



Historic Bakersfield News and Notes

BAKERSFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
A 501(C)(3) NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

2024 COMMUNITY EVENTS

Ongoing: BHS normally meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7 pm in our building. Please call to confirm date, location and time--call 802-827-3042. Our meetings are open to anyone and everyone who is interested in the history and future of Bakersfield.

Tuesday, March 5: Town Meeting Day. Voting takes place on all articles in the Bakersfield Annual Report regarding town spending and town officers as well as budget and directors for the Franklin Northeast Supervisory Union schools.

Sunday, March 24: Sugar on Snow Party

Wednesday, April 10: BHS Annual Meeting

Saturday, May 4: Greenup Day

Monday, May 27: Memorial Day

Saturday, June 22: Brigham Academy Alumni Meeting and Banquet



Our town's second historical marker is unveiled and dedicated on Saturday, September 2, 2023. This marker commemorates our building's original use as Bakersfield Academical Institution (South Academy), later as St. George Catholic Church, and now Bakersfield Historical Society, Corp.

*** SEE PAGE 6 TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2024 ***

<https://historicbakersfieldvt.org/>



Left: Gary Foote, BHS President, invites Ivan Stone and Rodney Allen to do the honors unveiling the marker.

Right: State Historic Preservation Officer, Laura Trieschmann marks the occasion.

Below: text of the sign

SOUTH ACADEMY

Bakersfield's role as a secondary educational center began in 1839 with the founding of the local Association for the Promotion of Education. Construction of the Greek Revival-style academy building on land leased from Capt. Elijah Barnes was funded by subscription. The school opened for its first term in September 1840. Owned by the Association and Methodist Chapel Society, Bakersfield Academy was chartered in 1845 as Bakersfield Academical Institute, known as South Academy. Enrollment peaked by 1850 with 13 instructors and 361 pupils under Principal Jacob Spaulding and his wife Mary Taylor Spaulding, preceptress. College preparatory curriculum focused on writing, geography, philosophy, chemistry, math, and languages

ST. GEORGE CHURCH AND BAKERSFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In 1867 the congregation of St. George Catholic Church began buying sections of South Academy, owning it entirely by 1885. Renovations ca. 1906 for the new use included removal of the second floor and windows to create a sanctuary, division of the entry hall with rooms on each side, and application of Gothic Revival-style detailing. From 1924 to 1928 the church was closed; upon re-opening the Mass was celebrated every Sunday until the church finally closed and was deconsecrated in 1996. The Diocese of Burlington donated the building to Bakersfield Historical Society in 1997. Gracing the center of the village, the former South Academy serves as a museum and community center.
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation – 2022

**The last event of the season—
Annual Holiday Craft Fair and
Crock Pot Cafe**



Photos by Amber Foote

Annual Report ~ 2023

The year 2023 has been the year for the Bakersfield Historical Society, Corp. to get back on its feet, in the post-COVID 19 era. The following is a review in what was accomplished and what is planned for the future.

- In March 2023 the Historical Society hosted our last Town Meeting Day Potluck Dinner. Voters decided that all matters relating to normal Town Meeting Articles should be decided by Australian Ballot, as they were during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Also, in March 2023 the Historical Society held their Annual Sugar on Snow Party. The local “Rusty Bucket Band” provided the music for the enjoyment of attendees. Rodney Allen provided the syrup and with his skills of having it at the right temperature and consistency, it was ready as people came through the door! The event was well attended.
- In April of 2023 we received approval of our request for ARPA Funds to help payoff the balance on the temporary loan from the Town of Bakersfield that was needed to supplement the funds we had acquired through a grant and donations for the emergency repairs to our building. COVID-19 restrictions had prevented our ability to obtain the sufficient grant funding for the project.
- On June 24th - the Historical Society members hosted the Annual Brigham Academy Alumni Banquet. Our Fundraising Committee, with Lisa Stone and Deanna Allen at the helm, worked to provide a varied buffet of offerings from some of Bakersfield’s best cooks; for the enjoyment of attendees.
- Bakersfield Elementary School Summer Camp students visited with our Collections Guru, Alice Foote, at the Historical Society Building to learn about Bakersfield’s early history as part of their “Explorers Week” activities.
- Two trees were removed: 1) the large Maple Tree that was mostly dead and located near the southwest corner of our building needed to be professionally cut to ensure it didn’t fall and hit our building and 2) members: Ivan Stone and Rodney Allen cleaned up the maple tree as well as the removal of the overgrown Cedar “shrub” at the northeast corner of the building.
- On July 4th - in the new post-COVID fashion, we held our “abbreviated” annual fundraising event of Ice Cream and Homemade Pie Sales, prior to the evening fireworks.
- September 4th - although 2022 marked our 25th Anniversary, we delayed celebrating until this year, due to COVID limitations.
- September 4th - the much anticipated Roadside Marker for the Historical Society building was now available and made ready for dedication. This Roadside Marker was made possible by the hard work and research done by Sue Tillotson and her coordination of the project with Laura Trieschmann, Vermont Historic Preservation Officer. This marker is a gift to the Town of Bakersfield from the Vermont Department of Historic Preservation.
- November 11th - the Historical Society hosted a Craft Sale along with our ever popular “Crockpot Cafe”
- Our building continues to be used, as needed and as weather permits, for local community and private events in coordination with our mission and the guidelines of our insurance restrictions.
- Our quarterly newsletter gets published under the care and persistence of Mary Schwartz.

2023 - Thank You Notes

The Bakersfield Historical Society, Corp. is able to satisfy the goals of its mission and maintain the Historical Society Building as a viable building from Bakersfield’s historic past because of the support we receive from current and past residents. This translates into donations of money, “in-kind” contributions of labor, and donations of products used at fundraising events.

- Special *Thank you* to Larry Westcom for “in-kind” service. His winterizing of our building’s plumbing in early winter enables us to save on heating fuel costs and flushing the waterlines in the spring without fear of broken pipes allows us to reopen in a timely manner for spring events.
- *Special Thank you* to Rosaire Paquette who on his own initiative donated his time and equipment to keep the grounds around our building mown and trimmed. Rosaire’s pride in our community is very much appreciated.

What’s in store for 2024 ?

The year 2024 presents continued fundraising challenges coupled with needed building maintenance and improvements in a post-COVID economy. Both are focused on enabling us to expand our mission responsibilities in our community.



Holiday Cheer at the Annual Craft Fair and Crock Pot Cafe

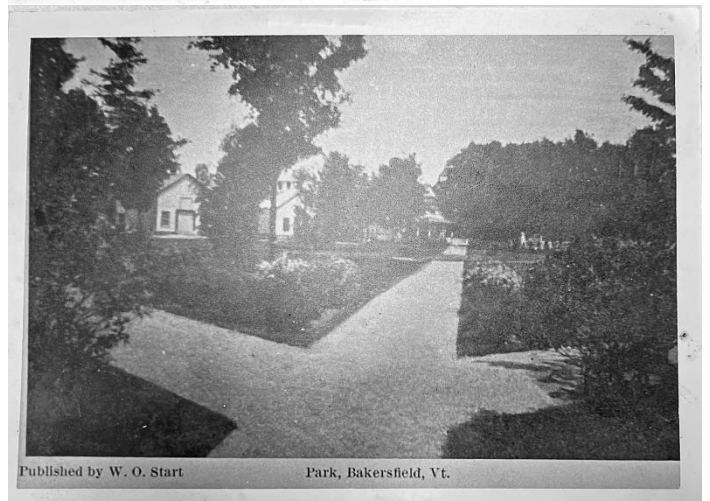


Photos by Amber Foote

There are three buildings visible looking northeast across the common, a carriage barn, a small garage, and the Hearse House.

This undated photo postcard shows the carriage barn and the Hearse House with a different building between the two. The middle building looks somewhat like a smaller version of the carriage barn to its left with its cupola.

If anyone remembers or knows what that middle building was and when or why it was replaced by the current building we would love to know the story.



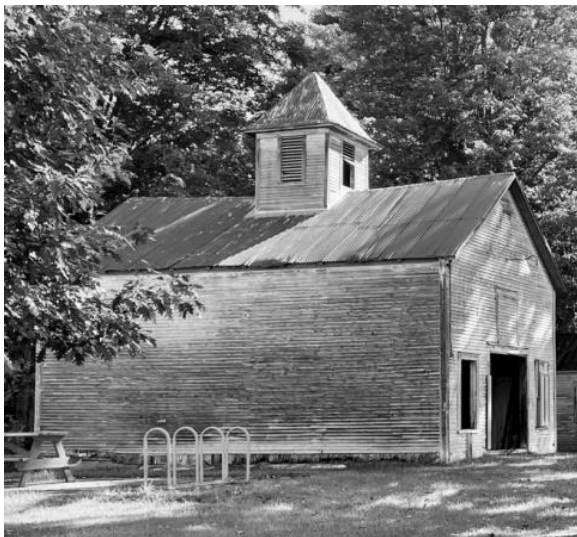
Published by W. O. Start

Park, Bakersfield, Vt.

Bakersfield has many beautiful old houses and also some wonderful old barns and outbuildings. Among these is the carriage barn in the Town Park and the Hearse House. The Bakersfield Conservation Commission is working to revitalize the carriage barn by seeking grants toward its restoration. It is also looking for input and ideas as to how a restored barn could benefit our town—as an educational history display, seasonal shelter for people using the park, meeting place, outdoor market space, etc.

The barn has some interesting physical features that indicate its age:

- It has a 5-sided ridgepole.
- There are axe-hewn beams with traces of bark which reveal both the type of wood and the kinds of tools used in its preparation.
- Sawn boards have marks showing that the saw used to cut them was a vertical saw. (Note: a vertical saw is a flat saw in a rectangular frame. It was used to trim logs or to cut trimmed logs into boards. It could be a hand tool held by a man on each end, one above the horizontal log and one below it or the up and down motion could be powered by water as in a mill.)
- The barn has large windows but only on two sides.
- It was assembled with tongue in groove joinery and wooden pegs.
- Its unique ventilation system, boxed in with boards, directs stale or foul interior air upward into the haymow and out through the shuttered cupola.



Some history:

The earliest maps of Bakersfield show few buildings in today's village center, where the carriage barn is located. Most town development was one mile north on what is now VT Route 108. By 1871 development had shifted south and there were numerous homes in today's village.

Asa Deane owned and had a house on the lot adjacent to the present Town Park. His house was moved south of the present intersection of Rte. 36 and 108.

William Naramore owned the property from 1880 to 1904. Naramore is listed as a storekeeper and postmaster and

served on the Brigham Academy building committee in 1894. He built a fine house and a carriage barn, complete with cupola, in 1890. His carriage barn is the one BCC wants to preserve for our town's use.

In 1904, Dr. Landon Abernethy set up a medical practice on the property. He kept a team of Morgan horses likely pasturing them in the area that is now wooded. He made his house calls with the horses until he replaced them with a car.

Theodore Backmann became owner of the property in 1961. He operated a gun shop out of the house until flames destroyed it in 1992. It remained abandoned or considered for development for dwellings for a few years.

In Nov. 2010, the newly formed Conservation Committee developed the interest of townspeople to purchase the property to add to the town park adjacent to it. This did lead to the town's purchase and addition of the parcel at that time.

BAKERSFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Officers 2023

President: Gary Foote
Vice President: Jerry Brigham
Secretary: Amber Foote
Treasurer: Linda McCall

Board of Directors 2023

Deanna Allen Ann Mittelstadt
Tami Brennan Joyce LaMonda
Alice Foote Lisa Stone
Newsletter Editor: Mary Schwartz
Website Editor: Amber Foote

JOIN THE BAKERSFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

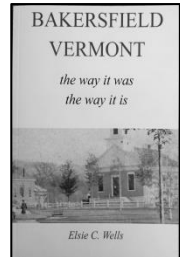
Bakersfield Historical Society
P.O. Box 70 Bakersfield VT 05441
Website: <https://historicbakersfieldvt.org/>
Find us on Facebook:
Bakersfield Historical Society, Corp.
(802) 827-3042

Support Your Historical Society

We depend on memberships, town taxpayers, 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



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

2024 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. Donations marked "for restoration" will go toward the building restoration/repairs fund and not into the general fund.

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.

<https://historicbakersfieldvt.org/>