

SECTION 1. HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The following is a summary of some of Poland's historical highlights.

1736 The General Court of Massachusetts granted a petition for two townships of land, including the geographical area of present-day Poland, to the officers and soldiers who had served in the disastrous campaign of 1690 against Canada. The grant was called the Bakerstown Grant. No real attempt to settle the area took place until 1768-69.

1741 George II settled a boundary dispute by creating the Province of New Hampshire. The land for the Bakerstown Grant falls within the new province's boundary lines and the title issued by Massachusetts was invalidated.

1765 Land was granted by the Massachusetts General Court in 1765 to officers and soldiers who served with Sir William Phips in the 1690 Battle of Quebec. It replaced a 1736 grant made to them called Bakerstown (now Salisbury, New Hampshire) which was ruled invalid in 1741 at the separation of New Hampshire from Massachusetts. The new plantation was also called Bakerstown (after Captain Thomas Baker), and included present-day Poland, Minot, Mechanic Falls and the greater part of Auburn.^[4]

1768-69 Some of the first settlers were Nathaniel Bailey, Daniel Land, Moses Emery, and John Newman.

1770 Moses Emery, Sr. settled in what is now East Poland and built mills on the south side of the Little Androscoggin River at Minot Corner and established a ferry. Mills provided boards for boxes, cornmeal and grains for settlers.

1772 Moses Emery, Jr. was the first male to be born in Bakerstown, as the area was originally called. He built the first sawmill in 1798 as well as a grist mill and took on other enterprises. His grave can be found in the ancient church cemetery at Center Minot.

1792 Captain George Waterhouse built a grist mill at the outlet of Range Pond.

1792 The first tavern was built in Poland by Captain George Waterhouse. This established hotel keeping in Poland as a major business in the early days.

1793 The first meeting house was built. The location is in question.

1793-94 The first church was built sometime during this period with the location unknown.

1794 Jabez Ricker moved his family from Alfred Maine to Bakerstown. Jabez had owned land adjacent to the Shaker community in Alfred and when they pressed him to acquire his land, he relented and made the land swap. Shortly after the Ricker's arrival in Bakerstown, some travelers knocked on the door looking for a place to stay [which began a long tradition of innkeeping on the property that continues today.](#)

1795 On February 17th, Poland was incorporated. It is believed that the name was taken from the old hymn tune "Poland," a great favorite of Moses Emery. During the settlement of Poland, small communities were established in the Town including Central, East, South and West Poland. Central

Poland, known as Poland Corner, became the busiest portion of Poland after

1797 The Wentworth Ricker Inn, [later known as the Mansion House](#), opened.

1802 Minot became a separate town from Poland.

1819 The Shakers settled on Range Hill, a mile from the Poland Spring area. The original house was destroyed by lightning, but a marker on Route 26 shows the spot.

1820 Maine becomes a state [on March 15](#).

1845 [While the spring on the property had been known for decades, the Rickers began to believe the water had medicinal properties and as](#) the fame of the water grew, [they](#) began sharing the water.

1845 Ground was broken for the first railroad, which went between Portland and Montreal. The Androscoggin and Kennebec Railroad was chartered in this year and in 1849 it opened a route from Danville Junction on the Grand Trunk to Waterville.

1852 Part of Poland known as Marston's Corner became part of Auburn.

1859 Industry was attracted to Poland's waterpower sites. When the population was 2,660, it had four sawmills, a gristmill, a tannery and a carriage factory. The St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad passed through the northeastern corner of the town, spurring development and bringing tourists drawn to its scenic ponds and gentle hills.

1859 The first commercial sale of Poland Spring water was made.

1870 John S. Briggs built a steam mill. In 1875, an addition was built for a saw and shingle mill a well as a clapboard mill and planer. He added a butter factory in 1884, and a threshing machine in 1888.

1876 The Ricker Family opened the Poland Spring House which shortly became a popular attraction for the country's social and political elite. The hotel [was](#), eventually comprised of over 350 guest rooms, a barber shop, dance and photography studios, pool room, music hall, bowling alley, dining facilities, fire sprinkler system and elevators, [and](#) served as the crown jewel of the resort grounds.

1877-80 The [Poland](#) Shakers joined with [the Shakers in](#) New Gloucester.

1883 The Poland Dairy Association built a butter factory where the Poland Community School now stands. The factory had an output of 300 pounds per day. The old creamery well is still in the school basement.

1885 Twenty-eight school districts had been formed by this time. The first district had been established on Range Hill in the southern part of town.

1890 The New Gloucester Shakers changed their name to Sabbathday Lake.

1893 Mechanic Falls became a separate town. The Maine State Building was constructed at the

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World's Fair in Chicago.

1893-84 The Maine Central Railroad came through Poland.

1894-1895 The Maine State Building was transported from Chicago and reconstructed on the Poland Spring Inn & Resort property. The building, constructed of granite, hardwoods, and slate from Maine, was originally constructed as the state entry for the Colombian Exposition or Chicago World's Fair of 1893. Designed by Lewiston native Charles Sumner Frost, the building was purchased by the Rickers, disassembled, transported to Poland Spring, reassembled and dedicated for use as a library and art gallery for the resort guests. It remains as one of only a handful of buildings left from the almost 200 that were constructed for the grand and historic fair.

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1895 Poland Spring Hotels opened a nine-hole golf course, one of the first in the state, after commissioning Arthur Fenn, America's first born golf professional and course designer, to construct the course for use by its guests.

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1895 There was a 100-year celebration of Poland's incorporation held under a big tent set up next to the Poland Town House for dinner and speeches.

1900 Amos Knight started work on what was originally called the White Oak Spring and Hotel, eventually to become the Summit Spring Hotel

1904 The Summit Spring Hotel was completed.

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1905 Knight installed the first elevator in the state and two artesian wells. Knight renamed the hotel "Summit Spring"

1906-07 The Poland Spring house bottling facility was erected.

1912 All Souls Chapel was constructed.

1913 The Ricker Inn open at Poland Spring (renamed in 1981 as the Presidential Inn).

1943 Summit Spring Hotel closes due to WWII.

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1944 Summit Spring Hotel was purchased by Edmund and Sol Kaufmann of Washington DC

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1949 Following a tragedy in the Kaufmann family, the Kaufmanns sell Summit Spring to the Malamut family.

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1954 The new Poland Community School was constructed on the site of the old butter factory.

1956 The town converted to a town manager form of government.

1959 The Summit Spring Hotel was torn down.

1962 Saul Feldman purchased the Poland Spring Resort and Water Company.

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1962 Article 42 in the Town Report asked the Town of Poland to accept a bequest from the estate of Jane Jeffrey Ricker for the purpose of building and maintaining a library and community house for the town. The town voted to accept the generous gift, and appointed the following building committee: Willard Stone, chairman; Robert Shaw, Irving Groves, Hobert Kilgore, Mrs. Guy Chipman and Robert Harkins.

1963 The Alvan Bolster Ricker Memorial Library and Community House opened.

1963 The Executive Inn (renamed the Maine Inn) [opened](#) on top of Ricker hill with all private bathrooms.

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1963 Jack Paar lived at Poland Spring [Resort, where](#) his television station, WMTW, was headquartered.

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1963 Poland and Poland Spring hosted the filming of two episodes of the popular TV show "Route 66". The site of the Wolf Cove Inn hosted one episode right in the dining room, The Inn operated as a restaurant called "Lobster ~ Land On The Lake" at the time. Poland Spring Hotels hosted the other, where the stars stayed during filming. Joan Crawford, Lon Chaney Jr, Tom Bosley and Patrick O'Neil were guest stars in those episodes. Watch [episodes](#) "Come Out, Come Out Wherever You Are" and "Same Picture, Different Frame" to see Poland and the Inn "back in the day."

1965 The State Park and Recreation Commission acquired over 500 acres of land on the southern end of Lower Range Pond for a [state](#) park. Donated by Saul Feldman

1966-1969 Poland Spring was the site of the largest women's [Job Corps](#) training center in the country. With several thousand individuals coming and going, the wear and tear took its toll [on the property](#). The Job Corps left the grounds in 1969.

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1966 An addition to Poland Community School was built.

1970 The Maharishi held a TM ([Transcendental Meditation](#)) teacher training course at Poland Springs, Maine, with 1,200 participants. [The Yogi, as he was known, was the spiritual leader of this movement and was known for his relationship with The Beatles.](#)

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1973-74 The Town Highway Department Garage was constructed.

1975 July 3, The Poland Spring [House which was](#) unoccupied burned.

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1976 The Poland Spring Preservation Society is formed. It's mission to protect the Maine State Building and All Souls Chapel and preserve the Poland Spring History.

1977-78 The Town took over the Plains Road from the State.

1977 Range Pond State Park was opened for public use.

1978 The Poland Spring Mansion House burned while it was being torn down

1978 A P-3 Orion surveillance aircraft from Brunswick disintegrated over Poland. Debris rained down on Tripp corner, right at the intersection of routes 26 and 11, a mile north of Wolf Cove Inn. The crew of the Orion perished in the incident. However, the locals fared better, with only a few popped windows resulting from the explosion of the fuel tank on impact.

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1979-80 The town's solid waste transfer station was constructed.

1979 The Poland Spring Health Institute was opened.

1981 The third addition to Poland Community School was constructed.

1982 Mel and Cyndi Robbins purchased the Poland Spring Resort.

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1986 The Sebago area, including Poland, was identified as a potential nuclear dump site. In the face of strong local opposition, the U.S. Department of Energy withdrew consideration of the area.

1989 Residents of Poland raised money and gathered together to build a new playground for the Poland Community School.

1989 A new Town Office and a new Fire and Rescue building were constructed and opened.

1990 Population of Poland, Maine is approximately 4,321. Poland takes part in Statewide "Maine Street '90 celebration." "Welcome to Poland, Maine" signs, designed by a local student, are erected.

1990 Soviet elementary school children arrived in Poland to spend a month living and going to school at Poland Community School.

1990 A new post office was opened on Route 26 serving the Poland Spring area located one mile south of Poland Corner Center Post Office, however, later in the year the new Post Office was assigned to all delivery routes in the town; Poland maintaining one zip code being 04274.

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1990 The Maine Bottling Company began bottling Garden Spring Water. [Garden Spring Water is now a spring source of Poland Spring Water Company.](#)

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1990 The Poland Comprehensive Planning Committee began work on updating the Poland Comprehensive Plan.

1990 Population is approximately 4,321. This was the last year that Poland's financial activities and operations reported on a calendar basis-January to December.

1991 Poland transitioned to a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year, with semi-annual tax billings, saving the Town significant dollars by avoiding the cost of borrowing in anticipation of taxes.

1992 New vehicle registration program implemented in Town office. Town computer system is replaced. Interior of Town Hall is repainted. Old town office building leased to Biological Services (Ira Levine). Community electronic bulletin board is activated on the Town's public access TV channel.

- 1993 Town wide revaluation initiated, the first since 1978.
- 1994 Valuation \$139,484,540 tax rate \$22.35 per \$1,000 valuation.
- 1995 Town awarded grant from Department of Environmental Protection for ½ payment of cost of closing and capping Town’s old dump. Town purchases land adjoining Transfer Station to permit reorganizing solid waste recycling area.
- 1995 Poland Bicentennial Year is celebrated. Poland Historical Society is established.
- 1996 Establishment of fee for service approach for Town Rescue. Road naming-house numbering project started for implementation of Statewide E-91 1 emergency response system.
- 1996 Process started for building [the high school](#) in Poland.
- 1997 Poland’s first ever Community Development Block Grant- awarded to improve accessibility to Alvan Bolster Ricker Memorial Library plus the construction of sidewalk between the Poland Community School and Library.
- 1997 Range Hill Bridge (Thunder Bridge) replaced under” Local Bridge Program” administered through Maine Department of Transportation.
- 1998 ICE STORM OF 1998 - 2,000 tons of down and damaged trees on Poland’s roads. Clean up cost in excess of \$200,000 paid with FEMA Disaster Reimbursement Funds. Poland’s Code Enforcement Officer Edward Blow dies. Old School House located on White Oak Hill Road is moved to the Municipal Complex. The Poland Unit of the Androscoggin County Sheriff’s Department moves into the old town office.
- 1999 Poland Regional High School and Bruce M Whittier Middle School opens. Poland School Department takes ownership of School Bus Fleet from Harry Busch. [Goss apple orchard operating under new ownership - Donald and Angela Roberts - ships apples worldwide.](#)
- 2000 The town creates its first Tax Increment Financing Districts 1 and 2 with Poland Spring Bottling.
- 2001 The town creates its own website – www.polandtownoffice.org.
- 2002 Bakerstown Alternative School moves into the basement of the Town Hall. Poland voters approve a town Recreation Department and Recreation Director.
- 2003 Poland Community School (PCS) is 50-year-old. A fourth addition to Poland Community School is constructed adding a multipurpose room, music room, small rooms for instruction and a new library media center. Portable classrooms are eliminated.
- 2003 Poland Historical Society moves into the Old School House. The Town Office is renovated and expanded. Poland expands its services to include a new Recreation Department. Full time Recreation Director, Scott Segal, is hired. The Fire and Rescue departments are combined into a single department. Willie Rice, Jr., is hired as the town’s first full time Fire Rescue Chief.

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2004 Poland Town Office renovated and expanded. Town salt shed is built, and the Town Garage expanded which included a 3-bay addition to existing town garage; closure of town's Poland Corner gravel pit with conversion into school bus parking area. Construction of a new fuel island with spill and ground water protection capabilities. Construction of central office space for School Union #29 office and Bus dispatch complex. Gravel pit off Aggregate Road reclaimed. Bell Tower is removed from the roof of the Poland Community Church and replaced with fiberglass steeple. New water source is constructed for all municipal buildings in the Poland Corner/Maine Street area on town owned land. Poland Community School implements a full-day kindergarten program. **Estimated population – 5,600.**

Commented [LJ2]: I note a similar change in population below as compared to the 2010 Census data. 2010: 5,376, Today's estimate over 5,600. I would remove this estimate here as it is in conflict with the town data below (2010 Census)

2005 The Economic Development Committee and a new Comprehensive Planning Committee is appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Residential Ice Rink is built. Androscoggin County is 150 years old.

2006 Town develops a third Tax Increment Financing District on the recommendation of the Economic Development Committee named the Downtown Village District. The first "village" district in the state.

2007 A town Charter Commission is elected. An ordinance to Recall elected officials is enacted. Richard L. Chick, Town Manager of 34 years, retires. Dana K. Lee is hired as the new Town Manager. The town website changed from an in-house service to Virtual Town Hall through economic development funds. Heavy Rescue vehicle is purchased with TIF funds.

2007 Dunkin Donuts, Subway, and the Family Dollar Store shopping plaza are the first businesses built in the new Downtown Village TIF District.

2007 Poland has three structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places, all located in Poland Spring: the Maine State Building, the All Souls Chapel, the Poland Spring Bottling Building and the Spring House.

Commented [LJ3]: There are additional places on the registry. Keystone Mineral Spring, Excelsior Grange, and Poland Railroad Station. I would advise deleting this sentence and using individual notations in the timeline or place it in the historic section on page 8 as I have suggested. Additionally, I have noted the list in order at the end of this timeline so that someone can make the decision to list them in the timeline or whatever works. (Page 8-9)

2010 Census there were 5,376 people, 2,140 households, and 1,581 families living in the town. The **population density** was 127.3 inhabitants per square mile (49.2/km²). There were 2,679 housing units at an average density of 63.4 per square mile (24.5/km²). The racial makeup of the town was 97.4% **White**, 0.4% **African American**, 0.3% **Native American**, 0.4% **Asian**, 0.2% from **other races**, and 1.3% from two or more races. **Hispanic** or **Latino** of any race were 0.6% of the population.

There were 2,140 households of which 31.5% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 59.6% were **married couples** living together, 8.9% had a female householder with no husband present, 5.4% had a male householder with no wife present, and 26.1% were non-families. 18.5% of all households were made up of individuals and 6.4% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.49 and the average family size was 2.81.

The median age in the town was 43.4 years. 22.2% of residents were under the age of 18; 5.8% were between the ages of 18 and 24; 24.7% were from 25 to 44; 35% were from 45 to 64; and 12.2% were 65 years of age or older. The gender makeup of the town was 50.0% male and 50.0% female.

Commented [LJ4]: This is just me saying this, but the American Community Survey has additional population estimates which may be appropriate to note here in place of decade-old data. For example by ACS estimates there are over 5,600 individuals living in Poland. There are limitations to this data so I know that it may not be an easy decision to resolve. Or remove as this is probably found somewhere else in the Comp Plan and isn't necessarily a historic item (at least not the entirety of the demographic data)

2013 Poland Spring Resort property including the golf course was listed as a Historic District In the National Register

2020 Covid – 19 virus causes a pandemic worldwide

Poland has two principal areas of historical significance, namely the Poland Spring area in its southerly section and Empire Grove in the east end. Poland Spring, which includes five major structures of its original resort and hotel complex, the golf course, the Presidential Inn (formerly Riccar Inn), the Maine State Building, the All Souls Chapel, and the Bottling Plant and Spring House, are on the National Register of Historic Places as a part of the Poland Spring Historic District. The chapel, Maine State Building, and former bottling facility and springhouse are listed individually. Of the three, the Maine State Building may have the highest historical value since it served as the State of Maine exhibit at the Columbian Exposition (1893) in Chicago. The structure was dismantled to be re-erected (1894) as part of the Poland Spring complex, serving as its library. The property which includes the course, most is listed within the boundaries of the historic district which was created in 2013.

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Empire Grove Camp Meeting Association, which is commonly called “The Grove” or “The Campground,” consists of 90 acres and 4,000 feet of road frontage on Empire Road. It is owned by the Empire Grove United Methodist Camp Meeting Association, and its purpose is to provide a quiet setting and religious fellowship for anyone regardless of their religious faith. The facility, which was built in the early 1900’s, includes about 50 buildings including privately owned buildings, common recreation areas, and religious facilities.

Other individually listed properties include the Keystone Mineral Spring, Poland Railroad Station and the Excelsior Grange. There are additional locations and buildings throughout Poland which have historical value and may be so designated in the future. In that event the Poland Spring Preservation Society, a non-profit corporation, has pledged to assist and oversee the preservation of such designated lands and structures.

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Commented [LJ5]: Is this an accurate commitment?

Based on information obtained from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Poland has one prehistoric archaeological site located on the shoreline of Thompson Lake. The Commission reports that the shore of Thompson Lake and Tripp Lake should be considered sensitive areas for prehistoric sites. Poland has not received a professional archaeological survey.

The Commission also reports an historic archaeological site, the North Family of Shakers Settlement Site (1819-1887) which was surveyed by the University of Maine in 1980.

NATIONAL REGISTER LISTINGS

Maine State Building (1974)

All Souls Chapel (1977)

Poland Railroad Station (1980)

Poland Spring Bottling Plant and Springhouse (1984)

Keystone Mineral Spring (2005)

Poland Spring Historic District (2013)

Excelsior Grange No. 5 (2016)