



The Bethel Journals

Bethel Maine History

April 17, 2011

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1968 Review of the News The Bethel Citizen

1968 News Headlines: Zoning Repealed Telstar Opens

Telstar Regional High School opened; Bethel voters repealed the town's zoning ordinance; Van Tel & Tel sold to Continental Telephone Co.; Bethel Water District replaced the Bethel Water Company; A & P Store moved to Railroad Street; Attorney Henry Hastings died in August; the Bryant family exited the retail grocery business; Casco Bank moved into new building; Town office moved into vacated Casco Bank offices; Western Maine Supply moved to its new home; and Grand Trunk rail service ended with its station torn down.

A Review of 1968 Bethel News

1968

1968 Bethel News Summary
John K Brown, Editor, Oxford County Bethel Citizen

1968 was an unusually busy year in the very busy '60s decade due to the number of significant changes and events: Telstar Regional High School opened; Bethel voters repealed the town's zoning ordinance; Van Tel & Tel sold to Continental Telephone Co.; Bethel Water District replaced the Bethel Water Company; A & P Store moved to Railroad Street; Attorney Henry Hastings died in August; the Bryant family exited the retail grocery business; Casco Bank moved into new building; Town office moved into vacated Casco Bank offices; Western Maine Supply moved to its new home; and Grand Trunk rail service ended with its station torn down.



Bethel's landmark rail depot was torn down; before the automobile, it was the town's most valuable economic asset.

JANUARY

The home of Alton Hutchinson on Mill Hill, Bethel, was destroyed in an early morning fire on January 3.

A buy/sell agreement was announced between the Bethel Water District and the Bethel Water Company.

The Greater Bethel Chamber of Commerce announced a winter program consisting of eight weekends of events.

A Bethel fire department tank truck was wrecked in a plunge down the railroad embankment at the foot of Church Street. The truck was driven by Harold Rolfe. He was accompanied by Parker Connor.

Sixty-five members of the 8th grade class at Crescent Park School visited a session of the Maine Legislature.

Federal funds of \$44,587 were announced for Grafton State Park. The money would pay half the cost of developing 50 acres in Grafton Notch.

The Great A. & P. Tea Company opened its new store on Railroad Street on January 23.

Edward H. Scheibler resigned as Gould Academy headmaster. Samuel Bigelow was named acting headmaster.

The Church of the Open Bible purchased a lot of land on Route 2 in Skillington for the future erection of a church.

Title 3 funds of \$36,260 were approved for planning in SAD 44.

John T. Grover was named administrative assistant at Gould Academy.

The Bryant family ended its connection with the local retail grocery business as Richard Bryant severed connection with the I.G.A. The family had been associated the grocery business in Bethel since 1876.

Deaths:

Jamison Lee Finney, Joseph C. Perry, Herschel Q. Walker, Mrs. Ella Bartlett, Harold C. Spinney, Ernest R. Grover, Gregory c. Osgood, Carrie Jewett Hastings, Walter B. Rice, Robert T. Smith.

FEBRUARY

An early morning fire caused an estimated \$10,000 damage at the maintenance garage of Andover Wood Products.

A sister of Rev. George Stebbins of the Bethel Methodist Church, Mrs. Ed Thompson and her husband, missionaries in Viet Nam, were reported killed in that country by Viet Cong guerillas.

Secondary students of SAD 44 enjoyed a program by Gary Merrill at the Bingham Auditorium.

Western Maine Supply Co moved to its new building on Cross Street from its location in the former Harrington Feed and Grain store on Summer Street.

Miss Elaine Conner was crowned queen of the Bethel Winter Carnival. The Misses Brenda Saunders, Cheryl Stevens, Lenora Westleigh and Dorothy Lovejoy were members of her court.

Oxford County Republicans held a mini-convention in South Paris on Lincoln's Birthday.

VAN TELEPHONE SOLD TO CONTEL

Bethel Citizen February 29, 1968

It was announced today by Louis Van Den Kerckhoven, president of the Van Telephone Company, Bethel, that the stockholders of the Company have voted to sell the Company's stock to the Continental Telephone Corporation.

At a later date this area, subject to the approval of the Public Utilities Commission, will be known as the Bethel Division of the Maine State Telephone Company.

The Maine State Telephone Company now operates in the following areas in Maine: Fryeburg, Fort Kent, Island Falls, and Liberty. Maine State Telephone Company is a member of the Continental System, third largest and fastest growing Independent in the country.

The Van Telephone Company was founded in the late 1890's by Alphonse Van Den Kerckhoven. During the early days there were some changes in management, but it finally was taken over by Mr. Van Den Kerckhoven in the early 1900,s, and has been a family-operated Independent Telephone Company ever since.

After his death in 1938, his wife Emma, was elected president, and his eldest son, Eugene (Gene), treasurer and general manager, serving until his death in 1961. During this time, there were many changes in the company; the greatest of which was the conversion to dial operation, which was completed in 1957.

Following Gene's death, Louis was elected president and Lucia Tikander, treasurer. Her husband, Walter, was appointed plant superintendent; Lucia and Walter operated the company until his death in 1965.

At this time Louis assumed a more active position in the company and Donald James was place in charge of outside plant.

It has been felt by the directors, that the area could be better served by a larger company, and on February 26, 1968, the stockholders voted to sell all of the common stock to Continental.

The policy of the Continental System, as in prior mergers, will be to maintain the present personnel in order to provide a high-grade type of communication service

Pineland Ski Club, Andover, held its 41st annual carnival. Miss Gloria Howard reigned as queen.

Deaths in February: Mrs. Anna H. Ramage, Ormando B. Farwell, Mrs. Grace A. Bickford, Mrs. Mary K. Wilde, Clayton E. Penley, Harry Benson, William J. Russo, Lewis R. Smith Sr.

MARCH

Selectmen for 1968 were seated as follows:

James T. Hudson, Chair	Term expires 1969
J. Jay Willard	Term expires 1969
Howard F. Gunther	Term expires 1970
John K. Brown	Term expires 1971
James E. Hutchins	Term expires 1971

Harold Carver was elected fire chief at the annual meeting of the Bethel Fire Department.

Ellen Clark was the Crescent Park School Spelling Bee winner.

Miss Pamela Douglass was Gould Academy Carnival Queen

It was announced that plans were being considered to build a Catholic Church on Route 26 opposite Telstar Regional High School.

The Drama Club of Andover High School presented a program of three one-act plays.

Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Brown celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary.

Capt. Richard L. Grover of Bethel received the Silver Star and third award of the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism in Southeast Asia.

R. S. McMillin was guest of honor at a banquet in appreciation of this ten years as Bethel fire chief.

Bethel Water District acquired the physical property of the Bethel Water Co. at a cost of \$141,250.

PLANNING BOARD MEETS – ORGANIZES FOR COMING YEAR

March 21 1968

The Bethel Planning Board held its first meeting of the current year Tuesday evening at the Selectmen's Office.

Discussion during the session revolved around several changes in the zoning code that may be proposed at a special town meeting along with a request by petition to abolish all zoning in the town. The petition had been signed by some 200 voters of the town. A public hearing to discuss the article submitted by petition, as well as a request to rezone land along the easterly side of Route 2 in Mayville and such proposals as the Planning Board may make is expected to be announced soon, to be held on a date in early April.

It is also planned that the Board will cause to be published a series of articles explaining the purposes of zoning in Bethel and the reasons for regulation of property use in specified areas. It is also felt that a recommendation should be made to the Zoning Board of Appeals that they consider the adoption of guidelines under which exceptions would be granted in the several zones of the town. As a point of information it is noted in the four zones a total of 11 uses are permitted by exception only.

Before the close of the meeting the group elected officers for the ensuing year. Henry Hastings, who has served as chairman for several years, stated that he did not feel that he could devote sufficient time another year, and suggested a change might be in order. Mrs. Ruth Ames declined another term as secretary. Mrs. Patricia Hud-

son was named chairman, with Wilbur Myers to serve as secretary. Mr. Myers, a new member of the board, succeeds Norris Brown on the panel.

Shortly, the Board plans to announce a schedule of regular monthly meetings, with special sessions as circumstances warrant.

Attending the Tuesday evening meeting were: Mr. Hastings, Mrs. Ames, Mrs. Hudson, Mr. Myers, of the Planning Board, Carroll Valentine, associate member of the Board; James Hudson, chairman, John Brown, James Hutchins, of the Board of Selectmen; Elwyn Dickey, Town Manager; Barbara Godwin, Stanley Moore, Susan Lovejoy, Ferol Godwin, and Frank Lowell.

The 1968 Planning Board members were as follows:

Patricia Hudson, Chairman	Term expires 1972
Ruth Carver Ames	Term expires 1969
Frank Lowell	Term expires 1970
Theodore Chadbourne	Term expires 1971
Wilbur R. Myers	Term expires 1973
Carroll Valentine, Assoc Mbr	Term expires 1970
Robert G. Stearns, Assoc Mbr	Term expires 1970

TO DISCUSS PROPOSED SEWAGE DISPOSAL FACILITY

March 21, 1968

Bethel citizen are reminded of the important public meeting to be held next Monday evening, March 25, at Odeon Hall. The 7:30 meeting will enable the public to acquaint themselves with the recommended sewage disposal facility for the town.

A representative of the Jordan Company will be present to explain the recommendations of his company. It is expected that methods of financing the project and method of operation of the facility will be discussed.

PLANNING BOARD HOLDS SESSION TUESDAY EVENING

March 28, 1968

The Bethel Planning Board met Tuesday evening, March 26, at the Selectmen's Office. There was discussion of articles to be prepared for publication to clear up some of the misunderstanding of the Zoning Ordinance. The first article published in today's Citizen will cover the question of Building Permits.

A number of proposals were discussed that would make changes in the Zoning Ordinance. It was decided to submit three of these proposals to the Selectmen to be placed as articles in the warrant for the special town meeting to be held at a later date.

These three proposals made changes in the Industrial Zone. The first proposal is to permit mobile homes as a permitted use in the Industrial Zones provided they are not located on the same lot as an industry.

The second proposal is to allow under permitted uses in the Industrial Zone extension and/or improvement of single family dwellings that were existing before March 1967, so long as they remain as single family dwellings.

The third proposal is to permit gasoline service stations in the Industrial Zone.

All of these proposals will be voted on at a special town meeting.

Since there are additional proposals that must be considered, the Planning Board will meet again on April 4 at 7:30 at the Selectmen's Office.

Deaths in March: Robert Henderson, Patrick J. Murphy, Mrs. Georgia Y. Haines, Mrs. Geraldine Dorey Goodwin, Mrs. Kathleen Bennett, Scott R. Hanley.

APRIL

The top ten seniors were announced at Gould Academy. Beth Tibbets was valedictorian; Cynthia Chapin, salutatorian; Ellen Kennett, third honors; others were, Lynne Merrill, William Eames, Irene Haines, Rosemary Stowell, Naomi Ballenger, Neal Robertson, and Richard Card.

A Dollars for Scholars Foundation for SAD 44 was being formed.

The home of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Wight in Newry was badly damaged by fire on April 12.

Honor parts were announced at Andover High School. David Hutchins was valedictorian; Mary Abbott, salutatorian, and Paula Poor, first honor.

Mr. and Mrs. David Foster of East Bethel were honored on their 35th wedding anniversary.

Five days of rain resulted in flooding conditions in this area with several roads being inundated.

Richard J. Dolven – Gould Headmaster Elect

April 25, 1968

Acting Headmaster Samuel Bigelow announced the selection of a new headmaster for Gould Academy.

Richard J. Dolven assistant headmaster at the Mercersberg Academy, Mercersberg, PA, comes to Gould on July 1st after being in his current position since 1963.

Mr. Dolven was educated at Albany High School, NY; and in 1954 received his B.S. degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He received his B.D. degree from the Yale Divinity School in 1957. He was a freshman counselor at Yale University for

nine months and held a summer pastorate in 1956 at the First Methodist Church in Norwalk, CT. He is a geology major and has taught chemistry, physics, algebra, biology and general science. At college he was a member of the varsity cross country team, track team, golf team and the glee club. He also coached track, cross country, basketball, golf and squash.

From September 1958 to August 1963, Mr. Dolven was chaplain and teacher at the Hackle School in Tarrytown, NY; and for four years he was director of the Summer School and assistant in the Discipline Office.

At Mercersburg, Mr. Dolven was also director of the Summer School and project directory of an Upward Bound Project under the sponsorship of the Office of Economic Opportunity.

He is married to the former Donna Mae Mott of Albany, NY and they have two children. The Dolvens plan to move to Bethel this summer.

SERIES OF MEETINGS BEING HELD BY CITIZENS OPPOSING ZONING CODE

April 25, 1968

Local citizens met at 7:30 PM April 15 and 22, at the Western Maine Supply store to organize in an effort to abolish zoning. It was the general feeling that zoning in the present form is based on the personal feelings of the Planning Board alone and does not represent the good of the town. Up until a petition was presented to abolish zoning completely, the Planning Board had not met for several months in spite of the fact issues had been put before them. It is evident that since suitable changes have not been made, and many feel that the only alternative is to get rid of all of it as it does not appear possible to abolish just parts of it.

Zoning was instituted by a majority vote of those voting at town meeting. However, in order to abolish zoning a 2/3 vote is mandatory in order to carry. If 300 votes are cast – 200 of these have to abolish zoning or it will stand as is. It has been petitioned to vote this article by Australian ballot and all persons interested should exercise their right to vote.

These meetings are open for people to discuss their views and offer suggestions. Come and express yourself. You are important and it does concern you and now! Tomorrow is too late.

All interested persons are invited to attend the next meeting April 29, same time and place, See you there!!!

Miss Cynthia DeRoche was named “Miss Republican” of Oxford County at the Miss Republican Ball held in South Paris.

Deaths in April 1968: Mrs. Ella Jordan, Mrs. Dorothy Kirkpatrick, Francis B. Chapman, Alpha (Kid) Blair, Alma May Collins, Roy C. Moore, Merton D. Kimball.

MAY

PUBLIC MEETING TONIGHT

May 2 , 1968

Bethel voters are reminded that there will be a public hearing tonight (Thursday) at Odeon Hall, 8 o'clock. The meeting will be to discuss: Proposal to abolish zoning, proposed zoning amendments, and the creation of a Bethel Sewer District.

PLANNING BOARD REPORTS ON ZONING PROPOSALS

May 9, 1968

Next Tuesday, May 14, Bethel voters will be given a chance to express their views on zoning. Following the public hearing on May 2, the Planning Board met to decide its recommendations on the articles in the warrant. In order that the voters might fully understand the articles and the recommendations of the board, this article will attempt to clarify the proposed changes in the Zoning Ordinance.

The Board recommends that articles 3, 12, 14, 16,17 ,21,22, 23, 24, and 25 be passed. Article 3 would change the area in West Bethel from the Favreau mill property to Pine Grove Cemetery from Industrial to Highway Commercial. Article 12 provides that Subdividers must provide a public street in accordance with Bethel's Subdivision Regulations. This will prevent inconsistencies by making a written law of the present policy of the town.

Article 14 will permit two family and multi-family dwelling in the Residential-Farming district; the lot area must allow 5,000 more square feet for each additional unit. Article 16 would change the zoning on both sides of Route 26 from the Greenwood line to Beaver Brook from R-F to Highway-Commercial. Article 17 will permit mobile homes in the Industrial district as long as long as they are not on the same lot as an industry, and as long as the lot is large enough.

Article 21-22-23 are concerned with signs; Article 21 will permit directional signs at intersections of State numbered highways and roads leading to the advertised business. Article 22 will permit Business signs in the Industrial zone, and Article 23 will permit business signs in the R-F zone. Article 24 will allow improvement of

houses already existing in the Industrial district, and Article 25 will permit gasoline service stations in the Industrial zone.

The Board recommends that Article 26, to abolish all zoning in Bethel, NOT pass. They believe that changes and improvements in the Zoning Ordinance should be made to plan for future development of the town, but that these changes be made with care and foresight.

The remaining articles (4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9,10, 11, 13, 15, 18, 19, 20) are articles which have caused controversy because they would cause drastic changes in the present* (the column was continued on page 10 and is omitted at this time.)

ZONING ABOLISHED IN TUESDAY VOTING

May 16, 1968

Going to the polls in numbers unprecedented for a local issue, Bethel voters decided to abolish local zoning in Tuesday balloting at the Bethel Fire Station. The final tally showed that 527 voters favored the article to abolish zoning, while only 206 voted to retain the ordinance. Zoning opponents needed 489 votes in favor of the article to over-ride a Bethel Planning Board recommendation for a “no” vote. A proposal opposed by the Board required a 2/3 vote for enactment.

In the voting on whether to establish a Bethel Sewer District, local voters followed the recommendation of the Board of Selectmen for a negative vote. The measure was turned down with 532 No votes, while 177 Yes ballots were cast.

All of the 23 other questions on the “zoning” ballot were defeated by an average of 210.1 Yes, to 303.5 No. These articles concerned changes to the repealed ordinance.

Much dissatisfaction had been evidenced in the zoning code in Bethel, especially since the first of the year, and it was clearly shown that the opposition’s efforts were not in vain.

The town initially adopted a zoning code in September of 1958. The first code was supplanted by one prepared by the James Sewall Company of Old Town as part of the town’s “comprehensive plan” at the March 1967 town meeting.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

(Dissolved by May 14, 1968 vote.)

Leland Brown, Chairman	Term expires 1969
Richard Carter	Term expires 1970
Ronald Kendall	Term expires 1971
Claus Wiese, Assoc Mbr	Term expires 1969

BUILDING PERMITS STILL NECESSARY ACCORDING TO LOCAL ORDINANCE

May 16, 1968

Following the vote on Tuesday, May 14, a number of questions were brought to the attention of the Bethel Planning Board as to what the outcome will mean to the town.

Because of the affirmative voted on article 26 – to abolish all zoning in Bethel – there is absolutely no zoning in effect in Bethel. Neither the zoning ordinance passed by the town in March 1967 nor the ordinance approved in 1958 are in effect. However, it is still necessary to obtain a building permit before building or altering present structures. This ordinance was put into effect on March 5, 1956, by an article reading “A permit issued by the Town Manager shall be required on all buildings hereafter erected in the Town of Bethel, and on buildings now standing which shall be altered, rebuilt or extended.

The Planning Board is still in existence and will continue to function as a body in local government. Its existence in Bethel was authorized at town meeting in March of 1957, and it operated under authority granted by Title 30 of the Maine Revised Statutes.

Because there is no longer any zoning the local Zoning Board of Appeals has ceased to exist. This body received its authority from the Maine State Statutes, Title 30 Section 4954 which states “The Municipal officers of a municipality which enacts a zoning ordinance shall appoint a board of appeals.” (*See Note 1 at end of summary*)

Another question that has been raised is how the loss of zoning will affect the tax evaluation recently conducted by the town. This tax evaluation will not be generally affected by the loss of zoning, but if an individual feels that his own property has been devalued because of an offense intrusion (taken to be intended as offensive intrusion) in his neighborhood, he can apply to the Assessors for a reduction in taxes.

The Planning Board shall still continue to regulate the subdivision of land. The board is given this authority through the Maine State Statutes, Title 30, Section 4956, which states that “ A register of deeds shall not record any plat of a proposed subdivision until it has been approved by the planning board and the approval noted on the plat. “ The Subdivision Regulations of Bethel are the policy that the board uses to judge each subdivision.

On June 12, the Planning Board will begin its schedule of meetings open to the public the second Thursday of each month. Any person wishing to come to this meeting will be welcome.

The Misses Ruth Tebbets and Ellen Kennett of Gould Academy were nominated for the Outstanding Teenager in America Award.

Miss Janis Kennagh was elected State Parliamentarian at the State Convention of the Future Homemakers of America.

Bob Cousy, Boston College basketball coach, and former Boston Celtics star, was speaker at the Gould Academy athletic banquet.

The music department of SAD 44 presented their spring concert at Bingham Hall.

Mrs. Doris Lord resigned as sixth grade teacher at Crescent Park School.

Bethel Senior Citizens celebrated their sixth anniversary.

Edwin O. Reischauer, former U. S. Ambassador to Japan, lectured at Gould Academy.

Delmont House of Bryant Pond was named chairman of the Oxford County Republican Committee.

Deaths in May : Elmo L. Tibbetts, Dana A. Grover, Mrs. Louvie Murphy, Mrs. Elizabeth (Maude) Kittredge, Loring J. Roberts, Mrs. Marion S. Coolidge, S/Sgt Hollis W. Buck, Mrs. H.H. Chapman, Robley Evans Chase, Mrs. Mildred S. Harvey, Roy O. Millett.

JUNE

Mrs. Lillian C. Bartlett, teacher at the East Bethel School, was a guest at a retirement tea.

Miss Margaret Joy Tibbetts, U.S. Ambassador to Norway, and Lt. Gen. James D. Alger, chairman of the Inter-American Defense Board, were speakers at the Gould commencement. Both are graduates of Gould Academy.

SPECIAL AWARD FOR “JOE” RODERICK

June 4, 1968

At Last Assembly and Class Day Exercises at Gould Academy last Friday, May 31, Mark Vail, on behalf of the student body, presented Joe Roderick with gifts of appreciation for his 26 years of coaching and friendship. Mark commented on Joe's interest in reading and the out-of-doors as well as his example and encouragement for all

boys in sportsmanship and athletics.

PLANNING BOARD TO MEET THURSDAY, JUNE 13

June 4, 1968

On Thursday, June 13, the Bethel Planning Board will meet at the Selectmen's Office at 7:30 P.M. This meeting will be open to the public and anyone interested are welcome to attend.

On the agenda for consideration will be the discussion of a building code for Bethel. Members of the Planning Board are presently studying the Abbreviated National Building Code issued by the Maine Municipal Association.

Since the special town meeting on May 14, there has been a number of questions in regard to which ordinance remain in Bethel now.

In 1956 the town of Bethel accepted a number of by-laws, these are on record and are printed in a booklet available to town citizens at the Town Manager's office. These by-laws cover Fire Department, its duties, officers, meetings, rules and regulations; the sewers, traffic and street regulations, rules on permits for building, chimneys, tenement houses, business blocks in regard to fire control, fire control and rules for violations, shade trees and permits.

Since 1956 eight ordinances have been adopted. In 1964 it was voted to prohibit discharging firearms in the compact area. In 1965 rules regarding motor vehicles as to noise were made, and in 1966 it was voted to have a penalty of not less than \$5.00 nor more than \$25.00 for unnecessary noise with an automobile. In 1965 it was also voted that the town would not be liable for damage caused by sewage that backs into a cellar if the sewer line from the private property is not properly trapped. In 1956 it was voted that all ways and streets that are laid out by the town shall be no less than three rods in width. In 1966 rules regarding loitering were enacted, and in 1967 control of pigeons was enacted.

All of the above ordinances are on file in the Town Manager's office and available for study.

It is hoped that any interested citizen will come to Planning Board meetings so that the board can be aware of feelings and ideas in the community.

S. A. D. 44 Dollars for Scholars awards were made to the following: Miss Andrea Swan, Edward Rosenberg of Woodstock High School; Thomas Davis, Miss Irene Haines of Gould Academy; Miss Mary Jane Abbott, David Arthur Hutchins, of Andover High School.

Severin Beliveau of Rumford was named chairman of the Maine Democratic Committee.

Mr. and Mrs. Earlon Paine were honored at an open house on the occasion of their 25th wedding anniversary.

Casco Bank and Trust Co. opened their new offices at the corner of High and Main Streets, Bethel.

FREDERICK KNEELAND HONORED AT TESTIMONIAL IN AUGUSTA

June 27, 1968

A testimonial dinner was given by the Legislative body and officers of the state at the Holiday Inn, Augusta, Wednesday, June 26, in honor of Frederick W. Kneeland who left the State House June 1, after serving six years as Legislative Finance Officer.

Mr. Kneeland has accepted a position as vice president of Wyman Canning Industries of Millbridge, Maine. They have factories at Millbridge, Cherryfield, and Bar Harbor, canning blueberries, sardines, apples and a packaging business.

Mr. Kneeland is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Roland Kneeland of West Bethel, and is married to the former Barbara Jordan of Auburn. They have four children.

Those who attended the testimonial from this area were Norman Ferguson, Hanover; Mrs. Louise Lincoln, Bethel; Mr. and Mrs. Roland Kneeland, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Rupert Grover, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Loton Hutchinson, and Mr. and Mrs. Shirley Gilbert. □

The class of 1918, Gould Academy, held its 50th reunion at the Red Rooster Dining Room, Mayville.

Deaths: Ella Hutchinson Bartlett, Lester D. Hathaway, Mrs. Helen M. Jacobs, Charles Tueill, Arthur Bennett, Charles R. Swinlon, Harry L. Lowe Sr., Mrs. Bessie Crouse, Mrs. J. P. Core, John J. Bartash, Frank M. Hayes, Robert J. Rugg, U. O. Pulkkinen.

JULY

Scott Emmons' buildings on the old County Road in Woodstock were destroyed by fire started by lightning.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Billings were honored by an open house in honor of their 25th wedding anniversary.

Mrs. Emily Saunders of Dover-Foxcroft, Mrs. Mary Hoffman of Lynnfield, Mass., and Mrs. Susan Farrar of Bethel visited Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Saunders, Peace Corps volunteers, in San Losita, El Salvador.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Paul of West Bethel celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary.

The Bethel town office was moved to the first floor offices formerly occupied by the Casco Bank in the Cole Block.

The Bethel tax rate was announced as \$37 per \$1,000 of valuation.

Fourteen nurses aides were graduated at Rumford Community Hospital.

TMC Edward Clark Bean retired after serving over 26 years on active duty with the U. S. Navy.

Deaths: Mrs. Lettie Hall, Elias T. Roberts, Mrs. Lucian J. Littlehale, Mrs. Gladys Morrill Johnson, Mrs. Lena Wight.

AUGUST

Harry Mason of Bethel celebrated his 100th birthday with a luncheon party at the Cozy Inn nursing home, Rumford.

The first National Reunion of the Kimball Family was held at North Bridgton.

Everett Lidstone returned to Bingham after operating the I. G. A. store for six months. Gene Buswell took over as owner-manager of the store.

Michael J. O'Donnell opened an office for the practice of law at the corner of Main and Spring Streets.



Old Home Sunday was held at the Andover Congregational Church.

Attorney Henry Harmon Hastings, Jr. (1918-1968) unexpectedly died. The town's 1968 annual report was dedicated to Mr. Hastings.

Over two dozen reported for Telstar Regional High School football practice.

Mrs. Violet Bennett retired as Bethel town clerk. She was first elected to the position in March 1957. Mrs. Katheryn Eames was named by the Bethel Selectmen to serve in the position.

Deaths: Mrs. Ismay Hathaway, Mrs. Rose F. Mason, Rupert K. Hathaway, Henry H. Hastings, Lawrence A. Lord, Otis D. Dudley.

SEPTEMBER

Elementary Schools in S.A.D. 44 opened on Sept. 9. **Classes at Telstar Regional High School started on Sept. 19. Orientation classes at the new school were held September 16-17-18.**

Mrs. Henry M. Laws, mother of Rev. C. W. Laws, celebrated her 90th birthday at the Congregational Manse on Broad Street.

Mt. Abram Fish and Game Association replaced the old dam at Indian Pond in Greenwood.

Work was progressing on the construction of the Bethel Catholic Church on Route 26.

Donald M. Nowlin of Sunday River signed a contract to play professional baseball in the Boston Red Sox organization.

S. A. D. 44 Schools reported a total enrollment of 1,400 students. Of these, 669 were enrolled at the Telstar R.H.S. facility.

Miss Susan Pollack of Harrison, a senior at Gould, was announced as a Merit Scholarship semi-finalist.

Mr. and Mrs. Garey York were honored on their 25th wedding anniversary.

The Sunshine Center was opened at Locke Mills. Leland Dunham is the proprietor of the coin-operated wash and dry cleaning establishment.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Dunn were given a going away party at Songo Lake Pavilion. They closed their store at the corner of Main and Church Streets on Sept. 7. They had operated at the location since Jan. 1963.

Deaths: Guy B. Vail, Mrs. Lesta Hale Compass, Mrs. Vivian M. Richardson, Forrest A. Keene, Carlton E. Gammon, Mrs. Ethel M. Johnson.

OCTOBER

Seventy-three Senior Citizens were luncheon guests at the Bethel Inn.

Bethel Chamber of Commerce held their October meeting at the Telstar Regional High School cafeteria.

Mr. and Mrs. William C. Guthrie, parents of Mrs. John T. Grover, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

The Rumford Hospital Fair was held October 17.

Cathy Buck and Peter Kailey, both of Bethel, students at Gould Academy, were commended for high performance on Merit Scholarship tests.

Philip Runnels, a student at Telstar R.H.S. was commended for his performance on the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

Larry Chenier, Bethel Grand Trunk agent since 1963 retired Oct. 11.

The first meeting for the year of the Bethel P.T.A. was poorly attended.

The Raymond Williams house on the Sunday River Road was reportedly gutted by fire.

Service was terminated at the Bethel Grand Trunk station.

Several railway cars of sugar beets were loaded at the Bethel siding for shipment to processing plants in Aroostook County.

Members of the Senior Vocational Building Trades class of Stephens High School, Rumford, visited the saw mill and planer mill of the L.E. Davis Lumber Co,

Deaths in October: Mrs. Carrie Morton, Warren G., Blake, Henry J. Lombard, Archie C. Bennett, Mabel Curtis Worcester, Gard Robert Bennett, Mrs. Martha Littlehale Lane, Father Charles Nelson, Mrs. Louise Tibbetts.

NOVEMBER

In the referendum election Bethel voters were favor of all questions regarding liquor.

The superintendent's office of S.A.D. 44 was moved to quarters at the Telstar R.H.S. facility.

The gymnasium at Telstar R.H.S. was utilized for the first time for basketball practice.

Mr. and Mrs. Stanley H. Wentzell of Gorham, N.H., formerly of Bethel, celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.

The Specialty Shop (brick building at Broad and Main St.) ceased operations Nov. 14, after 22 years serving the Bethel public.

A Boosters Club for Telstar R.H.S. athletics was organized.

The Western Maine Manager's Association held their monthly meeting in Bethel.

The District E Convention of Future Homemakers of America was held at Telstar Regional High School.

Dorothy Clarke Wilson, noted author, lectured at the Bethel Methodist Church.

Jane B. and Robert L. Grover were named Peace Corps volunteers. They are to serve in India.

The Portland Symphony Orchestra presented a concert for the students at Telstar R.H.S.

Deaths: Mrs. Nettie E. Spinney, Mrs. Alden Chase, Arthur Fogg, Leslie E. Gibson, Richard K. Jordan, Elwood F. Ireland.

DECEMBER

The use of certain books by English classes at Telstar Regional High School was protested. A procedure for literature review was adopted by the S.A.D. 44 Board of Directors.

Dr. James Hudson was named president of the Telstar Athletic Boosters Club.

Mrs. Donald Brooks served as general chairman of the “Living Nativity Scene”, presented for the fifth year on Dec. 22.

The Senior Citizens enjoyed a Christmas party on Dec. 10 at Garland Chapel.

A pre-campaign meeting of volunteer town chairman of the March of Dimes was held at the Sudbury Inn.

The Bethel Health and Service Council delivered Christmas baskets to deserving families.

Arthur Gilbert, West Bethel, was chosen by the Bethel Democratic Town Committee to serve as acting postmaster at West Bethel.

The Bethel railroad station, built in 1863, was torn down.

Deaths: Philip S. Chapman, Henry T. Roberts, John Douthwright, Mrs. Ida Golding Cummings, Arthur L. Dudley, Tolve (?), John E. Price.

REPORT OF BETHEL PLANNING BOARD – 1968

Town Report for 1968

The vote of the Special Town Meeting May 14, 1968 to repeal all zoning laws in Bethel has been of great concern to the Planning Board and to many citizens of the town including some who voted for repeal. Apparently some voters didn't realize that their vote would eliminate even the very elemental zoning regulations which were passed back in September 1958 and amended several times before superseded by the code as recommended in the Sewall Company long-range planning study authorized and financed by the town. Under these conditions Bethel has no means of controlling future growth, sustaining present tax values, or providing for additional taxes to meet or ever-increasing municipal costs.

Ultimately some zoning code might be conceived which on an area basis, would be acceptable to the voters of our town but until then the Planning Board would like to present the following program for your consideration.

Readoption of the simple zoning laws of 1958, as amended which were in effect prior to those recommended by the Sewall Company.

Consider a simple building code which would specify minimum standards for new construction in most parts of the town.

THE END

Note 1: Relation to comprehensive plan. A zoning ordinance must be pursuant to and consistent with a comprehensive plan adopted by the municipal legislative body,

Sources for this 1968 news summary: microfilm records of the Bethel Citizen—property of the Bethel Historical Society.