

Bangor History

A photographic retrospective

Logging, transportation, entertainment — at the time of its incorporation in 1834, Bangor had it all. The Queen City of the East, as it was deemed by Bangor Daily Journal editor Charles Roberts, was booming, the forestry industry and the Penobscot River were alive with lumber and ships carrying cargo and passengers from Bangor to Boston. Just a mere 30 years later, rail travel would add even more options to the big city, making feasible travel that once was impossible by stagecoach.

In addition, the steamship Bangor brought passengers to the city, and the city's first hotel, The Bangor House, found itself host to prominent guests by the likes of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Theodore Roosevelt, Frederick

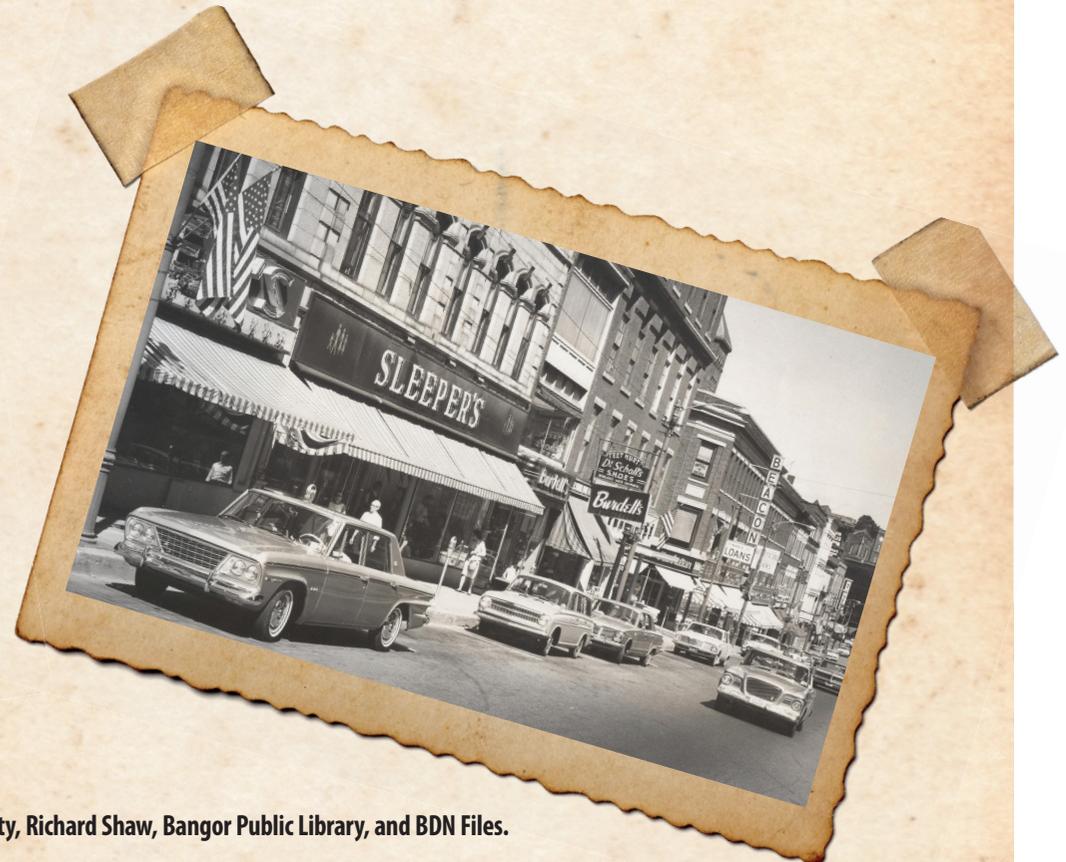
Douglass, Ulysses Grant, Oscar Wilde and Howard Taft.

Then it happened. The Great Fire of 1911 destroyed much of Bangor's business district — beloved churches, two banks, the library, mansions, homes — nearly 400 buildings were reduced to rubble that late April day. But the city's spirit rose from the ashes and just a year later the city was coming back to life. While the lumber heyday was over, the Queen City reigned and prospered.

Although it has experienced its share of struggles, today's Bangor is vibrant and the city continues to thrive and grow. The Waterfront has been brought back to life; the mall area, although ever-evolving, has

seen new development; outer Broadway, Union and Hammond streets are dotted with businesses new and old; the health care industry has brought new development and seen great expansions; and the city continues to thrive.

In the pages that follow, we've provided a brief glimpse of Bangor's history, but we'd love to hear your stories of Bangor. What was your favorite Main Street store as a child? Did you have a greatgrandfather who drove logs on the Penobscot River? Does your family have a story of the city that's been passed down from generation to generation? Share them with us by emailing photos and recollections to athibodeau@bangordailynews.com, as we'd love to include them in a future publication.



Historic photos courtesy of Bangor Historical Society, Richard Shaw, Bangor Public Library, and BDN Files.

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