

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Groton City Mayor and GU Commission Chairperson Dennis L. Popp and State Senator Cathy Cook joined GU's 100th anniversary celebration in February. GU unveiled two new anniversary emblems (one is pictured here) for its trucks and publications.

To celebrate our 100th anniversary, GU is participating in or sponsoring the following events and activities for our business and residential customers. (Check www.grotonutilities.com for full details.)

5/3/04 – 5/7/04

National Drinking Water Week in-school activities with performances by the Small Change Theatre

6/26/04 – 6/27/04

AirFest, Groton Airport

6/25/04, 7/25/04, 8/1/04, and 8/13/04

Centennial Concerts in Washington Park

8/6/04

Groton City Day celebration

8/18/04

Key Business Customer Luncheon with state and local government officials

8/21/04

Groton Utilities Community Picnic at Groton Utilities' Operations Complex

10/03/04 – 10/9/04

Public Power Week

10/03/04 – 10/9/04

Customer Service Appreciation Week

10/6/04

Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut, Inc. Business After Hours

12/4/04

Groton Holiday Parade

In our next newsletter (Summer), look for photos of the Groton Business Association/Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut, Inc./Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce breakfast, Groton City Easter Egg Hunt and the Groton Art Waves, Inc. production of "Earth Tones" – which have taken place since the printing of this issue.



GROTON UTILITIES

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Special Series of Publications Commemorating 100 Years of Community Service.

Early

CONNECTIONS

1904-1934

GROTON UTILITIES 100 YEARS OF GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

VOL. 1 OF 4

GROTON UTILITIES

SPRING 2004

Our Success ~ 100 Years in the Making!



GROTON UTILITIES

As Groton Utilities celebrates its 100th anniversary, we have taken a look back on our company's history to highlight our impact on the city, and the impact the city has had on us. Our roots are firmly planted in local history – we were, after all, created by the people of the Borough (City) of Groton – and



we feel the local community is a very important part of our celebration. So here's a look back on our early years, through 1934:

Laying the Groundwork: Life in the late 1800s in Groton and around the country was vastly different from the life we know today, but many of the seeds of today's luxuries were planted then. In 1879 Thomas Edison created the first reliable, long-lasting source of electric light which was practical for home use. It would be several decades before homes – and streets – in the Borough of Groton would be wired to take advantage of electric light.

In the 1890s the municipal use of water was growing more important and many larger

cities had public water supply systems. However, almost none had sanitary facilities, which is so crucial to public health. Fire departments in the Groton area consisted of a "bucket brigade" and maybe a hand pumper, but no volume of water could be accessed quickly in the case of major fires.

To address these issues, a group of "Groton Bank" residents invested \$100,000 to form The Groton Water Company and then The Groton Electric Lighting Company in the very early 1900s. They purchased parcels of land around town, including in the Poquonnock Bridge area. And, they built a small dam on Poquonnock Reservoir – which was tested to be as "pure as spring water" – where they installed a water main and pumping station.

1904 & The Borough of Groton:

As the area began to grow, some public-spirited citizens (including Charles E. White, Charles Marquardt, E. A. Card, Arthur Card, Walter Denison, Belton Copp, and Thomas Avery) decided these utilities should belong to the people of Groton. So, they successfully petitioned the legislature of the State of Connecticut for the establishment of a municipality, "The Borough of Groton." On May 26, 1904, a charter and by-laws were adopted by the citizens of the area, and the Borough became an official entity.

The Borough now was able to bond properties and enact taxation, which provided funds for the purchase of The Groton Water Company and The Groton Electric Lighting Company. Immediately, the Borough issued its first 20-year bonds to raise \$150,000 to purchase the existing facilities for water supply and electric distribution. With tax support, a few fire hydrants were installed for the

(continued on page 2)

We're pleased to present this premier issue of a special series of newsletters documenting the 100-year history of Groton Utilities.

This issue focuses on the company's beginnings from 1904-1934. Our summer issue will feature the years 1934-1964; the fall issue will focus on 1964-1994; and our final issue in the winter of 2005 will take a look at 1994-2004.

We hope you enjoy this look back at our "Early Connections."

Director's Message: It's about the People!

For 100 years, one thing has remained steady at Groton Utilities – the importance of the people. From our employees, to our customers, to the greater community – those are the groups of people who created GU and kept us so successful over these years.

As you'll see in this newsletter, the first employees really made "early connections"

by putting in countless hours to build GU from the ground up. Over this past century, our hard-working employees have continued to keep up with the needs of our business and residential customers. Those who have ever worked at GU share the same level of caring and enthusiasm for their work – out in the field, in the labs, in our customer service departments, in all the administrative roles, and in our newest high-speed internet and cable department.

We want to say thank you to our employees, retirees, customers and the community — so we are "Giving Back to the Community" by inviting you to share in our year-long celebration. Look to this newsletter as well as www.grotonutilities.com for information on community and business events we are proudly hosting this year. We hope you join in the celebrations—and as always, we thank you for all of your tremendous support.

Sincerely,
Glenn M. Wilson
Director of Utilities



Walt Podbielski Looks Back 53 years!



Walt Podbielski, former GU lineman and engineering office member, is one of the linemen featured in one of GU's 100th anniversary emblems (pictured here, third from left). Walt started work at GU in 1952 and retired in 1988. He remembers when the company had only one pickup truck, one line truck and one ladder truck. "Today's crew has it made with bucket trucks and back hoes. We had to dig by hand," Walt says. He feels working at GU was like being part of a very close-knit family – one that truly cared for each other. He says he'll never forget that several colleagues pitched in to start a bank account for his newborn son. And, he remembers fishing with William Clinton's dad. "This is a good group of people," Walt says. "I wish the company good luck as it continues to grow."

Our Success 100 Years in the Making!

(continued from page 1)

volunteer fire fighters. Within a few years, a street lighting circuit was established and a few homes were wired for electricity.

Moving Forward: In June 1904, the company laid its first service pipes and mains along the Poquonnock Road to the roundhouse at Midway. In 1905, the Legislature granted the Borough of Groton the right to establish a sewerage system, and



The Borough of Groton's first annual report is featured here (left).



The original municipal building on Thames Street, built in 1908, that housed Groton Utilities as well as the city offices and police station.

in 1912 a sewer use ordinance was adopted. In 1931, a sewer collection system was begun on a gravity flow basis on the river slope of Groton Bank.

Most of the growth in the Borough was residential during this time, although there was some growth in the Naval installations and at the New London Ship and Engine Company. The daily demand for water did not exceed 1 million gallons and the annual demand for electrical service did not exceed 1,600 kilowatts during this time.

That would all change in the 1940s with the growth of the United States Submarine Base, Electric Boat's vast expansion, and the establishment of Chas. Pfizer and Company, Inc. We'll take a closer look at the impact of these organizations in our next summer edition of "Early Connections" newsletter.

Sources: "Groton's Municipal Public Utilities," Mr. Dutton, 1955; "The Poquonnock Bridge Story," Carol Kimball, 1984.

Avery Point: GU Plays Role in Historic Property's Vast Changes

Since its early beginnings, many area businesses have looked to Groton Utilities to establish and maintain their utilities – especially during times of change and modernization.

Avery Point's varied history is an excellent example of how GU keeps pace with the changing electrical and water needs of a particular property. The land was originally purchased in 1904 by Morton F. Plant, a major steamship and railroad investor, for his summer home (known as The Branford House). In 1938, when the property was obtained by the State of Connecticut and deeded to the U.S. Coast Guard, GU upgraded and maintained the utilities as needed.

UConn turned Avery Point into its southeastern campus in the 1960s, and GU renovated the electrical and water services to suit their needs. In 1996, the State of Connecticut created the Marine Science and Project "O" facilities at Avery Point. GU again rebuilt the entire electric distribution system on the campus, which was outdated and in poor condition.

"GU's work in upgrading the water and electric lines at UConn's Avery Point campus has been excellent, especially regarding customer service and problem solving," said Al Lewandowsky, energy manager for UConn. "GU helped us engineer solutions to several of our most challenging tasks – including the installation of specific transformers required to interact with our new chiller plant. GU spent time and money to make sure they did things right. That's a great sign of quality service."

For Groton Utilities, keeping up with the change in technology and serving the customer is what it's all about.



PROFILE:

Mr. William W. Clinton, Former Director of Utilities *Fast-paced Changes in Utilities Kept Career Lively, Interesting*

Over his 38-year career at Groton Utilities, Mr. William W. Clinton was a central figure at GU, serving as an engineer, then foreman of the electrical department, then assistant superintendent, and finally, general manager (director of utilities). He was a prominent figure in the municipal utilities industry, creating the Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Co-Operative (CMEEC), the state's only organized electric utility co-op. And, he was involved in creating the Morgan Reservoir in Ledyard.

A Groton native, Mr. Clinton graduated from Fitch High School during WWII, and joined the Navy in his senior year. When he returned from the war, he earned a degree in electrical engineering from the University of Connecticut.

He says he knew almost every family in the northern half of Groton City, having gone to school with their children. "I really felt as though I was part of a large family," Mr. Clinton laughed. "A very supportive family that went through growing pains together – in a relatively short amount of time."

Throughout his career, Mr. Clinton explained he did some "fast work" to keep pace with growth in the electric system. During his early years, GU was the smallest but fastest growing municipally owned electric utility in Connecticut. When he left, GU was the largest in the state.

When he first arrived at GU in 1950, the town still hadn't fully repaired and restored the damage to the electrical system from the 1938 hurricane. He spent his first few years catching up with problems that had been left over from the hurricane.

Then, the company faced huge growth challenges when Electric Boat started to build nuclear subs. Their utility needs increased and the additional housing for workers in the area meant a large increase in demand for electric, water and sewer services.

To meet the growing need, GU built the Morgan Reservoir in Ledyard. Groton Utilities had to relocate a cemetery from

the property to Sandy Hollow Road. The company spent several years contacting every living descendent of those buried



there for approval. After the new cemetery and surrounding stone walls were built, many families in Ledyard contacted GU to say how pleased they were with it.

Mr. Clinton was directly involved in creating CMEEC, a co-op of six municipal electric utility companies in the state. Working together, CMEEC gave municipalities more security of knowing where their power was coming from, and at what cost. This helped them immeasurably with projections and planning, and keeping the lowest rates possible. Mr. Clinton served as the organization's president and helped nurture it into the successful group it is today.

In the mid-1970s, Connecticut Light & Power (GU's power supplier) increased its rates three times, which caused GU to have to raise its rates. Mr. Clinton went to the Federal Power Commission in Washington seeking a sizable refund from CL&P for its electric customers. In the early 1980s, GU finally met with success – and the company was able to issue nearly 8,000 refund checks. Mr. Clinton personally signed each check!

Mr. Clinton now lives in New Hampshire where he has been enjoying his retirement years. "I wish everyone at Groton Utilities happiness in what they do, and I hope they are able to achieve their goals," he says.