

# DANCE FOR A FARM

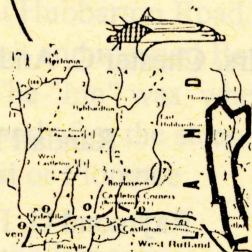
Conceived and choreographed by:  
Susan Sgorbati

Dancers: Hope Clark  
Chivas Sandage  
Susan Sgorbati

Music: The Will Dicker Boys  
Randall Neale, banjo

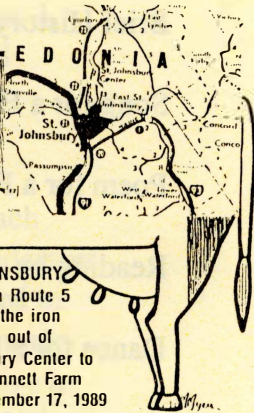
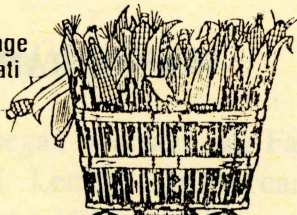
Design: Daniel Michaelson

Model Construction:  
David Cote



**CASTLETON**  
North on East Hubbardton Road  
to  
Ransomvale Farm  
(The Andersons)

Saturday, September 16, 1989  
3:00 P.M.



**ST. JOHNSBURY**  
North on Route 5  
across the iron  
bridge out of  
St. Johnsbury Center to  
Melvin Bennett Farm  
Sunday, September 17, 1989  
3:00 P.M.

A celebration for the family farm.  
Donations will go to family farms in need.  
Sponsored by Castleton State College and Catamount Arts.

# DANCE FOR A FARM

Choreographed, Conceived and Directed  
by Susan Sgorbati

Music by  
The Will Dicker Boys and Randall Neale

Dancers  
Hope Clark, Chivas Sandage, Susan Sgorbati

Design  
Daniel Michaelson

Design construction  
David Cote

## **PROGRAM**

Introduction Susan Sgorbati

Brief History Mrs. Chester C. Anderson

Song for a Farm Randall Neale

Poem for a Farm Raymond G. Fisher

Reading by Keith Jennison

Dance for a Farm Susan Sgorbati, Hope Clark,  
Chivas Sandage

*Donations for this performance will be given  
to farmers in need.*

Many thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Chester C. Anderson, Phil  
and Melvin Bennett, Kiah Caldwell at Catamount Arts and  
Julianna Lovell at Castleton State College

## **SITE DANCES**

This is one in a series of dances made for specific natural or man-made environments. This is a group project celebrating the farm and raising issues about the stresses placed on the family farm. In 1988, there was the Factory Tour which visited six different factories in Vermont and New York.

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### **RANSOMVALE FARM**

"L. Ransom Inn, 1808" began "Ransomvale Farm" on the East Hubbarton Road. Lemuel Ransom came to Castleton and married Betsy Hikcok on December 3, 1799. The "Inn" was where horses were changed before and after the steep climb over the notch to Pittsford or Florence.

One of the Ransom sons continued the farm in each generation until in 1915 when Grace Ransom Anderson and her husband, Fritz, bought the farm and settled in the old house. Her sons, Chester and Ellis, continued farming and still live here. Chester and his wife live in the big house, Ellis and his wife in a smaller house they built across the road.



## **Fate of the Farms and the Farmer in Vermont**

Way back here in Rupert Where the sugar maples grow,  
The pines so green in winter the birches white as snow,  
Where the hills rise up to mountains and dress in summer green  
A natural woodland habitat as one has ever seen.  
Vermont long noted for its farming, family farms, Progressive farms,  
Built their homes, raised their families, cleared their fields, built their barns.

Raising cattle sheep and horses- fields of hay and oats and corn.  
The whole family way of farming, rising early every morn.  
Cutting fire wood in the winter, making maple syrup in the spring.  
For Vermont, the farming business was the most important thing.

But now there is sadness in the valleys, one may see at every hand  
as the farms have become idle like a blight upon the land.  
Family farms along the valley there for generations past  
now are fading into memory, brush and trees are growing fast  
Or'e the pastures fields and meadows here the forest will return  
Creeping closer to the highway, no one seems to show concern.

Farming profits kept on shrinking, operating cost increasing  
Squeezed between two greedy systems, pay him less-charge him more  
Pays his taxes, always higher, his fruits are taken to the core.  
Finally faced with some decision to give up farming with regret  
Sells his cattle and machinery for what money he can get.

Now! there's lots of fellows ready who would like to be of help  
to buy your farm or sell it to a man who would develop;  
they will offer you big money and express a lot of charm  
they are the only people nowadays making money on the farm.

Realtors and developers both working hand in hand  
Bringing in the wealthy city folks to buy up Vermont land.  
They have no interest in Vermont expect for gaining personal wealth.  
So much for Vermont development-With agriculture in poor health.

Raymond Fisher  
Rupert, Vermont  
February 1989