



The Bartlett Snow Roller—Restored 2015

# The Historical Herald

P.O. Box 514 Bartlett, New Hampshire 03812

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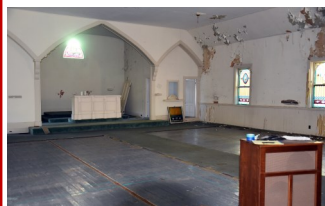
Bartlett Historical Society's Quarterly Newsletter

Summer 2018 Issue

(2018:3)

## **The Campaign Continues...Thank you for your Continued Support**

Our capital campaign to raise the funds to renovate the St. Joseph Church in Bartlett continues to drive forward. Individual and business donations have continued to arrive. Many of our donors have given to the campaign multiple times. In June, we filed for grant support with the state of NH's LCHIP program (Land and Community Heritage Investment Program). We also have three other grant applications in development or with decisions pending. We have also been in contact with the NH Charitable Foundation asking for support from the various foundations that they represent. Competition for grant support is very challenging with many good and deserving causes vying for the same dollars that we are requesting. We'll keep our fingers crossed hoping that we are ranked to the top of the pile by the different foundation review boards.

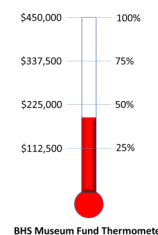


**Condition Assessment Report:** In past newsletters, we have mentioned that we had contracted with Alba Architects from North Woodstock, NH to perform a condition assessment on our building. We are happy to report that this assessment has now been finalized and approved by BHS, the architect and the NH Preservation Alliance. The results of the assessment confirmed many things that we knew about the building and found a few of which we need to be mindful. We will reference this assessment as we get into the actual hammer and nails

portion of the project. We received a \$3,400 grant from the NH Preservation Alliance to cover 50% of the cost of the assessment. We greatly appreciate their support.

**Building Stewardship:** Last November, we installed a temporary tarp on the roof to stop water from pouring through the roof. Our latest preventive maintenance effort was the removal of the oil tank from the building. The tank, full of heating oil, was in danger of tipping over and spilling oil in the basement. Mark Saunders and his crew from White Mountain Oil and Propane (WMOP) from North Conway came to the rescue pumping the oil from the tank and removing it. WMOP has been a big supporter of BHS and we thank them for their help in taking care of this potentially disastrous situation.

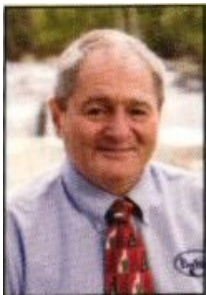
Finally, where are we now – donations have started to increase in number again and we continue to gain ground toward our campaign goal of \$450,000. Currently, we are at \$160,370 in cash and pledges (8% in pledges) – still a long way to go but we're moving in the right direction. We hope to see some large jumps in the campaign totals as we learn of our success in receiving grant funding. In the meantime, we will continue our search for support for this historic restoration project. We'll keep you informed.



Thank you to all who have contributed to this effort and who continue to encourage us to keep driving forward. A lot of positive energy has been expended and we are energized to keep striving for our goal of opening a great museum for Bartlett and the Valley. Donors from 03/16/2018—07/15/2018]

George & Ruth Abbott Accu Temp Services Anonymous (2) Badger Realty Bartlett Village Water Precinct F. Michael Bannon & Susan McIver Conway Daily Sun Country Cabinets William Denhard Jo-Ann Driscoll Mary Franklin	Stephen & Kimberly Franklin Carl & Judy Fuller Glen Sand & Gravel Richard Goff Golden Apple Inn Paula Graham Victoria Harlow Norman Head & Kathleen Sullivan-Head George Howard & Elois Sullivan Lydia Lansing	Jason Lebel Jeff & Martha Leich Kevin & Kay Lyons Maine Health Peter Marcoux David Marcus Marshall Family Fund Milford Flooring Jean Mollicone North Conway Music Center North Country Fair Jewelers	Northeast Auto Body Northeast Delta Dental Bev & Don Phillips Stefi Reed Hastings Gary & Catherine Scholl Terry Sherlock Carol Swanson Howie Wemyss White Mountain Oil & Propane White Mountain Stove Shop Edward & Willa Wolcott David Wright
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## President's Message:



Summertime in the mountains is a busy and exciting time of the year. After our usual bout with the black fly, the last little patches of snow melt off Mount Washington, the mountain sides are covered in green, the wild flowers bloom in the fields and we hear the Conway Scenic Railroad train whistle in the Valley. On the historical society board of directors, summer also marks the point where we start thinking about programs for the coming year, our summer Yard Sale and other upcoming events. It's a great time of year to be in the mountains.

Our main focus has been and continues to be on the project to renovate the St. Joseph Church building and reopen it as our Bartlett Historical Society Museum. We still remain deeply in fund raising mode on this project as we are now writing grant applications seeking support from local and state foundations. We are still receiving and welcoming individual contributions to the effort and will always appreciate support from individuals.

Recently, we provided a campaign and building update to the Bartlett School Board. In that presentation, we let them know of some preventive maintenance we are doing on the building with the removal of the oil tank. The retiring principal, Joe Voci, has been very supportive of our project. Conversations with the new school principal, Joe Yahna, about the mission of the historical society have also been very positive. The school board was pleased with our update and expressed their continued support for the effort also.

We had a couple of very interesting presentations since our last newsletter. John Swayze provided a unique view into the world of journalism and news reporting. Rick Tillotson gave us an "insiders" look at the history of the Balsams in Dixville Notch. While we still have two more presentations scheduled for 2018, we will continue to try to find interesting presenters and topics for our 2019 presentations.

Preparations have been underway for our next giant Yard Sale. Thinking back to our first yard sale in 2017, we really didn't know what to expect in terms of a public response to the sale. Needless to say, we were overwhelmed with the number of people who turned out to find new used treasures for their homes. We hope our 2018 sale is equally successful. Please mark your calendars for the event on August 10 and 11, at the Bartlett Elementary School.

Finally, we had a change on our board of directors. We express our appreciation to Stephen Libby for his service as Treasurer on the board and welcome Sue Franklin as our new Treasurer. Being an all-volunteer organization, we appreciate the sacrifice of time and energy for the organization.

We wish to thank everyone for their continued support in Your society. Our 2018 membership drive was very successful. We are pleased with the show of support for our ... *your* historical society.

*Norm Head, President*

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### **Change in our BHS Board of Directors**

In April 2018, our Treasurer, Stephen Libby announced that he was resigning from our board. To Stephen, we extend our sincere thanks for his service to the society in his term as Treasurer. In a special board meeting focused on installing a new Treasurer, we appointed Sue Franklin as the new BHS Treasurer. Sue has been the assistant treasurer for the capital campaign funds. Now, Sue will also be handling the treasurer's responsibilities for the BHS general / operating funds as well. We thank Sue for taking on this added responsibility. And, yes, Sue is Phil Franklin's wife.

### **Mt. Washington Valley Vibe Magazine Summer Edition**

One of the people who stopped by our Spring Craft Fair table in March was Dan Houde, the publisher of the Mt. Washington Valley Vibe magazine. Dan was very interested in our museum project and left the door open for including an article in an upcoming edition of Vibe. Phil Franklin later made contact with Dan and wrote an article that is slated to be in the summer edition of Vibe. Keep an eye open for that edition and pick up a copy. It is a great magazine with stories about all sorts of different things occurring here in the Valley.

## Some Random, Hopefully Interesting, Bartlett Historical Trivia

The town of Bartlett was named for Dr. Josiah Bartlett. Dr. Bartlett was the President of NH in 1790, the year the town was incorporated – *he never set foot on Bartlett town soil!*

*Josiah Bartlett was the second signer of the Declaration of Independence* after the President of the Continental Congress, John Hancock. Why? – The Declaration was signed by state from north to south. NH was the northernmost state in 1776 so Josiah Bartlett was the first of the three signers from NH. The others were William Whipple and Matthew Thornton.



Bartlett Boulder, located on private property off of Route 302, is a huge glacial boulder (estimated at ninety tons) deposited here as the Wisconsin Glacier retreated about 12,000 years ago. However, the oldest rocks in town, said to be 450 million years old, are in a band from Mt. Parker to Iron Mountain.

On September 2, 1983, the last scheduled freight train on the Mountain Division rails rolled through town and into Crawford Notch ending a long history of freight, logging and passenger rail trains through town. Today, the only railroad running through Bartlett is operated by the Conway Scenic Railroad.

VFW Post #5386, on River Street in Bartlett Village is named in honor of Francis Pierce Murphy, son of Frank and Mary Murphy. Francis was killed in action in WWII. The VFW post building was, at one time, a bowling alley.

President George H. W. Bush, then Vice President Bush, paid a visit to the Josiah Bartlett Elementary School on September 16, 1987, just before announcing his candidacy for president.



According to the Bartlett Annual Town Report from 1923 – 1924, \$290.19 was spent on text books for the high school and elementary schools. In 2018 figures, that is \$4,269.49.



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### St. Joseph Church—Our Future Bartlett Historical Society Museum

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interested in helping support  
the restoration of an historic  
building, please have them  
contact us.



We'd enjoy talking with them.

Norm Head  
603-986-6278

Phil Franklin  
603-374-5023

Normiejoe@gmail.com

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## **BHS has Been Out and About**

### **Spring Craft Fair, Sponsored by Bartlett Recreation Department**

On March 31, 2018, BHS had a table at the Spring Craft Fair that was sponsored by the Bartlett Recreation Department. Several people stopped by to introduce themselves, talk about Bartlett history and our museum project. At our table, along with our museum capital campaign information, we had the two Bartlett history books for sale, information on membership and, of course, a small raffle. Thank you to Annette Libby for providing BHS with a great table location and supporting BHS.

### **Mount Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce—Expo18**

On May 22, 2018, BHS was represented at the Mount Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce Expo18 by Phil Franklin and Norm Head. During the Expo, we met many local residents and people from away (one couple vacationing from Canada). We also had the opportunity to network with people from the different businesses and non-profit organizations attending the event. Being at the Expo18 event gave us another opportunity to explain the mission of our historical society, listen to the thoughts of attendees about the preservation of history, and talk about our St. Joseph Church renovation project. Phil did a live radio interview talking about the church / museum project, we made some business connections that will help BHS in the future and, overall, we received some very positive reactions from people to our efforts.



Phil Franklin (on crutches) at the BHS Table



Bartlett Water Precinct Board of Directors presents a donation to the BHS Museum Fund—(l to r) Dave Ainsworth, Phil Franklin, Norm Head, Barbara Altieri, Bob Blake

### **St. Joseph Church History**

Slowly, pieces of the history of St. Joseph Church are being found. Recently, we were given two undated photos of the interior of the church. These photos show that at some point in the past, the church went through two, and maybe three, remodelings. Many interior features are different in these photos. If you know anyone with knowledge of when changes might have been made to the interior of the church, or any other historical information, please have them contact Phil Franklin at [phil@BartlettHistory.org](mailto:phil@BartlettHistory.org).

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## 2018 Presentation Recaps

### World News Unscripted with John Swayze



On April 4, 2018, BHS was honored to have John Swayze as our presenter. John was a world correspondent for NBC radio and closed out his long career in news journalism as the CBS radio morning anchor. John enthralled an audience of about 60 people with stories of his experiences reporting the news from places such as Moscow, El Salvador and Beirut as well as during the aftermath of the 9/11 2001 terrorist attack. John played portions of two tapes from his reporting. Both provided moving examples of the award winning work he did objectively bring important stories to the world. The first tape was John reporting from Beirut during the Lebanese Civil War where he was caught in a fire fight between two warring factions. With the sounds of the battle overhead, John ended the segment saying "let's get out of here!" The second tape was a portion of an interview John recorded in Moscow with a couple who were Russian Refuseniks (Russian Jews who were denied permission to emigrate by authorities of the former Soviet Union). John gave them the opportunity to tell their story to the world – a story that might have never been heard if John was not brave enough to make contact with this couple and record their message. John also provided some counsel to aspiring journalists at the event. Finally, he let us know that "he never looks back" so this is the one and only time he would be doing this type of presentation. We offer our sincere thanks to John for sharing a portion of his life with us. He received a well-deserved standing ovation. (Photos courtesy of Kathleen Sullivan-Head)



Norm Head (left), John, Phil Franklin

### History of the Balsams by Rick Tillotson



On June 13, 2018, we hosted a presentation by Rick Tillotson on the history of the Balsams Resort in Dixville Notch. Rick walked the audience of about 40 people through a photographic history of the area and resort starting in the 1700's with the acquisition of the Dixville Notch area from the local Native Americans. He explained that after the Civil War lodging in the area started with the Dix House and that would grow into the Balsams Resort. He told of his grandfather, Neil Tillotson, who purchased the Balsams in 1954 and owned the resort until his death in 2001. The resort closed in 2011 and now a new ownership group is trying to revive this is once great North Country grand resort. We thank Rick for his interesting presentation.

## The Rest of the 2018 Program Lineup

### Wednesday, August 15: The History of St. Joseph Church: Presented by Phil Franklin

Phil has developed an interesting history of the church starting in 1888 going to today. Come to learn more about this church that was the first Catholic Church in the Mount Washington Valley.

Bartlett Elementary School, Cafeteria, Route 302, Bartlett, Time: 7:00 p.m.

### Wednesday, October 17: Ghosts & Haunted Houses: Presenter to be named soon

We've all heard about different houses that have a spooky story about them in the Valley so just in time for Halloween, we'll learn more about your favorite ghosts and goblins.

Bartlett Elementary School, Cafeteria, Route 302, Bartlett, Time: 7:00 p.m.

**All of our programs are open to the public. Donations are gratefully accepted at the door to help cover the costs of each presentation.**

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## **Ben Howard**

### **Interview**

**by Phil Franklin**



On May 29, 2018, Bert George, Norm Head and I sat with Ben Howard around his kitchen table in his home on Company Hill (Albany Avenue) to talk about his recollections of Bartlett and his life in general. Ben has owned the property on which he lives since he was a young man. Ben is a rather tall man with a strong handshake that gives away the fact that he worked hard for his living. As we talked, he revealed his dry sense of humor that at times kept you guessing whether he was joking or serious. The answer comes when he gives a little smile after his subtle joke. It was a really enjoyable conversation with one of the people who remembers Bartlett when it was busy with the railroads, mills and hotels.

Ben is a life-long resident of Bartlett, growing up in his parent's home on River Street – the third house on the left to be exact (this house was an annex to the Bartlett Hotel ("The Hotel" as Ben referenced it)). Aside from his college days and time away for service in the Marine Corp, Ben has made Bartlett Village his home. His parents were Newton and Hilda Howard. Newton moved to Bartlett shortly after WWI. Ben has three siblings, Jean, Jim and Dan.

Ben was born on November 2, 1929 at Memorial Hospital in North Conway, NH. His earliest recollections of his childhood go back to when he was seven or eight years old. He spent a lot of time, "just playing" as he put it. He said that one of his best friends was Bobby Davis. Bobby's father worked for the railroad as did many men with the railroad being the major employer in town. Ben would go swimming in the summer at Second Iron but he was never much of an athlete. The only formal sport he played was basketball in grade school because, in his words, "they needed to fill out the team." Ben said that he spent more time fishing for trout in the local brooks and in Sawyer Pond when he was older. He also went hunting for birds with his English Setter, Ted. He added that he spent time hunting up in the Cave Mountain area. He recalled a story of being up there in a driving snow storm. Because of the storm, he lost his bearings and knew that the best thing to do was head down the mountain and listen for a stream. When he finally made it to a road, he realized he had made his way to Jericho – the opposite side of the mountain from where he lived.

We talked about what it was like growing up in the Village. Ben told us that he was not allowed to go to the bowling alley just down the street from his house because it was considered a "dive." That building is now the Francis Murphy VFW Post #5386. With a smile he said that he went there anyway, apparently never being caught by his parents. The Village also had a movie theater, on School Street (formerly Carrigan Street). He said that it cost 15 cents to go to the movies back then.

Ben attended Bartlett Grammar School but admitted that he wasn't much of a student. He went on to Bartlett High School where his favorite teacher was Mr. Husman. Mr. Husman was also the school principal at the time. After graduating high school in 1947, Ben went on to the University of New Hampshire to study agriculture. While at UNH, he joined the ROTC program. His military service would later land him in Korea.

Going back to his early years as a youth in Bartlett, Ben said that he was 12 years old when America entered WWII. At that time, most of the men in town who were eligible to join the service left to enlist or went to work in the shipyard in Maine. Ben was no stranger to working as his father owned the local gas station and car repair shop until WWII when people stopped driving because of gas rationing. While the station was open, as a young boy, Ben would work for his father pumping gas. That is until one day a man came into the station, watched Ben for a while but never said anything to him. The man went to find Ben's father, Newton, at the G. K. Howard general store where he told Newton that Ben was too young to be working so he needed to stop even though it was the family business.

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Ben Howard continued ...

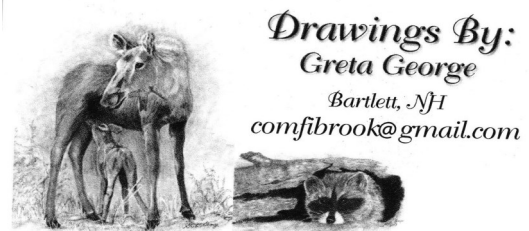
Apparently the mystery man was from the state of NH. Ben suspects that someone came in to the station, he pumped their gas and they made mention of it to the state. That ended Ben's gas station career.

Ben also made money selling the Saturday Evening Post. His uncle was G. K. Howard (Granville King (or Knight) Howard – Ben said he heard both middle names used). G. K. owned the local general store and at the age of 12, G. K. approached Ben asking him if he wanted to work in the general store. G. K. knew that Ben knew how to make change in a sale and also knew that he was a good worker just from seeing him at his father's business. As a clerk at the general store, Ben worked six days a week, after school and Saturday, for \$20 per week. He told us that the general store was the centerpiece of Bartlett Village, a gathering point for the local men where the problems of the world were solved in the discussions. The store was located just south of the tracks by the Bartlett freight warehouse (the yellow building that still stands by the tracks today) on Albany Avenue.

Ben spoke very fondly of Uncle G. K. Howard. He told us that G. K. was the first Howard in Bartlett, coming here to be a bookkeeper or accountant for the local lumber mill. G. K. was a Dartmouth College graduate. He was married but had no children (his wife died when she was young, G. K. never remarried and Ben never met G. K's wife). Aside from the general store, G.K. also was a town selectmen, he helped build one of the local churches, he rebuilt The Bartlett Hotel (the Howard Hotel at the time) after a fire and had a logging operation in the area. Ben told us that G. K. was a big influence in his life as was his father. Ben's father, Newton, came to Bartlett from VT to work for G. K. Ben received no special treatment because the owner was his uncle. We got the strong impression that "work" was a verb in the eyes of G. K. Howard so as long as you were doing your job, working in the general store was an enjoyable occupation. Ben told a story illustrating G. K.'s character as fair and understanding man. Apparently, a customer took a 100 pound sack of grain from the store and placed it by the railroad tracks (he was stealing the grain). The would-be thief went home to get his wheelbarrow to carry the grain sack and upon his return, G. K. had him arrested for the theft. G. K. then took the man to Ossipee where the man pled guilty for his crime and G. K. then paid his fine to have him released. In another story, we learned that G. K., even though he didn't do much of the selling personally, was a shrewd salesman. Apparently a man came in to buy a pair of shoes. After selecting the shoes, he complained about the \$2.99 price saying he could buy the same shoes cheaper through the Montgomery Ward catalog. In response, G. K. said that was fine and he would put the shoes aside in case the man came back in because he would need to wait for the shoes to be shipped, if they didn't fit, he'd have to send them back for another pair, waiting again for shipping and maybe in two or three weeks he'd have his shoes. After that exchange, the man bought the shoes for \$2.99.

Ben said that his uncle was a very philanthropic person. G. K. would always help people by carrying a tab (credit) for those who could not pay their bill at the store. Ben joked and said that some people thought he was a "mean" person, though, adding that G. K. expected those tabs to be paid when the person received their pay from their employer. He donated the land to the water precinct that now contains the baseball

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Greta's phone # 603 738 4958



Ben Howard continued ...

field (known today as “Black Fly Park”) on Route 302 toward the west end of town. He also donated the land on the corner of Route 302 and Albany Avenue to the water precinct for a park. That park now contains the Bartlett Historical Society snow roller and a fountain. Apparently, G. K. made the fountain a condition for the precinct to own the park land. As long as they kept the fountain in operation (seasonally), the park land was theirs. When you go by the park today, you’ll notice that the fountain is running from spring to fall. The fountain was built by a man named Cliff Pratt. This land was once the site of an Amoco gas station.



Water Precinct Park  
Fountain foreground  
Snow Roller background

At 16 years old, Ben got his first car, a 1929 Model A Roadster. Prior to that, his transportation was on his bicycle. The story goes that Ben started working for Cliff Pratt. Mr. Pratt built log cabins for a living and needed help so Ben moved from working at the general store into the cabin building business but he needed transportation to get to the job sites. He said he originally wanted a motorcycle but his parents turned down the idea. Soon, his father got the roadster through his garage. It wasn’t much of a car as it needed a paint job, the rumble seat was missing as was the top but it had four wheels and ran. He would eventually order a top for the car from a Sears catalog. At one point, he said the engine broke down. His father told him it had a broken piston so he sent Ben off to see Elwood Dinsmore. Mr. Dinsmore operated another gas station and car repair shop down the road from the Howard station (across from today’s Bart’s Deli). Ben went in and told Mr. Dinsmore what he needed. He said Mr. Dinsmore went into the back storage room, dug around and pulled out a piston for the 1929 roadster, sizing it up by eye. He brought the piston back to his father, they installed it and the engine ran perfectly. As an aside, Elwood Dinsmore also worked for 50 years on the railroad as a “car knocker” – someone who repaired train wheels.

Ben was born within one month of the start of the Great Depression (1929 – 1939). His only recollection of the depression era was that many people in town had no money because work was hard to find. He recalled the government sponsored WPA program and also a truck that would come into the Village weekly with supplies for people. He said that his family made it through this period without major problems. He also remembers the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corp) Camps at Sawyer River and

in Glen but he wasn’t allowed to go there. He did, however, know some of the boys who worked in the CCC camps. The CCC program ran from 1933 – 1939.

Earlier we mentioned that Ben was in the ROTC program at UNH and enlisted in the Marine Corp after finishing college in 1951. His basic training was at a base in Quantico, VA. He signed onto a program that would have him become a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in 90 days and added that his training through the ROTC program helped him a lot in basic training. He liked this base and training, spending one year there. He said that with Quantico being only a short distance from Washington, DC, he found that there were benefits to wearing your dress uniform into the capitol city – Service men seemed to get everything for free. From Quantico, he was shipped to Camp Lejeune for additional infantry training. Camp Lejeune was a terrible place being very hot and it had a lot of ticks. With the Korean War underway, the Marines were looking for young officers to lead the troops in combat. Ben volunteered to go to Korea as one of the replacement troops.

His journey to Korea was a multi-stop experience. From Camp Lejeune, he was placed on a luxury Pullman train car for a cross country trip that landed him at Camp Pendleton in CA where he would spend two to three weeks in the San Diego area. From there it was off to San Francisco where he caught a Navy passenger plane to Hawaii. After a week in paradise, he was loaded on to a troop transport plane that hop-scotched across the Pacific to Yokohama, Japan. Finally, from there, it was a ride in a Bradley Boxcar plane to Korea with a parachute strapped on his back (just in case). Upon landing in South Korea, he was sent to the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and was stationed there for one year. Ben did not see any combat action though because just three days before he landed in South Korea, the armistice was signed.

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Ben Howard continued ...

Upon reaching the DMZ, he was assigned to lead a company of infantry men who has just come out of combat. Three quarters of this company had been killed in action. Within a few days of the armistice, all of these men were sent home. Ben said he had a good duty station in Korea. While there, he was able to see the North Koreans building their bunkers at the DMZ while the South Koreans did the same on their side of the DMZ. Ben said that there was no shooting or conflict of any type during the time he was stationed there.

Returning from the service, Ben went to work for Railway Express as a truck driver. This was around the late 1950's when the rail service through town was declining, the B&M Railroad stopped coming to North Conway with freight and passengers, and things started switching over to delivery by truck. Joe Driscoll, the train station manager, was looking for someone to help him in the emerging trucking business so he approached Ben. Ben decided to take the job. He became a member of the Railroad Union as a driver for Railroad Express. Ben held this job for many years.

Ben was the Bartlett town treasurer in 1964 and served as a selectman from 1965 - 1973. He said that he was happy to be voted out of office by Gene Chandler, one of our current selectmen. Ben was also a member of the local volunteer fire department out of the Bartlett Village station house. Ben said that he never really liked being a firefighter. He was one of the few who would climb on roofs to work chimney fires and thought he was a good firefighter but he never was good friends with any of the other firefighters. The fire department had a rule that you had to attend regular fire department meetings – something that Ben just could not do. So, in the end, he was asked to leave the fire department.

Earlier we mentioned that Ben lives in a house on property on Company Hill. Ben bought this property when he was about 18 years old. He's been on this property ever since. He married at 27 years old. He and his wife, Pauline (now deceased), had four children, Robert, now deceased was in CA; Ellen lives in St. Petersburg, FL; David lives in Durham, NH; and Peter who lives in Meredith, NH. He also has eight grandchildren. We noticed that there is a picture of his granddaughter, Abbey, with Barack Obama among his many family pictures. Ben said that she is a Wellesley and Holy Cross graduate. While he is very proud of her, he also said there's a picture of her with Hillary Clinton somewhere. He said "she's a Democrat." I asked him if he was a Republican. Answering me he said that was a silly question for a person whose father was Newton Howard and uncle was G. K. Howard – short answer – "Yes." So ended our conversation for this day.

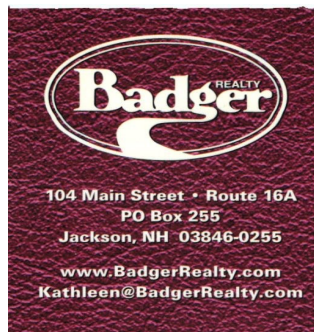
We picked up our conversation again on July 10, again, at Ben's kitchen table. While it was a very hot day, the house was cooled by a couple of fans. He said that years ago, he had an air conditioner but his wife really didn't like it so it went to the dump. Ben wanted to tell us more detail about the "G. K. Howard General Store." Ben is the last person alive who worked at that store. He told us that this was a "real"

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**Sky Valley Motel**  
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*Photo taken from  
Route 302 looking  
west towards Mt  
Carrigain. 1949*



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July 2018—Freight Warehouse (left)  
Former site of General Store (right)

general store and as he described it and we came to see that the store was essentially a one-stop shopping location. Other stores in the Village were the A&P grocery store (across the street from Howard's general store), Garland's Store (which mostly sold ice cream) and Donahue's General Store. Ben told us that G. K Howard built the store but wasn't sure of the exact date when it first opened.

As we said earlier, the store was located next to the Bartlett freight building that was used by the railroad. There was a short rail spur that came off the mainline between the freight building and the general store. The railroad used to pull in box cars loaded with grain and flour to be unloaded into the Howard store storage rooms. That rail spur is still there today but a bit overgrown with weeds.

Ben said that the building had a main level where all of the retail sales took place, a basement and a second floor. The store did not have a front porch with rocking chairs though. There was one cash register and usually four people on duty at the store. We asked if Ben knew the whereabouts of the cash register but he said he didn't know what happened to it after the store closed. To give us the list of things sold in the store, Ben said he was walking through the store in his mind. Ben let us know that G. K. didn't sell anything in the store that wasn't legal. We started our store tour with groceries and meats. While the selection wasn't large, G. K. carried what was needed. G. K. purchased beef and some pork from local farmers (no lamb because no one raised sheep in the area). The farmers would bring in the meat in large pieces and a butcher named Henry Cole would cut it into saleable pieces. Ben described Henry as a "big man" being about 6' 2", quite heavy and very strong. Ben said nothing was frozen in the store. He said that they made their own salt pork. Meat was stored in a large walk-in refrigerator. The store also sold canned goods and had large containers for beans (to be made into baked beans) and other bulk items.

Refrigeration in the store was electrically powered but no ice was stored in the building. The town had an ice house by the railroad tracks. Ice was harvested from McKeil's Pond or brought in by rail car. It was covered in sawdust and shavings from the lumber mill or the peg mill to prevent melting. The store had a hardware department where you could buy nails, screws and tools. Again, there wasn't as large as of large selection as you find today at your local lumber yard or box store but if you needed a hammer or an axe handle, you could find one there. Continuing around the store, you could find rifles and ammunition, black powder (used for blowing up stumps when clearing fields), gun powder and sulfur. Clothing was in limited supply but the essentials were there for men working on the railroad or in the mills, some dresses for women and children's clothing also. Ben said they sold over the counter medicines but no prescription drugs. Cigarettes, \$1.00 per carton, were a big seller and they had a large supply of them in a glass case near the front of the store along with chewing tobacco and pipe tobacco. The store also had a pickle barrel and penny candy. The store did not sell beer or any alcohol. You could buy your beer at Donohue's Store on the other side of the tracks (Donohue's would eventually become Mallett's store and now the building is closed up but the "7-Up - Mallette's" store sign still hangs on the front of the building). G. K. didn't sell newspapers or magazines either.

There was a ladies department in the store what was run by Josephine Glines. Ben said that she was a very nice lady. The ladies department carried dresses, silk stockings and other essentials for the women of the town. The store also had a shoe department selling children's, men's and women's shoes, again, with a limited supply of different types of shoes but a wide range in sizes so you couldn't be too fussy but you could find a shoe or boot to meet your needs.

In the back of the store on the first floor was a large room for the storage of grain. They had grain and feed for chickens, horses, cows as well as salt licks for cows. As we mentioned, this came to the store by rail car.

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Ben Howard continued

Bud Pettengill and Ben unloaded the sacks of grain into the storage room. These heavy sacks needed to be piled 10 high to accommodate the inventory coming off the rail car. In the spring, they also stocked seeds for the farmers to plant their fields. Ben told us that there were two cats that made their home in and around the store, noting that one was a particularly good mouser so he patrolled the grain room.



G.K Howard General Store (undated photo)

While the store didn't sell gasoline, they did sell kerosene that needed to be hand pumped into jugs that people would bring into the store. The kerosene was stored in a barrel outside the store but the spigot and pump were inside the store near the meat department. They also sold some lubricating oil as automobiles had mostly replaced horses in town by the 1940's. Ben did recall, though, that there were still a few horse harnesses in the store that could be purchased if needed.

Upstairs, the store had a supply of window glass that could be cut to size. On the second floor there was also a large room that was lined with sheet metal, probably zinc, for the storage of baking flour. The flour came in by special rail cars in sacks or bags of 100, 25, 10 and 5 pounds. A hand worked elevator was in the store so a maximum of 500 pounds at a time were wheeled onto the elevator and brought to the flour room for storage. The metal lining for the room was to prevent mice and rats from getting into the flour. Ben said that they also delivered as much flour as possible to the local inns and hotels directly from the rail car. The inns and hotels would buy what they thought they would need for the summer tourist crowd as each establishment did their own baking.

The basement of the store was mostly paved with concrete but had some portion as a dirt floor. It contained a wooden barrel of vinegar as well as a barrel of molasses. People would bring in jugs to have them filled for their home use. There was also a wood burning stove that heated the entire store. The stove was fed with 3' logs for burning.

The store sold a variety of other things such as fireworks, Christmas decorations and presents, baled hay, coal and coke (a high carbon material made from coal). The coal and coke were sold to the local schools as well as homeowners. Ben recalled having to shovel the coal into bags for people to use at home.

The store was owned and run by G. K. Howard but he apparently didn't do much selling on the retail floor. His office was near the shoe and ladies department in the store with a door that had a window in it so G. K. could watch over the operation while he worked in his office. The bookkeeper was John O'Connell. G. K. always seemed to have a new Ford automobile that he would let his employees use for store business if they needed to travel about town.

Inventory for the store generally came from Portland, ME. On a weekly basis, Bud Pettengill would drive to Portland to pick up replacement inventory. Occasionally, there would be a special order from a customer who wanted a large supply of something or furniture which the store did not carry as a regular item. The truck was a 1936 box truck. Even though there was gas rationing in the depression and war years, they were always able to get the gasoline needed to make the trip because they had the proper rationing card. Gasoline was stored in town in large tanks by the rail tracks next to what was Cole's Cabins (they would later become the Better Living Cabins on Route 302). Gasoline came to town by rail car.

Ben said that G. K. started to see his business decline in the later part of the 1940's. Somewhere around 1946 or 1947, G. K. sold the business to a couple from MA. They made several changes to the store that apparently didn't sit well with the local population so after a year or two, they also sold the business. After the general store closed, it became a thermostat factory and in the 1990's the building was destroyed in a fire. Today, there is a multi-family condominium building on the foundation of the store. G. K. Howard lived only a couple of years after selling the store, dying in 1949.

That concluded our conversation with Ben Howard. To say the least, it was an entertaining, educational and delightful time listening to his stories about his life, and the life and times in Bartlett. We thank Ben for sharing his recollections with us.





The Bartlett Snow Roller—Restored 2015

# The Historical Herald

[www.BartlettHistory.Org](http://www.BartlettHistory.Org)

Facebook: Bartlett Historical-Society

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Bartlett Historical Society Yard Sale**

### **Proceeds to benefit the BHS Museum Fund for the renovation of St. Joseph Church**

Following on the great success of our 2017 BHS Yard Sale, we are holding our second Yard Sale on Friday, August 10, and Saturday, August 11, 2018, on the field in front of the Josiah Bartlett Elementary School. This is a major fund raising event for BHS.

Looking at the things we've collected so far for the 2018 sale, we have a great assortment including:

- Kitchenware (some items in their original packaging)
- Glassware (newer and older items, sets of glasses & mugs, vases, platters and more—some great items for setting up an apartment or the college bound student's dorm room)
- Furniture (bureaus, tables, bookcases, lamps, chairs – setting up an apartment or sending a child off to college – we might have just what you need)
- Antiques
- Toys & Children's Items (a couple of cool John Deere ride-on peddle tractors, numerous toys and things just for the little ones)
- Craft Items
- Books of all kinds (history, crafts, novels, mystery, travel, reference)
- Tools & Yard Equipment (everything for the handy-person from hand tools to small snow blowers to gardening tools)
- Sporting Goods (several great bicycles, skis, fishing gear, and many more items)
- Games & Puzzles



2017 Yard Sale

We extend a sincere thank to the many people who have generously donated items to the 2018 sale.

**Save These Dates On Your Calendar for the Biggest Yard Sale in the Valley!**

*Friday, August 10, 2018, 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.*

*Saturday, August 11, 2018, 7:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.*

*Josiah Bartlett Elementary School grounds, Route 302, Bartlett.*

We hope to see you there!

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**Summer flowers brighten  
everyone's day**