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Roy Finestone Photograph Collection

Digital

1969-1990

239 digital images

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A wave of experimentation in communal living crested in New England in the late 1960s and early 1970s, with dozens of communities spread across the landscape of western Massachusetts and Vermont. Nina Finestone joined the Johnson Pasture community in Guilford, Vermont, in 1969, however after the main house there went up in flames on April 16, 1970, killing four people, she joined a number of its residents who moved to the nearby Montague Farm in Montague, Massachusetts. Nina married a fellow Montague farmer, Daniel Keller, and the couple moved to Wendell in 1980.

Providing exceptional visual documentation of life at Johnson Pasture, the Montague Farm, and Wendell Farm between 1969 and 1990, the Finestone collection is centered on the lives and family of Daniel and Nina Keller. All images were taken by Roy Finestone, Nina's father, with a medium format camera using color transparency film.

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Background on Roy Finestone

A wave of experimentation in communal living crested in New England in the late 1960s and early 1970s, with dozens of communities springing up across the landscape of western Massachusetts and Vermont. Cheap land, exhaustion with the fractious politics of the day, and a desire to rebuild society on new principles all fueled the communitarian impulse, but to say that no commune was typical is to underestimate how atypical they could be. At least 75 communes were established in Vermont alone, reflecting varying shades of political or spiritual commitments, varying degrees of communality, and a wide range of social theories. The radicals and revolutionaries of Red Clover and the back-to-the-landers of Earthworks were all part of the same general fabric as the hippies of Tree Frog Farm, which was once said to be dedicated to "nudity, psychedelic drugs and free love." Nearly all shared a commitment to sparking change for a more egalitarian world.

Straddling the Vermont-Massachusetts border was a group of three particularly tightly knit communes that shared a common history that extends into the present. In the summer of 1968, Raymond Mungo, Verandah Porche and seven of their friends established Total Loss Farm on 90 acres in Packer Corners, Vermont. A small commune by most standards, the Farm emerged out of the vituperative split in the Liberation News Service, of which Mungo and Porche were founders. The personality of Total Loss Farm was distinctly bent toward the literary and artistic, reflected both in Porche's poetry and Mungo's memoir of his first year there, *Total Loss Farm* (1971).

During that same summer, Marshall Bloom, another LNS founder and refugee, established another commune just down the road in Montague, Massachusetts. Similarly anarchic in orientation, without leaders or plan, the Montague Farm had a somewhat more explicitly political flavor to it than Total Loss Farm, and several of its members were (or went on to become) prominent political and social activists. One member, Tom Fels, wrote that the Farm "was a place where you could become a new person and, we thought, create a real opening in the social fabric."

A third commune, Johnson Pasture in Guilford, Vermont, was a different story. Roughhewn, muddy, and "medieval" in appearance, Johnson Pasture had an open door policy, accepting anyone who appeared on the doorstep, and although there was a small core of committed residents, the commune did not long survive. After a faulty stovepipe ignited a fire that destroyed the commune on April 16, 1970, killing four, several residents took shelter at Montague Farm.

Scope of collection

Providing exceptional visual documentation of life at Johnson Pasture, Montague Farm, and Wendell Farm between 1969 and 1990, the Finestone collection is centered on the lives and family of Daniel and Nina (Finestone) Keller. A resident of Johnson Pasture, Nina moved to Montague after the 1970 fire. She later married her fellow Montague farmer, Daniel Keller, and the couple moved to Wendell in 1980. All images were taken by Nina's father, Roy Finestone, with a medium format camera using color transparency film.

Inventory



Chuck Light and Nina Finestone



Nina Keller as young girl. Glass slide 2x2'
ca.1960

Johnson Pasture Commune: 'Rules: No illegal drugs, no more pets, no soap in stream, no picnickers, visitors welcome, no minors



overnight without parents okay, use trench'
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Building construction
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Building construction
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Field
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Field, with squash harvest in foreground
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Front of the house, Volkswagen beetle
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Group, infant, outside house
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Kitchen at Johnson Pasture
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Kitchen at Johnson Pasture
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Lounging at dusk
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Lumber stacked in front of house, Volkswagen beetle
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Preparing food in front of house
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Rear view of house, laundry, and make shift table
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Red pickup truck in front of house
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Teepee and signboard
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Tent by stream
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: three women
1969 Aug.



Johnson Pasture Commune: Road to Johnson Pasture
1969 Fall



Breakfast at Brattleboro (Chuck Light and Nina Keller)
1970 June



Janice Frey and baby Sequoia
1970 July



Nina, Chuck Light, Smoky, Janice, baby
1970 July



Nina Keller, Smoky, Charles Light, Janice Frey (Smoky and Nina on bikes)
1970 July



Montague Farm: '17 room house and Nina's wagon,' Montague
1970 Nov.



Montague Farm: 'Cows in barn,' Montague
1970 Nov.



Montague Farm: 'Cows in barn,' Montague
1970 Nov.



Montague Farm: 'Field in back of house,' [Montague]
1970 Nov.



Montague Farm: 'Ill-fated load of apples,' Montague
1970 Nov.



Montague Farm: 'John Wilton, Janice [Frey], Tony Matthew,' Montague
1970 Nov.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller (8 months pregnant) and mother
1970 Nov.



Montague Farm: 'Paper machie in barn'
1970 Nov.



Montague Farm: 'Tony, Alex Kelly, Rick, and 'Burn" (the dog)
1970 Nov.



Montague Farm: 'View down from road,' Montague
1970 Nov.



Montague Farm: Montague barn
1970 Nov.



Montague Farm: Dogs and baby (Eben) in snow in front of house, Montague
1971 Jan.

Montague Farm: 'View from the window' (over snow covered field, looking east, Montague)



1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Attic bedroom, Montague
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Baby (Eben) in basket
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Baby (Eben) in basket

1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Chuck Light and baby (Eben), Montague
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Chuck Light, Nina Keller, and baby (Eben)
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Chuck Light, Nina Keller, baby (Eben)
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller and baby
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller asleep by the baby (Eben) basket
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller feeding baby (Eben)
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller feeding baby (Eben), Chuck

1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller lying down, holding baby (Eben)
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller standing, holding baby (Eben)
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller, baby (Eben), Nina's parents
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller, baby, Tony Mathews, and cat, Montague 1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Chuck Light, Nina Keller, et al. 1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Baking bread in kitchen (Nina's mother?), Montague 1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller's mother cooking in kitchen, Montague

1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller's mother in kitchen, Montague
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Group gathered in kitchen, Montague
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Living room and stove, Montague
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Living room, Montague
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Chickens in coop, barn at Montague
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Cows in stalls, barn at Montague
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Cows in their stalls, barn at Montague

1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Milking in the barn, Montague
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Outhouse in the snow, Montague
1971 Jan.



Montague Farm: Splitting wood in the snow, Montague
1971 Jan.

Montague Farm: 'Five months old' (Chuck Light and baby Eben, Nina Keller, Roy Finestone in front of house, Montague)



1971 Apr.



Montague Farm: Baby (Eben) in baby seat
1971 Apr.



Montague Farm: Baby (Eben) in baby seat, laughing
1971 Apr.



Montague Farm: Bathing baby (Eben) in sink

1971 Apr.



Montague Farm: Older woman holding baby (Eben) at table
1971 Apr.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller spoon feeding baby (Eben)
1971 Apr.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller spoon feeding baby (Eben)
1971 Apr.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller's mother with baby (Eben)
1971 Apr.



Montague Farm: Unidentified woman holding baby (Eben)
1971 Apr.

Montague Farm: 'Janice and Sequoia, Eben 5 months' (also Chuck Light, Nina Keller, Nina's mother in front of house, Montague)



1971 June



Montague Farm: Nina feeding chickens, mother and Eben, dog
1971 June



Montague Farm: Whit Garberson (?) et al., seated at table, Montague
ca.1971 Fall



Montague Farm: Kids looking at pig sty, Montague
ca.1971 Fall



Montague Farm: Kids playing in field
ca.1971 Fall

Montague Farm: Nina Keller, mother, and unidentified woman sitting in field, Montague



ca.1971 Fall



Montague Farm: Chuck Light and baby in front of car (Scout)
1972 Spring



Montague Farm: Chuck Light and baby in front of car (Scout)
1972 Spring



Montague Farm: Chuck Light and Nina Keller and baby

ca.1972 Spring

Montague Farm: Chuck Light, Nina Keller, Janice Frey, Nina's mother et al., standing by car



1972 Spring



Montague Farm: Janice Frey and Sequoia in front of greenhouse, Montague

1972 Spring



Montague Farm: Living room at Montague

1972 Spring

Montague Farm: Nina Keller, Chuck Light, and baby (Eben?) in living room, Montague



1972 Spring



Montague Farm: Nina's father(?), Nina Keller, and two young girls at water pump
1972 Spring

Montague Farm: Nina Keller's mother and baby (Eben?) in field above Montague farm, looking south over house and barn.



1972 Fall



Montague Farm: Unidentified child and man inside house at Montague
1975 Jan.



Montague Farm: (?) by the road, sugaring
1975 Mar.



Montague Farm: Checking sap buckets, sugaring
1975 Mar.



Montague Farm: Kids standing in stream, Montague

1975 Mar.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller and young child (Eben?), inside house at Montague(?)
1975 Mar.



Montague Farm: Nina Keller driving tractor, three others, sugaring
1975 Mar.

Montague Farm: Nina Keller, her mother, two children, Janice Frey (end), three others and two dogs in front of house at



Montague
1975 Mar.



Montague Farm: Riding the tractor while sugaring
1975 Mar.



Montague Farm: Sap buckets on tree, sugaring (badly overexposed)
1975 Mar.



Montague Farm: Skin curing and stretching (unidentified participants), Montague
1975 Mar.



Montague Farm: Sugar house

1975 Mar.



Montague Farm: Tractor and farmers, sugaring
1975 Mar.



Montague Farm: Barn at Montague
1976 Oct.

Montague Farm: Barn at Montague with van and tractor, view from house looking south



1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: Barn at Montague, roof under repair, duck in foreground
1976 Oct.



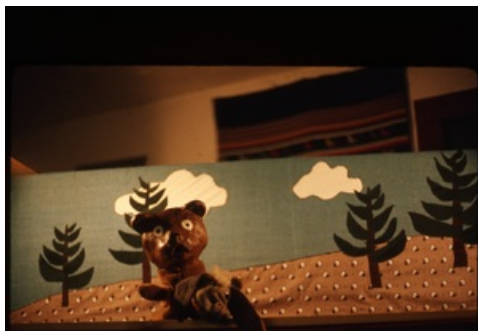
Montague Farm: Chickens
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: House at Montague
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: Man in wheelchair in Montague barn
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: Puppet
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: Roofing work on barn , Montague
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: Roofing work on barn, Montague
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: Roofing work on barn, Montague
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: Roofing work on barn, view from inside, Montague
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: Roofing work on barn, view from inside, Montague
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: Silo on barn, Montague
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: Three girls
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: Three little girls, Montague
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: View of field, Montague
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: View of hills, Montague
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: Young child on stone wall, Montague
1976 Oct.



Montague Farm: Dan, Nina, and Eben inside at Montague
1977 Apr.



Montague Farm: Kids playing in front of the greenhouse, Montague
1977 Apr.



Montague Farm: Montague barn and silo under snow
1977 Apr.

Montague Farm: Nina Keller, her mother, unidentified, child, and milk cow in front of house, Montague



1977 Apr.



Montague Farm: People gathered in the kitchen at Montague (underexposed)
1977 Apr.

Montague Farm: People in the kitchen, Montague (Seabrook No Nukes poster on wall)



1977 Apr.



Montague Farm: Sugaring: collecting sap.
1977 Apr.



Montague Farm: 'Peter fixing roof on garage'
1977 Oct.



Montague Farm: House and arbor in fall color

1977 Oct.



Montague Farm: Nina and mother leading a calf in pasture, Montague 1977 Oct.



Montague Farm: Nina, mother, et al. splitting wood, Montague 1977 Oct.



Montague Farm: Two kids climbing high in a tree 1977 Oct.



Montague Farm: Two unidentified farmers picking vegetables, Montague
1977 Oct.



Montague Farm: Dan and others around the Christmas tree
1977 Dec.



Montague Farm: 'Baking school'
1978 June



Montague Farm: Baking school

1978 June



Montague Farm: Dan Keller, baby, et al., in kitchen at Montague
1978 June



Montague Farm: Dan Keller, Nina Keller, Eben Light, and baby
1978 June



Montague Farm: Eben Light and baby
1978 June



Montague Farm: Harvesting (with kids)
1978 June



Montague Farm: Montague farmers
1978 June



Montague Farm: Nina Keller and baby (baby in No Nukes t-shirt)
1978 June



Montague Farm: Nina Keller and Eben Light

1978 June



Montague Farm: Nina Keller and family at picnic
1978 June



Montague Farm: Nina feeding baby
1978 June



Montague Farm: Nina Keller, baby et al under tree (underexposed image)
1978 June



Montague Farm: Ploughing with tractor (Nina Keller at wheel)
1978 June

Montague Farm: Steve Diamond with Volvo station wagon in front of Montague Farm



1978 June



Wendell Farm: House at Wendell
1978 Sept.



Wendell Farm: Keller family at barn
1978 Sept.



Wendell Farm: Keller family at barn
1978 Sept.



Wendell Farm: Milk cow and newborn calf
1978 Sept.



Wendell Farm: Milk cow and newborn calf
1978 Sept.



Wendell Farm: Baby with pans
1979 Mar.



Wendell Farm: Kellers and other farmers at ??
1979 Nov.



Wendell Farm: Logs
1979 Nov.



Wendell Farm: Unidentified at ?? (see 193)
1979 Nov.



Wendell Farm: Unidentified couple at ?? (see 193)
1979 Nov.



Wendell Farm: Sleeping on a mattress on the floor
1979 Nov.



Wendell Farm: Farm in snow
1979 Dec.



Wendell Farm: In the kitchen
1979 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Keller kids on stoop
1979 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Nina Keller and kids in kitchen
1979 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Underexposed
1979 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Dan and Nina Keller, kids
1980 Sept.



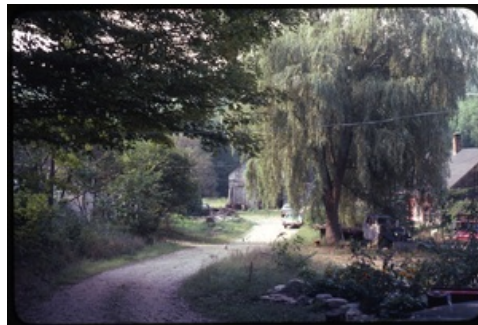
Wendell Farm: House at Wendell
1980 Sept.



Wendell Farm: Keller(?) boys, inside
1980 Sept.



Wendell Farm: Kids inside, Wendell?
1980 Sept.



Wendell Farm: View of house, Wendell?
1980 Sept.



Wendell Farm: House at Wendell
198 Oct.5



Wendell Farm: Nina and kids, Wendell
198 Oct.5



Wendell Farm: Dan Keller seated by ditch, pickup truck in background, Wendell
1982 May



Wendell Farm: Mother, Nina Keller, unidentified at Wendell
1982 May

Wendell Farm: Nina Keller and unidentified planting (perennials), mother looking on, Wendell



1982 May



Wendell Farm: Three children on front steps, Wendell
1982 May



Wendell Farm: Two kids on tractor, Wendell
1982 May



Wendell Farm: Nina Kler's mother and children, Wendell

1982 Dec.?



Wendell Farm: Dan Keller, Nina Keller, children, Wendell
1983 June



Wendell Farm: Dan Keller, Nina Keller, tractor at Wendell
1983 June



Wendell Farm: Nina Keller in woods, Wendell
1983 June



Wendell Farm: Walking through meadow, Wendell
1983 June



Wendell Farm: Children walking in from woods, Wendell
1986 Spring



Wendell Farm: Keller family at doorway, Wendell
1986 Spring



Wendell Farm: Keller family, Wendell

1986 Spring



Wendell Farm: Side, house at Wendell
1986 Spring



Wendell Farm: Wendell
1986?



Wendell Farm: Keller family, Wendell
1986 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Nina and black lab

1986 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Keller son and ?
1986 winter



Wendell Farm: Three children in living room
1986 winter



Wendell Farm: Keller children?, dog
1987 spring



Wendell Farm: Nina Keller and Roy Finestone (father)?, two dogs, Wendell
1987 spring



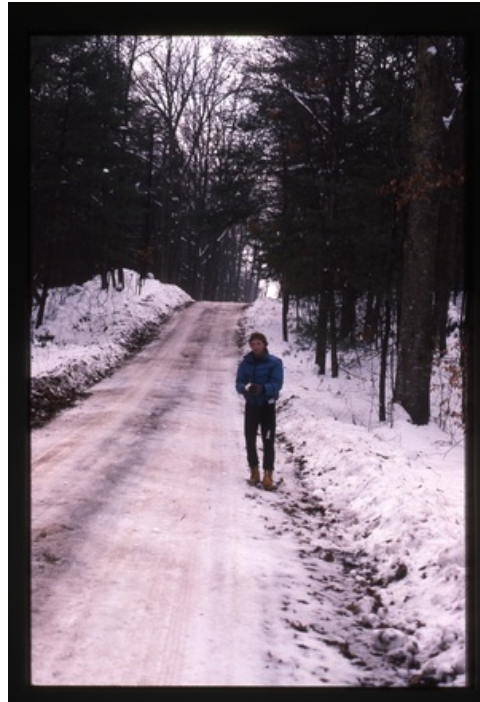
Wendell Farm: Nina Keller, mother?, Wendell
1987 spring



Wendell Farm: Dan Keller and parents (in-laws?)
1987 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Dan Keller(?) and children opening Christmas presents
1987 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Boy on snowy road
1987 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Dan Keller(?) with snowball and two others on snowy road, NH?
1987 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Keller daughter with snowball
1987 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Keller son with sled
1987 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Two kids by road in snow
1987 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Two kids in snow
1987 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Nina Keller on snowy road
1987 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Dan Keller, Family at Christmas
1987 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Dan Keller, family, at table
1987 Dec.



House in snow
1987 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Nina and Dan Keller at al., living room, N.H.
1987 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Nina Keller and kids, N.,H.
1987 Dec.



Wendell Farm: Nina Keller, father (in law?)
1987 Dec.



Swimming in pool (at hotel?)
1987 Dec.?



Wendell Farm: Dan and Nina Keller, kids, Roy Finestone(?), Wendell visit
1988 Sept.



Wendell Farm: Cabin on hill (cow and chickens in foreground), Wendell
1990 Oct.



Wendell Farm: Chicken and chicks, Wendell
1990 Oct.

Wendell Farm: Dan and Nina Keller, dogs, mother(?) resting on walk in woods, Wendell



1990 Oct.



Wendell Farm: Dan Keller and child, dog, dragging wood through woods, Wendell
1990 Oct.



Wendell Farm: Eben Light and grandmother(?), Brandeis campus
1990 Oct.



Wendell Farm: Eben Light in parking lot, Brandeis
1990 Oct.



Wendell Farm: Nina and Dan Keller and children on walk in woods, Wendell
1990 Oct.



Wendell Farm: Nina Keller and red dog, Wendell
1990 Oct.



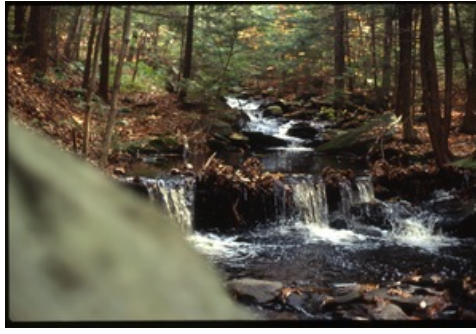
Wendell Farm: Nina Keller, Wendell
1990 Oct.



Wendell Farm: Nina Keller, Dan Keller and family on walk, Wendell
1990 Oct.



Wendell Farm: Stream in the woods, Wendell
1990 Oct.



Wendell Farm: Stream in woods, Wendell
1990 Oct.



Swaddled baby, Florida
1991 Oct.



Wendell Farm: Dan driving John Deere tractor, baling hay, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Dan driving tractor, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Dan on John Deere tractor, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Dan on tractor, baling hay, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Dan on tractor, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Haying, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Haying, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Haying, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Haying, Wendell(?)and once again and once again
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Nina Keller and unidentified woman, haying, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Nina Keller on hay truck, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Truck loaded with hay bales, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Two children on hay truck, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Calf and German shepherd, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Nina Keller and Holstein calf, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Nina and Holstein calf, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Nina Keller with Holstein calf, Wendell(?)
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Rooster and hen
ca.1980



Wendell Farm: Rooster, Wendell(?)
ca.1980

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Acquired from Dan and Nina Keller, 1999.

Digitized content

All images in the collection have been scanned and are available online through our digital repository, Credo.

Processing Information

Processed by Dex Haven, August 2010.

Related Material

A part of the Famous Long Ago Archive, the Finestone Collection is one of several in the Department of Special Collections and University Archives that document the alternative communities and counterculture of New England.

Language:

English

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Cite as: Roy Finestone Photograph Collection (PH 005). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

Search terms

Subjects

Communal living--Massachusetts.

Communal living--Vermont.
Johnson Pasture Community.
Keller, Daniel.
Keller, Nina.
Light, Charles.
Montague Farm Community.
Wendell Farm Community.

Contributors

Finestone, Roy. **[main entry]**
Finestone, Roy.

Genres and formats

Photographs.

Link to similar SCUA collections

Counterculture

Digital

Famous Long Ago

Intentional communities

Massachusetts (West)

Photographs

Vermont



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