



Historic Bakersfield News and Notes

BAKERSFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A 501(C)(3) NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

2021 COMMUNITY EVENTS

Ongoing: BHS normally meets the third Wednesday of each month at 7 PM. Possibly this will happen after enough people have been vaccinated. Please call to confirm when, or if, this might be happening for the location and time--call 827-3042. Our meetings are open to anyone and everyone who is interested in the history and future of Bakersfield.

Tuesday, March 2: Town Meeting Day. We hope you all voted. We missed both the in-person meeting and the wonderful lunch-and-chat that usually accompanies this event but we're deeply grateful for your support.



Last year was very difficult for everyone. One source of great sadness was that so many people were lost to us and we were unable to celebrate their lives and how much they meant to us because we were not able to gather together. We lost two wonderful and deeply missed members of our community and of BHS this year, Nancy Hunt and Marilynn Jessiman. Both were very long time members who were crucial to making BHS a resource for the community.

From Linda McCall—

When Nancy moved to Bakersfield she got very involved in learning the local history and interested in preserving that heritage for the community. She was a Charter Member of the Bakersfield Historical Society. She was "hands-on" in her approach to gain 501(c)3 non-profit status for the organization. She actively sought funding through grants and establishing a Restoration Campaign. Her focus was to repair the once South Academy and St. George's Catholic Church building to be used as a museum for local artifacts, photos, and information to be shared with our school and community.



While serving as a Town representative to the Northwest Regional Planning Commission she helped with incorporating a designated Historic District into Bakersfield's Town Plan. The action she took then helps make buildings in that district eligible for grants relating to historic preservation.

Nancy loved Bakersfield's history and this community. She loved her home on Whitney Road with its magnificent view of Mount Mansfield. If you stopped by for a visit, she might ask you to go for walk with her through the pasture, above her home, to a meadow where there was a picnic table. The pristine view of the valley below with the Mount Mansfield backdrop would forever be in your mind

Nancy lived her life on her terms: high energy and in control to the end!

[Memories cont. p. 5]

Thank You

The Bakersfield Historical Society would like to thank the voters of Bakersfield in their support of our request for \$10,000 on the Australian Ballot. These funds will help towards our \$50,000 goal for performing the structural repairs needed at the Historical Society building. You give us hope that this work can be achieved.



~ Help Needed ~

Last Spring, we became aware that there is evidence that the addition to the Historical Society Building (that houses the storage room, stage, emergency exit and the ADA compliant bathroom) is settling to the back and drawing away from the main building. These changes to the addition were noticed after the frost came out of ground in the Spring of 2020. Members of our organization, after viewing the problem, voted to get the building repaired as soon as possible to prevent further damage.

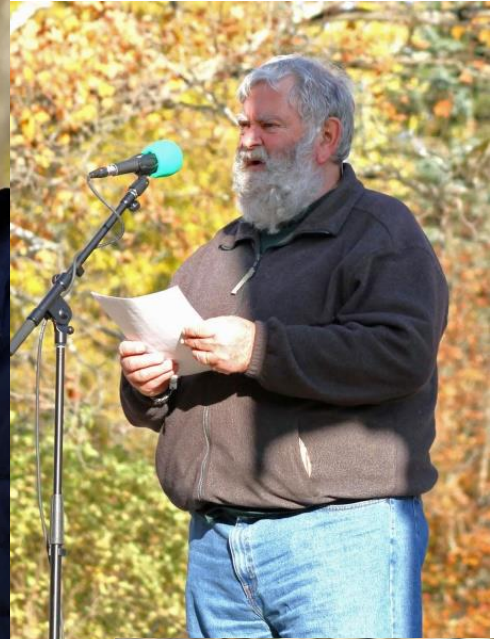
Contractors, with good reputations and who have worked on the building in the past, have been contacted to evaluate the damage and provide us with their estimates for repair. The total of those estimates is \$49,300. We currently have \$12,000 in a Money Market Account and \$10,000 pending in November from Bakersfield tax revenue, as voted on Town Meeting Day. Our goal is to get the work done this year. We have approached Preservation Trust of VT for guidance in having a Building Assessment completed as will be needed for our grant application process.

We appreciate the generous donations from folks who have stepped-up to help support this project. Bakersfield Historical Society, Corp. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Those of you who may be interested in helping with this project may send donations to:

Bakersfield Historical Society, Corp.
P.O. Box 70
Bakersfield, VT 05441

The dedication of the new Historical Marker honoring Peter Bent Brigham and Brigham Academy took place on Saturday, October 17, 2020 on Main St. on the lawn in front of Brigham Academy.

Speakers at the event were (clockwise from top) Gary Foote, President of Bakersfield Historical Society, Jerry Brigham, descendant of the Brigham family and teacher in the building for over 32 years.



Stephen Morse, BHS member who applied for the marker, grandson of Bakersfield resident Clyde Morse, and Laura Trieshmann, VT Historic Preservation officer.



Photos courtesy of Leif Tillotson





Our story about Lost Nation Rd. in the last issue turned up this surprise from Stephen Morse.

Alice Foote asked me if I knew anything about the section of Bakersfield south of the village known as “Lost Nation.” I said that I did not but that I did have a valuable old oil painting of Mount Mansfield painted from somewhere in that area. Gary Foote asked me to send him a photo of the painting which I did and 3 days later I got an excited telephone call from him that he knew exactly where it had been painted, being on Whitney Road (north of the Doane farm) at the

home of Nancy Hunt, also an active Bakersfield Historical Society member. Finally last Fall the three of us made a little pilgrimage up the hill behind Nancy Hunt’s home and found the spot where it had been painted from with the farm house down in the right corner.

The artist, C. Caseau, stayed with my great-grandparents, Charles & Sarah “Nettie” Morse and their 5 children (Mary, Bernice, Frank, Karl, and Jessie) in East Fletcher during the summer of 1890 when he painted it and he gave the painting to them as a Christmas gift. [Bernice and Karl later attended Brigham Academy]

The painting remained in the Morse family passing first to Bernice, then to her brother, Clyle Harry Morse, my grandfather [born after the family moved to Bakersfield]. It went on to his daughter, Rachel Abbie Morse, twin sister to my father, Robert Clyle Morse. When she died I was given the painting which proudly hangs in the music room at my home in Montpelier.

[The artist corresponded with the family for 14 years and mentions that he grew up in the area and has a brother in Sheldon but he has been hard to trace despite Steve’s best efforts]

Wednesday, Dec. 14, 1921—3

BATTLE OF BAKERSFIELD

Peaceful Country Side Feels Surge of Booze War and Rum Runners Lie Wounded in St. Albans Jail

Since the underground route for booze through Morrystown, Hyde Park and Wolcott became very unsafe, the traffic has been diverted—not stopped—and has been going through Bakersfield, Cambridge, Smugglers’ Notch to the thirsty further south.

Saturday night or Sunday morning during the early hours three separate cars loaded with booze were overhauled, not without shots being fired and men wounded, before the rum runners were captured.

We would like to thank Diana Paquette for the donation of her hand-painted Barn Quilt that was used in a fundraiser raffle. Her generosity was instrumental in raising \$1,295 during a difficult COVID year!



Above right: This tantalizing little scrap of ancient news was received from Fairfield Historical Society President, Torrey Crossman—it must have been a hot time in the old town that night.

[Memories cont. from p. 1]

From Alice Foote—

Nancy worked endlessly on her extensive floral garden below her house front. This spot was on a fairly steep slope and included ledge outcrops. The first of several years she focused on flowering shrubs to get them established. In time, bulbs, rooted plants, and climbing vines were added. There were a couple of seasons following the house fire when she was unable to continue, but after the new house was completed, she got out planting tools again. Last summer she was very proud to have completed this beautiful project.

She took great pleasure in having the physical ability to walk the extensive trails surrounding her home and to enjoy the widespread view beyond as the seasons changed.



Nancy and I worked together over the years on various projects of the Society, many dealing with improving the building. Some were the pull-up-the-sleeve kind, others of organizing materials, and many as hostesses to visitors wishing to enjoy our efforts

From Kim Ovitt—

I remember the summer after my mom passed, Nancy invited me up to her place for a picnic.

She took me by the hand and we toured her beautiful gardens, worked together to rebuild a stone embankment that edged her new drive, and we transplanted a few cherished shrubs and perennials. We had a simple lunch of cheese, fresh bread and fruit while sitting on her terrace enjoying the incredible view. Once we had completed our lunch, Nancy toured me through her barn where she shared stories of times with her husband and family. They took such care and joy in tracking every move of their herd and their other assorted critters. It was a beautiful

moment in time of shared interests, incredible kindness, and laughter.

Nancy had suffered many losses by the time that I met her. She understood the power that nature, beauty, and friendship had on our ability to grieve and heal. I can say with all my heart, this one little shared space of time, when she gave freely of her time and her world, was incredibly sweet and memorable

From Alice Foote—

Marilynn was born in the Buffalo N.Y. area. Her family includes husband Eric, her children, Bryan and Beth, and three grandchildren. She became a school librarian and Eric was a technical agent, which brought the family to Vermont in 2002. After Eric and Marilynn purchased a home in Bakersfield they joined BHS as a means of making social connections.



Marilynn was very skilled with computers from their first introduction in schools and used her knowledge to assist our team with cataloguing and storing the historical collection. Her skill with photography and design were evident in her work on our displays at the Vermont History Expo in Tunbridge, in our Quilt Shows, and in their Bakersfield Sugarhouse Project, to mention a few.

Their three grandchildren all deal with spectrum disorder so Marilynn and Eric worked together to raise funds for research and cure of autism. Eric kayaked from Buffalo to Burlington via the Erie Canal and Lake Champlain to raise awareness. Marilynn and Beth closely accompanied in a travel camper as support crew.

Marilynn was much involved with the community to the extent that her health allowed and always had a smile and a can-I-help? attitude. We will greatly miss her..

BAKERSFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Officers 2020	
President:	Gary Foote
Vice President:	Carrie Nelson
Secretary:	Sue Tillotson
Treasurer:	Linda McCall
Assistant Treasurer:	Tami Brennan

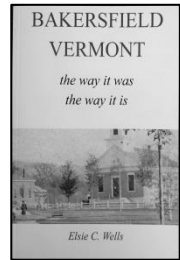
Board of Directors 2020	
Deanna Allen	Cheryll Irwin
Tami Brennan	Ann Mittelstadt
Alice Foote	Betsy Reed
Newsletter Editor:	Mary Schwartz

JOIN THE BAKERSFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Bakersfield Historical Society
P.O. Box 70 Bakersfield VT 05441
Find us on Facebook:
Bakersfield Historical Society, Corp.
(802) 827-3042

Support Your Historical Society
We depend on memberships, town grants, gifts and fundraisers to preserve our town's history, to heat and maintain our building, for educational programs, community use and much more.

- PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE by Bakersfield Historical Society**
- Elsie Wells *Bakersfield: the way it was, the way it is* \$25 (shipping is included) The book is also available for purchase at H.F. Brigham Library.
 - Map of Bakersfield Village – reprint of Beers Atlas color \$10
 - Historic Bakersfield Village (UVM pamphlet color) \$10



Cut here and send to the Bakersfield Historical Society, PO Box 70, Bakersfield, VT 05441

2021 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

BENEFACTOR \$100_____ PATRON \$50_____ FAMILY \$20_____ INDIVIDUAL \$10_____

I PREFER TO SUPPORT BHS WITH A GIFT OF _____

Our Restoration Gift Campaign is to help in the restoration and use of Bakersfield's landmark building in order to preserve the past for the benefit of present and future generations

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone _____ Email: _____

The Bakersfield Historical Society is a non-profit 501(C)(3) corporation. Gifts and memberships above the family level are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. You can increase the level of your support if your employer has a matching grant program.