



Exploring Vermont's Historic Sites with the 251 Club

By: Caleigh Cross

Photos courtesy of the 251 Club

Vermont's history is one of the state's biggest draws. Historic sites the state over range from monuments to the sumptuous homes of some of the most influential Vermonters to an underwater shipwreck for divers to explore.

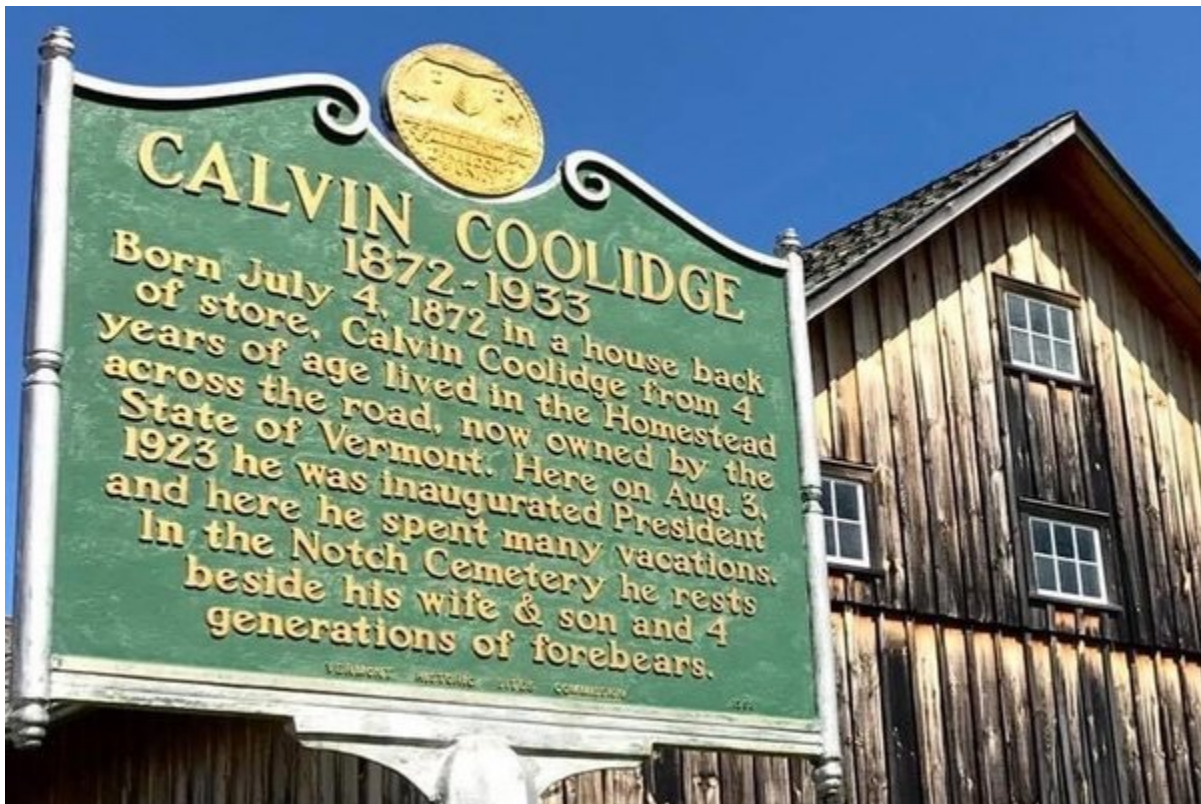


Members of Vermont's 251 Club aim to visit all of Vermont's 251 towns, cities and villages – and often, those trips include stops at one or more state-owned historic sites.

Visitors to [Vermont's historic sites](#) come away with a deeper understanding of Vermont's roots and an appreciation for the stories of the Green Mountains.

"The [President Calvin Coolidge Homestead](#) is one of my favorite and most peaceful places to visit in Vermont. So pure! I appreciate this beautiful historic village. The museum has wonderful exhibits. You can even ask 'Silent Cal' a question," said member Brenda Greika. "Many people don't realize that Coolidge is also buried in the village. It's a short walk away to the family cemetery plot. Calvin Coolidge is the only U.S. President born on the 4th of July," she said.

Greika also found a personal connection – Coolidge died on her birthday.



Other 251 Club members are finding ways to include historic sites in their close-to-home explorations as the state continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"My sister and I are focusing on history for our town visits. Two weekends ago we visited 10 Windham County towns," said Juanita Nunn of Plainfield. She got to know the village of [Bellows Falls](#), where the first canal in the U.S. was built.

"There is a historic railroad tunnel that goes under some buildings and a nice park right on the Connecticut River," Nunn said, recommending people check it out.

"We hit several historic sites on a gorgeous Vermont summer day," said Jeff Moreno, who lives in West Hartford with his family of five. "We especially loved learning about Phineas Gage and then finding the spot on the railroad the incident occurred."

Moreno is referring to an injury Gage, a railroad construction foreman, sustained to the brain while working that drastically altered his personality.



Stephanie Young of Burlington cites Broadway darling “Hamilton” as part of her newfound interest in Revolutionary War history.

Young and her children are exploring Vermont’s role in the battles this summer.

“Before we started exploring this summer, we didn’t realize how many places we could go to where we could stand where significant events occurred, including both [Mount Independence State Park](#) in Orwell, VT and Hubbardton Battlefield State Historic Site,” Young said.

“At [Hubbardton Battlefield](#), we learned that this battle was the only Revolutionary War battle that was fought entirely in what would become Vermont. Also, the monument that stands at Hubbardton is one of the oldest Revolutionary War battle monuments in the United States. We also walked on the trail through the Battlefield reading the markers describing what happened on July 7, 1777. There is no substitute for learning about history than actually being where it happened,” she said.

Young said her family was “amazed” by the sights inside the museum at Mount Independence, from a historic cannon to pieces of the Great Bridge between Fort Ticonderoga and Mount Independence.

“Both locations offered us opportunities to learn about the American Revolutionary War and further sparked an interest in my children about learning more about the Revolutionary War. And to continue cultivating that interest, we will be returning to [Ethan Allen Homestead](#) this summer (which is right in Burlington!) and taking advantage of the tours they are offering that you can book ahead of time because of COVID-19,” Young said.