

Baker Free Library

100 Years of Serving the Community
Of Bow, New Hampshire



1914 - 2014



The Honorable Henry M. Baker

The original benefactor of the Baker Free Library who donated land and monies for the establishment of a library in Bow in 1914.

Henry M. Baker



462-465 PENTAGON AVE.
701 FIFTEENTH ST.
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Statesman, Historian, Scholar and Soldier

General Baker served as the Adjutant General for the New Hampshire National Guard shown here circa 1887. He also served as the president of the New Hampshire Historical Society from 1903 through 1908.



W.G. Kimball

COR. MAIN & SCHOOL STS.
CONCORD, N.H.

Baker Free Library original building

Note the “Service Flag” in front of the building reflecting the citizens of Bow who had served in World War II.



Bow Girl Scout Troop – circa 1945



Longtime Bow residents Carol (Allbee) Gouin (sitting, last girl on right) and Gert (Bowen) Page (standing, second girl from left) shown here with their Girl Scout troop. The troop attended the dedication ceremonies for the World War II service flag and sung the Army, Navy and Marine Corps hymns.

Early View of the Baker Free Library



This image was taken after the completion of the '1967 Addition'. You can see the small addition at the back of the original building.

THE BAKER FREE LIBRARY.

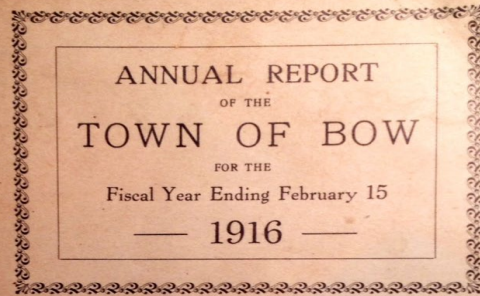
To the Inhabitants of the Town of Bow:

The Baker Free Library was dedicated and the deed of the property delivered to the town on October 29, 1914. There was included with the library nearly all of the books of the library of Gen. Henry M. Baker. To these there has been added over 250 volumes by the trustees. The books in the library now cover a considerable field, and in addition there may be had at the library the current issues of a considerable number of the more popular magazines and periodicals. The library is open upon Wednesday and Saturday of each week, from two to five in the afternoon. We invite your careful consideration of the library. If the library is generally used by the community, we are confident that it will prove itself of great value. The trustees hope to establish branch libraries early this year. The special fund of \$10,000 created by the town of Bow for the maintenance of the library has been invested in two real estate loans of excellent quality.

A copy of the treasurer's report is submitted herewith.

RUFUS H. BAKER,
D. WALDO WHITE,
FRANK E. WOODBURY,
STICKNEY SHORT,
ROBERT W. UPTON,

Trustees.



The first ever report from the Baker Free Library Board of Trustees to the residents of Bow — 1916.

The Baker Collection



Upon his death, Henry Baker donated his extensive personal book collection to serve as the foundation for the Baker Free Library collection.

Here is a beautiful image of part of the original Baker Collection.

A photograph showing two wooden shelves filled with books. The top shelf contains a variety of volumes, including "Proceedings of the New Hampshire Historical Society Vol. I 1870-1886", "Native Ministry of New Hampshire 1905 by N. T. Carter", several old leather-bound volumes with labels like "SINCE 1800", "AMERICAN HYGIENIC", and "ANCIENT AMERICA", "American Constitutions", and four dark blue cloth-bound volumes labeled "GENERALOLOGY VOL. I" through "VOL. IV". A red book titled "MARRIOTT'S RECORDING" is on the far right. The bottom shelf features "History of Medieval Art" by J. B. Harrison, "Chronological Records 1877-1940" by Arthur H. R., "Frances Town", "Robbins' Outline of History", "The First Church of Christ in New Hampshire 1843-1890", "Lancaster Natural Philosophy Division No.", "The First Church of Christ in New Hampshire 1843-1890", "Writings of John Adams", "The Progress of Religion in New England", and "Successful New Hampshire Men". The books are arranged in rows, some standing upright and others slightly tilted. The shelves are made of dark wood, and the background is a plain wall.

Here is a close-up
view of some of
the historical books
and documents
from the Baker
Collection.

Early View of the Baker Free Library



As seen from across South Street.

Compare the size of the trees in front of the building in this image to the size of the trees today!

A book display in the original BFL building



Note the copy
of the
Declaration
of
Independence
on the right.

The Lower Level
(basement) of the
Baker Free library.



The BFL Trustees and
the Lower Level
Renovation Committee
are currently in the midst
of a fundraising campaign
to finish the Lower Level
for community use.

The front of the Baker Free Library mid-winter. Note the “Honor Roll” monument in the foreground showing the Bow citizens who had served our country in the military during World War II.





A view of the Baker Free Library at night.



An early portrait of Henry M. Baker. This image was probably taken during the time Henry M. Baker became a prominent attorney in Washington, DC. He also graduated from Columbian (now George Washington) University in 1866.



Baker Free Library in Springtime.



This image from the 50th Anniversary of the BFL shows a large antique map of Merrimack County that was displayed at the library for many years. The map is now under the care of the Bow Heritage Commission.

Merrimack County Map Close-up showing Historic Bow Center



Original invitation (and
envelope) for the Dedication
of the Baker Free Library
ceremony October 29th 1914.

The Dedication of Baker Free Library

The Baker Free Library, Bow, N. H., given by the late
Hon. Henry M. Baker, will be dedicated with appropriate
exercises Thursday, October 29, 1914, at 2 P. M. Your
presence is earnestly desired.

Rufus H. Baker,
Sherman C. Burroughs,
Executors.

And Family, Given by
Mrs. Hilda Morgan Sargent



This document was donated to
the BFL by Mrs. Hilda Morgan
Sargent.



This portrait of Henry M. Baker was commissioned upon his death and is proudly displayed at the BFL even today.



Former Baker Free Library Trustee and current member of the Board of Selectmen Eric Anderson reads a brief history of the BFL at the October 2000 dedication event.



Candid shot of the front of the Baker Free Library. Note the USPS Mailbox in front and the undeveloped field to the right.

Construction in progress of the 'new' 2000 addition



Demolition of the 1966 Addition



Hilda Morgan Sargent



Hilda Morgan Sargent was the only person to attend the original 1914 dedication of the Baker Free Library as well as the recent 2000 dedication of the new addition.

She was born in 1903 and was active in just about every social club and event in town.

Sargent was the last known person from Bow to have spoke directly with Mary Baker Eddy.



Hilda Morgan Sargent was the 'Guest of Honor' for the dedication of the year 2000 addition to the Baker Free Library.

Here Ms. Sargent is cutting the ribbon for the dedication ceremony with the library trustees and town officials in attendance.



*The Citizens of the Town of Bow,
New Hampshire,
send you greetings and a cordial invitation
to attend their
Celebration of Old Home Week,
on Thursday, the twenty-third of August,
nineteen hundred and six,
at the Grove on Wood Hill.*

*Henry M. Baker,
President.*

*Robert W. Upton,
Secretary.*

Basket Picnic.

If stormy the exercises will be in the Town Hall.

General Baker was very active in the town of Bow activities. Here is an invitation he penned for the 1906 Old Home Week celebration to be held at the “Grove on Wood Hill”.

Note the event is a “Basket Picnic” which must have been a wonderful sight at the turn of the century!

The Henry M. Baker Homestead



Located on South Street where the current NH Automobile Dealers Association building now stands.

• MAY • 62



This image from 1962 shows Baker Free librarians (L to R): Virginia Brown, Barbara Howe and Helen Robinson at the “Annual Spring Book Display”

Baker Free Library rear view



This interesting image shows the corn field behind the BFL and is an excellent example of the agricultural foundation of Bow in its early years.

Bow resident Deb deMoulpiéd painted a beautiful rendition of this image that is currently on display at the library.

Baker Free Library annual report from 1966

ANNUAL REPORT OF BAKER FREE LIBRARY 1966

The Baker Free Library of Bow has had a very busy and rewarding year. We have served all our old friends and have met many, many new ones. For the benefit of those who have yet to use our facilities we give our hours:

Winter Schedule - Monday 2:00 to 8:00 P.M.
Wednesday - 2:00 to 5:00 P.M.
Saturday - 2:00 to 5:00 P.M.

Summer Schedule - June to September
Monday - 2:00 to 8:00 P.M.
Wednesday - 2:00 to 5:00 P.M.
Friday Evening - 7:00 to 10:00 P.M.

Our staff consists of: Mrs. Helen Robinson, Mrs. Virginia Brown, Mrs. Marjorie Foshier and Mrs. Barbara Howe, Librarian.

Our circulation for the year was 28,498 books and magazines. Reference and subject materials handled were too numerous to estimate.

In May, our library lost a wonderful friend and a member of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Walter Kennedy became a trustee in 1952 and was elected secretary and treasurer, which position he filled exceedingly well until the time of his unexpected death. He is sadly missed by all of us who worked with him. Mr. Reginald Scott has been elected by trustees to fill out his term as trustee.

In October, we entertained the Mothers' Club. For Christmas, the Bow Garden Club set up a Candy Cane tree for the children. As usual, at the town meeting, we had a new book exhibit. Look for us this year and chat with us about books and plans for the new addition. We will be there all day and evening.

The trustees voted to employ Mr. Guy Wilson of Concord as the architect, using funds voted from our Capital Reserve Fund at a special town meeting. We will have the complete plans ready to be voted on at the town meeting. The trustees have applied for state and federal funds, if available, to help finance this addition.

The need for an addition to our library is very pressing. The staff is most handicapped in their working area; the stacks are crowded; the children need their own room; reference and study

space is not now available and adults certainly need a comfortable place to read, browse and relax. For them we plan a reading area.

We ask you, the voters of Bow, to think about all these things, taking into consideration that each year we wait, the higher the costs will be. Also, a more desperate effort will have to be made by the staff to keep the Baker Free Library up to high library standards.

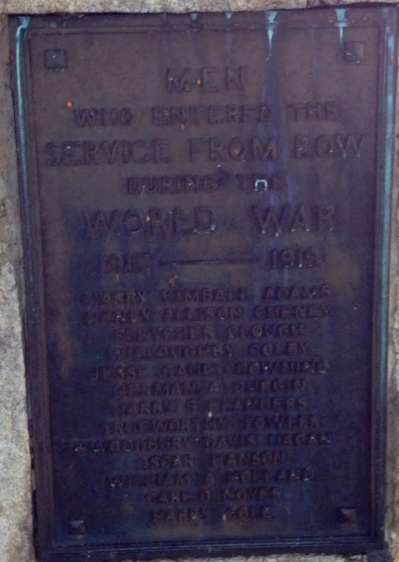
Respectfully submitted,

BARBARA K. HOWE,
Librarian
CARL D. OGDEN
Chairman of Trustees

Baker Free Library Invested Funds as of December 31, 1966

Bonds		
1 Public Service Co. of N.H. 3 1/4% 1973	\$1,000.00	
5 Treasury of United States 2 1/2% 1967-1972	<u>5,000.00</u>	\$ 6,000.00
Stocks		
26 Shares Manufactures Hanover Trust Co.	198.12	
27 Shares Continental Ill. National Bank	157.41	
45 Shares Inland Steel Co.	521.90	
24 Shares Continental Insurance Co.	139.63	
5 Shares Cudahy Packing Co. 4 1/2% Cum. Pfd.	<u>500.00</u>	<u>1,517.06</u>
Savings Bank Deposits		
Merrimack County Savings Bank, Book No. 47964	1,535.30	
New Hampshire Savings Bank, Book No. 162184	<u>1,000.00</u>	<u>2,535.30</u>
		\$10,052.36

HAROLD W. HOWE
Treasurer
Board of Trustees
Baker Free Library



The World War I
service monument
currently in front
of the Baker Free
Library showing
men from Bow
who served in ‘the
Great War’.

MEN
WHO ENTERED THE
SERVICE FROM BOW
DURING THE
WORLD WAR

1917 — 1919

HARRY KIMBALL ADAMS
HENRY ALLISON CHENEY
FLETCHER CLOUGH
WILLOUGHBY COLBY
JESSE GAULT DOWNING
HERMAN A. DURGIN
HARRY B. FLANDERS
TRUEWORTHY FOWLER
* WOODBURY DAVIS HAGAN
OSCAR HANSON
WILLIAM A. HOLLAND
CARL O. NOYES
HARRY COLE

Close-up detail
of the names of
13 men from
Bow who served
in WWI.



Close-up detail of
the World War II
service monument
listing the names of
men and women
who served in
WWII.

This monument is
current on display
at the front of the
Baker Free Library.

Baker Free Library – Library Directors

Arthur M. Case, 1920-1930

Annie C. Foote, 1930-1951

Barbara K. Howe, 1951-1977

Helen Robinson, 1978-1987

Linda Kling, 1987-2008

Lori A. Fisher, 2008-present





Annie Colby Foote

This image shows Annie Colby Foote who served as Town Librarian for over 20 years. She also served as the long-time tax collector and school treasurer.

This picture was taken at the fire station of Logging Hill Road, about 1910.

Gen. Baker has been an extensive traveller. He has visited thirty-eight states and all the territories, including Alaska. He has also been in all the British provinces to the north of the United States. In his trip to Europe he went as far north as the North Cape, spending some time in Norway and Sweden and nearly a month in Russia, in addition to visiting other countries of the Continent and the British Isles. He has at all times been a close student and a keen observer. The cultivation of a taste for literature has been to him a pleasure and a recreation. He is a member of the New Hampshire Historical Society, and has contributed valuable articles to its collection. In 1888 he offered two prizes for competition by the alumni and undergraduates of Dartmouth College, \$100 for the best original college song, and \$100 for the best original music for the song. The prizes are still open for competition.

He was Judge Advocate General on the staff of Governor Currier, and is a Mason, Knight Templar, and a noble of the Mystic Shrine.

Although business interests have until recent years kept him much in Washington, Gen. Baker has never allowed his New Hampshire citizenship to lapse, and has recognized no other place than Bow as his home. There he has been regularly taxed, and there he has regularly voted. He resides on the Baker farm, which for over a century has been the family homestead. This he has improved and beautified, and it is here that his summers are spent. His native town now claims him as its largest tax-payer.

Gen. Baker is one of the most successful men of New Hampshire. He has achieved success because he has earned it. He had to carve out his own fortune. He had but the usual advantages of farmers' sons of the Granite State in his start in life, and he had to make his own opportunities and rely upon himself in the struggles and trials which precede success. He has not been without his chapter of self-denials and deprivations. He has had his taste of disappointments and defeats, but he has borne failure as bravely as he has been modest in the enjoyment of success.

This image shows a biography of General Henry M. Baker published in the 'Granite Monthly' featuring an article of prominent Bow citizens of the time — circa 1900.

The Baker Family Homestead

NEW HAMPSHIRE HOMES.



THE BAKER HOMESTEAD, BOW MILLS.

THE Baker homestead at Bow, owned by John B. Baker, Esq., has been in the possession of that family for several generations. The extensive farm is now carried on by Mr. Baker. Here Gen. Henry M. Baker, Member of Congress from the Second district, New Hampshire, was born.

The Baker
Homestead in Bow
where Henry M.
Baker was born on
January 11, 1841.

Henry M. Baker Residence – South Street

NEW HAMPSHIRE HOMES.



RESIDENCE OF HON. HENRY M. BAKER, BOW MILLS.

THE residence of Hon. Henry M. Baker, congressman from the Second New Hampshire district, is at Bow Mills, and externally gives every evidence of comfort and convenience which the interior arrangements fully substantiate. It is a delightful situation, and here Mr. Baker, freed from the cares of public life, amid the scenes of his youth enjoys to the fullest extent the pleasures which the locality affords.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE

BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE NEW HAMPSHIRE SOCIETY OF SONS

Compliments of

Henry M. Baker.

CONCORD, N. H.:
THE RUMFORD PRESS.
1903.

As an acclaimed historian, Henry M. Baker wrote and presented many speeches on historical events.

Here is the transcript of a 1903 speech General Baker gave to the NH Historical Society on New Hampshire's participation in the Battle of Bunker Hill. It is an enlightening, fascinating account of NH soldiers serving at this pivotal Revolutionary War battle.

MOUNT WASHINGTON RAILWAY.

SPEECH

OF

HON. HENRY M. BAKER,

IN THE SENATE, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 1891, ON
SENATE BILL NO. 1, IN A NEW DRAFT,
TO AMEND THE CHARTER OF

THE MOUNT WASHINGTON RAILWAY COMPANY.

CONCORD:
REPUBLICAN PRESS ASSOCIATION, RAILROAD SQUARE.
1891.

2000 Addition Construction in Progress – Children's Section



2000 Addition Nearing Completion – Ready for brickwork



2000 Addition Demolition – Rear Windows of Old Building



Demolition of 1967 Addition to make way for the 2000 Addition



2000 Addition Taking Shape



Circulation Desk and Staff Office Taking Shape



Building the new Foundation for the 2000 Addition





Trusses being
installed as part
of the 2000
Addition.



Baker Free Library
was Open During
Construction of the
2000 Addition.

Books and Offices were
moved to temporary trailers
during construction.



Credits

Many people took pictures over the years of the Baker Free Library. Here is a (partial) list of folks who helped support the 100th Anniversary slideshow:

Eric Anderson

Charlotte Buxton

Lori Fisher

Linda Kling

Faye Johnson

Gary Nylén

Ginny Shirk

Thanks to:

Lori Fisher – BFL Director

The BFL Staff

The BFL Board of Trustees

The Friends of the Baker Free Library



*The very existence of libraries
affords the best evidence that we
may yet have hope for the future
of men.* - T.S. Eliot

*I have always imagined that Paradise will
be a kind of library.* - Jorge Luis Borges

Baker Free Library 100th Anniversary Slideshow

Produced by the Bow Heritage
Commission (2014)

Compiled by Mark Leven
Photography Support from Eric Anderson