



The Historical Herald

PO Box 514 Bartlett, New Hampshire 03812
www.BartlettHistory.Org

Bartlett Historical Society's Newsletter

July Issue 2017

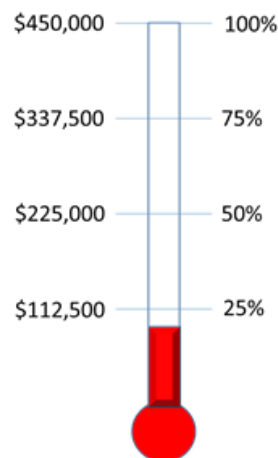
Bartlett Historical Society Museum Campaign

Thank You for Your Support!

We are continuing to march forward in our capital campaign to raise the fund needed to renovate the St. Joseph Church building in Bartlett Village and open our historical society museum.

The Board of Directors of the Bartlett Historical Society would like to extend our appreciation to the following people & companies for their generous donations to the Bartlett Historical Society Museum Fund since January 2017. Your support for this project has moved us closer to our campaign goal & the establishment of the

Bartlett Historical Society Museum



BHS Museum Fund Thermometer

Donors since last newsletter;

Sponsor Thank You

We thank our many sponsors who cover the cost of this newsletter. Your support for this quarterly publication is greatly appreciated. We ask our readers to please patronize our newsletter sponsors and let them know that you appreciate their support of the Bartlett Historical Society.

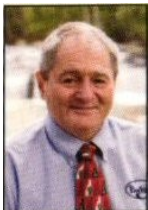
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Norman Head, President; Bert George, Vice President
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Phil Franklin, Secretary

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Member Volunteer, Dave Eliason, Website/Newsletter
Member Volunteer, Mike Chandler, Advice and Assistance
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We hold meetings every month and all are welcome to attend. Find the date and time at our website. **Www.bartletthistory.org**

President's Message:



Norm Head, President

President BHS



Bartlett Historical Society Museum – Project Status

” or go directly to our website at http://bartletthistory.org/church_main_page.php.

As always, we thank you for your continued support.



New Ways to Donate to the Bartlett Historical Society



A couple of reminders:

BHS is a non-profit 501 c 3 organization. All donations to BHS or the BHS Museum Fund are tax deductible. All work done by your Board of Directors or any other

BHS member is strictly on an uncompensated volunteer basis. BHS does not receive any government funding from local, county, state or federal sources.

We thank you for your support.



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This newsletter is paid for by our sponsors. We thank all of you for making this possible. Your support is appreciated.

Coming Programs and Events for 2017:

Unless otherwise noted, all programs will be held at the Community Room in the school and will start at 7:00 p.m.

All our programs are free and open to the public. We always appreciate donations at the door to help cover our expenses. Thank you.

October 18, 2017----Bob Cottrell will be presenting: Harnessing History: On the Trail of New Hampshire's State Dog, The Chinook:

This program looks at how dog sledding developed in New Hampshire and how the Chinook played a major role in this story. Explaining how man and his relationship with dogs won out over machines on several famous polar expeditions, Bob Cottrell covers the history of Arthur Walden and his Chinooks, the State Dog of New Hampshire. Cottrell will be accompanied by his appropriately named Chinook, Tug.

<http://www.nhhumanities.org/programs/harnessing-history-trail-new-hampshires-state-dog-chinook>



fk.

Bert George

A Quiet but Colorful Resident of Bartlett

By Phil Franklin, Bartlett Historical Society

Growing Up In Bartlett Village

Bert was just a youngster when he moved to Bartlett from Oregon with his family. It was in Bartlett that he grew up and attended elementary school. He told us that this was the best part of his youth, as he had a great many experiences and fond memories that he recalled for us.

Bert's father, Franklin, aside from being a store owner, raised Shetland ponies. There were five horses in total and two barns on their property on Route 302. The first barn measured 40' x 50' and was used as a carriage barn. The second barn, for the horses, measured 40' x 60'. In the 1952 timeframe, Bert was given the responsibility of cleaning the horse barn daily. Before the family moved out of the store living quarters, Bert needed to cross Route 302 to do his chores. The horse barn had water in the barn so he fortunately didn't need to haul water to the horses but he still needed to clean six stalls before going back home to get ready to go off to school. Bert said that one day while crossing Route 302, he ran into a car – the car didn't hit him, he hit it. Anyway, his mother called the local doctor, Dr. Twaddell, who came to the George's and attended to Bert. Bert was wearing cowboy boots at the time of the accident. His mother asked the doctor if she should remove his boots. Bert said that the doctor's reply was that "no, cowboys die with their boots on!" Bert said that once the family moved from the store to the Win George house, doing the morning chores got easier – and safer also.

Continuing with the story of the horses, Bert told us that in 1950 and for years after that, there was an equestrian show at Cranmore Mountain. Bert and his older brother, Ben, used to take two or three horses to the show where they would lead the horses in a parade to be judged. Bert said that they never won the blue ribbon but they did come home with second and third place prizes on occasion. Growing up in Bartlett Village, Bert said there were three other boys with whom he palled around. All of these boys were his brother's age so they didn't really appreciate having a younger kid, two to four years their junior hanging around with them but, nevertheless, they were his neighborhood pals. Aside from Ben, the other boys were Stanton "Stan" Dorsett and Steven Chandler. Most of their adventures were unsupervised and outside as they had plenty of forest land in which to roam, horses to ride and games to play. On rainy days, they used to play a game with a pair of dice and baseball cards.

Bert George, continued

All of the kids collected cards in those days so they used the cards and dice to entertain themselves when they could not go outside. Bert had cards for the teams the Brooklyn Dodgers and Boston Braves. Your cards were your players so you needed a full team represented on your cards. The game was played by rolling the dice. A pair of sixes, for example, was a homerun, rolling a nine got you a single, rolling a ten was a double, rolling anything under a nine was a strike. It was obvious by the way Bert described this game that it provided a great deal of enjoyment for the kids in the neighborhood.

When Bert was ten years old, he said that he would ride horses with Stan Dorsett. On more than one occasion, this got Bert and Stan into trouble. In one instance, they went into the family garden and caught some garter snakes, put them into a bucket and rode up to the Foster Street area where some young girls lived with their family. Bert said that they would chase the girls with their horses and also swing the snakes by the tail as if they had cowboy ropes. Throwing the snakes at the girls, one landed on the shoulder of one of the girls and apparently put quite a scare into her. She told her father of the incident and he connected with Bert's father, who happened to be the Deputy Sheriff in town. Before Bert got home, his mischief was known and dealt with upon his arrival home.

After WWII ended and the soldiers came home, baseball became a big sport in Bartlett. Bert said there were three teams – the Bartlett VFW team, a "town" team and the Bartlett High School team. The town team included many of the forest service people who were here for the summer months. The VFW team was named after Francis Murphy, a local man who was killed in action (in Germany) in WWII. Bert was only 11 years old at this point so he was too young to play but he said that you could always find a game to watch. The Bartlett teams played against each other as well as against teams from Conway, Fryeburg and other surrounding towns.

Continued next page....



Thanks go to *Matty B's MountainSide Café* at Attitash for helping us publish this newsletter. We appreciate your support.

Bert George, continued

Bartlett games were played on the water precinct field that is still located on Route 302 at the west end of town. This field was donated by G. K. Howard, a local shopkeeper.

Bert also recalled that in the mid-1950's, Bartlett had a movie theater where admission was ten cents. Bert said that there was always something to do in the area and no one ever worried about the children playing without supervision. As a matter of fact, it was expected that they would be off exploring on their own.

We talked about the Boy Scout troop that was here in Bartlett – Bartlett Troop 321. The scout leader was one of the members of the VFW. The Boy Scouts had a building that was located on Albany Avenue between the current fire department building and the Grove Street railroad tracks. Today the building is gone but during WWII, this building was used as the lookout spot where local people watched for airplanes going over, reporting what planes were spotted. In particular, the concern was that German war planes might fly over the country so civilian watchers kept an eye out. This activity occurred all up and down the east coast of the United States.

The Boy Scouts had a very active troop in Bartlett. They went on hiking expeditions. On one occasion, Bert recalled that they were climbing Mount Washington with a plan to go up the Ammonoosuc Ravine Trail and descend via the Jewel Trail. As they were hiking, the weather turned very bad and the troop was stranded at the top of the mountain. They ended up staying in the hotel at the top of the mountain. The next day, the Army sent trucks up the auto road to “rescue” the boys. On another occasion, the troop was camping at the former CCC camp located behind the covered bridge over the Saco River off of Route 302. An incident that occurred on one of the camping trips was that one of the boys set his site up near the fire and during the night, the fire warmed and melted the snow where the boy was sleeping. *Continued next column...*

Bert George, continued

His sleeping bag became waterlogged and he needed to be pulled away from the fire at midnight. Bert commented that they tried to convince the boy to set up his site farther back but he wouldn't hear of it. The end result spoke for itself.

Growing up on Bartlett, all of the boys went hunting and fishing. Every boy owned a BB gun. Bert used to go up to Sawyer River to fish. His mother would drive him to Livermore and he would then work his way to the old CCC camp site on that river. Sometimes, his father would accompany him and provide the transportation. On occasion, after the Memorial Day Parade, a couple of the VFW members would take a couple of scouts to Sawyer Pond where they either build a raft or uncover their hidden raft and get out to the island on the pond. From there, they would fish for trout. Often they stayed the night and then returned home the next day.

We asked Bert where his favorite swimming hole was located in his youth. Without hesitation, he said “Second Iron.” Second Iron is still used as a swimming hole on the Saco River to this day. Bert said that people would go out there and spread out picnics on the flat rocks. Unfortunately, many times, people left garbage behind when they left and the owners of the property, the Trecartens, started shooing people out of the area because of the mess being created and the liability. It seems that some of the younger kids would take a daring jump from the tracks level of Second Iron and even from the top of the iron bridge. The accuracy of the jump was critical because there was and is only a small space between the submerged rocks that was deep enough to splash in without getting hurt on the rocks. Bert said that the water was between one foot and seven feet deep. He admitted to making the jump from half way up the iron.

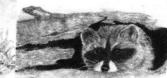
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Thank you Kate & **True North Vet** for helping make this Newsletter possible.



Drawings By:
Greta George
Bartlett, NH
comfibrook@gmail.com



We thank Greta for her support.

Greta's phone # 603 738 4958

Bert George—Continued

To get to Second Iron, the kids would ride their bikes down River Street to Cobb Farm Road. Bert said that they needed to be careful passing the Ryan's house (the first house on the right at the bend in the road) because Mr. Ryan had a turkey in the yard. It apparently loved to chase the boys on their bikes so they would watch for the turkey to move away from the road and then ride as fast as possible to get by the Ryan's. After that, they were clear to get to Second Iron.

Aside from the Second Iron bridge, the only bridge across the Saco River for horse, vehicle and pedestrian traffic in the Upper Bartlett area was and is the River Street Bridge by "Big Rock." The first bridge, which is pictured in post cards dated 1920, was a steel structure bridge. The bridge landed to the right of where the current bridge crosses the Saco River. That bridge came down in 1958 or 1959. It was replaced by the current bridge which has been damaged by storms, most recently in 2011 by raging waters from Tropical Storm Irene. Repairs on the bridge from Storm Irene were completed in 2015. Bert told us that a few people swam in the river at Big Rock in the 1950's but today it has become a popular spot for many tourists to relax on the banks of the Saco River.

We asked Bert to tell us about his favorite memory of his youth. He said that is was the time before he went to Kennett High School. Once at Kennett, he stopped playing sports locally and was then part of a much larger pool of kids. Bert did recall that in 1955 or 1956 (yes, at age 11 or 12), he bought a 1936 Buick (for \$50) from his cousin Roger King. He took the Buick out into the George's Woods and drove it around the trails. There were several collisions with trees and rocks so the car took a beating. Bert, along with his friends, Stephen Chandler who owned a pickup truck and Stan Dorsett who owned another old car, would eventually make their way across the Saco River to Cobb Farm Road. Bert said that they used the straight section of Cobb Farm Road for some "fun" with their vehicles. He said that his Buick did not have muffler on it so at 45 mph he would be shooting flames out of the exhaust pipes. Apparently, his car made quite a racket. To his knowledge, Bert's father never found out about the Cobb Farm Road activities. In 1958, Bert was heading off to high school so he parked the car in a barn, drained the fluids and did not return to the car until 1988. At that point, he sold the car for \$800. Bert also recalled another memory of "apple fights" with a bunch of kids from Madison. These incidents occurred when Bert was about 10 years old and hanging around with some of the older boys. *Continued next col-*

Bert George—Continued

Apparently, a bunch of boys from the Company Hill area (located up Albany Avenue past the tracks) and village boys were hanging around in the Water Precinct Park when a car load of boys from Madison came by and pelted the Bartlett boys with apples. Bert said that they would put the apple on the end of a stick and use the stick to propel the apples toward their targets with some force. Arthur Cook was one of the Bartlett boys who "lost" the apple assault. A local man named Newton Howard witnessed the Bartlett versus Madison apple battle. After it was over, Mr. Howard told the Bartlett boys that they should be ashamed of themselves for letting the Madison boys throw the apples at them. In response, Arthur found a fire hose and hooked it up to a hydrant and waited. The next time the Madison boys came by, the Bartlett boys were in what is now the Will Duggan Memorial Park on the corner of Route 302 and School Street by the present day Josiah Bartlett Elementary School. As the Madison boys came by for another round of fun with the Bartlett boys, Arthur turned the fire hose on them in their car and soaked the Madison contingent. That ended the Madison intrusions into Bartlett. Bert said that Mr. Howard just smiled when he saw the new use for the fire hose. Bert noted that all of the kids had good values and they were just being kids, resolving their own issues in their own ways.

Bert also told of skating on McKeil Pond. The story is actually not about the skating but about getting to and from the pond. In order to get to the pond, you needed to travel by the house of Mr. Scribbner. Apparently, Mr. Scribbner was a frightening figure to the kids because he always carried a shotgun with him. Mr. Scribbner worked in the fire tower on top of Mount Carrigain. Bert said that when they went to and from the pond, they would stop before the Scribbner house and check to see if the man was in the yard. When the coast was clear, they would run past the house. Bert said he would tell this story to his kids as they grew up.

Bert's High School and College Years

Bert reminded us that Bartlett had its own high school with the first graduating class of two students in 1925. The first graduate was Earl Chandler. This school was open from 1925 to 1958. After 1958, Bartlett high school students attended Kennett High School. Bert was one of those attending Kennett, entering Kennett in 1958 and graduating in 1962. He said that the Bartlett kids came with a reputation of being a bit unruly (obviously an undeserved reputation!).

Continued Next page..

...Bert George from preceding page

He recalled that when he was in Miss Goldman's class she made the three Bartlett students stand (Bert, Donald Hill and Mary Mead) where she proceeded to tell them that "they knew what happened in Bartlett and that was not going to happen at Kennett." Bert said he never knew what she was referring to but she certainly set her reputation as a tough teacher.

While attending Kennett High School, Bert got involved in the football team. That came about because a teacher found Bert and another boy, Ivan Roberts, in detention after school one day. Why were they in detention? Apparently, Ivan was a bit of a bully and one day, it was Bert's turn to get picked on. Ivan knocked Bert's books out of his hands. Bert wasn't going to stand for that treatment and a bit of a struggle ensued in the school hallway. Even though Ivan was the aggressor, they both landed in detention for their breaking of school rules.

In comes a teacher, Mr. George Davidson. He said they could get out of detention if they came out for football. Weighing his options of one week in detention or playing a game he didn't understand, he selected football. From all accounts, not his own, Bert went on to be quite a good football player for Kennett playing all positions because there were only about 14 - 20 athletes on the team at any one time.

During the winters of his youth, Bert skied at Stanton Slope (now a lost ski area and part of the Stilling Grant Development), Black Mountain and Intervale Ski Slope (another lost ski area). He said that he used to watch his friend, Norman Head, jump off the ski jump at Intervale. As for Bert, he had no desire to fly off the end of the ski jump.

Bert met his future wife, Greta, at Kennett. While Bert was a football and basketball player, Greta was a softball and basketball player. They met in their freshman year. Greta eventually talked a shy Bert into going to a dance. He said that he didn't know how to dance so Greta danced with the other boys. Their relationship blossomed and they eventually married many years later. In high school Bert said he had an Allstate Series motor scooter during his junior and senior years. He eventually sold that to Bert Elliott.

Bert attended the University of New Hampshire from 1962 to 1966. He said that unlike his brother who was into many academic things, Bert was a good student but more interested in sports. Bert played linebacker for the UNH football team.

Continued next column

...Bert George—continued

He was 5'10" and 180 lbs. He laughed saying that with the size of the players today he couldn't have even made it on to the team. While attending the university, Greta and Bert were married in 1964. UNH is also the place he got his first taste of the military in the ROTC program.

The Military Years

Bert spent a good deal of his life in the military service. We wondered how he got connected with the service. The story starts when Bert attended the University of New Hampshire (at a cost of \$425 per year). Bert entered the university undecided on his major or course of studies. While at UNH, Bert enrolled in the ROTC program and started palling around with other men who were in the ROTC Army and Air Force squads. This was a two year program and Bert enjoyed his time with the military at university. As a Second Lieutenant, the next step was going to navigation school at an Air Force base in Sacramento, California for 10 months in 1966. From there, he was assigned to fly on C141 cargo planes out of Charleston, South Carolina. In 1967, he was given an assignment to fly as the navigator on a flight from Charleston to Germany. The mission then continued on to Athens, Greece, then Libya, then Italy, then Spain and then finally back to Charleston. All the time, they were picking up and delivering cargo to different airbases. Bert said that it was that trip that made him decide to stay in the Air Force.

Bert would get his first taste of Viet Nam when he was assigned to fly on missions from Charleston, South Carolina to Viet Nam from late 1967 to early 1968. Bert was transferred to Omaha, Nebraska for a period of time and then, in 1972, he requested to be sent to Viet Nam. His tour in Viet Nam started in Da Nang and then moved to Laos and Thailand flying on EC47's. By then Bert had moved from cargo assignments to "listening" missions. He said that his missions would be aboard planes where they would fly at 8,000 feet with listening equipment pointed ground ward.

Continued on next page...



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Bert George—continued

On the flight were people who experts in different languages including Russian, Chinese, Cambodian, Laotian and Vietnamese. Essentially, these were intelligence gathering flights. As his service time was winding down, Bert was thinking he might be able to get an early discharge since he only had six weeks left in his military commitment but the government wasn't letting that happen. With just a few weeks left in that commitment, he was transferred from Viet Nam to a base in Illinois. He recalled that it was there that someone contacted him about the option of another assignment. Early on in his military service, Bert filled out what was called a "Dream Sheet." This listed assignments that Bert would have enjoyed taking if the opportunities arose. The person contacting him asked if he wanted to transfer to Alaska which was one of Bert's dream locations. He had options before him – 1. He could end his service in a few weeks and return to Bartlett to be with his family; 2; He could go to Alaska for a one year assignment without his family or; 3. He could go to Alaska for a three year assignment with his family. Bert said that he called Greta and told her the good news was they were going to Alaska but the bad news for her was that it was for three years. It was January 1973 and Bert moved his family to Alaska. Bert said that the Alaska assignment was "the best assignment in the world." After four and one half years in Alaska, he was sent to another school for more military training in Alabama and that added training also added another two years to his service commitment. Being that that would bring him to 10 years in the service, Bert decided to stay another 10 years and complete his 20 year service commitment and retire from the military.

Bert was eventually transferred to Florida where he was the squadron commander for a school that trained fighter pilots in water landing survival techniques. Drilling was very rigorous and in one drill which simulated a fall from 500 feet to the water with a parachute, an unfortunate incident occurred.

Continued next column

Bert George—continued

While conducting the drill, the parachute of one of the pilots failed to open properly and the young man broke his neck in the fall. Bert said that blame for this incident rolled downward to him. He told of another surprising incident while stationed in Florida. He said that at one point, the Army was training soldiers on night time jumps from an aircraft into the water. As he squadron commander, Bert was interested in observing the exercise one evening so he went out on a Navy boat with other officers and soldiers and waited in the quietly dark with night vision glasses expecting to see the Army jumping into the water. Instead, they saw a private boat come into the area and tie up to a buoy. Later, a low flying plane came over dropping bales that turned out to be marijuana into the water near the private boat. They had just witnessed a drug shipment. Bert said that they started up the Navy boat and headed for the private craft which took off into the darkness. Bert's boat picked up the bales, brought them to the dock and stacked them like bales of hay. He contacted his commander to tell him of the evening's activities. Eventually, the DEA came to the dock and took control of the drug shipment. At this point in his military career, he was at another transition point. He could have transferred to another post at the Pentagon or he could retire. Weighing his options, Bert considered that his father was now in a nursing home and his mother was suffering with Alzheimer's disease. Feeling a need to handle his family responsibilities, Bert retired with honors from the Air Force at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel at the end of 1987 and came home to Bartlett.

Continued next page...



Thank you **Sky Valley Motel** for helping to publish this Newsletter.

Photo taken from Route 302 looking west towards Mt Carrigain. 1949



Please remember that much of the information contained in this newsletter is also available at our web site.

www.BartlettHistory.org

Bert George—continued

What would have happened if Bert left the service when he was in Illinois with only six weeks to go (and not accepted the Alaska assignment)? Bert said that he would have returned to Bartlett and taken over the family store from his parents. He said that no one else in the family was interested in running the store so the George's rented the store to other shopkeepers for a while before eventually selling the store.

Thinking back to the original mission flying on the C141 in 1967, Bert recalled a story where he met the infamous Muammar Gaddafi, later known as Colonel Gaddafi, the leader of Libya. Bert said that when his plane landed in Libya, they were to pick up cargo and fly it to Italy. As the Americans were loading the plane to leave Libya, Gaddafi and two Libyan soldiers approached the plane. Bert said they boarded the plane and did an inspection of the cargo area. This was an unexpected occurrence so the American Embassy and Ambassador got involved. At some point, Bert approached Gaddafi and shook hands with him. Bert learned that the Libyans suspected that on at least one other flight by another crew, a Libyan was smuggled out of the country in a barrel. Gaddafi was stopping by to ensure that Bert's plane was not participating in this effort.

Continued next column....


Bert George—continued

Not finding any of his countrymen in the plane, Gaddafi and his soldiers left the plane and the C141 departed Libya. Thus ended Bert's brief encounter with a notorious world leader.

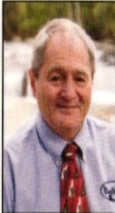
Thank You to Bert for

His Time and Memories


We started this interview with Bert expressing a concern that he didn't know what to say. In the end, we spent four incredible hours listening to him talk about his youth, his adulthood, his family, and the growth of Bartlett. We have recorded these four hours for future generations to hear and learn about their home town. We sincerely thank Bert for the time he gave us to tell his story.



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The Historical Herald

You can find all these stories and hundreds of other topics at our web-site:

BartlettHistory.Org Take a look sometime.

Grant

The Bartlett Historical Society received .

Time Passes:

221 Years Ago in Bartlett,

209 Years Ago in Bartlett:

119 Years Ago in Glen

109 Years Ago in Glen:

12 Years Ago: The Bartlett Historical Society was formed by a small group of individuals interested in preserving the history and heritage of Bartlett.

The Bartlett Historic Society Board of Directors hopes you have enjoyed this issue of The Historical Herald.

Norman Head, President — Bert George, Vice President
Hannelore Chandler, Treas — Kathleen Howard, Curator
Phil Franklin, Secretary

We encourage anyone with an interest in helping in any way to speak with any of us.