

Historical Society

OF WILMINGTON, VT



Carriage Shed Built in 2014 By Pioneer Timber Frame

Family History of the Carner Farm and Graway Dairy

Ray Hill Road, Wilmington, Vermont (From the perspective of the Carner Girls, Laura, Eleanor and Isabelle)

George Spaulding Carner and Polly M. Carner, parents of Wayne Philetus Carner, lived in Wayland, Michigan. On October 24, 1871, Wayne Philetus Carner was born there. Grace Belle Haggard was born on September 29, 1886 of the Haggard family. Both families traveled a great deal and at some point, Wayne and Grace met in Canada and were married in 1908 in Vegerville, Alberta, Canada. Stanly Collin Carner, son of Wayne and Grace was born in Penticton, British Columbia, Canada on July 18, 1910. In that same year, Margaret Ellen Donahue was born in Fairlee, Vermont, February 1, of John and Margaret Salls Donahue. The paths of Stanly and Margaret were destined to cross.

Isabelle notes that Wayne and Grace Carner came from British Columbia, Canada in 1912 by Stanley Steamer automobile and bought a farm in Halifax, Vermont through a Strout Realty advertisement. Once the snow melted it was clear that the farm was "a rock pile," with not much good grazing land for dairy cattle. They sold it and moved to Mountain Mills, which was part of Wilmington, where they opened a dry goods store. Yearning for a farm again, they moved to the Wheeler Block in 1916 in Wilmington continuing to look for another farm and on June 14, 1921 bought the farm on Ray Hill from Willis Boyd. There was a total of 48 acres – 34 on the east side of Ray Hill and 14 on the west side. The farm house was built on an existing foundation. Our grandparents, Wayne and Grace, purchased the house from a Sears Catalogue.

The Carner farm had been in our family for three generations, a total of 93 years. This year of 2014 is especially notable, because the farm land surrounding the old reservoir site, which has been in Eleanor's family since 1976, was sold to the current owner of the old farm house. The decision to sell was discussed many times, but this year the time was right. The new owner has enlarged the old farmhouse, built a beautiful stable, and has plans to have the property continue as a farm, perhaps someday for horses. In any case, it was a good decision and all the Carner girls echo the words: "Welcome to Ray Hill!" We know our parents would be pleased to see the farm continue in a similar format and not be developed. Keeping the green vistas is the way we want to remember it.

Graway Dairy

The dairy's name was derived from a combination of our grandparents' first names, Grace and Wayne, and the business was established in 1922. Our father, Stanly, was about twelve years old at this time. The farm business was developed with the raising of Jersey cows and selling raw milk at this time.

On November 1, 1943, Margaret and Stanly took over the farm and milk business. Sometime in the early 1950's our grandparents moved to downtown Wilmington where Wayne built a home on Church Street in Wilmington entirely by himself for Grace. That building is the current location of the Food Bank in Wilmington. At that time our parents took over the business, Laura was three and Eleanor was one. Our story really begins there where the three of us grew up, the Carner girls, Laura

Emily, Eleanor Ruth and Isabelle Agnes. We grew up in the business and had a huge role to play in the daily operation. As soon as we could reach the clutch pedal, it became imperative that we learn to drive the tractor and truck. On our 16th birthdays, we all had to get our driving license. We remember coming back into town when Dad let us drive from picking up milk at Wheeler's farm and hoping and praying that the light would be green and we would not have to stop and shift and that as we drove up Ray Hill, Dad would not insist that we stop at the top of the first hill, shift into neutral, pull up the emergency brake and then shift back into low, slowly letting off the brake, applying the gas, and not rolling back at all. Quite a hair raising experience! Also, Dad would send us out into the field to learn to back up, since we couldn't hit anything out there! Eleanor remembers that Laura did most of the driving and was often called upon to be in charge of many tasks in the farm life. Sometimes being the eldest, wasn't always the easiest!

Eventually, the dairy became modernized and a pasteurization facility was developed, but not until the Spring of 1947. The farm business continued with the raising of Jersey cows and selling pasteurized milk in glass bottles. The milk room had two coolers, a pasteurizer, aerator where the pasteurized milk would flow over for cooling, ultimately ending up in a vat above the bottling machine. Part of this operation included a machine that separated cream from the milk and for a while bottled cream was also sold. Margaret also tried her hand making some cottage cheese, very time consuming, but delicious – something about the rennet comes to mind.

Eleanor notes from some early information the importance of Jersey cows in the dairy industry. It was important to register one's herds by their history so that when and if a farmer wanted to sell his Jersey cows, there would be a record of their existence and heritage. In a letter dated February 1, 1938, our grandfather Wayne received a letter in an apparent response from his to The American Jersey Cattle Club in which it was noted that there were, "on some two million farms in the United States today, more than ten million Jersey cattle, more than any other dairy breed. Realizing this, the Jersey breeder has a right to be proud of the popularity of his favorite breed and to be optimistic of the future. This popularity of Jerseys will undoubtedly react to the benefit of all who are associated with the breed, especially at this critical moment when American farmers are going into the market for dairy cattle." Eleanor has always commented that the Jersey Cow is The Real Vermont Cow!

Stanly and Margaret were married in Wilmington on June 22, 1935 and had set their sights on California, but money became scarce and he needed to find a job. They had gotten as far as St. Louis and Dad heard from someone there that the Brown Paper Mill in Monroe, Louisiana was hiring. Dad labored in the pulp mill where he was exposed to terrific heat and chemicals. All this was practically unbearable and took a terrible toll on his health. He used to say he wondered why he hadn't thought about becoming a milkman, as that had been in his previous younger life and would have been much easier on his health. Laura Emily was born on March 5, 1940 while our parents lived in Louisiana. After they had been in Louisiana for about five years, they received word that Wayne was very ill and it became necessary to return to Vermont. (We know this was a bitter moment for them, as their personal dreams were dashed, but dire family matters made the return necessary.) They moved in with Grace and Wayne and on January 14, 1941, they received one undivided half of the farm from

Wayne and Grace. Eleanor was born in July of 1941, actually on Stanly's birthday!

In the early days, the milk was delivered by horse and wagon. Once in awhile folks will say they have come across one of the old bottle caps, a Vermont scene of a cow and the mountain, "our mountain," Haystack, which could be seen from our kitchen window in the old farm house. Our Dad helped his parents with every aspect of the business. Once it was in full production, they milked about 30 cows twice a day.

Our Mother, Margaret Ellen Donahue, who was born in Fairlee, Vermont, was newly graduated in 1932 from Castleton Normal School and lived in the Wilmington Baptist parsonage near the bottom of Ray Hill. She taught high school English and Dad's sister, Katherine Elizabeth, nine years younger than her brother, introduced her to the family one day. On that particular day, as the story goes, Dad was coming out of the mink house (yes, besides being a dairy farm, they also grew mink) in pretty shabby attire and didn't make the best first impression on Miss Donahue. However, with the encouragement of Katherine, they dated and were married on June 22, 1935. Both our parents took music lessons from Mrs. Strausser, Mother on piano and Dad singing. Dad had a fine voice. Our home was always full of music, very much a part of our lives growing up. Eleanor found some information while looking at old documents that Wayne had a bass voice and sang in a quartet and also solo performances so it would seem natural for music to be in our lives. Laura and Eleanor sang together in junior and senior church choir and performed with the Wilmington High School chorus which was directed by Mrs. Stanley Gilmore, an extremely accomplished musician in her own right. Mostly, Laura and Eleanor practiced their singing in the milk room early in the mornings before school when they had to wash the bottles for the daily operation of the milk business. Eleanor also remembers besides singing, musical instruments were practiced in the milk room, at least one day a week, usually on band practice days. We remember our band leader, Mr. Young, saving that we probably could be pretty good band musicians, if only we would practice! Laura played the saxophone and Eleanor played the clarinet. It was not a pretty sound! Anyway, we had to do something while the water was heating up for bottle washing, so some water fights naturally ensued. Once the bottles were washed and sterilized, the rinsed bottles were stacked to the ceiling in wire racks. After school and athletic games or practices we would drive the truck loaded for that night's milk delivery.

There were two routes, east and west in town. The service was door to refrigerator. Our customers knew the milk would be delivered late into the evening. A matter of trust, our customers left their doors unlocked, we would knock and announce our arrival and new milk would be placed into the refrigerators and old bottles would be picked up. Eleanor remembers especially nights after a holiday meal like Thanksgiving. Rearranging refrigerators to get the new milk in and putting everything back from the dinner was a huge challenge. With attention to detail, everything fit in with no room to spare. Whew! Home free, only to find out after shutting the door, she forgot the cranberry sauce!

Parmelee & Howe Drugstore in Wilmington was our best customer and Laura remembers one time that she thought she would save herself some time and carry in a twelve-bottle rack, but nearly went through the showcase at the store by the time she got in there. Remember all those wonderful milk shakes? We all have favorite stories

about the milk route times!

The division of labor was this: Mother milked the cows and fed and cared for the young stock. Dad processed the milk for delivery and "the girls" were the "right hand men." Our parents named each cow and Mother painted their names in red above the stall and it was so funny, but they always knew which stall to enter. We remember the cows and Mother saying "Ladies, step along please." The leader of the pack coming in from the field was named Edna Mae and once in the barn, Dad used to place her head on his shoulder, stroke her neck and she would moo softly against him. It was so sweet.

In the summer months, haying was always a large part of farming. Any slack time was devoted to clearing the land of rocks and brush. By the time Isabelle was born September 23, 1951, there were good fields for grazing and haying.

Some of Isabelle's best memories of Laura and Eleanor were with Laura driving "the old Grey Ghost," the farm tractor, and Eleanor riding on the rake behind. Sometimes the hay rake was attached to the farm truck and on many blistering hot days, Eleanor remembers yelling to Laura to slow down and Laura's response was her usual classic one: "You want to get to the lake don't you?" So, of course, Eleanor complied as it was 98 degrees in the shade and we needed to round up the neighborhood kids and get to Lake Raponda as soon as possible!

The girls together, always, would rake the dried hay into windrows, along with our parents. Dad later on would use the buck rake in front of the tractor to make huge bunches. Sometimes a tooth on the rake would break off and we'd make a quick trip to Phil Rice, who lived on Shafter Street, who would handily craft a new tooth to be replaced by evening for more haying. There was never any time to be wasted. Often haying would continue late into the night by moon and tractor light to beat a rain storm. Laura recounted a story and Isabelle concurred where Mother would make us hot dogs for supper and after that we would go out on clear, moonlight nights, climb up on a pile of hay, and she would tell us stories and also would tell us about the Constellations and the tales that went with them. She was such a remarkably, intelligent woman.

Getting the hay into the barn was a Rube Goldberg affair where Dad would be up in the hay mow, Laura would have brought in a load of hay on the buck rake, Eleanor would wrap the rope around the load on the buck rake, and by pulley, when Laura backed up the tractor, the load was lifted up into the barn, where Dad would push the hay all around and the barn would gradually be filled up evenly into every nook and cranny. It was so hot and dusty up in the mow, and we often wondered how Dad managed this task. He was such a strong individual, both physically and mentally.

During this time, Isabelle remembers that she and Mother would be together making up fresh lemonade with lots of ice and sugar to sustain us through it all. When it was unbearably hot, she made "switchel" an old restorative drink. Isabelle says this was a pretty disgusting tasting drink and was made up of vinegar, cumin, sugar, molasses and salt, but it did the trick.

Another favorite memory was of Dad and his scythe. He could cut down a whole field in what seemed like one continuous, graceful, incredible flow of movement. Then we would all go out pitch forks in hand to turn the hay over. For this farm family and many others in the area, there was a lot of work, but it was a great life. Eleanor remembers times when our Grandfather Wayne used to help in the field turning hay by hand, even when he was very old. Our Dad would want him to come in out of the sun, but he very rarely was persuaded to do so.

There were young people in town who helped during haying season – all the Raymo boys, Dick, Jamie and Mike and quite often during the time when Dad had to stay with the haying, Ivan Bartlett helped with the pasteurization process and occasionally delivered the milk.

As the ski industry came to the Valley, Isabelle remembers that the milk business was changing. Laura and Eleanor were leaving for college. We had fewer cows and bought more and more of our milk from the Wheeler Farm, another farm that had Jersey cows. Parmelee & Howe, the drugstore in Wilmington, remained our best customer, but big ski lodges like Bruce and Lola Gavitt's Lodge and restaurants like Long Jim's Inn and Ploughman's Rest became milk customers. In the end, there were 60 milk customers, a goal our folks had worked to achieve.

The saddest day came when Mother and Dad sold the cows. The folks had named every one after famous women and "First Ladies." Isabelle remembers that day "the truck backed up to the barn. Mother and Dad went away together, something that I never saw them do."



1920's Carner Milk Wagon in front of Carner House on Ray Hill.

The Flying Milkman

"It was the fall of 1920 and father Wayne Carner and I were trying to load some rowen which was blowing like feathers in the gale-like wind. We were standing beside the old town reservoir at the time and I yelled, 'all this field is good for is to fly airplanes from.' Little did I realize that I had prophesied the future of the Carner Air Field at the early age of 12."

This opening paragraph was taken from the Story of the Emergency Field, Wilmington, Vermont that our Dad, Stanly Carner, wrote about his dream of becoming a pilot and how it came to fruition. His dream of becoming a pilot started from his first flight in Ithaca, New York and concluded with his enrolling in a correspondence course from Aviation Institute of America. Inc., which he completed in 1937 while he and our Mother lived in West Monroe, Louisiana.

We remember that one of the biggest fields on the farm incorporated a runway that Dad kept mowed and cleared for his airport. One of Dad's greatest remembrances was when he was 16 he traveled to Springfield, Vermont to see "Lucky Lindy," Charles Lindbergh, who was making his tour of the states, after his 1927 Trans Atlantic flight. Dad's obsession with flying culminated in his purchase of an old J2 Cub with a 40-horse power motor making it terribly underpowered. He had a couple of instructors and finally soloed at Keene. Laura remembers being with Dad when he made his third landing requirement, and that he caught his left gear and left wing on the runway. Despite this, Dad was granted his license and on January 1, 1950 he landed on hard crust at the Wilmington Flying Club's field at Fred Aldrich's farm on Ray Hill Road. The Flying Club had started to build a hangar, which was completed except for the doors.

Laura and Eleanor will always remember the terrible day when we came home from school to find our parents in the truck heading up to the field where Dad's Cub, tied down in the hangar, which had no doors, was destroyed by a horrific wind which came up, destroying the hangar and bending the plane in an upside-down position. All Dad could salvage was the propeller, a Lewis propeller, which resides in Eleanor's home today. We know this was a terrible time for Dad and that it was devastating; the time, money and effort wiped out in one storm. His special flying buddy, Andrew Crawford and Lindy Emery pushed him to overcome his grief and take lessons in the Club ship which was hangared at North Adams. He soloed in their 65 horsepower Aeronca.

Soon after that he bought a new plane from George West, the manager of the North Adams field. It was an Aeronca 11 AC. How did he afford to buy this airplane, we wonder now, and in reading this history found out that he sold five cows to buy it. This plane had two side-by-side seats, with a wheel control, throttle in the center console, with the nose higher so the forward vision for landing was different than the Cub. It turned out to be a beautiful ship.

Housing the airplane became a big problem because at that time the Wilmington Flying Club was disbanding and they were giving up their field. We read about how Dad in his spare time from running the farm, took down Percy Whitney's barn for the lumber. Roy Cross sawed the 8'x10' timbers to use in building the hangar. This one was not going to blow down! With

further permission from Corrine Ray, Dad was able to move 150 feet of stonewall between their properties. Dad often spoke about his best friend, Andy Crawford, who was without a field for his plane at the time. Andy bulldozed the Ray wall, removed brush and poured the cement for the foundation. Getting the hangar doors hung was a tough job and Eleanor remembers being out with Dad on some extremely cold days, giving him moral support, as he finally got the doors to work. The hangar was 40x42 feet and turned out to be a wonderful solid building. Roy and Alice Cross pitched in and with all of their help the hangar was built. Dad eventually bought some acreage from Roy Cross to extend the runway northward and acreage from Corrine Ray to extend the runway southward. This gave a total of 1,725 feet of usable runway space.

The field was rough and Dad hired Floyd Rafus from Halifax to come, grade and scruff the field. He wanted the humps and stones removed. Mr. Rafus worked for two days at \$2.00 an hour using a large grader. Those were the wages in those days. Much work went into the improvement of the field, from those who owed a milk bill to ones who would benefit from the new runway. In time the field was ready for use and we remember vividly how Dad kept it mowed, added a large wind sock and befriended many lost or weather-related forced landing aviators. We recall Dad telling us he even had a Navy helicopter come in, needing gas. Dad said he was paid by the Navy for this.

Isabelle remembers loving to fly with Dad over the Harriman Reservoir to see the old cellar holes of Mountain Mills, where as mentioned before, Wayne and Grace had their store and home. Laura and Eleanor remember when Isabelle was very little and she flew with Dad, she used to say she flew "all around the top."

Dad's field played a big part in the early development of Mt. Snow and Haystack. During the early fifties, Walter Schoenknecht asked Dad to fly him over Hogback, Pisgah and Stratton Mountains. It was in the winter, Dad had skis on his ship, and he spent more than two hours looking over the terrain. At the end of the flight, Walt told Dad he had made up his mind and said he was going to buy Reuben Snow's place and that would ultimately be his ski resort. Many planes were flown into Dad's field during the development, electricians, plumbers, builders of all sorts, setting up their crews for the day and back home to Albany or Boston or wherever they hailed from.

Dad decided that with the popularity of the field it was time to contact the Coast and Geodetic Survey requesting them to designate his field as an emergency field. They were responsible for the printing of the Aviation Sectional Map for the FAA Bureau of Aeronautics. Two FAA men came up from Boston, made a study of the field and granted his request. On the next printing of the map, Dad's field was noted as Carner Private, length 1,725 feet. After this request was granted Dad contacted the State Aeronautic Department, who had previously turned him down when he requested a number for his field. He informed them they could now see that his field was listed on the Albany Sectional map and soon thereafter his field number was given. This whole process took about seven years to accomplish.

Laura and Eleanor learned how to fly from Dad. Eleanor remembers many early mornings when the weather was just right, Dad would say, "Elwa, there's no wind this morning, let's take her up." Soon we were doing training patterns, flying pylon eights, learning how to pitch and roll the aircraft, diving and pulling up, pulling back on the wheel and going up to nearly a stall, then diving back down. Some mornings, she remembers being queasy from all the instruction. Her biggest regret was never following through and getting her pilot's license. She remembers flying with Dad and on many occasions he would "turn the controls over to her" and twice she remembers landing, sitting on the pilot's side, Dad said "unassisted." Eleanor remembers Dad having great confidence in her, but she never had the courage to pursue what she had been taught. Dad always said he would never force any of us to get our licenses, if we had some kind of fear of accomplishing it.

As kids growing up on a struggling dairy farm, these memories are wonderful ones, ones that not too many others would ever know. Isabelle remembers that Dad belonged to the Flying Farmer's Association and farm folks who had planes would "fly in" for breakfast, before the cows were milked. Dad would have on his black barn boots and his milk room apron and go out and meet them. This always made an impression until we saw all the other farm folks in similar attire when we would fly to their fields. These were fun times and flights!

In trying to sum up our feelings, if Dad had not pursued his dream of flying, the drudgery of farm life would have been too much. Dad noted in his special flight album, that his active flying years were from 1949 to 1979. He was an impressive bush pilot, who could land his plane on whatever surface presented itself. We all flew with him around the Valley, flew to his sister's place in Durham, New York, many airports, sometimes in threatening weather and one time in particular when it was nearly dark. We had practiced parking the vehicles on the lower field with our headlights shining up on the runway and one night we had to do this as Dad was later getting back from a flight. The headlights shone right on the spot where he touched down, once again showing his prowess as a fantastic aviator. These memories are vivid and lasting for the three of us. All of his flying time was centered around running the farm, pasteurizing the milk, getting it ready for delivery and finally



Stanley Carner gassing up Aeonca early morning prep flight - 1957

deliveringthemilkinthe evenings. Whenour parents decided to get out of the business, we remember how he walked his tworoutes around for the last time, just to say a final good by e to his loyal customers. The end of an era, truly.

Growing up on Ray Hill encompassed many good times there, many rugged winters, many lovely spring times, summers and falls. There were trying times as in any family, but our memories are largely good ones.

Adams Farm

In 1865 Henry Adams purchased the farm. He invented & patented a variety of liquid holders used in the collection and storage of maple sap, and livestock watering tubs. He raised sheep on the farm in addition to the increasing demand of the manufacture of these wooden tubs built in a woodshed between the barn kitchen and barn.

Walter Adams purchased the farm & continued to make the liquid holders. The increased demand necessitated the construction of a full woodworking shop in the 1880's, initially operated by a horse powered treadmill. In 1893, the treadmill was replaced by a gasoline engine Walter purchased at the Chicago World's Fair. He continued raising sheep, oxen & producing maple syrup. The farmhouse was used as a tourist home in the early 1900's by Walter & his wife Ada, so that people from the cities could come to the country in the summer & enjoy our cooler climate, fresh air & lakes.

Louis Adams purchased the farm & a saw-mill to continue making the liquid holders. He started milking Holsteins. In 1939, Louis' right arm was amputated just above the elbow due to a cancerous presence. His handicap necessitated the sale of most horse drawn equipment to fund the purchase of the day's latest technology to compensate for his handicap, such as tractors, electric motors, milking equipment, and a variety of prosthetics. He made the last of the liquid holders in the 1940's as clear spruce lumber was getting more difficult to find & the galvanized metal tanks had become popular. Plastic tanks & the metal tanks are being used now, but the sugar makers who still have the wooden tanks & tubs are using them, as wood is a better insulator than the metal or plastic ones. These antique Adams Farm tubs are frequently spied across the new England landscape, either in active use or as lawn ornaments. Doris Adams continued with the tourist home, but was also open to skiers in the winter with the opening of Mount Snow & Haystack.

In 1971 William & Sharon Adams bought the farm. They closed the tourist home, and renovated the dairy barn to accommodate 80-100 Holsteins. In 1980 we started the popular sleigh rides, taking people on a 1½ mile ride through the sugar lots & pastures to a log cabin in the woods, stopping for hot chocolate & getting warm by the 2 wood burning stoves. In 1986 we sold the cows as part of the Reagan Administration's whole herd buyout program. Proceeds from this we used to purchase construction equipment & reopened a gravel pit on the property. We operated this business for a number of years. Adams Farm gravel is now spread all throughout the valley in the roads to new homes and condos. In 1992 our daughter, Jill & her husband started the petting farm catering to tourists with the popular bonfires, haunted hayrides, teas & luncheons for motor coaches. With the downfall in the economy they could no longer continue. Our granddaughter, Tessa stayed on the farm to help us keep it going with the agri-tourism business (motor coaches) & the sleigh rides. During that time the farm was for sale.

In 2012 our son, Christopher (Kip) & his partner, Tina Cullen purchased the farm. He had a roofing business for 30 years, but farming was in his blood. He sold his roofing business to his son, Ryan. They have continued with the petting farm, motor coaches & sleigh rides. They have added a paintball course, built a meat processing plant to sell meat raised here on the farm & also to do custom meat butchering & packaging. They have plans to have a herd of dairy goats & make goats milk cheese.

Every generation has had to do something different to keep the farm going & keep it in the family. We wish Kip & Tina the best of luck in their new endeavors.

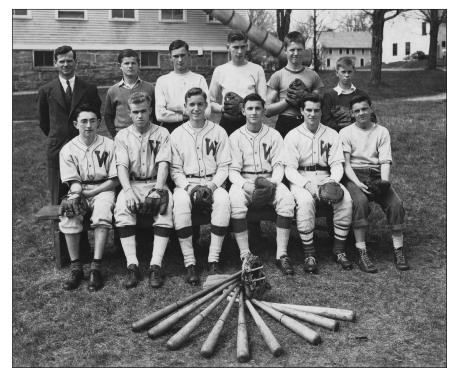
William & Sharon Adams (See photos on back cover and insert page.)

Who is the Baker in Baker Field?

Written By George Van Wyck

I didn't hear about the re-naming of Baker Field from the sports section of The Miami Herald, but word filtered down fairly rapidly. A copy of the September 25th Valley News was sent to me, and sure enough, an article written by Jack Deming said that after the latest soccer game, a win over Bellows Falls, a ceremony was held honoring Coach Hayford for becoming the winningest coach in Vermont High School history with 346 wins. The master of ceremonies, M. B. Nesbitt, declared "...we would like to announce the renaming of Baker Field, which will from this day forward be known as Hayford Field."

Three hundred, forty-six wins is a lot of wins, and I'm sure Coach Newton Baker's wins would not approach that number. However, they were different "eras" in which they coached. Coach Baker had many obstacles he had to overcome. Wilmington High School was much smaller than the present consolidated Twin Valley High School. He came to teach at Wilmington during the great depression when schooling wasn't considered as important



1945 Wilmington High School Baseball Team:

Front row left to right:

Stuart Rist, Bob Greene, Larry Nelson, George Van Wyck, Harvey LaTerre, and Donny Parsons.

Back Row:

Coach Baker, Charlie Dunn, Bob Burchards, Leland Cross, Skip Worden, and Earl Parsons.

as it is today. I would guess that the athletic budget has grown over the years. I think Newton H. Baker, although born and raised in Massachusetts, became a Vermonter from the time he entered Middlebury College. After obtaining his BS degree in 1929, he took a teaching position at WHS in 1930, became principal in 1935, and remained until 1945 to take a position with the State of Vermont Department of Education. He was teacher, coach, administrator and disciplinarian. During his years at WHS, Coach Baker not only coached baseball on the field named in his honor, he also coached field hockey and basketball, and if WHS had had more male students, he probably would have coached a football team, too. Of interest to me was the fact that he coached three of my older sisters in field hockey, and three or four of my older brothers in baseball and basketball before I came along.

With his tireless work, and a little bit of his own cash, Coach Baker took an unkempt field and made a very respectable baseball diamond out of it. After the Flood of 1938, he almost had to start over. He changed the course of Beaver Brook to alleviate the continuous wash out of center field, but had to leave right field alone. He often paid to have the grass mowed, and one day he had about ten guys with manual lawnmowers working in a line to get the infield in playing condition. No wonder that at the Old Home Week ceremonies of 1940, Mr. Boak, Superintendent of Schools dedicated it as the Newton H. Baker Recreational Field, but added,

"...he expected it would be shortened to Bakerfield by the boys and girls."

His baseball players were asked to bring their own gloves, and a bat if they had one. Heaven forbid that a bat be broken during a game or practice. One of the first things he taught me was how to hold the bat to keep it from splitting when hitting the ball. Bats were precious commodities -- so precious a partially split bat was "taped up" and used again. When I played baseball for him in his final year at WHS, the baseball team had five uniforms -- the rest of the team wore their street clothes. If a uniform got dirty, it had to be taken home for cleaning before the next game. If a ball was hit hard enough to end up in Beaver Brook in right field, an often occurrence, someone had to find it so that it could be dried out for future use. What was his athletic budget?

With the limited number of males in WHS while Coach Baker was there, he had to make due with the players he had, not only for baseball, but also for basketball. A summary in the Bennington Banner concerning the 1944 County basketball tournament said, "We take our hats off to Wilmington, especially those three little fellows who looked more like 6th graders as they marched in and out of the game at Coach Baker's command. He had to use at least one of them most of the time." (And WHS won that tournament!)

As a teacher, Mr. Baker stated in a Modern History class in the early forties that Germany could be defeated, but that Russia, who was then our ally, would be our long-term problem. As an administrator, in 1943, he arranged a speed-up program for seniors capable of it so that they could graduate at mid-term and get a head start on college. Extra classes were arranged after regular school hours and on Saturday mornings. Three students took advantage of this program. As a disciplinarian, one young student skipped school one day to go see the movie, "Gone With The Wind". When told of this, Mr. Baker required her to stay after school until the skipped hours had been covered.

Although Mr. Baker moved to Waterbury after leaving WHS, his heart remained with his Wilmington students. In 1979, he made a 1,410-mile trip around the eastern United States to visit former students and athletes. While in Miami, I took him to a University of Buffalo-University of Miami baseball game. He liked the game, but was also thrilled to watch it on the field where two of his sons had played soccer against UM.

After doing all this reminiscing about Mr. (Coach) Baker, I was given a copy of a later Valley News, which included a letter from Adam Grinold, on behalf of the Twin Valley School Board in which he stated, "It should be noted that Hayford Field refers to the soccer field only. The Twin Valley baseball team will still play on Baker Field ..." I think Coach Baker would be fine with that.



Six Maynard's - Our Beginning

My mother, Mary Buffum Maynard was a registered nurse and my father, Eleoda Maynard, was an apprentice to Benny Black a well known sign painter who put the first "Gold Leaf" on the dome of the Capital in Montpelier.

The first of six children, Vera Buffum & Allison Lyman Maynard were born in Burlington, VT. Our grandparents were Elumina Lowery Maynard, Olive Moore and Arthur Maynard Buffum.

When I was three years old my Grandfather Buffum died and my Grandmother needed help with her farm on the backside of Castle Hill in Wilmington. This is what people did - helped when and where help was needed.

My Dad known to many as Leo Maynard, a city sign painter was taught everything there was to know about having a farm from Gram Buffum. He learned how to take care of a cow or two, chickens, gardens, having and making maple syrup.

The next two Maynard children, Jacquelyn Beverly and Roger Eleoda were born at Gram Buffum's home.

My parents eventually bought the farm boardering Gram Buffum's Farm and that is where the two younger boys Reginald Leo and Peter John were born. This is what was called the lower farm. Our home was close to where Pete's daughter Michelle and family live now.

We were so happy growing up on the Buffum Farm. We could run everywhere from the lower farm up into the maple orchard and never be called back unless there was work to do. My sister and I learned how to make beds, sew, do housework and the boys did farm work and maintaining a house and barn.

We all helped when sugaring started, taking care of sap buckets, collecting pails of sap for the gathering tub and Dad did the boiling. This was very important work; we sold most of the syrup. After we finished washing sap buckets at the end of the season the family was taken to Vaudeville & Movie at Latchis Theater in Brattleboro. In the summer time my Dad mixed his talent for sign painting and other jobs around town.

I read in my grandmother's journals that Dad gave a party for Louise Bueche when she came from France. He had the kitchen cleared out of furniture, Mom baked goodies, and Charlie Bueche played the accordion for dancing. We kids must have been sound asleep because I don't remember the party. Louise and Jane came in 1927 to a small house added to the bigger house. Grandpa Bueche lived in the big house with four children. His son Roger moved to be with Louise and Jane in their new house. The Bueche family was our closest neighbors.

Jane could not speak English and I couldn't speak French. We spent most of our first year smiling at each other and playing with dolls. Jane waited for me to get old enough for first grade so we could start school together. We rode with my father by car most of the time. When the roads were not good Jane and I rode in her father's one horse open sleigh keeping warm under a bearskin fur. School was from 9 a.m. till 4 p.m., we had an hour for lunch, homemade bread and jelly sandwiches. I remember a tunnel on the top floor of school for fire drills. The first graders through sixth were on the first floor so we didn't use this until junior high.

The Bueches were just down the hill so we all walked two miles into town for library books, errands, 4-H meetings, and to visit cousins and friends who lived in town. We saw neighbors along the way and respectively did not visit them, just waved, unless we had an invitation.

Vera, Jackie and Roger are the only ones left of the six Maynard children.

We had some hard times but a lot of good times growing up on both farms in Wilmington.

Vera Maynard Deyo ~ Born 12-25-22



Gramma Buffum at her farm.

President's Report

One of our greatest accomplishments for 2014 was the building of our new carriage shed. This was made possible thanks to all the donors from far away to locals whom supported this project and for all the fundraisers we have put on over the past couple of years. Thank you to our House Committee Chairman, Lenny Chapman for his leadership throughout this project and Travis Wendel from Pioneer Timber Frame for constructing it. We are very excited for the opportunity to display our large artifacts that have been in storage for so long. They include a local doctor's buggy, a sleigh and the old safe from the high school along with many other items of interest. Once we get some landscaping around the building completed this spring and displays in place we will hold an open house for all to enjoy.

Another great addition to our archives is the research material that went into Brian Donelson's Vol. I and Vol. II of "The Coming of the Train" books. Mr. Donelson asked that the material be accessible for anyone who is doing research on the material he compiled from his extraordinary project. We are extremely grateful for this generous donation to our archives,

The society has seen a few extra visitors this past year thanks to the Village Walking Tour Map that was completed in the fall of 2013. The numbers marking the twenty-five different historical stops can be seen throughout Wilmington, encouraging tourists and locals alike to pick up a map and learn the history of these stops. The 25th stop marks the location of the historical society, which makes for a great introduction of what we have to offer at the society. If you haven't had a chance to take the tour please stop by the chamber office to pick up a copy of the map.

Our monthly meetings during the summer and fall of 2014 were quite informative with a slide show on Antarctica and a history presentation on WWll. Other events such as the "Antique Appraisal Show" brought in some very interesting artifacts that in turn surprised the owners as to the value of their items. In October the "3rd. Annual Quilt Show" was put on thanks to Sue Wurzberger's determination. We have plans in the works to hold both of these events again this coming year at Memorial Hall with the Antique Appraisal Show scheduled for Sat. July 18th and the 4th, Annual Quilt Show on October 17th & 18th.

Each year we try to set a goal for building upkeep and this year our goal is to raise enough money through donations and fundraisers to hire someone to paint the exterior of the museum. We were very fortunate to have a volunteer student who kept the lawn mowed through out the summer, which was a big help to us and he was able to earn some volunteer hours for his school requirements. Mary Pike-Sprenger contributed flowers for our new flower barrel that was purchased with money donated in memory of Martha Crafts Pardee.

The society is very excited to be celebrating 40 years of Wilmington history preservation this year. In 1975 a group of dedicated volunteers saw the need for preserving Wilmington history, so the Historical Society of Wilmington was established. On June 10th of 1975 the first meeting was held at the Bissell Parish House. In September, a charter and bylaws were adopted and officers were elected in October. Regular meetings were eventually held at the firehouse and library before the purchase of the Barber House. Since the purchase of the museum the society has been able to share with the public all the interesting history collected over the years during presentations, summer hours, village walking tours and the help with genealogy and research just to name a few things. A lot has taken place over the past 40 years, from a yearly newsletter generating memberships and donations to help keep the society independent to the building of our new carriage shed. We have come along way thanks to so much dedication from so many people- thank you!

I would like to take this time to thank all of the people who wrote an article for our newsletter this year. If any of you would be interested in writing an article for next year's newsletter please feel free to contact me, we are always looking for new contributors.

Visit our web page at "www.wilmingtonhistoricalsociety.com for more information, as it's available.

Historical Society of Wilmington

P.O. Box 1751 Wilmington, VT 05363



Adams Farm circa 1927 Louis Adams at the base of the pole, Roy Chase up the pole, and Louis' 1st wife Rachel (Hemenway) Adams in the background.