



SUGGESTED ITINERARIES

Each of these suggestions represent a full day of activity. For a more relaxed pace, split over two days and include a night's stay at a local motel or bed and breakfast. To include a show, do a half tour and then an early dinner to leave time to see a play at Oldcastle Theatre or the Dorset Theatre.

Arts & Culture Tour #1

- Visit Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home in Manchester
- Drive Route 7A (The Shires Byway) to Bennington
- Lunch on Main Street and walk the downtown.
- Visit "The Bennington" Center for The Arts
- Drive the Covered Bridge Loop
- Dinner in North Bennington

Arts & Culture Tour #2

- Breakfast on Main Street in Manchester
- Visit the Southern Vermont Arts Center in Manchester
- Lunch on Main Street in Manchester and walk the downtown area
- Drive Route 7A (The Shires Byway) to Bennington
- Visit the Bennington Museum
- Dinner in Downtown Bennington

History Tour

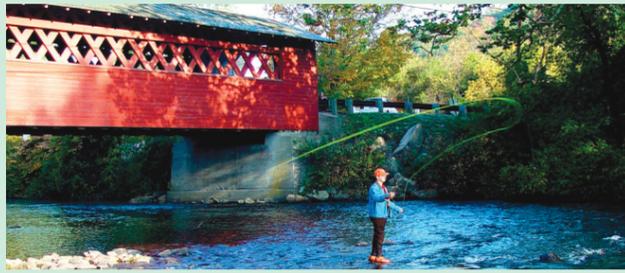
- Breakfast in Bennington
- Visit the Bennington Museum
- Visit the Bennington Battle Monument
- Visit The Covered Bridge Museum
- Take a walking tour of Downtown Bennington
- Lunch in Bennington on Main Street
- Drive Route 7A (The Shires Byway) to Manchester
- Visit Museum of American Fly Fishing
- Shop historic Main Street in Manchester
- Dinner in Manchester on Main Street

For more information on Attractions, Dining and Lodging through The Shires of Vermont, visit:

Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce:
www.Bennington.com

Manchester Chamber of Commerce:
www.visitmanchestervt.com

Recreation in The Shires



Kelly Stand Road

Provides access to the Long Trail/Appalachian Trail, Green Mountain National Forest, Branch Pond and Grout Pond. Seasonal road, closed during winter months.

Batten Kill

"Kill" is Dutch for "river." Famous for fly fishing, the river is also popular for canoeing and tubing. Best for paddling in spring or after a rain as it can get low during drier months.

Lake Shaftsbury State Park

Located in Shaftsbury, it offers visitors a great beach and picnic areas, easy hikes around the lake, and a rental cottage. Row boats, pedal boats, kayaks, and canoes are all available for rent as well as a picnic shelter for large group gatherings. For those that need to refuel, a concession stand located in the park offers yummy snacks at reasonable prices.

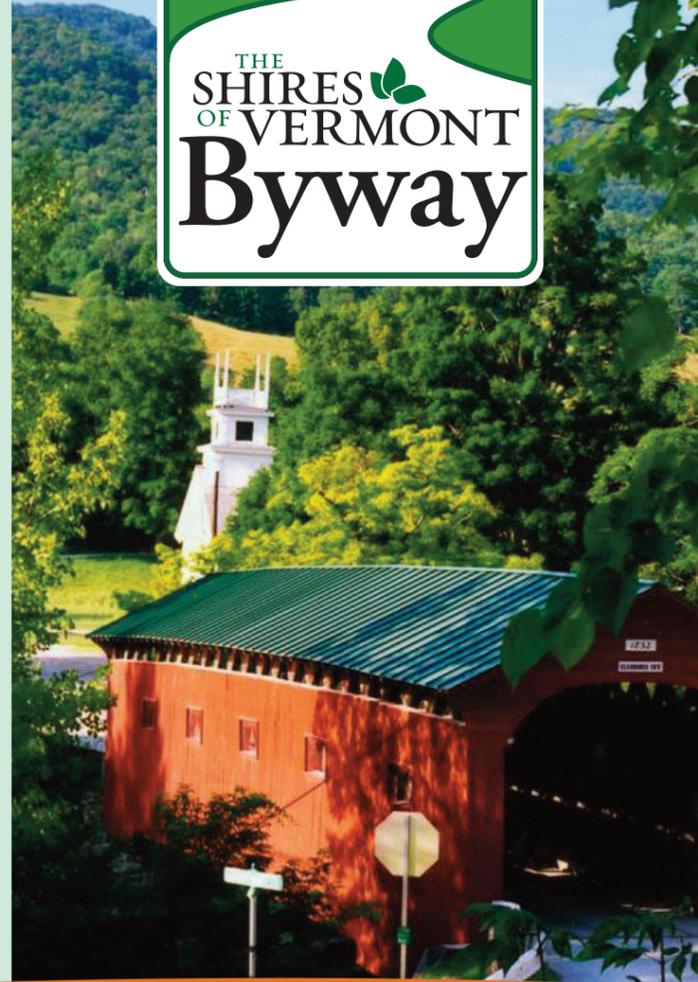
Woodford State Park

Located in Woodford, it is the highest elevation campground in the state at 2400' above sea level. With easy trails, an open lake, and a bog to explore, it's great for all ages. Woodford has boat rentals (canoe, kayak, and rowboats) 103 campsites, and is also a popular fishing location. If you stay overnight, be prepared to be awakened by an outstanding chorus of birds which serenade visitors, especially in the spring.

Emerald Lake State Park

Located in East Dorset, it includes a small clear, clean, and cold lake where visitors can rent a kayak, canoe, pedal boat or rowboat. A concession stand, lakeside picnic tables, and a picnic pavilion for large groups are also available. 104 campsites are scattered on the heavily wooded ridge above the lake.

Driving Tours



www.TheShiresOfVermont.com

So Vermont. So near!



Nestled between the Green Mountains to the East and the Taconic Mountains to the West, the Shires of Vermont Byway between Manchester and Pownal beckons the visitor to enjoy scenery, hospitality, recreation, and cultural heritage. The Green Mountain Range is a steady source of aesthetic inspiration as well as wildlife habitat, timber, fresh water, hunting, fishing, and hiking. The Taconics form a massive and natural boundary with New York.

Mohawks and Iroquois first traced this path, and by the 1760s it became a migrating route for pioneers from Litchfield and Berkshire counties seeking life in wilderness newly opened to settlement.

Bennington County is Vermont's only county with two "shire" towns, Manchester and Bennington, each with its courthouse, hence the terms North and South Shire. Route 7A is paralleled by the Long Trail, hikers' famous "footpath in the wilderness" from Massachusetts to Canada.

Each town has special character. Pownal boasts scenic back roads ideal for bicycling, bordered by organic farms, and a backdrop of formidable mountains. It was settled early by Dutch families who found fertile soils along the Hoosic River.

History saturates Bennington, the first town chartered (1749) by Governor Benning Wentworth of New Hampshire. Settled in 1761 by Congregational Separatists, Bennington drew newcomers from southern New England who soon learned that land they purchased in good faith was challenged by New Yorkers. New York may have had the better legal claim but Wentworth was quicker to act. Ethan Allen organized the Green Mountain Boys to secure land rights, though it took thirty years until they were

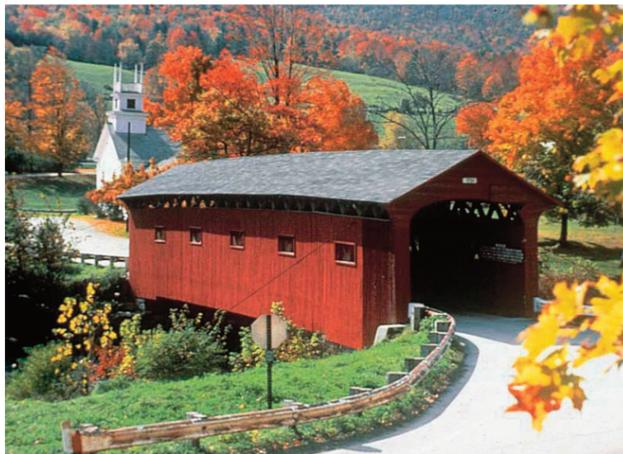
resolved and Vermont statehood was achieved.

A larger challenge, posed by British troops, ended with the Battle of Bennington in August 1777 and victory for American independence. The 306-foot Battle Monument is Vermont's most-visited State Historic Site. Bennington College and Bennington Museum along with a number of artisan craft shops, celebrate the artistic creativity that remains prevalent in this region.



Known for its pottery, 19th century knitting mills, an economy of manufacturing, retailing, and tourism, Bennington has a regional hospital, and five colleges.

Shaftsbury, an early Baptist town, where poet Robert Frost lived from 1920 to 1938, today finds residents scattered over some 85 miles of mostly gravel roads in rural-agricultural homesteads. Its chief industry makes pre-cast concrete products.



Arlington's 2,400 residents cluster in two villages. Governor Chittenden lived here long enough to justify the claim as Vermont's first capital. Residents have included

writer-educator Dorothy Canfield Fisher, artist Rockwell Kent, and illustrator Norman Rockwell. Fly fishing, canoeing, and kayaking are enjoyed on the Battenkill.

Sunderland, once home to Ethan and Ira Allen, is mostly in Green Mountain National Forest, accessible by the picturesque Kelly Stand Road that crosses the mountains toward Stratton. The Chiselsville covered bridge stretches high over the Roaring Branch.



Manchester is synonymous with the arts, golf, fishing, skiing, and tourism. Before the Civil War Franklin Orvis opened the Equinox Hotel. Mary Todd Lincoln and sons Robert and Tad stayed there, and Robert later built his summer home, Hildene, now a major historic attraction. Retailing features factory outlets and is anchored by the Orvis Company and its American Fly Fishing Museum.

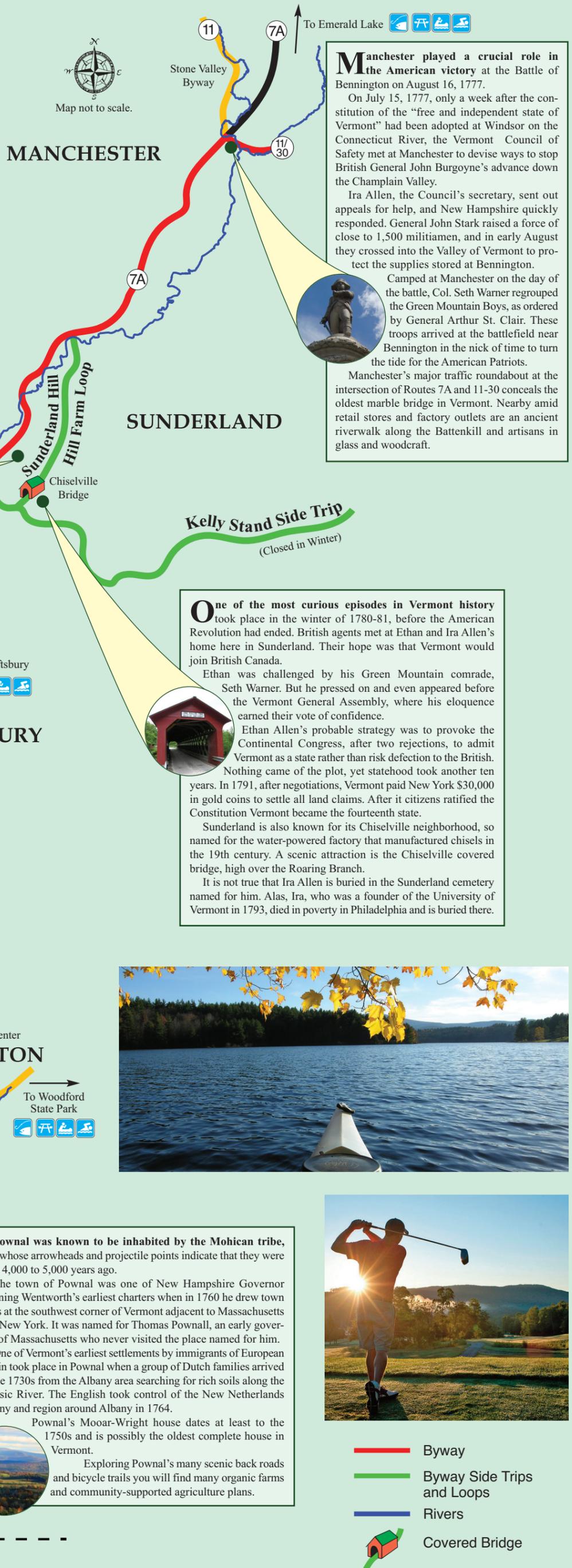
To learn more about Vermont Byways, visit www.vermont-byways.us



www.TheShiresOfVermont.com

So Vermont. So near!

History and Scenery Along The Shires of Vermont Byway



Manchester played a crucial role in the American victory at the Battle of Bennington on August 16, 1777.

On July 15, 1777, only a week after the constitution of the "free and independent state of Vermont" had been adopted at Windsor on the Connecticut River, the Vermont Council of Safety met at Manchester to devise ways to stop British General John Burgoyne's advance down the Champlain Valley.

Ira Allen, the Council's secretary, sent out appeals for help, and New Hampshire quickly responded. General John Stark raised a force of close to 1,500 militiamen, and in early August they crossed into the Valley of Vermont to protect the supplies stored at Bennington.



Camped at Manchester on the day of the battle, Col. Seth Warner regrouped the Green Mountain Boys, as ordered by General Arthur St. Clair. These troops arrived at the battlefield near Bennington in the nick of time to turn the tide for the American Patriots.

Manchester's major traffic roundabout at the intersection of Routes 7A and 11-30 conceals the oldest marble bridge in Vermont. Nearby amid retail stores and factory outlets are an ancient riverwalk along the Battenkill and artisans in glass and woodcraft.

One of the most curious episodes in Vermont history took place in the winter of 1780-81, before the American Revolution had ended. British agents met at Ethan and Ira Allen's home here in Sunderland. Their hope was that Vermont would join British Canada.

Ethan was challenged by his Green Mountain comrade, Seth Warner. But he pressed on and even appeared before the Vermont General Assembly, where his eloquence earned their vote of confidence.

Ethan Allen's probable strategy was to provoke the Continental Congress, after two rejections, to admit Vermont as a state rather than risk defection to the British. Nothing came of the plot, yet statehood took another ten years. In 1791, after negotiations, Vermont paid New York \$30,000 in gold coins to settle all land claims. After it citizens ratified the Constitution Vermont became the fourteenth state.

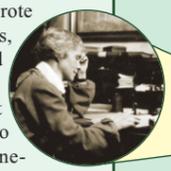
Sunderland is also known for its Chiselville neighborhood, so named for the water-powered factory that manufactured chisels in the 19th century. A scenic attraction is the Chiselville covered bridge, high over the Roaring Branch.

It is not true that Ira Allen is buried in the Sunderland cemetery named for him. Alas, Ira, who was a founder of the University of Vermont in 1793, died in poverty in Philadelphia and is buried there.



Writer Dorothy Canfield Fisher (1897-1958) was one of Arlington's most influential citizens, locally and nationally. A social and political activist, she managed the nation's first adult education program, introduced the Montessori teaching method to America, and did war relief work in 1917 in France.

Born in Kansas and educated at Ohio State University and Columbia University, she made her home in Arlington, where Canfield ancestors were early settlers. She was a founder of the Book-of-the-Month Club and wrote many novels and non-fiction books, including *The Vermont Tradition* and *Memories of Arlington*.



Mrs. Fisher chaired the Vermont Board of Education and sought to improve the state's many rural one-room schools. Responding to concerns over Vermont's low population in the early 20th century, she acted as a one-person chamber of commerce to publicize abandoned hill farms as available summer homes or second homes.

Among artists she attracted to Arlington was Norman Rockwell, who painted many of his famous *Saturday Evening Post* covers here in the 1930s and 1940s, using local models. Others included artist-composer Carl Ruggles and artist Rockwell Kent. It was she who suggested with success that Robert Frost think about buying a farm on Route 7A in Shaftsbury.

Arlington's St. James Church, built in 1839, reflects early Anglican influences in this town. Its picturesque cemetery is a favorite of visitors.

The old stone blacksmith shop at the corner South and Elm streets has seen many uses in its 170 years. It was built about 1844 by partners Henry G. Root and Luther Graves, who had established a Yankee peddler business in which horse-driven wagons loaded with merchandise would go out into the countryside to make sales.

Root and Graves proved ambitious and expanded their business to Troy and Dutchess County, New York. They used the blacksmith shop to repair wagons and make tinware to sell. But after railroads arrived in the 1850s the peddling business waned. In 1862 Root and Graves and others founded the First National Bank of Bennington, located on West Main Street in a building that still stands.

The old blacksmith shop was used again and again by several smithies into the 20th century. Then it became a car repair shop, a gift shop, a girls club, and a recreation center called Teen Town. In recent times it has been headquarters for the Chamber of Commerce and the Bennington Police Station. Today it is operated by the Better Bennington Corporation as a welcome center and art gallery.



Pownal was known to be inhabited by the Mohican tribe, whose arrowheads and projectile points indicate that they were here 4,000 to 5,000 years ago.

The town of Pownal was one of New Hampshire Governor Benning Wentworth's earliest charters when in 1760 he drew town lines at the southwest corner of Vermont adjacent to Massachusetts and New York. It was named for Thomas Pownall, an early governor of Massachusetts who never visited the place named for him.

One of Vermont's earliest settlements by immigrants of European origin took place in Pownal when a group of Dutch families arrived in the 1730s from the Albany area searching for rich soils along the Hoosic River. The English took control of the New Netherlands colony and region around Albany in 1764.

Pownal's Mooar-Wright house dates at least to the 1750s and is possibly the oldest complete house in Vermont.

Exploring Pownal's many scenic back roads and bicycle trails you will find many organic farms and community-supported agriculture plans.

