

A Familiar Site



In the spring of 1884, W.K. Menns, a Burlington photographer, perched atop this hill as the snow melted and snapped this pair of pictures looking at the same view you are seeing today. Do you wonder if perhaps he climbed up onto the Webb's newly built home to get an even better view?



W. K. MENNS,

BURLINGTON, VT.

1884 - Looking southwest toward Shelburne Bay and Shelburne Point.

Not quite a panorama, the images show the Oakledge landscape as the Webbs would have seen it. Look around. What do you recognize? Can you find any of the same trees? How about the large boulder to the left of the volleyball court?



W. K. MENNS,

BURLINGTON, VT.

1884 - Looking west toward South Cove and Lake Champlain.

The four aerial images to the right illustrate the land-use changes south of Burlington since the height of the Great Depression. How many differences can you find between when Oakledge was a resort in 1937 and a city park in 1999? Do the changes continue today? The red star in each picture marks the former location of the main house at Oakledge, now the location of the picnic shelter just behind you.



1937 - The landscape around Oakledge is mostly open. Neighborhoods to the east are set in a "grid pattern" of streets running at right angles to each other.



1962 - Open land around Oakledge is developed during the post World War II prosperity of the 1950s. Oil tanks appear on the northern edge of the property. Interstate construction begins to the east.



1988 - Suburban-style neighborhoods built on winding roads appear around Oakledge. Development fills in around Interstate-89.



1999 - The surrounding land appears to be filled with houses, streets, and commercial buildings. Oakledge is a thriving city park, a green oasis serving the recreation needs of Burlington's residents.



This sign and others in Oakledge Park evolved from research done by students and staff of the 2003 Science and Technology strand of the Governor's Institutes of Vermont, a week-long residential program for highly motivated Vermont High School students. Image collection and analysis supported by the UVM Geology Department's Landscape Change Program, an NSF and Lintilhac Foundation supported initiative to archive images of Vermont landscapes (www.uvm.edu/perkins/landscape). Creation and installation of the signs supported by private donations and grants from the Lintilhac and Henderson Foundations.

Shelburne Farms Collection, Shelburne, VT

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