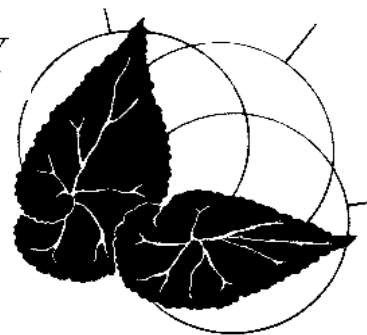
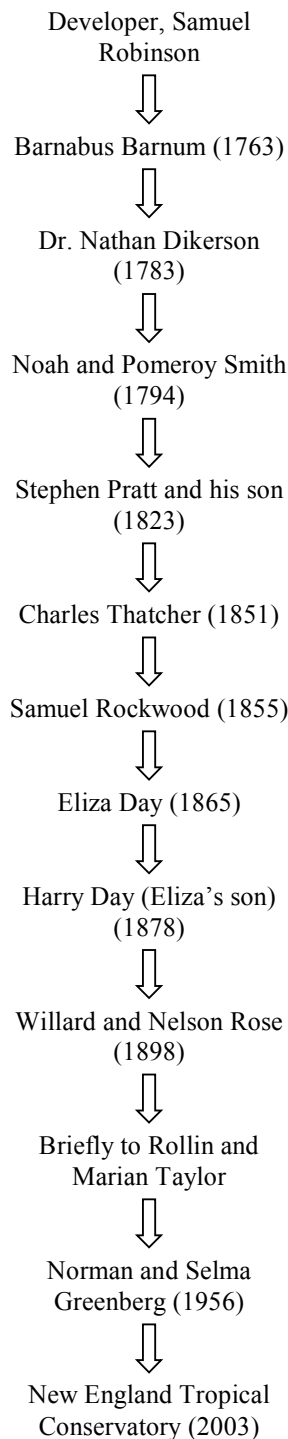


Fact Sheet **5** History of the Norman and Selma Greenberg Reserve



History of Reserve (estimated acquisition)



The Norman and Selma Greenberg Nature Reserve is a beautiful 96-acre natural area owned by the New England Tropical Conservatory and conserved by the Vermont Land Trust. The Reserve is a playground for wildlife, wetland animals and families alike. This land boasts beautiful views of mountains, forests, brooks, and meadows. But the view didn't always look like this. What is now our land to appreciate and learn from was a farm with animals and grassy fields not long ago.



The first person to live on this land and clear the trees was Barnabus Barnum. Barnum purchased the land in 1763 and owned it for 20 years. He sold it to Dr. Nathan Dickerson in 1783 who continued to clear the land and was the first of many to farm it.

The farmhouse was built where the clump of sumac is today just south of the "Old Farm Road" trail. The hired hands house can still be seen in its original spot where the cellar hole now lies. Along the "Old Farm Road" and "Wetland Outlook" trails you can see the wooden power

poles that brought electricity to the homes starting in 1935. As a reminder of our every changing culture, we still see the remnants of the family trash piles as the ground heaves them into the present each spring.

Life on the 96-acre parcel was mainly of subsistent living. Sheep, cows and pigs grazed on the open fields as well as horses, which did the plowing. Vegetables grew in the fields for food and apples were sold to make a little money for what was purchased in the town of Bennington. A farm road was constructed across the brook, which we now use to walk across. The brook was dammed near Main Street for swimming in the summer and ice in the winter.

In 1895 a trolley line was built that took people from North Adams to Bennington where passengers could change trains to travel up to Hoosick Falls. The full ride took 1.5 hours and cost 30 cents*. The line from Bennington to Williamstown stopped in 1929. We still walk the trolley line today as it passes through the wetlands of the Reserve.



Norman Greenberg bought the land in 1955 and for almost 50 years the land went untouched. The pastures grew to shrubs then to trees. The brook reverted to its natural flow and left the wetlands to grow native plants and shrubs. In 2003 Greenberg sold the land at to the New England Tropical Conservatory for the public to enjoy and connect with the natural setting it provides.

*Hall, Joe. "The Trolley Line in Pownal." *Pownal Gateway* Apr. 2007: 3+