



THE FUND FOR NORTH BENNINGTON, INC.

A Report on the First Twenty Years

1992-2012

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Mission and Organization

The Fund for North Bennington, Inc. is a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation dedicated to enhancing community life in and around the Village of North Bennington, Vermont.

The Fund conserves undeveloped land to protect natural resources, maintain agricultural uses, and provide opportunities for public recreation. The Fund supports community efforts in education, social services, planning, the arts and historic preservation.

Through all its activities, The Fund seeks to maintain and strengthen the special physical character and social fabric of the community.

The Fund relies on donations from the public to support its operations. The Fund is qualified as a tax-exempt, public charity under IRC Sec. 501(c)(3), and as a Vermont land conservation organization under 10 V.S.A. Sec. 6306(b).

Six trustees govern the Fund. The current board president is Robert E. Woolmington. The other current trustees are David Aldrich, Christine Graham, Joseph McGovern, Robert Howe and Susan Sgorbati. There is no paid staff.

The Fund was founded in 1992 by William R. and Ethel (Babs) McCullough Scott. Their wisdom and vision remain an inspiration. The Preservation Trust of Vermont, Inc. helped the Scotts transform their ideas into action.



Conserving landscapes, assuring public access

The Fund for North Bennington, Inc. owns more than 410 acres of woods and farmland in and around North Bennington. It holds conservation easements on an additional 15 acres.

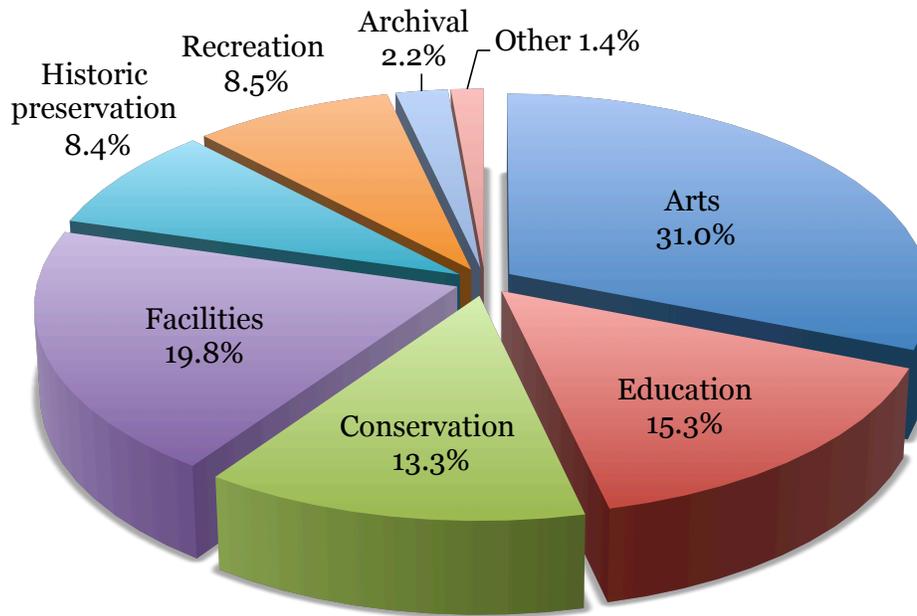
These lands were acquired in a series of transactions beginning in 1994. The work was made possible by generous public donations, by grants from the State of Vermont and private foundations, and by gifts of land and bargain sales. The cost of maintaining these areas is principally covered by gifts from the public.

Much of The Fund's agricultural land is actively worked. Forestland is managed for conservation. The properties are generally open for public access.

The Fund has developed a network of walking trails around The Mile-Around Woods and Lake Paran. The Short Aldrich Trail circles the lower valley of Paran Creek, principally on land owned by The Fund. The Robert Frost Trail includes a long stretch through deep woods once owned by the poet. The Frost Trail also provides splendid views of Lake Paran, Paran Creek, the Green Mountains and the Berkshire Hills.

The Fund has worked closely with the Vermont Land Trust, Inc. to assure that the Fund's lands are perpetually conserved as natural areas or for agricultural use. All of The Fund's lands are subject to perpetual conservation easements.

Grants by Type 1992-2012



Supporting community work, collaborating with others

The Fund for North Bennington, Inc. operates a grant program to support projects that are principally focused in and around the Village of North Bennington.

The Fund has awarded 252 grants for a total of \$380,904. The average total of grants awarded each year has been \$19,000. Examples of work assisted by grants from the Fund include:

- Expanding facilities and supporting performances and exhibits for music, art, sculpture and photography;
- Supporting the needs of our diverse community through a broad range of projects – from after-school programming and senior swimming passes to nutrition education and construction of access ramps;
- Facilitating outdoor education in the natural sciences for elementary students in the village's gardens, woods and fields;
- Underwriting productions of Shakespeare's plays by children;
- Repairing and conserving historic village structures;
- Teaching string instruments and student musical performances at the North Bennington Graded School; and
- Strengthening the capacity of organizations focused on North Bennington.

Building charitable capital for the village

The Fund for North Bennington, Inc. has established two funds for the benefit of the village with the Vermont Community Foundation.

One of these funds is dedicated to acquisition and stewardship of conserved land. The second supports special projects and grant making by The Fund for North Bennington, Inc. The two funds totaled \$409,000 as of April 30, 2012.

The Fund works to build charitable capital for the benefit of North Bennington over generations. The two funds are managed by the Vermont Community Foundation for long-term capital appreciation as well as income to support community benefits now.

The Fund engages in annual fundraising to meet the costs of holding and managing our conserved lands. These properties are subject to real-estate taxes. Generous donations from the community help us with those costs as well as repairing roads, re-planting trees, and undertaking other projects on land we have protected.

Special gifts by members of the public have also been decisive in allowing The Fund to acquire and conserve additional land in and around the village. The construction of The Robert Frost Trail and conservation of surrounding land was made possible by grants from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, donations of land and bargain sales by generous landowners, grants by private foundations and many public gifts. As a tax-exempt entity, The Fund can assemble a broad range of resources to accomplish special projects.

The Fund welcomes donations, bequests and special gifts to support the long-term health of our community. We would also be delighted to talk with donors about a charitable annuity, a charitable trust, or certain gifts of property. These types of gifts can have substantial tax benefits for donors as well as provide critical support for the mission of The Fund.

More information about making a gift and about our work in building charitable resources can be found at www.northbennington.org/donations.html. We welcome inquiries.

Presenting North Bennington on the web

In 2005, The Fund for North Bennington, Inc. created a web site to tell people in the village about our conservation work, and to showcase our photo collections. We soon found that we were presenting the Village of North Bennington to the world.



The Fund's website, www.northbennington.org, logged 28,831 unique visitors in 2010-2011. During that same period, visitors viewed 140,775 pages.

More than 78 percent of our web visitors are new to the site. They often arrive after Google searches about Shirley Jackson or Cushman furniture, but visitors then click through to learn more about the village. Our extensive photo galleries receive constant traffic. The Fund's site is the principal source of information about the village found on the web.

We also log many returning visitors who check the events calendar regularly, or view maps of walking opportunities. We refresh content regularly, and aim both to deepen and broaden the selections. The site is rich in archival materials, but also seeks to present the contemporary village. Information about the work of The Fund for North Bennington, Inc. is provided in detail.

The next twenty years

The Fund for North Bennington, Inc. aspires to help others sustain and nourish the qualities of life that we cherish in North Bennington. There is no grand strategy, no conventional business plan.

What lies ahead? We know this: The Fund will work to grow charitable capital for the benefit of the village. We will manage conserved landscapes for public access, agricultural use and as natural areas. We will remain alert and responsive to the needs of the community and our neighbors. *We will support the work of others for the benefit of North Bennington.* These are enduring fundamentals for The Fund.

North Bennington's greatest resource through generations has been the energy, ideas and civic-mindedness of its residents. Villagers created governmental institutions like the fire department and the graded school well before most Vermont towns. Villagers organized volunteer groups like Paran Recreations, Inc. to enrich community life in special ways. Villagers built private businesses like Cushman Manufacturing Co. and Stark Paper Company that thrived for generations – yet vanished as the world changed.

The Fund's future will be shaped by the evolving challenges and opportunities facing our community.

The Fund can assist financially to answer questions that begin: “What if...?” We can organize resources. We can provide digital platforms. We can steward resources through easements and other legal mechanisms. We can provide an organizational frame for community innovation.

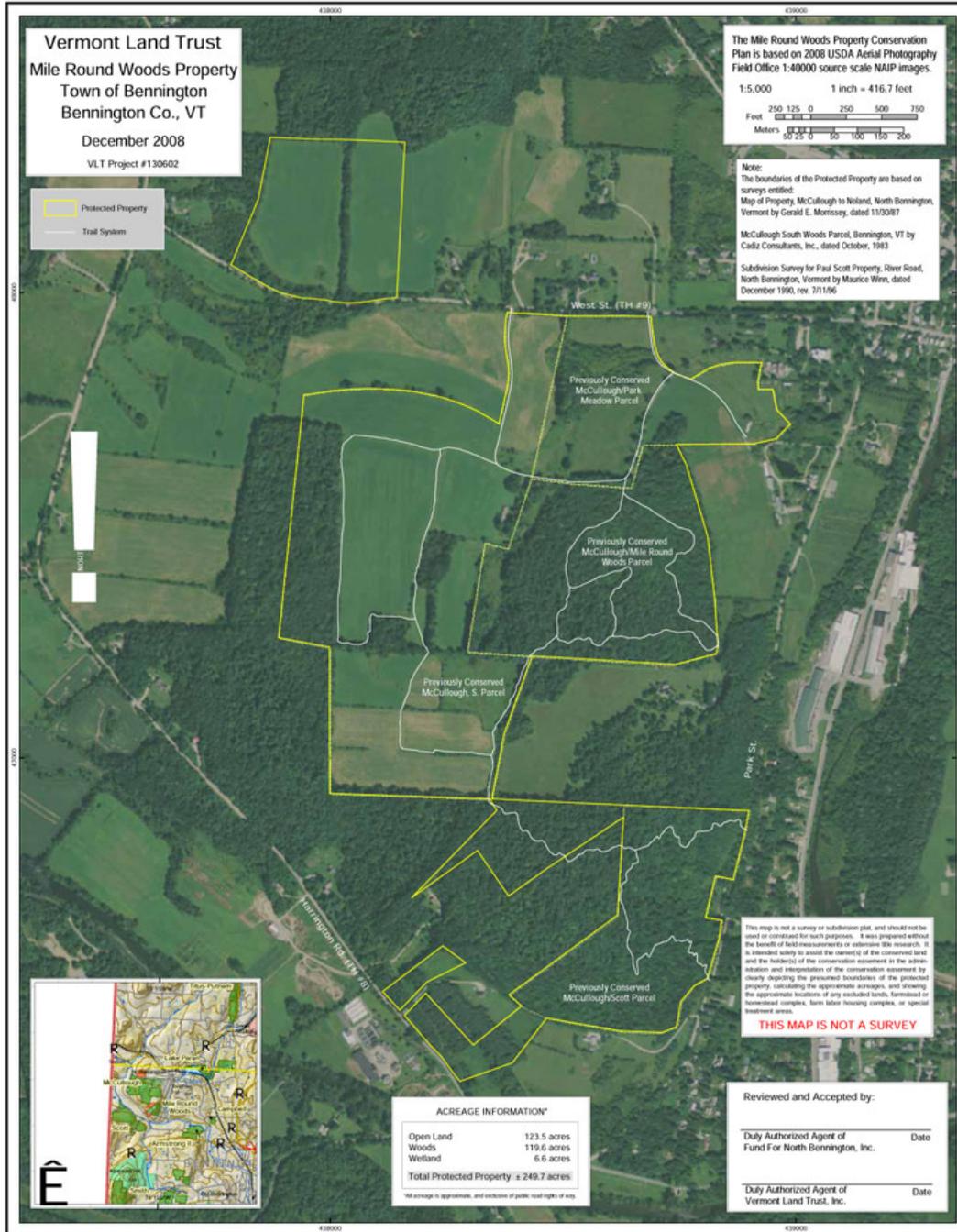
Simply put, we provide tools for building community and enhancing life in North Bennington. We plan to continue lending a hand for the next twenty years -- and far beyond. But what work will we be doing? That depends largely on the work of the people who live in our village.

We are committed to being an active part of a thriving, welcoming, interesting community. Please tell us how we might help.

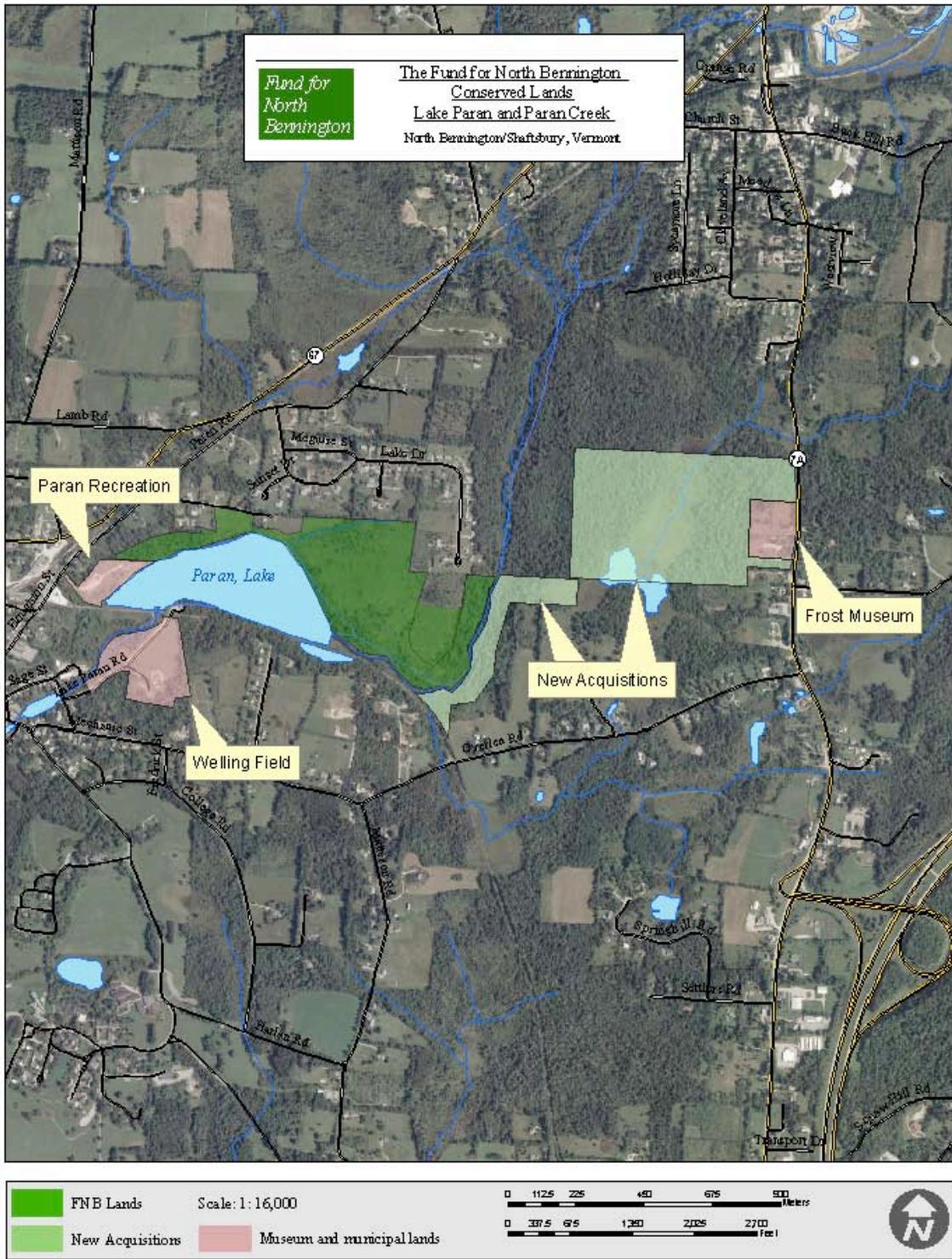
THE FUND FOR NORTH BENNINGTON, INC.

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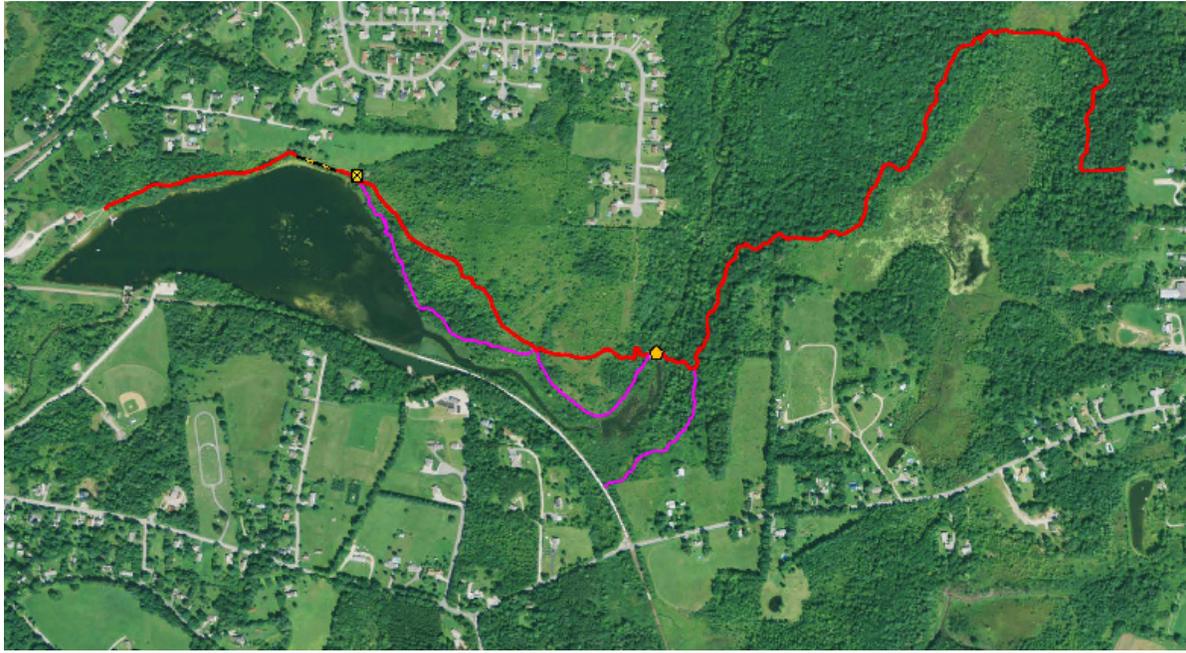
Maps, tables and notes



This map shows trails and the boundaries of conservation easements held by Vermont Land Trust on land owned by The Fund for North Bennington, Inc. in and around The Mile-Around Woods. An adjoining parcel (not outlined) owned by The Fund next to the “McCullough/Scott Parcel” is conserved by an easement held by the Vermont Chapter of the Nature Conservancy.



This map shows conserved land owned by The Fund for North Bennington, Inc. in the vicinity of Lake Paran and east to Route 7A in Staftsbury.



Above, The Robert Frost Trail in red. The side trails (purple) are not yet completed.

Grants by The Fund for North Bennington, Inc. 1992 – April 30, 2012

	Number	Percentage	Dollars	Percentage
Total of all grants	252	100%	380,904	100%
Median size of all grants			1,000	
Arts	89	35.3%	118,170	31.0%
Education	54	21.4%	58,390	15.3%
Conservation	30	11.9%	50,801	13.3%
Historic preservation	28	11.1%	32,037	8.4%
Facilities	20	7.9%	75,455	19.8%
Recreation	15	6.0%	32,320	8.5%
Archives and documentation	11	4.4%	8,431	2.2%
Other	5	2.0%	5,300	1.4%
North Bennington Graded School	23	9.1%	76,590	20.1%
Park McCullough House	19	7.5%	38,555	10.1%
Bennington String Quartet	18	7.1%	34,295	9.0%
North Bennington Tree Committee	17	6.7%	27,700	7.3%
Sage City Symphony	15	6.0%	12,450	3.3%
Vermont Arts Exchange	15	6.0%	30,300	8.0%
Paran Recreations, Inc.	12	4.8%	23,470	6.2%
Children's Shakespeare Theater	9	3.6%	11,200	2.9%
Other	124	49.2%	126,344	33.2%

Gifts to The Fund for North Bennington, Inc. 1992 – April 30, 2012

	Number	Percentage	Dollars	Percentage
Total of all gifts	1503		1,505,076	
Median size of all gifts			50	
Gifts of \$10,000 and more	12	0.8%	1,214,482	80.7%
Gifts of \$5,000 to \$9,999	24	1.6%	119,744	8.0%
Gifts of \$1,000 to \$4,999	35	2.3%	50,900	3.4%
Gifts \$250 to \$999	95	6.3%	26,828	1.8%
Gifts \$100 to \$249	388	25.8%	40,570	2.7%
Gifts \$50 to \$99	467	31.1%	22,410	1.5%
Gifts \$10 to \$49	434	28.9%	10,111	0.7%
Gifts \$10 or less	48	3.2%	455	0.0%
Conservation (operations)	1021	67.9%	130,772	8.7%
Conservation (special)	323	21.5%	74,252	4.9%
General purposes	26	1.7%	213,917	14.2%
Henry Bridge Park	55	3.7%	19,430	1.3%
Easements on other land	7	0.5%	34,400	2.3%
Paran land and trail	11	0.7%	79,119	5.3%
Bequests	3	0.2%	506,000	33.6%
Initial capital	1	0.1%	200,000	13.3%
Kohler McCullough Fields	1	0.1%	152,771	10.2%
School facilities	1	0.1%	50,000	3.3%
Other	54	3.6%	44,415	3.0%

Includes cash and securities, but excludes gifts of land and foundation grants. Includes gifts from family foundations.

NOTES

1. The Fund for North Bennington, Inc. gratefully acknowledges the service and contributions of former trustees Marjorie J. Manning and Jean (Short) Aldrich, along with the many other community volunteers who have contributed ideas, time, energy and labor in support of our work.
2. The corporate governance policies of The Fund for North Bennington, Inc., along with copies of the organization's IRS 990 tax filings, may be found at www.northbennington.org/FFNBdocs.html. Accounting for tax filings by Wallace W. Tapia, P.C., 131 Main Street, Burlington, VT 05401.
3. The top ten most viewed web pages at www.northbennington.org are: Cushman main page; Shirley Jackson; Cushman catalogs main page; photography galleries main page; site home page; Cushman 1949 display home photo gallery; Cushman ads; Cushman factory photo gallery; page describing the Village of North Bennington; and the 1894 Cushman catalog.
4. This report was written, illustrated and designed by volunteer effort without cost to The Fund for North Bennington, Inc.

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