

BETHLEHEM
NEW HAMPSHIRE,

BETHLEHEM NEW HAMPSHIRE,

A Bicentennial History

(Updated 1999 Edition)

edited with introductory chapters by

GEORGE C. WILSON

and 1974–1999 update by

MIKE DICKERMAN

and written by the people of Bethlehem
with dedication to Hattie Whitcomb Taylor

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BETHLEHEM 1974–1999

BY MIKE DICKERMAN

In the 25 years since the Town of Bethlehem celebrated its first bicentennial—marking the 200th anniversary of the granting of the township of Lloyd Hills—inevitable change has taken place in the community.

Fires and demolition crews have leveled many of the remaining Main Street hotels that once flourished here each summer, leaving less than a handful of the grand structures still standing. In their places, condominiums, built during a vacation home construction boom in the 1980s, sprouted up in a couple of locations, though the number actually built never reached the lofty heights once predicted. An economic downturn left many of these planned resort communities either half completed, or never actually started.

The local school population, buoyed by a surge of new town residents, has risen to unprecedented numbers, though these appear to be leveling off as the millennium comes to a close. Shortly after the 1974 bicentennial bash, the Profile School District, encompassing the towns of Bethlehem, Franconia, Sugar Hill, and Easton, was formed and a new junior and senior high school was built on Route 18 on a portion of the former Glessner Estate. In more recent times, Bethlehem Elementary School has added new classroom space and a kitchen, while at Profile a new junior high school wing has been constructed.

Local taxpayers have also been asked in recent years to foot the bill for a new water treatment plant and new water distribution lines. Other improvements in town include the development of a new children's play area behind the Main Street town building, and the construction of two basketball courts and a skat-

ing rink just across the street at the site of the former Agassiz House.

The passage of time has seen Bethlehem lose some of its most devoted citizens, including longtime fire and police chief Howard Sanborn (1996), former state representative Malcolm Stevenson (1984), local justice Henry Greenlaw (1990), businessman, town clerk and former Executive Councilor George Noyes (1992), and well-known author and historian Frances Ann Johnson Hancock (1979).

Certainly the most talked about and divisive subject in recent town annals is the solid waste landfill operation on Trudeau Road. First established in 1976 by Harold Brown, the landfill has been the object of almost continual controversy since the mid-1980s, when the first major expansion at the site was announced. In this, the true bicentennial year of the township of Bethlehem, controversy still swirls about the landfill.

Downtown Bethlehem has undertaken a new identity in the late 1990s with the establishment of a number of antique shops on both the north and south sides of Main Street. Combined with the weekly flea markets held at the former Sinclair House site, Main Street is a booming place each Saturday during the summer and early autumn months, attracting throngs of people to the center of town.

Another significant addition to the downtown landscape is the new Bethlehem Heritage Society museum. Located at the site of the former Bonardi Block, in space shared with the local Chamber of Commerce, the museum and visitor's center opened to rave reviews in 1998, and in the first six months of operation attracted more than 4,100 visitors from 33 states and 11 foreign countries.

On the following pages, an attempt will be made to highlight some of the major events

which have taken place in Bethlehem since this history book was first published in June 1974, less than two months before the town's first bicentennial celebration. As is the nature of this type of historical beast, there will most certainly be some omissions, while others may feel that too much has been written about other events or happenings. In any event, it is the author's intent here to inform readers with a perspective on the Town of Bethlehem's last quarter century of existence. It has certainly been a fascinating 25 years, and well worth chronicling.

THE SCHOOLS

Profile Junior–Senior High Thirteen years after Bethlehem High School graduated its last class, high school students from Bethlehem were attending classes back in town when the new Profile Junior-Senior High School opened its doors in September 1976. The Profile School District, officially formed on June 6, 1974, combined the Bethlehem and Lafayette Regional school districts. Voters from both school districts overwhelmingly supported establishing the new school district, with Bethlehem residents voting 200–85 in favor of the proposal and Lafayette Regional residents approving the measure 303–71.

Just six months after the district was formed, a \$1.6 million bond was approved, authorizing construction of a new grade 7–12 school on a 20-acre tract donated to the school district by John Glessner Lee and his sister, Mrs. Charles Batchelder, Jr. Actual construction on the school commenced in the spring of 1975, and the new school was officially dedicated on August 28, 1976.

In its brief 23-year existence, Profile has had

just three principals. Charles Micciche was the school's first principal. He was succeeded in 1977 by Stephen North, who held that post for 20 years. Richard Larcom, the former head administrator at Keene High School, was named to succeed North in June 1997 and he retains that position in 1999.

Mirroring student population numbers around the region, Profile has seen a sharp increase in the number of students it serves, particularly in the last 10 years. Less than 240 students attended the school as recently as the 1990–91 school year. That number is closer to 350 students in 1999. School budgets have ballooned along with the student population. It cost close to \$3 million to operate the school district during the 1998–99 school year. That's about three times as much as it cost just 15 years ago, when the district spent \$979,070 in 1983–84.

The new Profile School building was plagued with a series of physical problems in its early years, prompting a \$357,000 school bond proposal in May 1980. Though that bond vote failed, a reduced \$158,700 bond, earmarked for various renovations, did pass in March 1981.

The school population boom of the early 1990s brought voters back to the polls again in 1992 and 1993, this time to vote on a new junior high wing and other renovations. It took three votes before a \$965,000 bond was approved on December 14, 1993. Oddly enough, just a couple of years after the addition was completed (Sept. 1994), Profile had its smallest graduating class ever. Just 23 students were handed diplomas in the school's June 13, 1997 graduation ceremony.

Bethlehem has been represented on the Profile School District Board by more than a dozen dedicated public servants since its cre-

ation in 1974. Among the inaugural board members were Dr. David Bishop, Frances Clark, Betty Smith and A. John Cassista. In subsequent years, Bethlehem board representatives have included Robert Harrington, Raymond Ritchotte, Pauline Keach, Oliver Underhill, Douglass Heinmuller, John Stevenson, LeRoy Deabler, Alistair MacBain, John Starr, Perley Whipple, William Brown, Margaret Gale, David Wood, Jim Payette, and Richard Virdone.

Bethlehem Elementary School In the last year that Bethlehem Elementary School operated as a K-8 facility, student enrollment averaged close to 270 pupils a day. The transfer of local 7th and 8th graders to Profile at the start of the 1976–77 school year precipitated a sharp drop in enrollment, which bottomed out in the mid-1980s, when less than 170 students attended classes at BES. Since then, the numbers have gradually risen to the point where now the student population is back over the 220 mark. It reached a high of about 250 from 1995 to 1997, but has slightly declined since then and appears to have leveled off for the time being.

The student population boom that saw attendance numbers increase by nearly 40 percent over a three-year period in the late 1980s forced school officials to take measures to ensure that the Main Street landmark could adequately handle the increased traffic and meet various state education mandates. Over a four-year period beginning in November 1989, Bethlehem voters went to the polls four different times to vote on proposed expansion plans. The first three bond votes—with price tags ranging from \$2.3 million to \$1.4 million—were all rejected. Then in September of 1992, a \$740,000 bond was approved allowing for the construction of a new three-story 4,200 square

foot addition. The new wing on the northwest corner of the brick structure added two new classrooms, a handicap accessible elevator, and a new kitchen, where hot lunches are now prepared for students and faculty members. The school auditorium and old locker room were also renovated. A formal dedication of the new school wing was held in November 1993, two months after the wing was put into use at the start of the new school year.

In contrast with 1974–75, when the school budget for the town was under \$400,000, it now costs more than \$1.5 million a year to run BES, with most grades split into two classes.

BES has benefited from the services of some outstanding administrators over the last 25 years. These include Richard Fagnant, Anthony Simone, Lou Lafasciano, and the current school principal, Gerald Benson, who came to BES in 1995 from the Bath School.

Bethlehem residents serving on the school board between 1974 and 1999 have included: John Rolli, Frances Clark, Dr. David Bishop, Clement Hubert, Richard Seagrave, Robert Harrington, Clare Brown, Pauline Keach, Ellen Pritham, Robert Piche, Bruce Brown, Evelyn Hagan, Alice Dreier, Norman Brown, Dan Ferreira, James Payette, Thomas Cudihy, Scott Stevenson, Tammy Reardon, Frank Hagan, Kim Mackay-Pearson, Oliver Cole, Lauren Corliss, and Tina Greenlaw.

Former students at the BES building—namely those who graduated from Bethlehem High School—still gather every five years in town for a grand alumni celebration. Typically the weekend event has attracted 250–300 BHS graduates, but time and age have begun taking their toll on the school's older alumni, with several grads having passed away in just the last year and a half.



The new three-story addition to Bethlehem Elementary School—built in 1992—can be seen at the far left of this photo, taken from in front of the school in 1998.

White Mountain School When Bethlehem celebrated its Lloyd Hills bicentennial in 1974, The White Mountain School was just a few years removed from the most turbulent times in the school's long history. The school, which had formerly been called St. Mary's-in-the-Mountains, nearly closed its doors for good in 1972 due to declining enrollment and subsequent financial troubles. But the school name change, the transformation from a girls-only boarding school to a co-educational institution, and the astute leadership of individuals such as E. Charles Sanborn and William F. Patterson, helped reverse the tide for The White Mountain School.

Mr. Sanborn was headmaster when the school adopted its new name in 1972. He came to the school from Northfield-Mt. Hermon School. As quoted in Linda Clark McGoldrick's 1986 centennial history of the school, Sanborn said, "The name change to the White Mountain School identifies us with a location and connotes a vigorous outdoor orientation that is consistent with our educational philosophy." Sanborn relinquished his headmaster duties in 1974 to Patterson, the school's assistant headmaster. Sanborn remained with the administration as director of long-range planning.

Under Patterson's leadership, several milestone events took place at WMS, including the construction of a new indoor recreation center and the McLane Center, a solar and wood-heated dormitory. Funding for both of these buildings was secured after a successful \$1 million capital campaign. Peterson's administration also introduced the school's long-running Cultural Events Series, which just completed its 25th season.

Jack Hood served as WMS' next headmaster, taking over for Sanborn in 1980, at a time when the school was again struggling with a sharp decline in enrollment. Hood, the former director of Interlochen Arts Academy of Michigan, laid the groundwork for the school's Learning Assistance Program, which is based on the philosophy of building self-esteem through personal success. The school also launched its ambitious Wilderness Odyssey Program in 1987, a year before Hood's departure. Under this program, now known as Outdoor Learning Expeditions, students and faculty participate three times a year in two- to four-day off-campus projects. Each expedition has a theme, such as "Walden, Thoreau, and a Philosophy of Wilderness," "Wilderness First Aid," or "Glacial Activity in Tuckerman Ravine." These trips use an experiential approach to learning which enables the subject matter to "come alive."

From 1988 to 1993, Sam Robinson served as WMS headmaster. The Harvard University graduate oversaw further development of the school's Learning Assistance Program, along with the English as a Second Language program. On Robinson's watch, the school also introduced its Community Service Program, in which all students are required to spend time working for various area non-profit agencies.

Charles L. "Mickey" Landry, Jr. (1993-97)

and W. Philip Irwin (1997 to present) fill out the roster of headmasters at WMS since 1974, with Irwin taking over on July 1, 1997, after serving as director of planned giving at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio. Current enrollment at the school is just over 100 students.

TOWN GOVERNMENT

The long-running controversy over the Trudeau Road landfill has placed a host of town government officials in the spotlight for the better part of 15 years now. Both elected officials, such as the board of selectmen, and non-elected appointees such as members of the planning board and zoning board of adjustment, have had their hands full dealing with one legal crisis after another over the landfill issue. At times, it has practically paralyzed operations in Town Hall.

One of the biggest changes to come about in local government was enacted in March 1997 when Town Meeting participants voted to expand the selectboard from three to five members. At a time when many northern New Hampshire communities are finding it difficult to get anyone to volunteer for this often thankless job, Bethlehem has had no shortage of candidates, even with an expanded board.

While issues surrounding the landfill have garnered most of the newspaper headlines in recent years, many other positive (yet overshadowed) accomplishments have come about thanks to the dedication and foresight of both elected and unelected officials.

Over the last 16 years, the Village District spent \$3 million upgrading its sewer system and constructing a new wastewater treatment facility off Austin Road (Route 142). A good portion of the funding for this project was pro-



A bulldozer pushes around solid waste trucked into and deposited at the controversial Trudeau Road landfill.

vided by the federal and state governments in the form of grants. With stricter federal water standards in place, the District was also required to undertake two major water-related projects, first in 1987 and then again in 1992. The 1987 project involved the construction of a permanent cover structure over the town reservoir on Strawberry Hill. An even more ambitious water project was undertaken in 1993 and 1994 after voters approved a \$2.55 million bond issue on Sept. 1, 1992. This bond, approved by an overwhelming 113-11 margin,

paid for new distribution lines, a new water treatment plant adjacent to the Strawberry Hill Reservoir, and the installation of water meters on all residential and commercial service lines.

Securing passage of the 1992 bond issue was not an easy chore for Village District commissioners, who had to go to voters three times in 18 months before winning approval. The third and final vote was taken with the threat of an Environmental Protection Agency fine hanging over voters' heads.

In 1995, the board of selectmen oversaw the process of changing the names of numerous town roads and streets, in anticipation of the July start-up of the statewide Enhanced 9-1-1 emergency dispatch system. Among the roads to receive new names were Upper Brook Road (now called Miller's Run), Old Wing Road (now Sawmill Road), South Street (Meadow Street), Reid Way (Evergreen Road), and Willson Heights (Cleo's Way).

That same year, a proposal by selectmen to curtail local emergency dispatch services and hire out this service to the Grafton County Communication Center was soundly rejected by residents in a Town Meeting vote. The selectmen estimated the move would have saved the town \$30,000 annually, but residents instead favored maintaining local control of the

dispatch center. In the last two years, major steps have been taken to improve dispatch center operations. Besides adding new computer equipment and software for better record-keeping, the center is now operating with a high output repeater situated atop Mount Agassiz. This move has eliminated the "blind spots" throughout town from which patrolling emergency personnel could neither receive nor transmit information back to the dispatch center.

Also in 1995, Town Meeting participants voted to change the way town business is conducted each March. The traditional Tuesday night business portion of Town Meeting was changed to the Saturday following the usual second Tuesday of the month date. Day-long balloting continues on the second Tuesday of March, however.

The roster of selectmen since 1974 includes: Anthony Pepitone, Gerald "Skip" Davidson, Howard N. Keach Jr., Robert Coute, Richard Tremblay, Edward O. Lauderbaugh, Raymond Little, George Hardy, Bruce Kilkenney, William Russell, Sylvia Dufour, Donald Lavoie, Myrtle Ledoux, Daniel Tucker, John "Jack" Anderson, Robert MacLean, John L. Wedick, Jr., Joel Goodell, Raymond Bushway, Sarah Mike, David Wood, Norman Brown, and Brad Presby.

Serving on the Village District Commission have been: Howard Stone, Floyd Brown, Malcolm Stevenson, Walter Blandin, Theron Miller, Harold Brown, John Rolli, Richard Robie, Sr., and Bruce Brown.

The short roster of elected town clerks includes Myrtle Ledoux (1974–1976), Karleen Sanborn (1976–1993), Brenda Darling (1993–1998), and newly elected Tandy Girouard (1999).

Town and Village District moderators have included Peter Smith (1974–1984), Alistair MacBain (1985–1999), and Mark Corliss (1999).

Like the board of selectmen and the Village District commissioners, the town planning board has had its plate full over the last two decades. In the 1980s it was the booming vacation home real estate market that threatened to consume the town. At one time, more than 600 proposed condominium units had either received planning board approval or had been presented to the board for review. The economic downturn of the late 80s and early 90s quashed most of the development plans, and gave town planners a bit of a breather.

Some controversy was generated late in 1993 when U.S. Cellular asked to erect a 120-foot cell phone tower on private land atop Mount Agassiz. Eventually planners approved the cellular phone proposal, and the tower was



A wooden frame cover over the town's Strawberry Hill Reservoir was constructed in 1987.

A few years later, a new water treatment plant was also built on Strawberry Hill.

put up on landowner Stan Harrison's scenic mountaintop property.

The Bethlehem Police and Fire Departments, long under the direction of Chief Howard Sanborn, underwent leadership changes in 1996 and 1997 following the August 1996 death of the 81-year-old native son. Former



The Fairways at Bethlehem (above) and Village at Maplewood (below) condominium complexes were constructed in the late 1980s during the vacation home building boom. Many other condominium projects were planned in town, but most fell victim to the recession of the early 1990s.



town selectman and longtime local firefighter John "Jack" Anderson assumed Sanborn's head fire duties in October 1996. Under his leadership, the fire department has seen many of its members undergo extensive training, and most are now state certified firefighters. The town's firefighting arsenal has also been upgraded extensively in the last three years. In 1997 alone, a new tanker was added to the department's fleet, as was a "new" 1955 American LaFrance 85-foot ladder truck. Despite its age, the ladder truck is in superb running condition, and it was purchased for just \$7,000—all secured through fire department fundraising efforts.

The fire department's volunteer ambulance corps, which still offers free service to townspeople, has endured its ups and downs over the years, but as of March 1999 was as healthy as

any time in the past. Approximately half of the ambulance crew members are certified emergency medical technicians, while most others are certified "first responders." Just last year a second-hand ambulance was purchased from the Conway Fire Department, and this new vehicle has proven to be a worthy successor to the older coach ambulance purchased a decade earlier from the Lyndon State College (Vermont) Rescue Squad.

The successor to Howard Sanborn in the police chief's position is Eric Lougee, who was appointed to the position in August 1997. Lougee came to Bethlehem after 10 years with the Lancaster Police Department. In between Sanborn and Lougee, Norman Brown held the chief's position on a one-year interim basis.

The police department has been significantly overhauled in the last three years. Un-



Local firefighters battle a raging inferno as the Alpine Hotel burns to the ground in November 1991.

der Chief Lougee's direction, the department has begun computerizing its records, including all motor vehicle accidents, incident reports, gun licenses, and domestic violence complaints.

The department's complement of four full-timers (including Lougee) has also been equipped with new firearms and bulletproof vests, while ongoing training has become mandatory for all police officers. A four-wheel drive Ford Explorer was added to the department's vehicle fleet two years ago and has served patrol officers well, especially in the winter months when local roads are at their worst.

It should also be noted that the memory of Sanborn, who served as town fire chief for 47 years, will live on in perpetuity at the fire station. In October 1997, fourteen months after his death, the station was dedicated in his honor and a memorial plaque featuring a portrait of Chief Sanborn was placed outside the station entrance.

The last 25 years in town have also seen the 1979 reactivation of the dormant Conservation Commission. This board, currently chaired by Tanya Tellman, meets monthly and is charged with reviewing wetlands permits and keeping an eye on matters relating to the town's natural resources. One of the Commission's newest jobs is managing the Town Forest off Prospect Road. The Town Forest was formed at the 1998 Town Meeting and is more than 70 acres in size. Three tracts, including the land around the former town dump, were consolidated to form the Town Forest. Another responsibility of the Conservation Commission is maintaining the Bethlehem segment of the New Hampshire Heritage Trail, which will eventually run north-to-south the length of the entire state.

The municipally-owned Bethlehem Country Club, which celebrated its centennial year of

operation in 1998, continues to prosper. Membership revenues have soared in recent years, more than doubling in the 10-year period ending with the 1997 season. Likewise, annual greens fees have risen to near the \$80,000 level. In 1998, for the second straight year, the club enjoyed a healthy year-end surplus.

Wayne Natti, PGA Professional (and as of 1999 the BCC Director of Golf Operations), has been at the course since 1994. He replaced longtime golf pro Fred Ghioto. In addition to their normal golf club duties and responsibilities, Natti and Ghioto have done an outstanding job with the club's popular Junior Golf Program for kids. The annual six-week summer program regularly draws more than 125 aspiring young golfers to BCC each Tuesday morning. BCC also serves as the base of operations for the New Hampshire PGA Junior Tour North—a highly competitive tournament series for teenage golfers, founded and directed by BCC's Natti.

The Bethlehem Public Library remains an

active place, with Muriel Brown now in her 27th year as head librarian. Though cramped for space, the library continues to serve the public in a variety of ways. As Mrs. Brown and library assistants Ruth Miller and Jean Wedick like to point out, the Bethlehem library may be the only one in the state that lends out ice skates during the winter skating season. With little variation, the annual circulation numbers for the last decade or so have averaged approximately 12,000 books, magazines, and tapes.

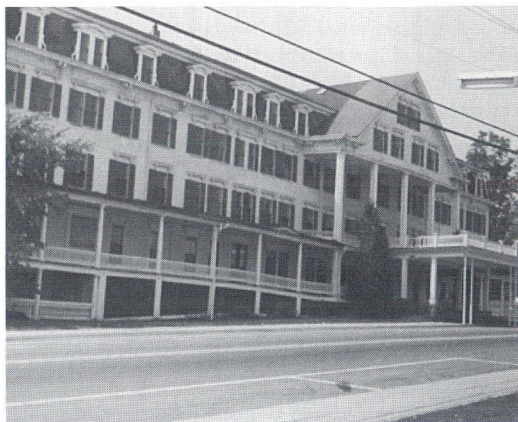
BETHLEHEM'S VANISHING HOTELS

Most of the remaining physical links to the town's celebrated summer resort era vanished in flames between 1974 and 1991. Of the more than 30 hotels that lined Main Street less than a century ago, just a couple are still standing, and even these structures appear to be on their last legs.

The Sinclair House, the Park View, the Upland Terrace, and the Alpine Hotel are among the hotels that have disappeared from the downtown landscape in the last 20 years. Certainly the Oct. 24, 1978, blaze that leveled the Sinclair House remains as one of the saddest occasions in Bethlehem's more recent annals. The Tuesday evening fire, which started on the top floor of the four-and-one-half story building, was discovered shortly after 7 p.m. and drew firefighters from more than a half dozen area communities. As *The Littleton Courier* noted in its coverage of the fire, the Sinclair was "preeminent among Bethlehem's 30 summer hotels" and only a valiant effort by firefighters prevented the nearby Villa West (or Agassiz House) and Perry House from going up in flames as well. At the time of the fire, the



Bethlehem Country Club celebrated its 100th year of operation in 1998. To commemorate the occasion, a history of the golf club was compiled by author Bob Labbanace.



The Sinclair House as it looked in 1975, the year it ceased operations.

hotel was owned by Merle Straw of Seabrook and True Glidden of Portsmouth.

The Sinclair had been vacant for a little more than three years, having failed to open for business as usual in the summer of 1975. This marked the first time since 1865 that the hotel was not entertaining guests. The contents of the Sinclair were auctioned off the following summer, and in 1977 there was talk that the building might be converted to a religious retreat. Any future plans for the building were rendered moot in the fall of 1978 when the building went down in a literal blaze of glory.

As traumatic as the Sinclair House fire was to Bethlehem residents and longtime visitors, an equally devastating fire occurred on August 25, 1990, when the historic Upland Terrace, built 133 years earlier by Rev. C. J. Fowler, was gutted by flames. As building owner Neil Chase remarked the day after watching the aging

hotel burn, "It's a shame to lose something like this . . . the whole area suffers for it." Both the Sinclair and Upland Terrace fires were intentionally set, ruled fire investigators.

About all that remains of the grand turn-of-the-century hotels are the Highland House, the Maplehurst, and the Turner's Tavern buildings. The Highland House, which was slated for refurbishing before the recession of a decade ago hit, lies vacant and quite forlorn at the west end of Main Street, overlooking the town golf course. The Maplehurst, last used in 1992 as the headquarters for the Chase Tennis Camp, has been vandalized numerous times since its abandonment and is now owned by the town. Its windows were boarded up in the fall of 1998 by fire department personnel. The former Turner's Tavern building is now known as Cedarcroft, after it was converted into an apartment complex in the mid-1980s.

The string of devastating hotel fires of the last quarter century began on March 28, 1975, when the New Grand View Hotel on Pleasant Street was destroyed in an early Friday morning blaze that started around 4 A.M. in the basement of the 80-year-old building. At the time of the fire, the hotel was owned by Jules Schriber.

Just three days after the Sinclair House fire, on October 27, 1978, a second Main Street landmark, the Maplehurst, was struck by fire. Fortunately only minor damage was sustained and the building, then owned by Neil Chase, continued to be used each summer for the next 14 years.

On March 26, 1980, the Brentwood Motel on Route 302 became the next fire victim, followed shortly thereafter by the "Six Pillars" on Agassiz Street (on June 14, 1980) and the 80-year-old Agassiz House (July 27, 1981).

The remote location of the Six Pillars, near



On the night of Oct. 24, 1978, the vacant Sinclair House is devoured by flames.

the Mount Cleveland Road junction on Route 142, hampered efforts to extinguish this 10 P.M. fire. The 17-room colonial-style mansion was owned at the time by William Nau of Kittery, Maine.

As for the Agassiz House, this four-story wooden structure caught fire a little after midnight and was first spotted by town police officer Tom Sheedy. Firemen had no chance to save this building as two intentionally set fires, at opposite ends of the building, gave the fire an insurmountable head start.

The aging Park View and Columbia Hotels on Park Street, used primarily by the dwindling number of summertime Jewish visitors, were lost in June 1987, not to fire, but to demolition crews. The two connected buildings were razed to make way for a proposed hotel/conference center, which, as things turned out, was never built.

At about the same time that Massachusetts hotel owner Robert Bowman was making plans to modernize the Alpine and Highland Hotels on Main Street, the century-old Wallace Hill Inn at the west end of town went up in flames, a little more than a year after it closed. The building, owned by Dean and Betsy Knapp-ton, was for sale at the time of the August 5, 1989 fire.

The summer and fall of 1990 saw two final fires strike the Main Street hotel district. The grand Upland Terrace was damaged beyond repair on the night of August 25. The hotel, which was also up for sale, had been used sparingly in recent years. Its primary function was as a rainy day gathering place for Chase Golf



The Highland House (left) and Maplehurst (right) buildings are among the few remaining Main Street hotels still standing in 1999. Both have been vacant for several years and are in severe states of disrepair.



The historic Upland Terrace is gutted by fire the night of August 25, 1990. Owned by Neil Chase, the building was used sparingly in its final years.



Flames rip through the Alpine Hotel building on Main Street during the Nov. 20, 1991, fire that leveled the structure.

and Tennis Camp enrollees. A couple of months after the late summer fire, the charred remains of the hotel were torn down and the lot in which it stood for so many years remains vacant, save for the building's foundation.

Twice within an eight-week span, also in 1990, the vacant Alpine Hotel was hit by suspicious fires. An early morning fire on November 10 caused minimal damage. More serious structural damage was incurred on December 22 when an early evening blaze heavily damaged the third floor. Eleven months later, in

a spectacular nighttime fire, the Alpine went down for good on November 20, 1991. The 114-year-old wood frame building, which was slated to be demolished in the coming winter months, was consumed in a little more than 90 minutes. The intense heat generated by the fire was enough to melt shingles on homes on the opposite side of Main Street.

While the town's older hotels have all but vanished, Bethlehem still proudly boasts a goodly number of lodging establishments which have helped the community maintain a

link to its hospitable past. Inns and bed and breakfast facilities exist all through town, many in some of the town's older summer cottages.

The Wayside Inn at Bethlehem Junction is the granddaddy of today's local lodging industry. The Inn dates back to 1825, when John Pierce, Jr., nephew of New Hampshire-born U.S. President Franklin Pierce, built the wood frame structure. Today, Victor and Kathe Hoffmann operate the 16-room inn, along with an adjacent 12-room motel complex. Dinner is served in the elegant Riverview Restaurant.

Along Main Street, the former Ivie Estate, once the summer home of the Woolworth family, is operated as the Mulburn Inn. Owners Christina Ferraro and Alecia Loveless have seven available guest rooms in the picturesque English Tudor-style mansion.

The Maplewood Country Club and Resort is also in the lodging business as of last winter after the historic Casino building, owned by Ben Ristuccia and business partner Ben Korsak, was renovated and 20 luxury suites constructed. The addition of the luxury suites marked the first step in a major development plan at the Maplewood property. Within the next two years, the resort's owners hope to build a new 100-120-room hotel adjacent to the Casino. The owners have also committed to pumping more money into the Donald Ross-designed 18-hole championship Maplewood golf course. With the possible exception of relocating the 17th green and 18th tee area, no major alterations for the course are planned.

Next to the Maplewood Country Club is The Balmoral, a fine colonial inn owned by Mark and Elizabeth Morrison. Closer to the main business district is the Angel of the Mountains B&B, located in the 104-year-old building long known as The Gables. This building is also known to many longtime residents and visitors

as the former Howard House Annex. Sally and Ben Gumm are the innkeepers of this B&B, which was built in 1895 by W. H. Kellner of Newark, New Jersey, for use as a summer home.

The Grand Victorian Cottage on Berkley Street, operated by Frances and Steve Marzalkowski, offers 10 smoke-free rooms in this restored turn-of-the-century mansion, while Sally and Jim Donovan operate The Little Guest House on Prospect Street.

Also at the west end of town is the delightful Adair Country Inn, on the grounds of the former Guider Estate. This spacious inn, with its English style gardens and wooded trails, is owned by Bill and Judy Whitman.

Other seasonal overnight accommodations are available locally at the Northern Star Inn (owned by Deborah Ford) and Dew Drop Inn (Michelle Authier and Steven Jergensen) on Maple Street, the Arlington Hotel (the Strulovic family) and the Sherman Inn (Lon Weston) on Main Street, the Pinewood Motel (Randy and Sue Nearing), Baker Brook Motel and Lodges (Irene Lowney), Hearthside Village Cottage Motel (Steve and Rhonda Huggins), and Snowy Mountain Motel (Gary and Annette Fritz), all on Route 302, and the Highlands Inn (Grace Newman) on Valley View Lane.

BUSINESS LIFE

Community leaders and residents have strived in recent years to forge a new identity for the town. Certainly the abundance of unique and spacious inns and B&Bs has gained Bethlehem a growing reputation as a community that still welcomes visitors with a charm and style that harkens back to the town's heyday of the early



The former Ivie Estate at the east end of Main Street, now owned by Christina Ferraro and Alecia Loveless, is operated as The Mulburn Inn.



The Angel of the Mountains bed and breakfast occupies the building formerly known as The Gables. Ben and Sally Gumm serve as innkeepers.

20th century. Bethlehem is also becoming quite well known as a destination for treasure-seeking antique buyers and sellers. Close to a dozen antique shops may be visited in the summer; most lie within the Main Street shopping district. Flea markets each Saturday from June through fall foliage season attract other curiosity seekers.

Many of the rejuvenation efforts undertaken in recent times have been backed or sponsored by the Bethlehem Redevelopment Association, which was chartered on June 21, 1982. The BRA's first president was James Tibbetts, while Len Reed was the vice president. One of the organization's most devoted and tireless members was the late Dave Hard, for whom the BRA's annual property improvement award is now named. A similar improvement award for Main Street properties is named for deceased local businessman Malcolm Stevenson. Over the last couple of years the BRA has placed most of its focus on revitalizing and enhancing the Main Street business district, notes current president John Keller. One highly visible outgrowth of these efforts was the July 1997 formation of the Bethlehem Heritage Society and the subsequent opening of a new visitors center and museum on Main Street. This was possible thanks in part to a \$25,000 Town Meeting appropriation in March 1998.

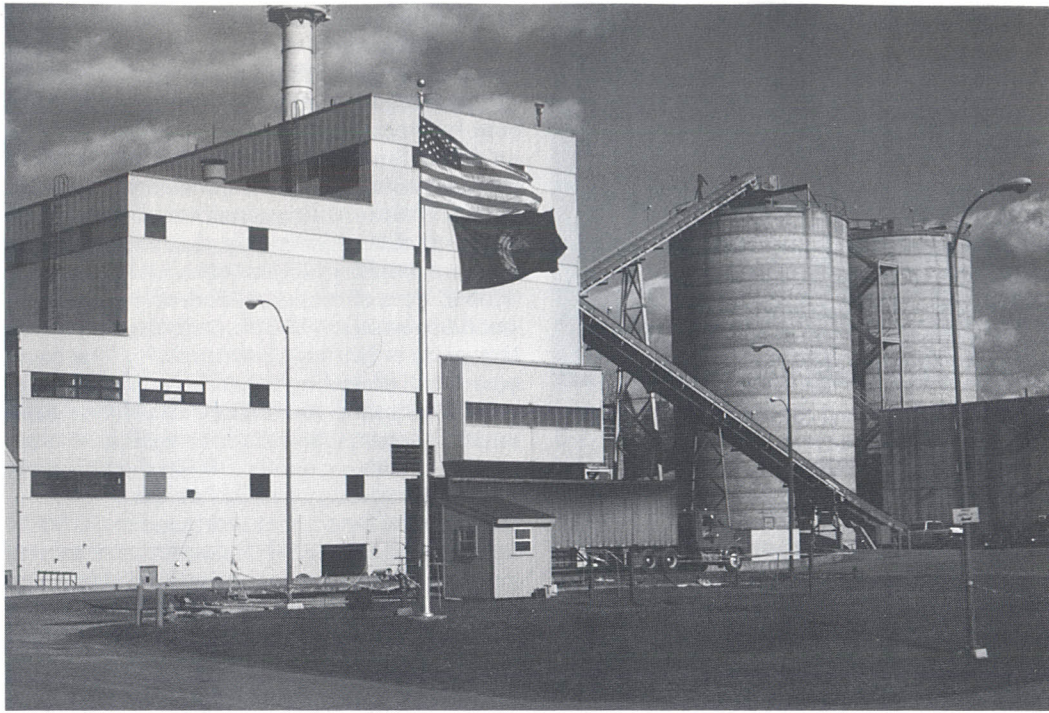
More than 30 growing town businesses, large and small, have also been aided over the last 13 years by the Bethlehem Revolving Loan Fund. This fund was established in 1986 and its pool of money is used to create or expand employment opportunities, as well as to stabilize employment in existing businesses. The low-interest matching fund loans have been made available for capital purchases, inventory purchases, working capital, and marketing or promotional campaigns.

From a business standpoint, the town has experienced its share of highs and lows in recent decades. The closing of the Sinclair House in the summer of 1975 tempered the enthusiasm of a year earlier when Neil Chase rejuvenated the Maplewood Golf Course and hosted a grand opening celebration attended by celebrities such as Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and sportscaster Curt Gowdy (himself a Bethlehem landowner).

In the mid-1980s residents were geared up for a wave of vacation home construction projects, fueled by a robust economy that seemed limitless. The Village at Maplewood condominium and townhouse complex was the first to sprout up, and was followed shortly thereafter by The Fairways at Bethlehem development next to the town golf course. When the economy took a downturn in the late 1980s, hundreds of condos were either approved for



Paul Hudson, left, and Harvey Burlock cut the ribbon to officially open the new Bethlehem Heritage Society museum and tourist visitor center on Main Street in June 1998. More than 4,000 people visited the museum in its first six months of operation.



The Pinetree Power woodchip plant on Route 116 began producing electricity in late 1986.

construction or were in the process of being reviewed by an overburdened town planning board. Only a scant few units—mostly at the Village at Maplewood—were ever built, while all that remains at some of the development sites are abandoned concrete foundations.

In March 1985, a building permit was issued by the town for construction of a new woodchip electric plant on Route 116, between Littleton and Whitefield. The multi-million dollar facility, operating as the Pinetree Power plant, came on line in late 1986 and is among the few new industrial sites to be established in Bethle-

hem since 1974. Over the last 10 years, development along this same stretch of Route 116 has seen Littleton Lumber Company relocate to the former Midway Drive-In Theater property, while a motorcycle dealership, Littleton Harley Davidson, was established a short distance away in early 1989.

The summer of 1987 saw the Colonial Theater on Main Street refurbished by the Eames family of Littleton, and every summer since then the movie house has shown first-run films from the 4th of July through Labor Day. In the fall of 1992, the interior of the theater was

also used as the setting for the closing scene of the independently-produced motion picture, *Where the Rivers Flow North*, starring Rip Torn and Tantoo Cardinal.

Cable television debuted in Bethlehem in the fall of 1989 when AMRAC Cable hooked up its first customers. Longtime resident Howard Keach was one of the principles in the start-up cable television firm. The cable system has since been bought and sold several times. Denver-based FrontierVision is the current cable provider, having purchased the previous provider, State Cable TV Corporation, in late 1998. In February 1999, however, it was announced that Pennsylvania-based Adelphia Communications Corp., the nation's seventh largest cable television firm, had agreed to buy FrontierVision's parent company.

The fall of 1989 also saw People's Bank of Littleton open a new branch office in the former Indian Head North and Littleton National Bank building on Main Street.

Privately-owned Mount Agassiz has played an important role in the expanding North Country telecommunications field. It was approved as a site for a new 120-foot high cellular phone tower in November 1993. The galvanized steel structure, built near the summit, sits on land owned by mountaintop resident Stan Harrison. The mountain, long known for its splendid summit vista toward Franconia Notch and the mountains to the southeast and southwest, remains accessible to hikers thanks to the generosity of Harrison, who for the last decade has taken up year-round residency on the mountaintop with his wife, Katherine Rhoda. Harrison operates a research and development business atop the mountain, having received research grants in recent years from the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, and a number of private corporations.

Garnet Hill, the highly successful natural fibers mail order catalog firm based in Franconia, expanded its operations into Bethlehem in 1989 when it constructed a 19,200 square foot warehouse just off I-93. The warehouse/distribution center has been added onto six times since, with the most recent expansion taking place in 1998. To date, the warehouse has grown to 84,000 square feet. Future use of the building is uncertain, however, as Garnet Hill's holding company, Boston-based International Cornerstone Group, announced in mid-1998 that it plans to shut down the Route 18 distribution center, probably in mid-2000. All distribution services will instead be handled at a much larger facility about 40 miles north of Cincinnati, Ohio.

The summer of 1998 marked the official opening of the new visitor's center and museum on Bethlehem's Main Street. The center, housed in the former Ranlett's Cafe building at the site of the Bonardi Block, was renovated over the course of several months in the spring and early summer. The Bethlehem Heritage Society, now some 200 members strong, has gathered an impressive amount of memorabilia from the town's earlier days, and hundreds of these items are currently on display in the 140-year-old building. Weekend crowds at the museum were quite impressive during its initial summer of operation.

Speaking of crowds, two other properties elsewhere in town can probably lay claim to being the busiest places in Bethlehem between the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

The Rocks Christmas Tree Farm, under the capable management of Nigel Manley, is owned and operated by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, which purchased the historic Glessner Estate in February 1978. The Rocks has been selling trees for



The Rocks Christmas Tree Farm is operated by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. The Society purchased the former Glessner estate in early 1978 and established the tree farm about a decade later.

a decade or more now, and its popular choose-and-cut program draws hundreds of people to the property each weekend day between the two late year holidays.

Finnegan's Fine Firs, on Cherry Valley Road, is another popular Christmas tree farm owned and operated by retired U.S. Forest Service employee Myles Finnegan and his family. The Finnegans began planting trees on their property in 1968 and started selling them commercially in 1975. In a typical season, they will sell between 1,700 and 2,000 trees through wholesale, retail, cut-and-choose, and mail order methods.

Since 1996, the holiday season has been ushered in locally with a weekend "Christmas in Bethlehem" celebration, usually early in December. Sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, the festivities have included a homes and inns tour, an arts and crafts show at The Rocks, sleigh and wagon rides, a gingerbread house contest, and the stamping of holiday

cards with the special Bethlehem post office Christmas cachet, designed by former postmaster Margaret Hildreth.

The beginning of Bethlehem's bicentennial year has seen one other exciting development on Main Street, that being the relocation of the Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN) to the Martignetti/Dibner Block. This five-year-old organization has been a true North Country success story, helping area women from all walks of life develop their own small businesses. WREN spent most of its first five years in Littleton, starting as a "one room operation" according to executive director Natalie Woodroffe. As WREN establishes itself on Main Street, it lays claim to having 240 supporting members, and is affiliated with nearly 100 area women-owned businesses.

At its new Bethlehem headquarters, WREN hopes to develop gallery space for area women artisans, a meeting space for workshops and other functions, studio space for artists, incubator office space for new women-owned businesses, and a retail marketplace where WREN members will display and sell their wares.

Elsewhere in town, the Knights of Columbus, O'Neil Council 1835, of Littleton, has built a new Council Home on Route 18 in Bethlehem, midway between Profile School and Interstate 93. The K of C home includes a meeting hall that can accommodate as many as 200 people.

The former Congregational Church on Maple Street, long the home of Maplewood Odd Fellows Lodge No. 100, is now owned by Jodo Karate instructor Joe Simard of Bethlehem. The Odd Fellows Lodge, which celebrates its centennial year in 2000, now meets regularly at the Durrell Methodist Church.

The town's two most popular and enduring Main Street restaurants are Lloyd Hills Restaurant, opened in 1987 by Bill and Dianna

Green in the former Parker's Drug Store building, and Rosa Flamingo's Restaurant, opened in June 1987 by Barbara Ferringo. Rosa's succeeded Joe and Barbara Ferringo's former restaurant, The Villa, which burned to the ground in a January 1984 fire.

The former Maplewood Caddy Camp property on Route 302 has been home to the Friendship House drug and alcohol treatment center for most of this decade. The Northern New Hampshire Council on Alcoholism (NNHCA) bought the property in 1990 and undertook extensive renovation work over the next several years. NNHCA purchased the building and land from Jack and Barbara Timm. It was being used as a religious retreat and study center at the time.

At the other end of town, also on Route 302, Burch House, a private, non-profit therapeutic residential community for adults in emotional crisis, has been in operation since 1978. Burch House was founded by former Franconia College faculty members David Goldblatt and Catherine Symmes.

In June 1998, the Easter Seals Foster Home for teenage boys from northern Vermont and New Hampshire opened its doors on Mount Cleveland Road. The facility is situated in the former White Mountain Country Club clubhouse.

Northern New Hampshire Youth Services operates a similar group home for teenage girls on Maple Street. Originally called Orion House, this facility was established in 1986 and serves mostly families and teens from the North Country. Jay Apicelli serves as its director.

Active houses of worship in town as we approach the new millennium include Durrell Memorial United Methodist Church on Main Street (Rev. Arthur Savage); Christ the King Roman Catholic Church on Main Street (sum-

mers only, Father Joseph Klatka); Bethlehem Hebrew Congregation, Strawberry Hill Road (Bruce Diamond, rabbi, July only; Amy Mitz, cantor); the non-denominational Bethlehem Christian Center on Maple Street (Steve Palmer, pastor); New Life Assembly of God Church on Route 116 (Kevin Horion, interim pastor); Congregation Machzikei Hadath & Mikwah, Lewis Hill Road (summer only).

TOWN ANNALS (1974-1999)

Even in a small rural community such as Bethlehem, an awful lot can happen in the span of two and a half decades, and that has surely been the case. While many of the highlight events of the last 25 years have been mentioned in previous sections of this updated town history, there's lots more to talk about. Here then is a chronological look at some of the other interesting happenings in Bethlehem since the start of the town's first bicentennial year.

In January 1974, police managed to solve the December 14, 1973 robbery of the Littleton National Bank branch office on Main Street. Charged and later convicted of the \$7,000 robbery was 39-year-old James J. O'Shaughnessy. Another high profile arrest was made in town at the start of the summer tourist season when Grafton County attorney John Eames and his brother Jeremiah were charged with violating the state's obscenity and pornography laws by showing the X-rated movie "Deep Throat" at the Colonial Theater. John Eames, who was suspended from his county attorney's job while the case made its way through the courts, was eventually acquitted of the charges, as was his brother.

At the height of the summer season, Bethle-

hem hosted its Lloyd Hills bicentennial celebration the weekend of August 9-11, 1974. The gala festivities featured a Friday night street dance, a children's parade, an antique show and sale, a pie-eating contest, a bicentennial ball at the Maplewood Casino, a fireworks display, and a grand parade on Sunday, which drew thousands of spectators to town.

In the summer of 1976, the town's zoning board of adjustment made a ruling that would have major ramifications a decade later. A July 13 variance issued to Trudeau Road landowner Harold Brown paved the way for a new sanitary landfill operation there.

A month later, as construction neared completion on the new Profile School building on Route 18, and as residents were sadly preparing to take part in an auction of the Sinclair House contents, the Durrell Memorial United Methodist Church celebrated its 100th anniversary on August 25, 1976. This was just a day before the hotel auction and three days before the dedication of the new school.

In the winter of 1978, one of the town's more historic properties, the 1,200-acre Rocks Estate, was acquired by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. The February land deal, deemed the "largest Society acquisition in 40 years," according to SPNHF President Paul Bofinger, included the sale of 17 buildings and the working farm. The sale of the estate was announced jointly by the Society and John Glessner Lee and Martha Lee Batchelder, owners of the property.

For a short few years in the late 1970s and early 1980s, The Rocks was home to the non-profit Forest and Farm Museum, which opened on July 21, 1979 with more than 200 people in attendance. Monetary woes forced the eventual shutdown of the museum, and in more recent times, the property has been used



Crowds line Main Street in August 1974 for the Lloyd Hills bicentennial parade and celebration.

by SPNHF as its North Country headquarters and as a working Christmas tree farm.

The following year, Bretzfelder Memorial Park on Prospect Street was established after Helen Bretzfelder bequeathed a 17-acre tract to the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. The original 17 acres of the park were at one time owned by Helen Bretzfelder's father, New York attorney Charles B. Bretzfelder, who found inspiration and comfort in a towering white pine tree that still serves as the centerpiece of the park. Under this tree, Mr. Bretzfelder often paused in his daily walks to nap, or to simply enjoy the surrounding natural beauty. Following his death in 1943, Mr. Bretzfelder's ashes were scattered about the base of the tree, per his request.

Bretzfelder Memorial Park is owned and managed by the SPNHF, but the Bretzfelder Memorial Park Committee, consisting of appointed area citizens, provides guidance in the

The Hillview Apartments senior citizen complex was completed in 1980 at the site of the former Perry House. It provides 20 apartment units for local seniors.



development and use of the property in accordance with the terms of Ms. Bretzfelder's bequest. Through a number of purchases and land donations, the park has grown to about 77 acres. Among the park's feature attractions are the Bretzfelder Forest Center (first opened in November 1986), a wildlife pond, trails for skiing and hiking, interpretive signs, and a picnic shelter and outside picnic area.

As 1979 came to a close, ground was broken in the downtown area for a new senior housing complex at the site of the former Perry House on lower Agassiz Street. The Hillview Apartments complex greeted its first tenants in the fall of 1980 and continues to provide housing in its 20 apartment units.

Bethlehem Municipal Court, a local institution for more than 70 years, closed on August 22, 1983, when longtime Judge Henry Greenlaw retired from his post at the age of 68. The court handled 350–500 cases a year, with sessions being held every Tuesday.

Controversy surrounding the Trudeau Road landfill erupted for the first time in the summer of 1985 when the facility's owner, Sanco, sought a major expansion at the site. Sanco became owner of the landfill property in 1983 and 1985 after completing two separate land deals with property owner Harold Brown. Initially the town's zoning board denied Sanco a special exception, but the board later reversed itself, granting approval with numerous conditions. The landfill saga, which has garnered local newspaper headlines ever since, continues to play itself out in town hall, in the courtroom, and along Trudeau Road. Since 1985, the landfill has been granted several other contested expansions, including one earlier this year, just weeks before the facility would have reached its capacity.

On several occasions in the 1990s, town resi-



The controversial Trudeau Road landfill has dominated local politics for the better part of last 15 years. It is currently owned by a Rutland, Vermont-based firm and is more than 20 acres in size.

dents have been asked to cast votes on warrant articles relating to future expansion of the facility. Voters repeatedly passed measures that restricted new or expanded landfill operations in town. Still, the landfill remains in operation, the beneficiary of several favorable Grafton County Superior Court rulings, which may yet be appealed.

Over its 23-year life span, the landfill has had

several owners, with publicly traded Casella Waste Systems of Rutland, Vermont the current owner/operator. Earlier this year, CWS agreed to a merger with a New Jersey-based waste disposal and recycling firm. What impact this merger will have on the state of affairs at the Bethlehem landfill remains unclear.

On August 2, 1986, a new highway bridge over the Ammonoosuc River at Bethlehem



Pierce Bridge near Bethlehem Junction was replaced by a new span over the Ammonoosuc River in 1986. The modern \$1.8 million bridge is named in memory of local World War II veteran Sergeant Charles A. Wolcott.

Junction was dedicated in honor in of fallen World War II veteran Sergeant Charles A. Wolcott, a native of the town and a Bethlehem High School graduate. The new \$1.8 million span replaced the green iron Pierce Bridge.

In early summer of 1987, Bethlehem was officially designated "Poetry Capital of New Hampshire" by the state legislature following a campaign initiated by George Epstein and the late Myrtle Doane, co-founders of the Poetry Council of Bethlehem. The designation was backed by all three local state legislators, Kathleen Ward, Rita McAvoy, and Henry Whitcomb. Road signs announcing the honorary title were shortly thereafter erected at both ends of town along Route 302.

An even more prestigious honor was bestowed on resident basket maker Newt Washburn in the fall of 1987. In early October, the 72-year-old Washburn, a fourth generation Abenaki basket maker, traveled to the nation's capital to receive the National Heritage Fellowship Award from the National Endowment for

Resident basketmaker Newt Washburn was honored in the fall of 1987 when he received the prestigious National Heritage Fellowship Award from the National Endowment for the Arts.



the Arts. Washburn's work is known nationwide, and at least one of his baskets is in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

June of 1988 saw an ambitious group of residents and area business owners host a revival of the turn-of-the-century "Open for the Season" celebration. The weekend event, which drew thousands to town, featured a modern day coaching parade on Saturday and a gala ball at the recently renovated Maplewood Casino. A second Open for the Season celebration was held the following year, with the carriage parade again the highlight event. A third and final Open for the Season weekend, with a parade, arts and crafts fair, pancake breakfast, and grand ball at the Mount Washington Hotel at Bretton Woods, followed in 1990. Efforts to continue the event ended the following year when organizers were unable to come up with an adequate number of volunteers. Smaller scale Open for the Season festivities have been held the last couple of years, but with markedly tinier crowds in attendance.

One place where crowds haven't been lacking in recent summers is Bethlehem's recreation area off Elm Street. Youth baseball and softball participation grew by leaps and bounds in the 1990s, prompting construction of two new ballfields. Twice in recent years (including 1998) these fields have played host to state Bambino League baseball and softball tournament contests. In 1998, the combined baseball and softball programs had 186 participants.

Winter recreationists, meanwhile, formed the Mt. Agassiz Trail Association early in the 1990s. This group of snowmobile enthusiasts maintains between 35 and 40 miles of trail throughout the town, including important new connecting links tied to the Franconia, Twin Mountain and Littleton trail systems. After

several lean years, the club has boosted its membership roster to 60 persons. A new trail groomer was purchased for the 1998-99 season, reports club president Rick Chamberlain.

The Bethlehem Ski Club, which operated the Cottage Street ski tow at the base of Mount Agassiz, no longer exists, having disbanded several years back. Bethlehem Elementary School's student ski program has more or less replaced the Ski Club. The BES program offers students a weekly opportunity to ski at state-owned Cannon Mountain in Franconia Notch State Park. Participants may also choose to skate at the new town ice rink, cross country ski or go swimming at Bretton Woods Resort, go bowling in Littleton, or go snowshoeing.

The ice rink and adjoining basketball courts at the junction of Routes 142 and 302 were constructed over a two-year period in 1995-96. Money to build the facilities came from local

fund-raising activities, Town Meeting appropriations, and from in-kind donations from North Country Environmental Services, operators of the Trudeau Road landfill. These fund-raising efforts also resulted in the erection of all new playground equipment behind the town building and adjacent to the municipal swimming pool.

At the 1998 town meeting, residents established a new town forest on land off Prospect Road, just across from Bretzfelder Park. The forest, a little over 70 acres in size, includes the old town dump property, an adjoining tract seized for non-payment of taxes, and a mystery tract whose ownership could not be traced through normal tax records.

One of the most horrific incidents to occur in town over the last decade was the November 16, 1994 murder-suicide of Gail Machado and her husband of three months, Michael Ma-



The new town recreation park across from the Cruft Block features basketball courts and an outdoor skating rink.

From 1988–1990, Bethlehem hosted a rejuvenated “Open for the Season” weekend, highlighted each year with a grand modern day coaching parade. The late June event drew several thousand spectators to town each year.

OPEN FOR THE SEASON

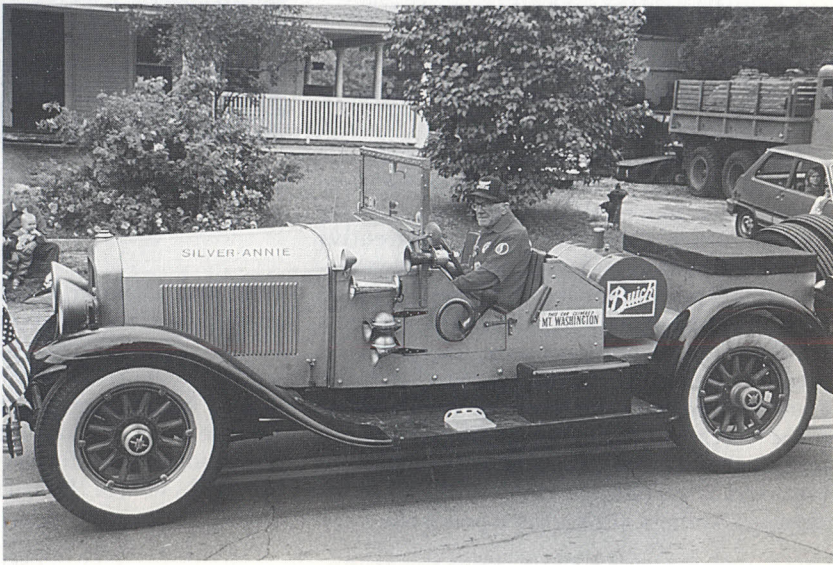
Coaching Parade and Festivities



June 18-19, 1988

Bethlehem, New Hampshire





chado. The late night incident at the couple's Maple Street/Austin Road home sent tremors through the BES community, where Mrs. Machado worked as a special education aide. Police speculated after the incident that Michael Machado first shot and killed his wife, then tried to cover up the shooting by attempting to burn down their house. Just as the first police officer arrived at the scene, Mr. Machado turned his gun on himself and fired.

The passage of time has taken the lives of numerous other beloved members of the Bethlehem community, though by less violent means.

On July 7, 1977, Charles Lavoie, past selectman and school board member, and owner of the Lotta Rock Dairy, passed away at just 46 years of age.

Teacher, author, and area historian Frances Ann Hancock Johnson, 79, died on October 18, 1979, taking with her a wealth of information.

In 1984, town historian Hattie Whitcomb Taylor, 86, author of the booklet *Early History of the Town of Bethlehem, N.H.*, first published in 1960, passed away, as did longtime Village District Commissioner and state legislator Malcolm "Mac" Stevenson, then 74.

Other notable local deaths since 1974 include those of: George Noyes (1992), longtime town clerk, state representative, Grafton County Commissioner, and Governor's Executive Councilor, at 84 years of age; Wendell Stephenson (1990), one of four weather observers atop Mount Washington on April 12, 1934, when a wind gust of 231 miles per hour, the highest on record, blasted the summit, at age 81; Judge Henry Greenlaw (1990), at age 75; Dr. Mortimer Fisch (1994), longtime library trustee, president of the Bethlehem Hebrew Congregation, and town resident since 1974, at age 76; Howard Sanborn (1996), town police chief, fire



Police officers from all over the North Country escort the hearse carrying longtime Police and Fire Chief Howard Sanborn to his grave in August 1996.

chief, and constable, at age 81; Lucie C. Brooks (1997), longtime school cafeteria worker, at age 80; Fred Aldrich (1998), proprietor of the Bethlehem Village Store since 1973, at age 83.

Also: Frank Sheedy (1996), longtime Village District water superintendent, at age 79; Doris Stevenson (1996), former school board member and Village District clerk, at age 87; Dorothy Hogan Guider (1991), daughter of

former American Bar Association president Frank J. Hogan and widow of successful area businessman John W. Guider, at age 89; Gertrude Harrigan (1978), former town tax collector (1945-72), police dispatcher, and nurse, at age 82; Fred Stevenson (1978), owner of Valley View Farm, at age 69; Philip Lyster (1978), owner of Midacre Farms on Prospect Street, at age 77.



