



Historic Bakersfield News and Notes

B A K E R S F I E L D H I S T O R I C A L S O C I E T Y

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

2025 COMMUNITY EVENTS

Ongoing: Bakersfield Historical Society is currently meeting the third Wednesday of each month at 10:30 am 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 4: Town Meeting Day. 10 am. Voting on the road work budget and general expenses of the town as well as some town officers will be by Australian ballot. All articles for the remaining town offices and for other expenses and special requests will be voted from the floor at the meeting.

Sunday, March 23: Sugar on Snow Party: 1 pm to 3 pm— \$ by donation. Our building will open for the season with this end- of-winter favorite. Enjoy traditional fare—local maple syrup on local snow, donuts, coffee, cider, pickles and other treats—Shake winter off your feet with music by Rusty Bucket.

Wednesday, April 16: BHS Annual Meeting 7 pm in our building: The agenda includes election of officers, discussion of programs, work on the building and plans for 2025. Everyone is invited and we welcome your ideas.

Saturday, May 3: Greenup Day 9 am in the Town Park. This is our annual gathering for spring cleanup of the public spaces of our town including the Town Park and the Common.

Monday, May 26: Memorial Day, 10 am to 1 pm. Open House. Recent acquisitions to our collection will be on display. Burial information is available for Bakersfield's three cemeteries: Maple Grove, the Catholic Cemetery, and Cook Cemetery.

Saturday, June 21: Brigham Academy Alumni Meeting and Banquet
Saturday, July 5: Independence Day Celebration



Soule Maple Candy tin

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2025

(SEE PAGE 6)



Message from the Bakersfield Cemetery Commission

Bakersfield's cemeteries hold the history of our community from the days of our forefathers to present day. All who are buried here have stories of their lives, families and the contributions they made to our community. They were military servicemen who served our country in peace and wartime, some lost their lives in foreign wars. They were the men and women who built and worked in the homes, farms, schools, businesses, and churches that make up our landscape and community infrastructure. We have a responsibility to care not only for the places they built for our community, but also for their final resting places.

The Bakersfield Cemetery Commission is committed to take proper care of the Town cemeteries: Maple Grove and Cook Cemeteries. We have requested the assistance of Vermont Old Cemetery Association (VOCA) this summer to provide training and guidance in the industry approved methods of restoration and cleaning of headstones. We are reaching out to community members who would be interested in volunteering some of their time to support and participate in these projects. Work sessions will normally be on Saturdays with work starting at 8:00 AM, weather permitting.

If you are interested in helping, or have questions regarding this project, please contact Linda McCall at (802) 827-4475, Ron Marcotte, Heather Tanner, Janet Machia or Kerry Flieger.

Thank you,
Linda McCall
Bakersfield Cemetery Commission



Bakersfield, Vermont Town House 1909

By Joyce Morin (re-printed, no date)

Dec. 23, 1909 Thursday

"Athol and I cleaned the Town House complete this forenoon. I went over at 6 & built a fire & we swept and mopped it in good shape. This will finish my work on the New Town House—It is a Dandy and everybody seems satisfied I have been pretty much the only one to look after it since May last. Have had all the accts, to keep & all materials to look after. I get in work & [unreadable]. I finished about \$65.00 & I have also built for the selectmen a shed 18 x 30, back of it, & 2 closets. One in each end costing \$150. I got in that \$20.00."

This is an entry, in pencil, found in the Diary of Frank William Davis, Town Clerk and Postmaster of Bakersfield, Vermont in the year of 1909 when the building that we call our Town Hall today, was built. In 2009 this building will have stood a century.

On Jan. 15th 1909 a Town Meeting was held and a Committee reported to the town that Ella Shattuck would give a strip of land 60 x 90 in the south east corner of her lot next to Mrs. Colburn's house for a new Town House. They recommended the Town House be 40 x 60 and have one story above the basement. The Town that day voted to build the house and have an architect draw plans and they adjourned until Jan. 29th at which time they would hear an expense report.



The meeting of Jan. 29th was canceled, rescheduled, and adjourned until Feb. 17th with no mention in his diary, but on the 18th of Feb. the Town Clerk met with the Town House Committee and Mr. Impey, the Architect/Contractor. How a one story plan for this building emerged into a two story is a mystery!

The total cost to build the Town House was \$5017. On December 21st, dedication day, there remained a debt of \$317.00. They held a dinner netting \$8.00 and a dance upstairs netting \$26.00 to reduce that debt. I believe this was the beginning of the Town Clerk's Office being housed in this building. Until then it had been in several locations in the Village. According to Elsie Wells' Bakersfield Vermont the way it was the way it is, in 1909, Mr. F.W. Davis was Postmaster and Town Clerk in a building, since destroyed by fire, that sat south of Lawyer's Store. Previously town meetings were held in a brick Town House that was located in the vicinity of where Paul's Quik Stop sits today. I believe this was where the town's people were meeting at the time this land was given to them and built the present Town Hall.

The Diary was given to us by Alberta Reed, with several other generous donations of Town History. The Diary has been transcribed. Anyone wishing to read it should contact the Bakersfield Historical Society. It gives us a look into the construction of the town Hall, as well as a view into everyday life in the year of 1909 in Bakersfield, Vermont.

Note: the shed behind the Town Hall was a shelter for horses and carriages and the closets were the "outdoor plumbing" for ladies on one end and gentlemen on the other.

In the pre-automobile days before 1910, winter allowed for a whole range of activities not usual today. Roads were not plowed except to remove drifts and the deepest soft snow. Horse-drawn snow rollers, wide enough to cover the width of the road, packed the snow and left a hard, smooth, slightly corrugated base. Children loved to follow the roller, walking on the crisp, hard surface. Winter was the time for visiting and travel. There was more leisure than in the other seasons and travel was easier on snow covered, rolled roads.

The family could have cozy sleigh rides under fur robes on pleasant Sunday afternoons. Straw rides were frequently enjoyed. Class straw rides were a common school outing. When school let out and there were sleighs along the main streets, it was considered fair game to catch rides standing on the runners of sleighs or climbing into the body of a pung [box sled]. Children soon learned which farmers or drivers would tolerate these hitch-hikers or allow one to throw the rope of his sled around a back brace and get a free ride. *[I can add that this trick persisted far, far longer into the automobile era (attaching to a bumper) than it ever should have.]*



Vermont snow roller circa 1900

The most universal recreation was coasting, also called sliding. Every child had a sled and there was great rivalry as to speed and distance traveled. There were high hung wooden sleds for young children, low racers and flexible flyers for the school children; jumpers—home-made of a barrel stave with a post supported by two braces topped by a wooden block for a seat; and even dishpans for steep, slippery slopes (forerunner of flying saucers).

But for the young people there were the double runners called traverses, and dependable steerers. Some of these double runners would hold as many as six or eight passengers. As the last one gave the starting push, each passenger held on around the waist of the one in front of him, and as a unit all swayed with the curves for the thrilling drop to the last inch of distance that could be coaxed from the racer.

The village sliders had several excellent routes on certain town roads. A guard was usually posted at intersections and at railroad tracks to insure a clear route. Only evening sliding was allowed on the roads. There may not have been a town law, but at least there was an understanding among the young people.

There was plenty of pasture and hillside sliding at any time when the snow was right, especially when there was a crust. Some private property was open to and extensively used by the whole community. Nothing could be more exhilarating than sliding on the crust on a sparkling early morning in February or March with spring in the air.

There were hockey teams from the earliest time and hockey flourished. Mill ponds, formed behind dams made fine skating surfaces. After school and in the evening skaters swarmed over the ice which was kept clear by volunteers among the schoolboys. A big bonfire was often built and the skaters sat around it to rest and to warm themselves. Some fine skaters developed in the early days here who could challenge younger performers in figure eights and fancy steps.

This story comes from the White River Valley Herald (Randolph, VT) 12 May 1960)

"Winter Was Glorious Fun In The Old Days In Randolph" by Genieve Lamson. It seems very likely that a similar story would be written about winter almost anywhere in Vermont that has hills and children.

Bakersfield Historical Society, Corp.

Annual Financial Report - 2024

Receipts in 2024

Memberships	\$ 2,380.00
Donations.....	\$ 1,774.00
<i>In-Kind Donations:</i>	
Larry Westcom Winterizing and Spring re-open - waterlines	
Rosaire Paquette mowing and trimming	
Fundraisers	\$ 2,245.00
Bakersfield History Book Sales	\$ 60.00
Building Use	\$ 400.00
Emergency Grant from PTV for Roof Repair.....	\$ 2,910.00
Direct Tax from Bakersfield	\$ <u>5,000.00</u>
Total Receipts	\$ <u>14,769.00</u>

Expenses in 2024

Water	\$ 140.00
Insurance	\$ 2,014.97
Fuel oil	\$ 1,867.00
Electricity	\$ 577.31
Website	\$ 191.76
P.O. Box Rent	\$ 84.00
Newsletters..(paper, printing, address labels donated).....	\$ 407.00
Maintenance	\$ 3,576.58
Building Projects	\$ 3,326.24
Supplies	\$ 105.56
VT Historical Society Dues	\$ <u>50.00</u>
Total Expenses	\$ <u>12,340.42</u>

Pending Projects:

1. Short Term - 2025

- a. Install exterior outlet with separate breaker shut-off
- b. Install refurbished window in attic gable
- c. Paint exterior trim and bell tower
- d. Re-surface ramp with a natural sure-pac
- e. Repair area with storm water leak - bell tower

2. Long Term

- a. Bell Tower Repair
- b. Refinish Floor
- c. Repair cracked and broken stained glass and storm windows
- d. Brick veneer repair/replace east & west walls

Thank you to all who donated dollars, talent, and labor that has helped support our mission to preserve Bakersfield's historic heritage.

BAKERSFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Officers 2024

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

Board of Directors 2024

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

JOIN BAKERSFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

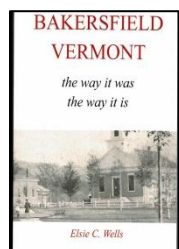
Bakersfield Historical Society
P.O. Box 70 Bakersfield VT 05441
Website: <https://historicbakersfieldvt.org/>
Find us on Facebook:
Bakersfield Historical Society, Corp.
(802) 827-3042

Support Your Historical Society

We depend on memberships, town 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

2025 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: _____

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/>