

Memories of New Boston

by Bea (Byam) Peirce

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Good evening.

In June, 1941 Donald & Dorothy and Beatrice Byam moved to a farm in New Boston from Milford, NH. For a few weeks in the summer we were joined by Lawrence Byam, son of Donald.

The Byam Farm

The Farm is located on River Road, Route 13, about 3 miles from the New Boston Center and the address is now 444 River Road. According to the Tax inventory records the farm had been owned by Fred Hertach. When he was there he had 160 acres and valuation was \$3500, for the year ending December 31, 1941. The previous year it was \$4000; the Hertachs had 1 horse \$40 (at that time they valued the farm animals and they paid tax on them), 13 cows \$516, and 150 fowls \$150; that was in 1940.

There were 3 people living there, Fred, Hannah & Warren and they each paid a Poll Tax of \$2.00. Fred Hertach owned the farm from 1928 until 1941. Records show a Joseph Lizotte, Lazotte, or Lezotte, owned the farm from 1921 to 1927 and had purchased it from the Valley View Co. who owned it in 1920. Prior to 1920, the farm was owned by J. R. Whipple Co. In the tax inventory it was referred to as the Hutchinson Farm. I was talking to Frances Towne about it and Howard looked at some records he had and found that a Henry Hutchinson owned the farm in 1889. And that's as far back as I went!

Prior to moving Father had been employed at the Crosby Farm in Milford, NH as a herdsman. He worked with Charles Brown (brother to Harland Brown who lived in New Boston) and Henry Laxson, Manager of the Crosby Farm (located on Elm Street in Milford), and who later retired to New Boston and lived on South Hill Road, first house on the right that you can see from the road. Mother was a homemaker but she had previously worked for the two women, sisters who owned the Crosby Farm. I completed 2nd Grade in Milford before moving here.

The house we moved into had 11 or 12 rooms, depending on how you counted them, plus a large pantry and a shed for wood and there was an outhouse in the shed. In the ell section of the house there was a large attic. We also had a large cellar. There was no central heating; we had wood stoves for heat and the first year we lived there, no electricity. We used kerosene lanterns. In order to get electricity, we had to pay for the poles to bring the lines to the farm. The second year we were there we did have electricity. With no electricity, we had ice delivered and our icebox was in the woodshed. Oliver Bailey was our iceman.

We had a telephone which was a party line. We did not tie up the telephone due to so many people on the same line. The phone office was where Louise and Dana Robie live.

Water was piped from a spring up on the hill a long ways away. There was no pump; we had gravity feed water. There was a lot of water pressure and each stall for the cows had a waterer and when the cows drank and then lifted their heads, it made a snapping noise because of the water pressure.

I went to Sunday School - Rev. Louis Swanson was the minister at the time - later on Rev. Bradford Davis was the minister and Rev. William Burger. These are the ones I remember but there may have been others in between which did not stay as long.

Animals

We had milking cows at the farm varying amounts from 18 to 30 at a time. We also had 2 to 3 horses used for haying. We had barn cats only and we had a dog called Yankee who used to kill the woodchucks who would dig holes in the pasture. We had chickens which we raised for broilers and sold them every three months during the war. Milk was sold to H. P. Hood and was picked up in a truck in milk cans. We had a milk room and a cooler for the milk. The barn also had a shed to store sawdust. The barn was kept clean and we whitewashed the walls every once in a while.

In summer when the cows were in pasture I had to help get them in. A lot of them would automatically come because they were ready to be milked; they *wanted* to be milked, but then once in a while you had a stray one and you had to hunt for it. I sometimes helped teach the calves to suck milk out of a pail. I also helped with haying. We had a hay fork in the barn which picked up the hay and we walked a horse back and forth to get the hay into the hayloft, and that was one of my jobs, some times. Later a tractor replaced the horses and I drove the tractor back and forth. I drove it into the milk room once. I forgot to put my foot on the brake, so, I didn't do *too* much damage.

At various times we had other animals. We had two geese and they were nuisance and chased people that came to visit around the yard so we got rid of them and we had two goats who used to climb on cars so we got rid of them also. We had two cows killed by lightning one summer. The dog, Yankee, did not like thunderstorms and he would hide under a bed. We used to stay out of the kitchen and bathroom during a thunderstorm because sometimes the electricity would bounce around the pipes.

We had hired men to help with chores. During the war one of our hired men was from Ohio and he came to work just for his room and board because he did not want to go to war.

We used to set a pan of milk in the pantry and let the cream rise to make butter but during the war we were not allowed to make our own butter. We purchased clear shortening with a little orange/yellow pill to mix with it which we spread and used it for butter. We used the pantry to hang cured meat. We used to render the fat from a pig for which we used for cooking and baking.

Family

About six weeks after we moved in, my sister Brenda was born just before I started to go to third grade. Charles was born two years later and Lester two years after Charles. Lester was born on a town meeting day in March.

Mother was a very good cook and she also sewed a lot of our clothes, and did all the housekeeping. Sunday nights she didn't cook a meal; we had odds and ends. We used to have

popcorn and milk, I think; things she didn't have too cook. Dad did the farm work and grocery shopping.

Dad belonged to the Joe English Grange #53. Mother belonged to the Homemakers' Club. I belonged to the 4-H Club. I learned to sew both from Mother and at the 4-H club and made some of my clothes. I also learned needlework, knitting and crocheting. Mother also did tatting which I never learned to do. Mother was right handed and I am left handed so it was a challenge to teach me. I continued to sew & knit when my children were growing up.

School

In September 1941, I started 3rd grade at the New Boston School, located where the Fire House is now. This building housed all 12 grades. As we lived 3 miles from town, we went to school by bus. Victor Daniels was our bus driver. I was the last one picked up in the morning and the last one off at night.

School Building: The first floor had a large entry room. Girls' bathroom was on the left and boys' bathroom was on the right sort of under the stairway to the second floor. Grades 1-3 were in room on the left and grades 4-6 were on the right.

Milford had two rooms of just second grade so I found it hard adjusting to 3 grades in one room (in New Boston). School records show that there were 15 boys and 21 girls for a total of 36 students in grades 1-3 and 22 boys and 14 girls total of 36 students in grades 4-6. Each room had 36 students.

Natalie Hopkins taught grades 1-3 and Mrs. Katherine T. Fairbanks taught grades 4-6 for the school years 1941-1942 & 1943-44. Katherine Bartlett was the Music Teacher for many years. When the teacher was busy with 1st or 2nd grade, we had something called "seatwork" which I had not experienced before. We were given a lot of paperwork to complete related to our studies and it had to be done before the end of the day or else we might have to miss the bus. I soon learned to get it done.

Recess time was spent in the yard beside the school facing Mill Street. We took our lunch to school. At some point during the earlier school years we had a hot lunch item cooked upstairs and served in the attic of the school. My favorite food was fried bread with applesauce and my least favorite was rice pudding. We also had soup. In 1944-45 Marion Pounder taught Grades 4-6. I liked to read and I checked out books from the Whipple Free Library. Elsie Warren was the librarian.

The School Nurse was Edith G. Walker. I really don't remember her. Her reports showed that she did a toxoid clinic for diphtheria and a TB patch clinic, and other clinics. Also there was one person who had polio. I do remember the Dental Clinic in 1942, in the entry room of the Town Hall. We were first examined by the nurse and recommendations made for treatment by the dentist. When it was my turn, I was scared to death by this item which looked like a blowtorch he aimed towards my mouth. After this experience I did not willingly go to the dentist. Prior to this when I lived in Milford, I had no problem with the dentist.

Joe English Bombing Range

In September, 1941, the government bought the land in the Joe English Hill area and December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor and World War II happened. During the war someone came and took our fingerprints at school.

During the bombing one day they missed and a bomb landed in our cow pasture not far from the barnyard fence. They missed our cows.

Playing

In grade school we sometimes played games on the common near the Baptist Church. One of the games was called Red Light.

At home we went swimming in the river near Lang Station as there was a deep spot under the bridge. I took my sister and brothers swimming. In the winter we went sliding, skiing and ice skating. We skated in a small pond in one of the pastures and on a section of the river across from the big field which was separated from the fast moving part of the river.

Our neighbors were not very nearby. I had an 11th birthday party in January and one of my presents was a black and white pig. And it was almost half-grown, and it had a big red bow on it. One of my classmates lived on a pig farm located approximately where Andy's Drive-in and home was on River Road almost to the Goffstown line. One time a classmate visited after I had received a pair of glasses in the mail (I was very nearsighted) and when I put them on I realized that she had a polka dot dress on. I could not see the polka dots without the glasses.

Junior High School

I started Jr. High in 1945—Home Room Teacher was M. Elizabeth Hoyt. The Junior High room was on the second floor of the school building and was a small room. There was also a Cloakroom on the second floor landing and the Principal's office. The big room held grades 9-12. The Headmaster was C. Edgar Stevens, Mr. E. Gale Huntington taught Social Studies and Ruth C. Burnham, Home Economics. The Home Ec Room was on the 3rd floor of the building. In 1946-47 Carroll Sanderson was Headmaster; Ruth Merrill, Math & English; Doris Stiller Home Ec and Sophie Gagalas, Social Studies. Mr. Huntington was one of my favorite teachers and I enjoyed studying history in his class. Elizabeth Hoyt was the Grades 7 & 8 Home Room teacher.

New Boston High School

Freshman year in High School my sister and brothers brought home whooping cough and I was out of school for about 5 weeks beginning the last week of April which was also the beginning of softball and baseball season, which we really liked. I came back to school for the last two weeks of school in June. At some point during High School I had the mumps and also the German measles.

During High School I belonged to the Future Homemakers of America. In Home Economics we served a luncheon for our mothers. We switched classes with the Agriculture class for a week and learned to wire a lamp, etc. I helped mother at home at one point to reglaze and putty windows.

I played softball and basketball, neither of which I was very good at. The baseball team won a tournament which was very exciting. I don't remember which year. We spent a lot of time at the ball field.



BEATRICE BYAM

Class Treasurer.....3
 Chapter F. H. A. Reporter.. 4
 Chapter F. H. A. Treasurer. 2
 Echo Staff.....3, 4
 Senior Play..... 1, 3, 4
 Softball.....2
 Basketball..... 2, 3, 4

Fourth of July we had a big parade. On some Saturday nights in the summer, we had movies and sat on the grandstand. Sometimes Mother and I would get dropped off and we would walk home after the movie, which was three miles.

In May of 1947, students were outside the school building and a

vehicle with equipment on it came through town and it stopped before the bridge between Dodges and the Pharmacy on the other side. Hagland's Pharmacy. The driver looked at the bridge and spent a long time deciding whether or not he should drive over it. He finally chose to continue and the bridge partially fell in. The Historical Society has the newspaper article and pictures.

We raised money for our class by having whist and cribbage card parties in the lower town hall. Our class went to Boston in our senior year for five days. Mr. Aliapoulios and Miss Larkin went with us. In Boston we stayed at the Hotel Touraine, which was one of the J.R. Whipple hotels, or used to be. Mr. Aliapoulios had to leave because his wife was having a baby. We spent most of our time in Boston at the ball park watching the Red Sox play. I think we went to at least two games and maybe a third. We also toured Boston.

We graduated with 11 in the class, 4 boys and 7 girls. We did have a larger class but some students left at the end of 8th grade, and several during high school. In 1949-50, there was a total enrollment of 47 in the High School and in 50-51 the total was 38, nine fewer students. We were all in the largest room for home room and if a class was going on which we were not in, we studied in back of the class. We had a separate room for chemistry and physics. Home Economics was on the 3rd floor.

In 50-51 Headmaster was Alexander Aliapoulios and he taught math. Margaret Larkin taught Social Studies and English; Home Economics - Annette Ouelette; Agriculture and Science - Neal Andrew, Jr.

Graduation was in the upper Town Hall. Graduating was Dorothy Barss, Barbara Bose, Betty Kenny, Sylvia Friedrich, Carol Hooper, Audrey Thompson, Beatrice Byam, Robert Card, Richard Kennedy, John Theuner and Alfred Woodbury. Dorothy Barss was Valedictorian and I was Salutatorian. I did not like making speeches or writing them.

College and Work

I went to Hesser Business College beginning the fall of 1951 and Spring of 1952 for Junior Secretarial studies. In the spring of 1952 while still in college, I began working part time at Liberty Mutual and worked full time when I graduated.

Family

I met my husband George "Greg" Peirce in about 1948-49. We were married Feb. 24, 1953, at Grandma & Grandpa Byam's home on South Hill Road, which no longer exists. Elizabeth "Betty" Young Daniels and Winston Daniels were our maid of honor and best man. Rev. William Burger was the minister of the Community Church at that time. We lived on Depot Street, Fred Hodge's house, until 1957 when we moved to 230 River Road where I still reside with my son, Geoffrey, wife Tammy and grandson.

My daughter Gail lives with her husband, Jonathan Stout and daughters on Old Coach Rd. and son, Gregg "Clete" Peirce and his wife Donna and daughter live on Clark Hill Road in NB. Daughter, Grace and her daughter live in Rye. Her son lives in Goffstown.

"Greg" had previously lived in New Boston at the foot of Joe English Hill in a home called the Wigwam. He moved here with Charles & Hazel Peirce in 1936 when he was 10 years old. In 1941, the government purchased their property for the bombing range and they moved away. He attended school here through his Sophomore year. He liked New Boston very much and came back here to live. His family was originally from Lowell, Mass.

My mother's father and my grandfather was Arthur Wheeler Merrill. He had cousins living in New Boston at the Greystone Cottage. They were Nathan and Leonard Wiley Merrill and they were born in New Boston and owned Greystone cottage about 1854 to 1874.

Work

I picked blueberries with Frances Byam Towne at Colonel Taylor's, off South Hill Road for 10 cents a quart when I was 10 or 12, I don't remember exactly and it was probably only once. I also did some baby sitting. During High School in the fall I picked up drops in Pitman's Orchard for 10 cents a box and picked peaches off the tree and was paid by the hour for this, because you have to be very careful with peaches. I don't remember how much it was per hour.

Between my Junior & Senior year in the summer I worked at the hospital in Grasmere in the Emergency Room. I had to sterilize the instruments, and check the laundry in and fold it a certain way. I lived at the hospital in the topmost floor and shared a room with other workers. Part of my pay was Room and Board and I don't remember what I was paid.

After I graduated I worked at a factory on Commercial Street in Manchester for two months to earn money to pay for college. I had a ride to work. I received \$100 from the New Century Club for college which I had to pay back when I graduated at \$10 per month. I worked part time before I graduated from college for a few months at Liberty Mutual and went to work there full time after graduation. And that's it!