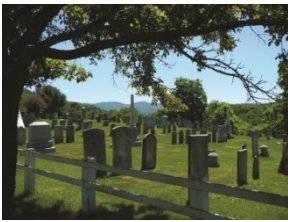


# 69 Barnet Center Historical District

Barnet, Vermont

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The Barnet Center Historic District can be found on a hill, above the Stevens River, at the geographic center of Barnet. It is located along Highway 7, which is off of US Route 5. This historic district is unique because it represents a small and rural 19<sup>th</sup> century church-centered community that has remained largely untouched by modern development and settlement patterns.

The land where the Historic District is located was first purchased in 1775 by an association of farmers from Perth and Stirling in Scotland. As a result, this area became some of the first lands in Vermont to be settled by direct foreign immigration. When the Scottish farmers immigrated, they also brought Presbyterianism with them, which was a new form of church government in New England. In order to properly observe the religion, it was thought at the time that taxes from residents should be used to support the minister and church. As a result, in charters for new towns, lands were deeded to the first settled minister. The location of the first church and the first town center was also dependent on the location of the lands granted. As was the case in Barnet Center, the church became the focus of social and religious life after Reverend David Goodwillie was granted 340 acres in 1790.

Of the five structures to make up the Barnet Center Historic District, the United Presbyterian Church is the most prominent building in the District. The other structures include the Reverend Goodwillie House, a shed, a Vestry, and the Manse, a Scottish term for a Presbyterian parsonage. A church burial ground is also part of the Historic District. All of the structures are wooden framed and date from 1790 to 1915. The architectural styles and designs represented include vernacular renditions of Greek Revival (church, Vestry and the Manse), Queen Anne (porch of Vestry), Classical Cottage (the Manse) and Cape Cod (Reverend Goodwillie House).

The United Presbyterian Church of Barnet Center is the third building to sit on the site, which was previously occupied by a wooden meeting house built in 1787 and a Federal brick church built in 1829. The 1829 church was destroyed by fire in 1849. However, the current church was erected in record time, requiring just less than three months from the raising of the first frame to the preaching of the first sermon by Reverend David Goodwillie (May 1-July 22, 1849).

The Reverend Goodwillie House was built in 1790 in the Cape Cod style. The structure was the first parsonage house for the first settled pastor, Rev. David Goodwillie. It is unique for its large size, 44 x 40 feet and for the attention to detail paid to the structure during its construction. For example, the house had the first wallpaper and lead water pipe in town. The size and luxuries of the Reverend Goodwillie House demonstrate the importance of this man as a minister within the Barnet Center community. The Reverend Goodwillie House is also thought to be the second oldest habitable house in Barnet. Reverend David Goodwillie and his son, Reverend Thomas Goodwillie each preached for 40 years and had great spiritual influence on the Barnet Center community. The Barnet Center Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.

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