

Groton Electric Turns 100 Years Old!



Groton Residents—You are cordially invited to attend
our 100-Year anniversary celebration!

September 26, 2009

(Rain Date October 3, 2009—church parking lot across from GrotonFest)

23 Station Avenue—parking & garage facilities
10 a.m.—3 p.m.

In honor of our 100-year anniversary,
we have joined together with the annual Harvest Fair hosted by the Union
Congregational Church and the Station One Fire Department Open House to celebrate!
There will be lots of exciting events for all ages!



Food, fun and events will be offered on Main Street! Visit the Harvest Fair for delicious lunch items!

Groton Electric will offer snacks and drinks!

Join Groton Electric for bucket truck rides, the dunk tank—see which employee will be dunked!
Fun events for the kids! Lots of give aways! Receive 100 kWh off your next bill and more!



Receive 100 kWh off your October 31, 2009 bill

As a THANK YOU to our valued customer!

Customer Name: _____ Acct#: _____

Service Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Receive the value of **100 kWh off your October 31, 2009 bill with this coupon. To be eligible,
you MUST bring this coupon to our Anniversary Celebration on September 26, 2009.

**Approximate value \$12.00



THEN: November 20, 1909

Twilight was upon the town of Groton, that Saturday afternoon of November 20, 1909. Friday's Boston newspapers' weather forecasts called for "Partly cloudy and warmer, Saturday. Rain in the south; rain or snow in the north portion at night or Sunday morning, with a moderate to brisk southwest wind."

Henry K. Richards, who was known as the "Father of the Groton Electric Plant", was standing in his heavy overcoat at the corner of Court and Main Street, waiting. Myron Swallow and Frank Waters, fellow commissioners, were by his side,

also waiting. Richards reached in his vest pocket, took out his watch and glanced at it: 4:25 p.m. Twilight was well upon Groton, but in five minutes the nighttime appearance of the town of Groton would be forever changed.

4:30 p.m.: all at once, 184 electric lights of 32 candle-power each (about 100 watts), cast a bright, golden glow over the streets of Groton. Five-hundred and seventy poles had been erected to support almost 200,000 feet of copper wire, all deployed in just 121 days after July 22, 1909, when authority was given to construct the Groton Electric Plant at a cost of just under \$18,000.



This picture of Howard Gilson Sr. was taken on July 4, 1908.

Only a year earlier, at a Town Meeting on November 3, Henry K. Richards, Frank F. Waters and Myron P. Swallow were charged to look into a way to generate electricity by water power or other, for the sole purpose of lighting Groton's streets. Acetylene, or gas light, had been considered and ruled out because of cost. Now, Groton, with a population just over 2,100, was ready, and so was the technology.

What today would be called a cost benefit analysis, was conducted by the committee who found that the best arrangement for Groton would be to have the people of Groton own the company, and buy power from other generating sources. Ayer Electric, which became part of Mass. Electric, and then New England Power Company, was chosen as the supplier for Groton's requirements. Electric power was sold to Groton for \$.06 a kilowatt-hour. Groton, in turn, charged consumers \$.16 a kilowatt-hour—all three of them! A year later, however, there were 42 consumers, reaching over 100 by 1914, 200 by 1918, and 300 by 1920 when the rates were down to \$.13 per kWh. Things were looking up. There were now more than 1,000 power poles in Groton, and more than 25 miles of wire.

NOW: July 2009

Today's Groton Electric is governed by a three-member Board of Commissioners whose current members are Chris Christie, Rodney Hersh and Kevin Lindemer, all residents of Groton. We have 11 employees including a Manager, three office personnel and seven line workers.

With revenues for 2008 of \$9,005,725, our utility now serves more than 4,400 customers. Our current residential rates are \$.12 to \$.13 per kilowatt-hour—**3¢ less than what customers paid in 1909!**

In the most recent 12-month-average report for the state's 42 utilities, Groton Electric was ranked the third lowest rate for a 500 kWh bill and is 79.2% lower than neighboring utilities. The commissioners and the management team are thrilled to be able to offer such low rates to our customers.

Today's distribution system has expanded to more than 153 miles of overhead and underground service connections. Our substation on Lowell Road has two 69-kV lines fed from the Ayer substation and two 13,800 kV step-down transformers with a total capacity of 50 MW. Local demand for electricity reached a record peak of 18.2 MW in August 2006.

Challenges and opportunities

New technologies offer exciting challenges and opportunities. Our Automated Meter Reading (AMR) system allows customers to track their usage online and make adjustments, if needed, during periods of peak demand. The AMR system also allows us to offer Time-of-Use rates that encourage customers to shift some electric use from high-cost energy times during the day to low-cost energy times at night. Time-of-use shifting saves money for the customer and reduces Groton's peak demand, which may lower peak demand costs for Groton Electric.

Outages are always challenging, as demonstrated by the ice storm of 2008. Our team of dedicated employees rallied together and worked around the clock to ensure power was restored to Groton residents in record time. That is public power at its best.

A promise to the future

Our mission statement has remained intact for many decades—to provide power at the highest degree of reliability at the lowest cost that fiscal prudence dictates. This means that our customers can rely on their community-owned Light Department to provide unsurpassed service at the best possible price.

From three customers and receipts of \$50 in 1909, to 4,400 customers and receipts of slightly over \$9 million in 2009, Groton Electric Light Department remains committed to providing dedicated service, essentially uninterrupted.

Thank you groton for 100 great years. We are proud to serve our ratepayers!