

2026 GROTON ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Sign up for this year's GCS Alumni Reunion

August 1, 2026 at 2:00 pm

Details on pages 10 & 11

Groton Alumni Association Officers:

Flo Butts Allen, Class of '73
President

Lisa Shurtleff, Class of '83
Vice President

Phyllis King Boyden, Class of '68
Secretary

Nan Metzgar Farkas, Class of '75
Mary Meeker, Class of '75
Co-Treasurers

Supporting Committee Members:

Audrey Griffin Aloï, '82

Buddy Belonsoff, '88

Doreen Griffin Billups, '80

Betty Tompkins Conger, '60

Lee Shurtleff, '83

Coretta Smith, '71

Mary Ann Batzer Smith, '62

Joy Trescott, '94

Visit our web site:

www.GrotonNYAlumni.com

Connect with us on Facebook

[Groton NY Alumni Association](#)



Email: GrotonNYAlumni@gmail.com

President's Welcome Message

Thank you to all of our Groton Central School alumni who participated in the 2025 Annual Summer Reunion Picnic and helped plan this year's event. Your continued support and enthusiasm make this tradition so special.

Many years ago, alumni records were carefully maintained by Alice Sincerbeaux Houston in a notebook with handwritten entries, and reunions were held at Groton High School only during anniversary years. As times have changed, so have we—embracing technology with a digital newsletter and electronically maintained records. We are also proud to now include all who attended Groton Schools.

We are thrilled with the positive response and truly grateful for the many kind compliments we've received.

We always welcome suggestions and feedback. While our committee is small, it is deeply dedicated to serving this organization and our community. We are always looking for new members to join us—whether or not it's your anniversary year.

We look forward to seeing you!

Warmly,
Flo Butts Allen
President, Class of '73



Lee, Doreen, Flo, Mary, Nan, Audrey, Lisa



Betty



Coretta, Mary Ann

GROTON PAGE

By Lee Shurtleff '83, Village Historian

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The Beginnings of Our Local School System

According to the 1899 publication "Grips Historical Souvenir," the earliest accounts of a local school date to 1805 when a "low log school house" of 30' x 25' was constructed on land that both the Groton Carriage Works and Corona Typewriter plant later occupied. It is noted that the first teacher was Abiatha Hathaway. The log building burned down in the winter of 1813-14 and was replaced with a new structure built farther south along Main Street.

As the settlement grew, so too did the needs of the students, and a much larger, two-story building was put up in 1858. The 1858 structure largely remains intact, as today it is home to Carrington-Fuller Post 800 American Legion, and most assuredly, lessons and lectures of learned elders there endure!

A desire for expanded learning spurred area residents to raise and pledge funds for the establishment of a community library in 1834. Grips wrote that "this library undoubtedly proved an incentive to higher study than could be pursued in the common school, and a high school was opened through the efforts of interested citizens in an upper room of the village school building, rented for the purpose" soon afterwards.

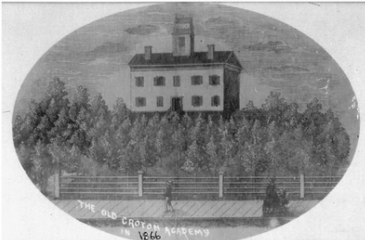
The high school enticed Groton's citizens to then fund and endow a local academy that was incorporated by an Act of the New York State Legislature on May 9, 1837. By 1839, the Groton Academy enumerated 206 pupils: 117 male and 89 female.

While the first half of the 19th century was known in education as the "era of the academy," the second half gave way to the "era of the free school," when communities such as Groton began to promote "free education," in place of the tuition and endowment-based academies.

It was said that "the people awoke to realize that it was as proper to tax for high schools as for elementary," and the local academy was merged with the elementary school to form the Union Free School in 1872.

The Academy, then owned and overseen by the renowned Professor M.M. Baldwin, was purchased by the Groton Union Free School District, and all the elementary and secondary functions thereafter inhabited the site. The original academy building was destroyed by fire in 1882, but was soon replaced by a larger, sturdier brick structure that was enlarged again in 1893 and used well into the 1950s.

The lasting impact of the academy was noted in 1899 in that "its blessings of enlightenment and culture have largely made the village what it is: the traditions, the ideas, and experiences of those times are having their effect upon the school of the present." As a proud Alumnus of Groton Central School, I suggest that those very foundations remain beneath and within the community today.



Groton Academy built 1834 destroyed by fire in 1882



Union Free School constructed after fire in 1882



American Legion Home. The two-story northern section was built in 1858 to house the enlarged local school, replacing an 1814 structure. The school merged into the Groton Academy in 1872. The Crandall Typewriter factory operated out of the building afterwards (1887), as did an automotive dealer. Corona also ran its early trucking operations out of the garage in the 1920s. It was renovated into the Corona Hotel. The Legion acquired the property in 1934 after a fire destroyed the non-original (southern) additions.

The Alice Sincerbeaux Houston Award

This award honors Alice (Sincerbeaux) Houston (Class of 1926) for her many years of service to the Groton Alumni Association. If you would like to donate to the award, make your check payable to Groton Central School and mail it to: Groton Central School, 400 Peru Rd., Groton NY 13073. Please note on your check: Alice Sincerbeaux Houston Award. Your donation is tax-deductible. Congratulations to the 2025 recipient, Alisa Slater.

GAA Leadership Award

The GAA Leadership Award honors the exemplary leadership and hard work of former GAA Presidents Meredith Wells and Betty Conger. If you would like to donate to this award, please direct your donation to the Groton Alumni Association at P O Box 42, Groton NY 13073. Congratulations to the 2025 recipient, Cooper Hewitt.

Raffles & Donations

Every year the Alumni Association sells raffle tickets and accepts donations to support the annual reunion and contribute to student scholarships. Our fundraising allows the association to honor the staff at GCS and support other school-related events and projects. Your donations are greatly appreciated. Donations and raffle tickets can be made/purchased on the Alumni Reunion Reservation Form or at the annual reunion.

Ways you can help:

- Make a donation (can be made any time)
- Purchase a Memory Brick (can be done any time)
- Purchase raffle tickets for the \$100/\$50/\$25 raffle. Drawing to be held at the annual reunion on 8/1/26
- Purchase tickets to win the 50/50 \$ raffle, the Mario Venturini painting, A Flo Allen Quilt, & A Buddy Belonsoff Print. Drawing to be held at the annual reunion on 8/1/26



WIN THIS MARIO VENTURINI PAINTING!



Flo Allen Quilt



Buddy Belonsoff Print

Congratulations to last year's winners:

Kathy Volpicelli Winthrop - \$100

Jennifer Bonavia Sebastian - \$ 50

Bruce Westfall - \$ 25

Kim Beckwith Travis - Buddy's Framed Print

Todd Twigg - 50/50 winner



Groton Memory Brick

The High School Memory Brick Garden can always use more! Memory Bricks can be ordered year round. If you've thought about ordering one, now's the time to do it! An engraved brick is a thoughtful way to pay tribute to teachers, alumni, friends and family who have passed. To order, check out the options on the GAA website.

GrotonNYAlumni.com/memory-brick

GROTON EDUCATION FUND

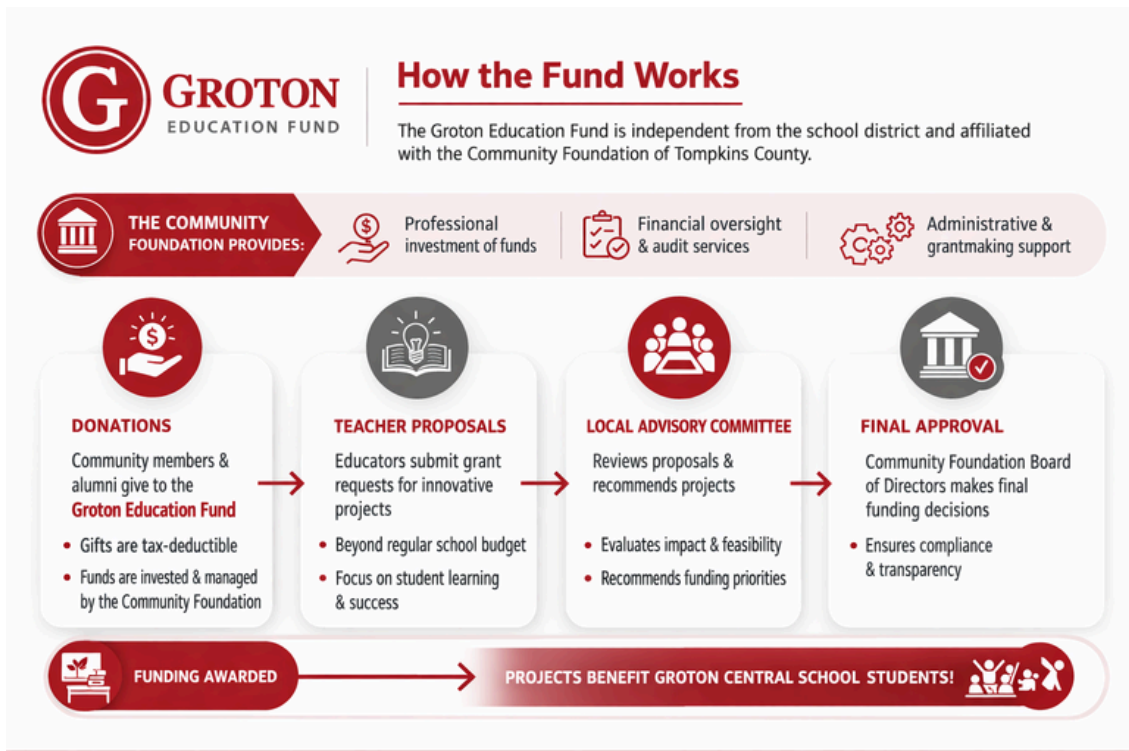
Are you interested in making a tax-deductible donation to benefit GCS students?

The Groton Education Fund (GEF) is up and running! This fund was established in 2008 and has provided support for many projects that have directly benefited the Groton Central School students. After a pause of a few years, a committee has been re-formed and is actively seeking out, reviewing, and supporting requests from teachers.

This year, we are offering awards of up to \$750; to date, we have approved 4 projects for initiatives that are outside the district's general operating budget and that focus on academic excellence, collaboration and innovative ideas. Approved this year are projects entitled, "Strawberry Hydroponic Tower" (Grades K-5), "Redhawk Rising Film Festival" (grades 9-12), "Birthday Cake Kits" (to be distributed through our local food pantry, the Community Cupboard), and "Therapy Dog Purchase" (aimed at enhancing students' emotional awareness, coping skills, and confidence, mainly at the elementary level). Be sure to check the Alumni website for photo updates of these exciting projects!

Are you interested in making a tax-deductible donation to benefit GCS students? The Groton Education Fund is managed by the Community Foundation of Tompkins County. To make a gift to the GEF, either one-time or longer-term, or a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), please visit the Community Foundation at www.cftompkins.org, go to the bottom of the page, select "Giving" and "Make a Gift." Enter Groton Education Fund in the search bar.

Thank you for considering this wonderful chance to make a difference. Any questions can be directed to the Alumni Association's email, grotonnyalumni@gmail.com.



1926 and ONWARD!

ALICE L. SINCERBEAUX HOUSTON

The Groton Alumni Association (GAA) recently noticed that Groton alumnus, ALICE L. SINCERBEAUX HOUSTON graduated from the Groton Academy 100 years ago, in 1926. Born in 1907, hers was a life of dedication to Groton schools and the Alumni Association, in addition to her devotion to family, farm, and church. The GAA and our school district have renewed recognition of her with a framed mural of Groton schools, both rural and village. The GAA also continues to give the Alice Sincerbeaux Houston annual award to a deserving Groton H.S. senior.

Alice attended the Cortland Normal School (now SUNY Cortland) in the fall of 1926, to achieve her teaching certificate. She would have begun this career at around age 19, teaching at one-room school houses on the Pleasant Valley and Sovocool Hill roads. She also taught for a time at the Washington School District in Freeville, NY. In 1941 she married Robert "Bert" Houston. They had two sons, Robert and Marlin. Thanks go to Robert and grandson "PJ" for providing much of this information.

Changing focus in 1941, Alice became the Groton High School principal's secretary at the Main Street School. She continued this until 1944, during which time she volunteered to become the secretary of the newly-formed Groton Alumni Association. From this time onward, Alice kept index card records of all Groton alumni. They were updated regularly, with the use of telephone calls and letter-writing. Her family says that "she was the modern-day information super highway" for the people of Groton. (The index cards were turned over to the newly-formatted GAA in 1996, helping to establish our data base procedure.) As school secretary, Alice also undertook the work of school census taker. This work lasted for 20 years. Being a census taker enhanced her Alumni Association record keeping. People have lovingly said that "Alice would call as soon as parents got their newborns home from the hospital." And, of course, she was helpful with all the information needed for Kindergartners' school registrations.

Alice Houston was a caring woman, involved in much of Groton's daily life, as was the custom of the times. She and her husband both embodied dedication and devotion to family, friends, the school, and the town as a whole. Also representative of the times, Alice was an accomplished pipe organist, playing for 35 years at the Groton Congregational Church, followed by further work as Community Church secretary until her retirement from that in 1994. Alice was able to attend one Alumni Reunion Picnic before her death on December 30, 1998, at age 91. It is an honor to remember her, and we are grateful.

The Evener Family

Jeff Evener-Class of 1974
Teri Evener-Friend of Class of 1975
Katie Evener LaFrance-Class of 1994
Tim LaFrance-Class of 1999
Jeffrey W. Evener-Class of 1995
Elizabeth Scaglione Evener-Class of 2005

Jeff and Teri-Retired-Volunteers at the American Legion Post 800. Jeff is helping with the Honor Guard and Teri has been an auxiliary working member for 48 years. They both love volunteering to help their community and veterans.

Jeff helped a group with the development of the youth Football/Cheerleading program to make it self-sufficient. Teri ran the concession stand so that they made enough money to buy new uniforms, helmets and cheerleading outfits without the kids having to sell anything.

Both Jeff and Teri are proud of being founding members of the G.I.F.T. Golf Tournament, that for the last 17 years has donated over \$21,000 to Groton High School Sports and has also, as of last year, started a scholarship for a deserving boy and girl high school senior. GCS has been important part of their lives for the past 51 years and will continue to be.

Katie is a high school Earth Science teacher, National Board-Certified Middle School Science teacher, and softball coach. Tim (both of his parents graduated from Groton) is a board-certified Emergency Medicine Physician. Both Tim and Katie were 3 sport athletes in high school. What they most fondly remember about Groton is playing soccer and football games under the lights at Ross field - and packed gymnasiums for home basketball games in the old gym.

Jeff and Beth both work in education. Jeff is the Homer Central School District Superintendent and Beth (both of her parents graduated from Groton) is a High School Counselor there. They have three children. Jeff served as the mayor of the Village of Groton (2009-2015) and served as a village trustee (2007-2009, 2015-2017). Jeff and Beth are proud of their Groton roots. They both serve and lead due to the wonderful teachers they had at GCS, who inspired them to pursue careers in public education. The friends, lessons, and memories of their time at GCS were foundational to who they have become as adults.

REUNION WEEKEND EVENTS

Breakfast

August 1, 2026
7:00 am - 10:00 am
Groton Fire Department
308 Main St.
Groton, NY



Groton Historical Association

Museum

The Groton Historical Association will be open on Friday afternoon, 7/31, from 3 pm to 6 pm and Saturday, 8/1, from 9 to 11 am. 168 Main St.

GCS Alumni Reunion

August 1, 2026 at 2:00 pm
Details and Reservation Form on pages 10 and 11

Class Displays

Take a walk on Main Street the week prior to the reunion to see all the class displays for the anniversary classes that will be in the businesses' windows.



18th Annual G.I.F.T. Golf Tournament



Do you like to golf and want to help support GCS Sports?

Come join us!

For the last 17 years GCS alumni, coaches, and fans have golfed together to raise money in support of Groton High School Sports. To date they have donated over **\$21,950**. Last year the tournament donated \$1,950 to support GCS High School Sports (boys and girls) and gave out two \$500 scholarships to two deserving seniors (boy and girl).

A BIG THANK YOU to all who participated!

Plan to participate in the 18th Annual G.I.F.T. Golf Tournament on Saturday, August 1, 2026. Four-person Captain 'N Crew, Men's Flight and Women's/Mixed Flight is only \$200.00 per team not including cart rental.

The tournament begins at 8:00 AM with a shot gun start. It is concluded by 1:00 PM. This tournament fills up quickly. **Register by July 28, 2026.** For more information and to get signed up, contact Seth Walpole at 607-279-3532 or Stonehedges Golf Course at 607-898-3754. The more teams, the more money to go to our sports programs. If you cannot play, consider donating to the tournament.

This is not part of the reunion registration form, but the Groton Alumni Association encourages participants.

Like us on  Facebook: GiftGolftournament

2025 REUNION MEMORIES



Buddy Belonsoff,
Class of 1988 and
Reunion Photographer



2025 REUNION MEMORIES



CLASS REUNIONS

Class of 1961

This is our 65th Reunion Year !

Remember "Veni, Vidi, Vici"

Your early reservations will help reserve our table at the annual GCS Reunion Picnic on Saturday, August 1st.

Any questions or concerns, please send email to:

Mary Ellen Jones, mejvny@gmail.com

Class of 1966

Class of 1966 is announcing its get-together to celebrate 60 years since graduation.

The Class of 1966 will meet at the Benn Conger Inn, 206 West Cortland Street, Groton, from 6 to 9 pm, Friday July 31st. It will be a cash bar with snacks.

Menu and price will be mailed to each class member by their Class Representative, Rose (Palmer) Tucker.

Class of 1976

50th Year Reunion

Friday, July 31, 2026 6-9 PM

American Legion Post 800 Groton, NY

\$15 per person

RSVP via Email: gcs1976.50@gmail.com

Class of 1981

45th-year Get-Together!

Join classmates for a casual get-together from 6:30 - 10pm Friday, July 31 at Groton's new fire station across from the Americal Legion.

Please RSVP via our Facebook group or email jolene.scaglione@gmail.com.

Facebook group: Groton Central Class of 1981

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/141774949176428>

Help us update our class mailing list!

Please send your mailing address and email address to Jolene Scaglione at jolene.scaglione@gmail.com.

For additional information and details on class reunions, visit the Alumni Association web site:

www.GrotonNYAlumni.com

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO OUR GCS ALUMNI REUNION AUGUST 1, 2026 2:00 PM

Stonehedges Golf Course and Banquet Facility
549 Stevens Rd., Groton, NY



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Mark your calendars!

It's time to reconnect with old friends and relive unforgettable memories at our upcoming annual class reunion. We will be honoring classes ending in '1' and '6'.



RSVP & COST**

Sign up for this year's reunion!
Complete the Reservation Form
and return it before July 15, 2026.

Meal Price \$22 for Lifetime
Members*, \$25 for non-Lifetime
members and guests.

OR

Social Participation Option
\$12 for Lifetime Members*, \$15
for non-Lifetime members and
guests.

*If you are not a lifetime member
yet, we encourage you to
consider joining - your support
helps sustain our efforts and
events. Select the option on the
reservation form to become a
lifetime member for \$25. Not
sure if you are a lifetime
member? Check your mailing
label or

Email: GrotonNYAlumni@gmail.com

FOOD & BEVERAGES

Full Meal

Appetizer Tray

Pulled Pork, Hofmann Hot Dogs with
Rolls & Condiments

Salt Potatoes, Macaroni Salad,
Pasta Salad, Vegetarian Pasta Salad
Cookies

Beverages: Beer, Iced Tea, Bottled
Water, Coffee and Lemonade

OR

Social Participation Option

Want to stop by and mingle without
a full meal? Select the Social
Participation Option:

Appetizer Tray

Beverages: Beer, Iced Tea, Bottled
Water, Coffee and Lemonade

A cash bar will also be available.
Please indicate any dietary needs
on the reservation form.

PROGRAM

2:00 pm - Check In & Appetizers

3:00 pm - Main Meal

4:30 pm - Program

**All reservations received after July 15, 2026 will be charged at
the event: \$35 per meal or \$20 for the social participation option.
All payments are non-refundable.



FUNDRAISING

\$100/\$50/\$25 Raffle

Tickets are \$5 each

Can be purchased in advance on
the Reservation Form or at the
event. Need not be present to
win.

CHOOSE YOUR PRIZE RAFFLE

50/50 Raffle \$

MARIO VENTURINI PAINTING

FLO BUTTS ALLEN QUILT

BUDDY BELONSOFF PRINT

Tickets are \$5 each OR 5 for \$20.

Must be present to win.

**2026 Alumni Reunion Reservation Form
August 1, 2026**

Class Year _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone number _____

Email _____

Guest Name _____ class year if Groton Alumnus

To register additional guests, please include their name(s) and indicate if they are a Groton alumnus and graduation year on the back of this form or attach a note.

Please make your selections below:

NAME, GUEST NAME	ITEM DESCRIPTION	QTY	PRICE	TOTAL
	NON-LIFETIME MEMBER/GUEST MEAL		\$25.00	
	LIFETIME MEMBER MEAL*		\$22.00	
	NON-LIFETIME MEMBER/GUEST SOCIAL OPTION (NO MEAL)		\$15.00	
	LIFETIME MEMBER SOCIAL OPTION (NO MEAL)*		\$12.00	
	\$100/\$50/\$25 RAFFLE (NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN)		\$5.00	
	LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP*		\$25.00	
	DONATION TO THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OPERATING FUNDS			
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE				

*To verify your membership status, check your mailing label, or email GrotonNYAlumni@gmail.com

Any dietary restrictions? _____

**MAIL COMPLETED FORM WITH PAYMENT BY JULY 15, 2026 TO:
GROTON ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
P O BOX 42
GROTON NY 13073**

ALL RESERVATIONS RECEIVED AFTER JULY 15, 2026 WILL BE CHARGED AT THE EVENT: \$35 PER MEAL OR \$20 FOR THE SOCIAL PARTICIPATION OPTION.

ALL PAYMENTS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE

Groton Alumni Association
P O Box 42
Groton, NY 13073

GROTON ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS

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To receive this newsletter & alumni updates via email, email us at: GrotonNYAlumni@gmail.com