

1793 - Abram Brinsmaid builds a private residence on Burlington lots 160 and 161, now the site of Oakledge Park.

1874 - Capt. Proctor sells his land for \$6,500 dollars.

1850 - Captain Napoleon B. Proctor, who lives on the north side of Shelburne point, purchases Mark's Bay for \$400. He uses it to build a steam boat.

1885 - Dr. Webb purchases land on Shelburne Point and builds a large manor house and farm barns. The cottage built in 1881 is converted to a guest home.

1881 - Dr. William Seward Webb purchases the property and builds a large summer "cottage" named Oakledge for more than \$30,000. He also builds barns for his horses and carriage roads and turns the property into a farm.

1925 - Burlington Country Club wants to purchase Oakledge as the spot to create a new golf course and yacht club. The Webb family decides not to sell.

1891 - C.W. Scarff, agent for Dr. Webb, creates a plan for the development of Oakledge that includes over 200 lots. The plan is never acted upon, and after World War I gas companies buy land to create tank farms.

1926 - Mrs. Fredrica Webb Jones sells Oakledge to a group of Burlington businessmen for investment purposes, who build summer cottages south of the big house for their private use. The rest of the land remains unused.

1929 - Allen S. Beach is hired to manage the property as "Oakledge Manor," a summer resort.

1934 - Fred C. Hill buys Oakledge Manor oversees its daily operation. The property now encompasses 225 acres.

1953 - Fred Hill leases the manor to David Beach (Allen's son).

1961 - David Beach purchases the Manor and then sells it to a group of General Electric employees the same day. Cliffside Country Club, a golf course, is born. The property is significantly smaller than in 1934, as various portions have been sold and developed over the years.

1970 - The city of Burlington enters negotiations with Cliffside to buy the property for the public park system.

September 12, 1970 - Unexplained three-alarm fire damages top floor of Cliffside.

April 10, 1971 - Cliffside votes to sell land to the city.

June 11, 1971 - The city of Burlington buys Cliffside for \$230,000 dollars.

June 24, 1971?? - The city officially takes possession of the title to the property.

July 19, 1971 - Less than a month after it was bought, the Burlington Fire Department burns the Cliffside Manor House, first built by the Webb family, in a "training exercise."

May 1987 - The barns and gatehouse that Dr. Webb built are bulldozed by the city to make room for the new bath house. No traces of Oakledge Manor are left in the park.

July 19, 1971 - On the same day as the fire, the murder of Rita Curran shifts State's Attorney Pat Leahy's attention away from the investigation of the illegal blaze.

October 12, 1971 - Burlington awarded \$22,500 in federal funding for Oakledge to create 4 tennis courts, 2 Little League Baseball fields, 25 picnic areas, and drain an existing softball diamond.

The Webb Family on the front porch of the Manor House

Photo courtesy of Shelburne Farms Collections, Shelburne, Vermont



The Times are Changing

A History of Oakledge Park