

## Retrospective: The History Behind Bernards Township Charter Day & That Charter

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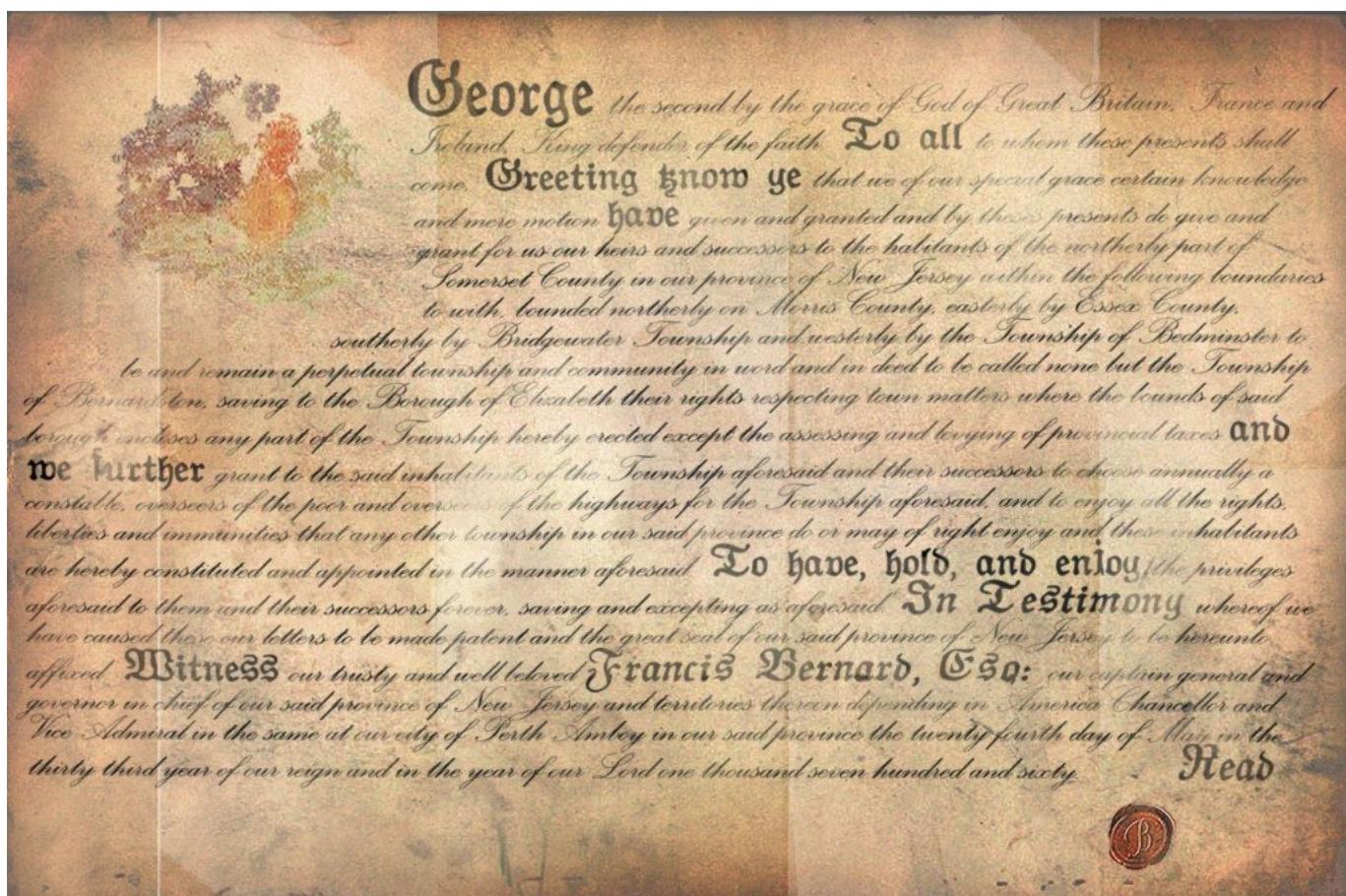


Bernards Township Charter Day, Mr. Local History—Join the fun and learn a little bit of history during your day.



## Why We Celebrate Bernards Township Charter Day

The first Charter Day street fair celebration in Bernards Township was held on Saturday, May 20, 1995. The event started at 10 am and lasted till 4 pm. Charter Day commemorates the May 24, 1760 (a Saturday) anniversary of King George II of England's granting of a township Charter, establishing Bernardston Township. This act was a courtesy and in appreciation for the services of Sir Francis Bernard, Royal Governor of New Jersey. From January 27, 1758, to July 4, 1760, Sir Francis Bernard, son of a British Reverend, was appointed Royal Governor of New Jersey for two years. At the time, both Bernardsville, Far Hills, and part of Warren were all "Bernardston."



While the "official" charter burned in a fire, copies survived, and this recreation shows what it would have looked like, including the wax seal in the lower right corner. Source: Mr. Local History Project.

RHS students recite the official Charter of Bernardston.



### **First Charter Day Street Fair - May 17, 1995**

The first Bernards Township Charter Day was scheduled to replace the Kiwanis Fair, which had been a Labor Day weekend staple in the Bernards Township area for decades. The Kiwanis Fair had been the largest community gathering and included pet shows, book sales, beauty contests, rides, bake sales, and more. The fair ended when the committee tried to move its location from Basking Ridge to Far Hills. The move didn't happen, and the event ended.

On Saturday, May 17, 1995, a new community event was coordinated to replace the Kiwanis Fair.

**Brae at (908) 647-0800.**

**Bernards Township Charter Day And Art's Festival** will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., in downtown Basking Ridge. The event will feature an historical tour, children's games, festival music, food, sidewalk sales, craft tables and sale, art show and sale, petting zoo, sand art and face painting.



**B**ERNARDSTOWNSHIP  
32 S MAPLE AV  
BASKING RIDGE

*Speak out, hide not thy thoughts.*  
Homer, c.850 B.C.

**Bernardsville  
BERNARDS TOWNSHIP**

**N**ews

*The official newspaper for Bedminster, Bernards Township, Bernardsville, Far Hills and Peapack-Gladstone*

VOL 97 NO 24 A1 BERNARDSVILLE N.J. WEDNESDAY MAY 17 1995

## Charter Day celebration is Saturday

BERNARDS TWP. — A wide selection of activities are planned this Saturday to celebrate "Charter Day" commemorating the 235th anniversary of the Bernards Township Charter.

Plenty of food, arts and crafts displays and sales, music and other family activities will be combined with sales throughout the day. Preview sidewalk sales begin Friday, May 19. Rain Date for the event is Sunday, May 21.

Charter Day is being organized by volunteers from local businesses and community organizations. The Business and Professional Organization of Basking Ridge is coordinating the activities.

The day begins at 9 a.m., with a "Bargain Bazaar" conducted by The Historical Society of The Somerset Hills at the Brick Academy. Numerous historical items will be offered for sale. Included are antique tools, century old newspapers, early books, maps, postcards and even an 18th Century military helmet. Proceeds are being used to help fund renovation of The Brick Academy in Basking Ridge.

Mayor Diana Boquist will officiate at the dedication of the newly constructed Allen Street Gazebo at 10 a.m.

Highlights at the gazebo on Saturday's schedule include a Bernards Township student art show and a va-

riety of musical, theatrical and athletic performances by local groups. About 150 children from the Tree House Child Caring Center will perform their spring concert at the Gazebo.

In addition, the portable stage, "Showmobile," will be brought in by the Parks and Recreation Department for the event. Showmobile performances include an ensemble of Ridge High School musicians, the Bernards Chamber Ensemble, Bill (Please see Charter on page 2)



**Ready To Celebrate**

Children from the Tree House Child Care Center will be singing a medley of songs at the new Allen Street gazebo on Bernards Township's "Charter Day," to be held Saturday, May 20, in downtown Basking Ridge.

The first Charter Day celebration in Bernards Township marked the end of an era. The Kiwanis Fair never occurred again.



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**HEAR YE! HEAR YE!**  
BERNARDS TOWNSHIP CHARTER DAY  
AND ARTS FESTIVAL

**Saturday**  
**May 20th 1995**  
**10am - 4pm**

**SIDEWALK PREVIEW SALE FRIDAY MAY 19TH**

**SIDEWALK SALE CONTINUES ON SATURDAY 10:30 - 4:00**

The map illustrates the layout of the festival area across several streets: S. FINLEY AVE., HENRY STREET, LEWIS STREET, S. MAPLE AVE., N. FINLEY AVE., WEST OAK, and ALLEN STREET. Key locations marked include:

- PARKING AT SCHOOL:** P
- BROWNLIE PLACE:** Post Office, Rest Room
- THE STORE:** ATM, Rest Room
- ROAD CLOSED:** Between Henry Street and S. Maple Ave.
- SIDEWALK SALES:** Sand Art, Food Crafts and More, Music Stage
- WHITE OAK:** Church, Student Art Show, Church
- WEST OAK:** Petting Zoo, Bargain Bazaar, Sale, Brick Academy, Gazebo, Folk Music
- ALLEN STREET:** Petting Zoo, Pony Rides
- LIBRARY:** P

**BASKING RIDGE NEW JERSEY:** EVERHART GALLERY ART SHOW & SALE, PHARMACY

**PERFORMING ARTS SCHEDULE CENTER STAGE MAY 20, 1995**

10:15	DEDICATION OF PARK GAZEBO HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC ENSEMBLE	1:00	GOTTA DANCE STUDIO
11:00	TREE HOUSE CHILD CARING CENTER SPRING CONCERT	1:30	YMCA OF SOMERSET-FITNESS AND GYMNASTICS DEMONSTRATION
11:30	JUGGLING SHOW WITH BILL CEDDIA	2:00	THE AMERICAN TAE KWON DO ACADEMY OF YMCA OF SOMERSET
12:00	IAN McGLYNN RECORDING ARTIST CONCERT	2:30	BERNARDS CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

**ALL DAY - PETTING ZOO, PONY RIDES, FOLK MUSIC, FIELD NEXT TO GAZEBO**

**Supplement to Bernardsville News, May 17, 1995**



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In 1997 and 1999, the Basking Ridge Post Office celebrated Charter Day with a commemorative stamp. People would visit the post office with various postcards to have the commemorative postmark added to their keepsake. The postmark was also accompanied by 5 historic buildings in the Basking Ridge village created in watercolor by Linda Arnold of Liberty Corner.

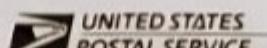
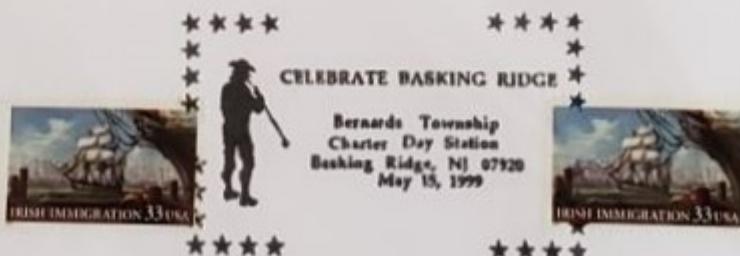


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*Historic Basking Ridge, NJ*  
Original Watercolor by Linda M. Arnold

### UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE celebrates BASKING RIDGE



1999 USPS commemorative postmark



## Retrospective: The History Behind Bernards Township Charter Day & That Charter



In 2022, the night concert held from 7-10 pm was canceled.

Today, the annual Charter Day Street Fair starts at noon and continues through 6 pm.

**Hashtagging #btcharterday on Social Media**



Search: #btcharterday

# #btcharterday

People are posting about this

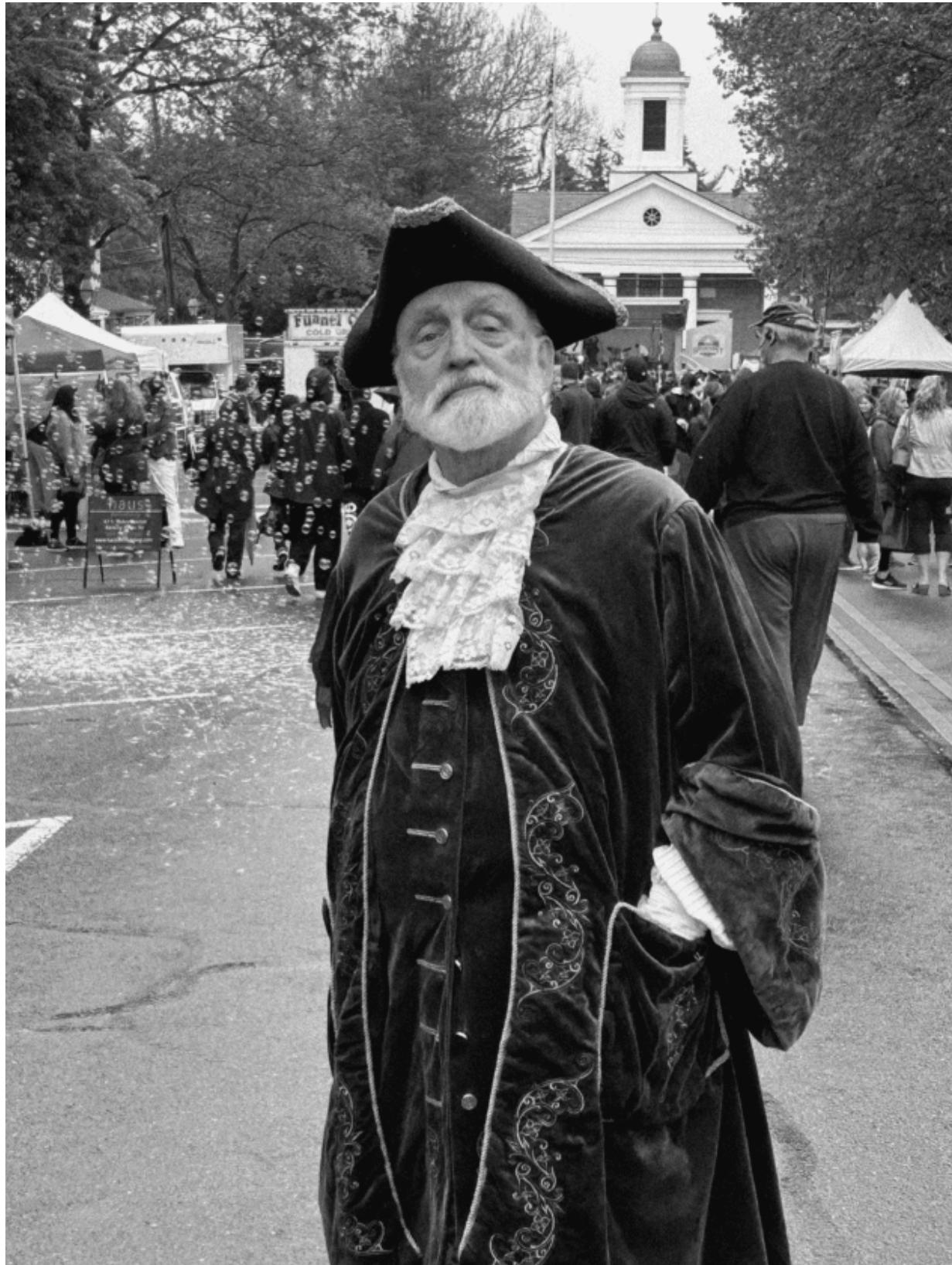
Visitors to Charter Day use the hashtag #btcharterday.



Mr Local History at Charter Day



## Retrospective: The History Behind Bernards Township Charter Day & That Charter





We leave you with a photo of our friend and Town Crier Hank Barre doing what he does best—kicking off Charter Day every year. Does he look more stoic in Black and white? And how about those bubbles (look close)!

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