

In Their Time Recalls The Importance of Trains

By Nancy Tripp
Andover Historical Society

Driving past Dyer's Crossing Road and the Hersey Farm on Route 11 will never be the same for me since I read *In Their Time* by Helen LaPlante Duchesne. This collection of stories is written in a straight-forward style and vividly paints the daily life of Dorothy Hersey LaPlante, Helen's mother, and her family.

In Helen Duchesne's words, "When I began to write these stories in 1989, I thought they were going to be about my mother's early years of growing up in the country. Then I realized her story was also my story, and many other women's stories as we grew up in the first half of the 20th century.

"I think my mother typified the rural New Hampshire woman of this era, as did her mother before her, and I after – women doing ordinary things – taking care of their homes, helping their husbands, and raising their children to become hardworking, productive citizens. They didn't work outside the home, nor did most women in their time. That is the way it was."

There are chapters about growing up on the farm, the children's experiences at the one-room schoolhouse, entertainment at the Grange Hall, the passing trains and tramps, the family's milk and gas station business, and excerpts from "Mama's 1935 Diary."

Here is a sample from the chapter *The Trains Go By*.

"The trains were always a part of my mother's life. They were like her alternate time pieces ...

"The railroads served an important part in the life of a community. It was

the trucking, buses, and cars of today. Nearly everything needed came in by rail. Lumber, cordwood, ice, livestock, industrial products, and farm produce went out. I can remember hearing the 4:30 AM milk train that took the farmers' milk to Concord and Manchester every morning ...

"There was another passenger train, called 'The Montrealer,' which traveled between Montreal and Boston and stopped only at the larger stations. It made its way past our house about 5:30 AM. This train was like an alarm clock waking us to go to the bathroom, after which we could sleep a couple more hours. My mother told me once it was jokingly called the "baby train" by the local folks because it woke couples up to play. But then she added, "Oh, don't write that." My mother was a reserved, serious person, so sharing her little story surprised and pleased me."

So, now as I pass the Hersey Farm, I can almost see Helen and her siblings trudging across the fields to get to Dyer's Crossing School, or a tramp looking at the notches on a telephone pole to see if this were a farm that would give him food. People might be gathering by the spring to collect clear, sweet water; or the sound of the eleven o'clock train whistle might bring Helen to her window to kneel and "look at the well-lit train cars" as her imagination carried her "along with all those strangers to distant and unknown places."

In Their Time can be purchased at the Emons Store in Potter Place or by calling Pat Cutter at 735-5628. As Helen LaPlante Duchesne writes in the epilogue, "Our nation's heritage runs deep. It is imperative that we cherish it."

Andover Historical Society Pot Luck Supper

Andover Historical Society
press release

Last year's pot luck supper was so successful that we want to repeat it again this year. Please come help us celebrate all the great activities that took place this year at the Andover Historical Society. Our volunteers put so much of their time into helping us to maintain our buildings and to staying strong financially. We had another great fair. We have put together a calendar for 2012. We also need to thank the Station Masters for donating the time to keeping the museum and the store open on weekends.

It is important to get together and pat ourselves on the back.

Please bring your favorite dish. We are once again doing this alphabetically. If your name begins with A – F, please bring a salad or vegetable, G – O an en-

tree, P – Z a dessert.

The supper is being held at the East Andover Grange. We are excited to experience their continued new facilities—heat this year! The date to remember is Thursday, October 27. Social hour with appetizers and punch will start at 5:30 PM and dinner will be served around 6 PM. Bring your own beer if you would like.

We are lucky enough to have engaged a speaker sponsored by the New Hampshire Humanities Council, Edie Clark, who at 7 PM will, appropriately enough, be talking about food while we finish up desserts and coffee. Her subject will be "Baked Beans and Fried Clams; How Food Defines a Region."

Edie's presentation is "informative, humorous and chock full of fascinating nuggets about the history of our regional foods." Hope you can make it.

Tucker Mountain Schoolhouse

By Donna Baker-Hartwell
Andover Historical Society

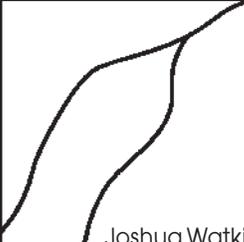
The Tucker Mountain Schoolhouse will hold its last Open House of the season on Sunday, October 9, from 1 to 3 PM. This one-room schoolhouse, built in 1837, served the mountain community for 56 years. Grades one through eight were taught by one teacher, and it has been reported that there were as many as 30 students at the peak of the school's service.

Fred and Mary Jane Ogmundson of North Wilmot will be hosting the last Open House of the season. Both are very talented and informative

people. Fred will entertain visitors with banjo and harmonica music. Mary Jane, who taught at the one-room schoolhouse in Alexandria for about eight years, will share memories and photos and show young visitors how to make a string yo-yo.

Refreshments will be served. Greeting cards and the 2012 Andover Historical Society calendar will be available. All proceeds go to support the work of the Andover Historical Society (AHS).

Visits to the schoolhouse may be arranged by calling Pat Cutter, AHS president, at 735-5628. More: 735-5586 or DonnaBH@tds.net.



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