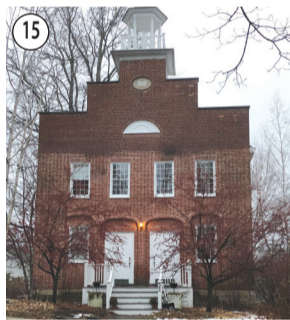


Asa Hyde House 1787
Asa Hyde, a skilled cabinet maker, came to Bennington from Norwich, Connecticut, in 1805 to work on the building of the First Church. He is responsible for many of the features of the church, including the columns, pews, and pulpit.

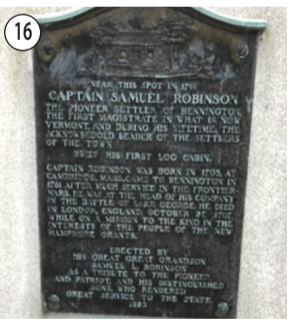


Site of the Catamount Tavern 1767
Originally the Stephen Fay Tavern, the building stood on this site and served as the headquarters of Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys, who left from here in 1775 to capture Fort Ticonderoga. General Stark, who commanded the American forces in the Battle of

Bennington, conferred here with the leaders of Vermont prior to the Battle. British officers captured in the Battle were housed here for a short time. The bronze statue of the catamount commemorates a stuffed mountain lion that once stood in front of the tavern snarling towards New York, then engaged in land disputes with Vermont. A plaque in the sidewalk behind the statue honors the life of Margaret "Peg" Bowen, who was enslaved here from 1772 through 1778.



Old Academy 1819
This two story brick building with a step gable front was originally built as a school; later it served as the town library, with the fire department in the basement. Just after it was built a windstorm blew off the belfry, and part of the facade had to be replaced. Note the difference in the brickwork on the front.



Site of Samuel Robinson's Log Cabin 1761
Robinson was the founder of Bennington and leader of the first settlers who bought land titles originating from a grant made by Governor Benning Wentworth of New Hampshire in 1749.



Samuel Raymond House 1821
Built of locally made brick, this was the residence of the president of the first bank in Bennington, which was located next door on Bank Street. Extensive renovations around 1930 included a two-story addition and a sunporch.



General David Robinson House 1795
General David Robinson was one of the sons of Samuel Robinson. This late Georgian house has elegant columns supporting a frieze above a regional version of the Palladian window.



Richard Carpenter House 1819
One of the many tradesmen in Old Bennington, Carpenter operated a tailor shop with Isaiah Hendryx. The triple window above the door shows renovations carried out in the early 1900's when it was doubled in size, had its roof line changed and the triple windows added above the door.



The Uel Robinson House 1828
Uel was the grandson of Samuel Robinson. The house is a Federal style / Greek Revival clapboard home. Interestingly, two of Uel's sons moved to South Carolina and served in the Confederate Army during the Civil War.



Ellenwood-Daniel Conkling House 1810
This home was enlarged and embellished in the Italianate style in 1859. At one time it sported a cupola. Ellenwood's carriage shop was next door.



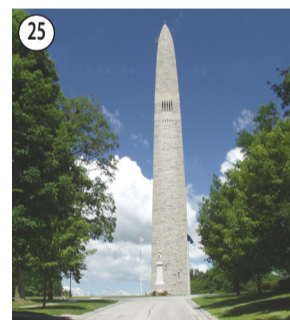
The Fay-Brown House 1781
This is the only stone building in the area and was built as a blacksmith shop. It was converted into a dwelling in 1857 and underwent remodeling in 1937.



Governor John Robinson House 1860
Robinson, the first Democratic Governor of Vermont, was elected in 1853. The house was built in the vernacular style that combined both Greek Revival and Federal features.



Captain David Robinson House 1790
Robinson was a grandson of Samuel Robinson, one of the founders of Bennington. Upon his death he deeded his house to the First Congregational Church for use as a parsonage.



The Bennington Battle Monument 1891
Built to commemorate the Battle of Bennington, it is located near the site of the Continental Storehouse which was the object of the British attack. The limestone memorial is 306 feet high, making it the tallest structure in Vermont. President Benjamin Harrison attended its

dedication in 1891 on the 100th anniversary of Vermont statehood. Memorials to General Stark, Colonel Warner, and printer Anthony Haswell are located nearby.



Monument to Colonel Seth Warner
Seth Warner was a resident of Bennington and successor to Ethan Allen as leader of Green Mountain Boys. Later, when the Green Mountain Boys became a Continental Army regiment, he led them to victory at the Battle of Bennington.



Monument to General John Stark
John Stark, one of the heroes of Bunker Hill, raised 1400 volunteers from New Hampshire and was the overall commander at the Battle of Bennington. Rallying his troops before the battle he said "There they are, boys! We beat them today or Molly Stark sleeps a widow tonight!" The sculpture shows General Stark pointing to the battlefield.

Special thanks to Robert Tegart and the Bennington Historical Society for donating their time and knowledge to create this walking tour.