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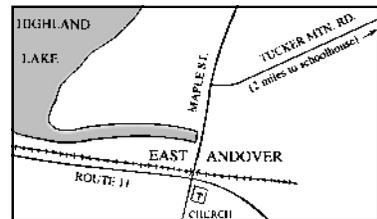


## Tucker Mountain Schoolhouse

By Donna Baker-Hartwell  
Andover Historical Society

The Tucker Mountain One-Room Schoolhouse will hold its first Open House of the 2009 season on Sunday, June 14, from 1 to 3 PM. There is no charge. Stop by and see the original blackboards. Refreshments will be served.

Also on display will be an antique stereoscope with a collection of stereoviews or photo-cards once belonging to Stella Thompson, a lifelong resident of East Andover. Some of the photos are of the surrounding area and people, dating to around 1900.



be used than are sufficient to give the required black and abrading surface; and the varnish should contain only sufficient gum to hold the ingredients together, and confine the composition to the board. The thinner the mixture, the better.

“The lampblack should be ground with a small quantity of alcohol or spirit-varnish, to free it from lumps. The composition should be applied to a smoothly

planed surface of the board with a common painter’s brush. Let it become thoroughly dry and hard before it is used. Rub it down with

The schoolhouse will hold a regular Open House from June through October on the second Sunday of each month with the same hours. Other opportunities to visit may be arranged by calling Donna Baker-Hartwell at 735-5586 or Pat Cutter at 735-5628.

Notecards, T-shirts and other gifts may be purchased. All proceeds from sales support the Andover Historical Society.

### Blackboards And “Crayons”

In the early 1830s, the blackboard was introduced into the country schoolhouse. This allowed teachers to present lessons to any number of students. Students would copy from the board and the teacher could change the lessons throughout the day.

The Tucker Mountain Schoolhouse is no exception. Three walls of the classroom are, quite literally, black boards. In 1837, when the schoolhouse was built, the interior wide pine boards were painted a flat black in order to provide the teacher with a surface to write on. In an article, *Blackboards and Slates*, written by Michael Day for the Country School Association of America in June 2007, Day provides the recipe for mixing the homemade paint:

“Here is a recipe for blackboard paint from 1853: Lampblack and flour of emery mixed with spirit-varnish. No more lampblack and flour of emery should

pumice-stone, or a piece of smooth wood covered with the composition. This composition may also be used on the walls.”

If you are wondering what was used for chalk back then, Day provides this information, as well. However, back in the early days it was referred to as “blackboard crayon.”

“Take five pounds of Paris White, one pound of Wheat Flour, wet with water, and knead it well, make it so stiff that it will not stick to the table, but not so stiff as to crumble and fall to pieces when it is rolled under the hand.

“To roll out the crayons to a proper size, two boards are needed, one, to roll them on; the other to roll them with. The mass is rolled into a ball, and slices are cut from one side of it about one third of an inch thick; these slices are again cut into strips about four inches long and one third of an inch wide, and rolled separately between these boards until smooth and round.

“When the board is filled, the ends should be trimmed off so as to make the crayons as long as the width of the board. It is then laid in the sun, if in hot weather, or if in winter, near a stove or fireplace, where the crayons may dry gradually, which will require twelve hours. When thoroughly dry, they are fit for use. An experienced hand will make 150 in an hour.”

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