

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT

Chartered February 25, 1782

1970 Population 837

1980 Population 1302

Size—15,500 acres (approx.)

Grand List—\$186,996.90

Town Office (Lower Library Level)	9:00-12:00/1:00-4:00 (Mon.-Fri.)
Joslin Memorial Library	3:00-5:30 (Mon.-Fri.) 2:00-5:30 (Sat.) 7:00-8:30 (Thurs. eve.)

EMERGENCY/IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Ambulance	496-3600 (or operator)
Fire Department	496-2400 (fires only)
Highway Garage	496-8897
Sheriff's Office	496-3924
Tax Collector	496-2282
Town Clerk	496-2218
Treasurer	496-2218
Clinic (MRV Health Center)	496-3838
Hospital (Ct. Vt. Med. Ctr.)	1-229-9121 (Berlin)
Poison Control (Vt. Center)	1-658-3456 (Burlington)
State Highway Garage-Dist. 6	496-3976
State Police	496-2262

SCHEDULED MEETINGS OF LOCAL BOARDS

- Selectmen—every Monday night at 7:30 PM—Town Clerk's Office
- Planning Commission—as required
- School Board—1st Monday of every month at 7:30 PM—Waitsfield Elementary School
- Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission—2nd Tuesday of alternate months at 7:30 PM (Feb., Apr., June, Aug., Oct., Dec.) 26 State St., Montpelier, VT.

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD

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A Brief History of the JOSLIN MEMORIAL LIBRARY

At the annual town meeting March 5, 1912, the following article was adopted:

"Article 9. to see if the town will vote to empower the selectmen to purchase a site for a public building, provided such site is needed. The cost of such site not to exceed \$800.00."

In November of that year Woodrow Wilson was elected President for the first time and the Titanic, on her maiden voyage, collided with an iceberg and 1,513 people drowned; Jim Thorpe was an outstanding athlete in the Olympic Games at Stockholm, Sweden; and the Boston Red Sox defeated the New York Giants in the World Series 4 games to 3.

By the spring of 1913 on Memorial Day, a handful of old soldiers laid the cornerstone of the Joslin Memorial Library. An account of the dedication (October 30) appears in the Mad River Valley News of November 4, 1913. The principle address was given by the Reverend H. C. Ledyard of Northfield, Vermont and the address of the donor of the library, George A. Joslyn, was read by the supervising architect of Montpelier, F. A. Walker. The library was constructed by the H. P. Cummings Construction Company of Ware, Massachusetts. The total contract price, including extras, was \$21,387.00. The architect was John MacDonald of Omaha, Nebraska, the home of Mr. Joslyn. Mr. MacDonald was also the architect for the Joslyns' residence in Omaha, churches, synagogues and the Joslyn Art Museum which was donated by Mrs. Joslyn in memory of her husband in November Of 1931.

As many of you know, the Post Office in Waitsfield occupied space in the library (which is now the children's room) from 1913 until 1966. The lower floor of the library building, called in the past the library hall, then consisted of one room for the town clerk's office and a vault that was built under the front entrance of the library. The remainder of the lower floor consisted primarily of one room, and town meetings were held in the library hall continuously from 1913 through the year 1935. In 1961 the library hall, so-called, was renovated and the Montpelier Savings Bank (now the Howard Bank) became the first bank facility in Waitsfield. The Howard Bank remained at this location until 1972. Soon after this, the town offices were to take over all the space vacated by the bank.

It is interesting to note that during the first year of library operations the postmaster served as the day librarian and janitor for the library and received an annual salary of \$75.00 and the night librarian was paid \$25.00 for the year. By the year of 1930, the total services for the day librarian and the night

Library History (continued)

librarian had reached the sum of \$150.00. The United States Government paid yearly Post Office rent from 1914 through 1922 of \$75.00. In 1923 the rent was raised to \$150.00 and remained that sum until 1947.

The architect's plans for the building contained a specification regarding the Opalescent art glass skylight reading as follows:

"Art glass panel in ceiling of library to be figured by the contractor at \$1.50 per foot, the design to be selected by the owner. Glass to be divided by bronze metal bars and to be thoroughly reinforced with iron."

Recently this skylight was cleaned and an electric lighting system was installed to light this skylight at night. The present appraised replacement value for the skylight is \$15,000.00

There is on file in the library, "In Memoriam George A. Joslyn", containing news clippings from over 175 different newspapers concerning his life and death and that of his wife, Sarah Joslyn. They were both most successful in the business world.

The opening paragraph of his address read at the dedication explains his absence:

"I had hoped that I might be able to meet with you today and take a personal part in the dedication of the 'Joseph Joslin Memorial Library Building' but circumstances which will not be reasoned with have ordered otherwise. The circumstances with which a businessman has to deal are usually hard masters; they rule him with a rod of iron and give little heed to mere matters of sentiment. I have been for a long time in business servitude and my bonds are beginning to chafe. I'm getting restive, but someday soon I expect to be free and then I shall come back here often to revisit the scenes of my boyhood, to breathe the tonic mountain air and to meet and greet friends of other days."

George A. Joslyn (1848—1916) and Sarah Hannah, daughter of James and Calista (Joslyn) Selleck (1851—1940), both of Waitsfield, were married at Berlin, Vermont on September 24, 1872.

One editorial entitled "A Romance of Business" said in part, "Joslyn drifted into Des Moines and got a job unloading paper for a ready-print concern then doing business there. It was from that modest start that he climbed until he became the head and practically the sole owner of the Western Newspaper Union (with branches in 31 cities).

Sarah Joslyn in 1929, thirteen years after her husband's death, turned the newspaper business over to the faithful employees who were permitted

Library History (continued)

to use a cash surplus of \$5,000,000.00 as a so-called payment for the business.

George and Sarah Joslyn had no children but had an adopted daughter. At the time of Mr. Joslyn's death in 1916, Mrs. Joslyn was very active in the business world and supported many private charities.

The Joslin Memorial Library has substantially increased its roster of borrowers in recent years with circulation annually exceeding the seven thousand level.

Library services include children's and adults' programming, discussion groups and summer projects, some of which have been conducted cooperatively with Warren Public Library.

Friends of the Library continue to assist with funds and volunteer services. All residents are eligible to borrow reading material. Local availability is augmented through interlibrary loan and collections from the Midstate Regional Library. Research assistance is available.

The Library is operated under a Board of Trustees with an employed librarian in charge of activities.

The library is open daily, with the exception of Sundays and holidays.

The Town of Waitsfield is indeed fortunate to have such a fine facility which provides excellent recreational as well as educational resources.