

BHS Curator's Report – Winter 2026

by Kathy Howard

Saturday, January 17, 2026, will be the “official” unveiling of our “Winter in the Valley” exhibits. This launch will be followed on Sunday, January 18th with our presentation on “Logging Railroads of the White Mountains” presented by Dave Govatski and our annual meeting.

Our goal is to change exhibits every six months to keep displays fresh and to encourage visitors to return and learn more about the place where they live or enjoy visiting. Preparation for changing exhibits requires a lot of thought, research and physical work. The first step is to determine an overall theme. Our “Winter in the Valley” exhibits will include displays on Attitash, ski clubs, lost ski areas, winter sports and ski trains. The next step in creating an exhibit is to determine what we currently have in our collection that will fit the theme.

The centerpiece for our winter display will be the Portland Cutter sleigh donated by Carroll and Nancy Hayes. In addition to the sleigh, we have recently received skis to add to our ski and snowshoe display. Another donor has contributed a 1950's children's sled. We have contacted local ski clubs in hopes of expanding our current holdings on the history of these organizations. One of our displays will feature a dog sled made by a local resident and information on dogsledding in the Valley as well as information on the Chinook – New Hampshire's state dog.

Once we've gathered everything together that fits this theme, items are sorted for relevance and the research and documentation begin. Whenever possible, we document the source of the item and relevance to Bartlett. Photos from our extensive collection are printed and added to the exhibits and display cards are created. Brief explanations or histories are researched and added in order to provide more history and meaning to the display. Our goal is to provide visitors with a “taste” of these historical themes and hopefully inspire and encourage interest in the history of the town of Bartlett and the Mount Washington Valley.

Behind the scenes, most previous displays must be dismantled and stored. Each current display is photographed and all catalog records for these items are updated to include information on when the item was used in a display. Objects are returned to storage, and documentation is filed for possible future use. Some displays are considered to be “permanent” such as our military history exhibit and our exhibit on the St. Joseph Church. Any new relevant items received are added to these permanent displays to “refresh” the collection, but the overall theme of these two exhibits remains the same. Because of avid interest in our geological display, the “rocks” exhibit will be continued for another six months!

Our PastPerfect database allows us to keep accurate records of what we have used previously and the time period when the item was displayed. Going forward, this allows us to track and document the history of the Museum and the Bartlett Historical Society. We can also track the number of visitors for each exhibition period. Since the opening of the Museum in October 2024, over 350 people have enjoyed our exhibits!

We are already planning for our next series of exhibits to launch on July 4, 2026. Not to reveal too much too early but think of 2026 milestones for our nation and our local

area as possible themes! More information will follow as we get ready to prepare for the next round.

Please stop by to see the new exhibits starting January 17th. If you have anything to donate that would fit the “Winter in the Valley” theme or any other item relevant to Bartlett history, please contact us by [email](#) or leave a message at 603 374-5037. We are always excited to add a new item to our collection and appreciate your support in our effort to preserve the history of Bartlett and the Mount Washington Valley area. Thank you!