

**MILFORD
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**May 16
7:30 PM
Banquet Hall
Town Hall**

**MILFORD
THEN
AND NOW**

Milford Historical Society

Milford Then and Now

Milford, as I remember it, was so different than it is today. The population was much smaller - half of residents were friends, the other half were relatives and everybody knew everybody. My neighborhood on West Street and Berry Court was mostly all my relatives - aunts, uncles, cousins, upstairs, downstairs, down the street and around the corner everywhere you looked were wonderful relatives. Many of them still live in the same houses today as in the late 30's and 40's. Milford was a very close knit community - we visited a lot and never called before going to visit. Everyone was so glad to see you come. Every Sunday afternoon we went across town to visit my Grandpa Langdell. He always had a Coke in the refrigerator for my sister, Janice, and I and cookies or crackers in the pantry. Grandpa always had wonderful stories to tell of his youth growing up in Milford. And, he had a dog named Skippy. I am a grandmother now but my grandchildren live out West and we only see them every year or two. My grandchildren don't know their grandparents the way that I knew mine growing up.

I was born in 1942, during the war years. Butter was rationed. We got this celuloid bag of clear margarine with a bright orange dot in the center. I remember my sister Janice and I fighting over who was going to mix that orange dot into the margarine. My father was away at war in the mid 40's. I think I was 4 when he came home on Valentine's Day 1946. My mother made wonderful scrapbooks of those years and it is so wonderful to be able to look through them with her and talk about those times. Refrigeration was very limited and Mother (Connie Fraser) did not have a car so we walked downtown on a daily basis to buy groceries for supper. Mother would push me in an open wicker stroller to the market and she shopped at Canney's a lot. That was the IGA store at the corner of Union Square and South Street. Meat, especially, was bought daily for supper. Now, my husband and I shop once every few weeks, shop for buys and freeze what won't be eaten right away.

Most every Sunday afternoon my mother would drag us (we never went willingly) down to the White Elephant Store to shop around. Mother wanted to look at the Blue Willow. We all thought it was nothing but junk at the time. From a collar button to a something or else - I can't quite remember what. There was farm equipment, furniture, desks, china of all kinds, etc. When I was looking for a secretary desk in 1965 - guess where I went: That's right - the White Elephant. And I found a beautiful dark desk - glass bookshelf on top, drop leaf desk, three drawers on the bottom - all for \$43. Can you imagine. The next year the White Elephant burned down. Now I would never think of the White Elephant as junk and I would love to tour the old place again if I could.

All the kids in the neighborhood played hide and seek in the summer at night. Peter Hokinson, Richard Vanetti, Robert O'dell, Paul Bishop, Lyle Gibbs, and those two Fraser girls. We had a wonderful time charging around the neighborhood hollering "ready or not, here I come" When It was dark, someone would holler "Olle Olle In Free". If we were not home on time, my Father would go outside and whistle for us to come home. We could hear that whistle all over the neighborhood. When we heard it, we ran home fast because we knew that by then he meant business. In the winter, my sister and I and the neighborhood gang would slide down West Street Hill, starting at Spaulding Street and going as far as the Railroad tracks, down past the cemetery. It took a really good fast running start to get that sled all the way down to those tracks and it was a triumphant ride when we did.

When I started first grade in 1948, there were two sessions - morning and afternoon at the Garden Street School. I went to the afternoon session. By second grade we were on a full day schedule. We all walked to school for 8:30 am classes, walked home for lunch from 12 - 1 and walked back to school and walked back home again at 3:30 pm when school was out. It was good exercise but at the time we really didn't know it.

"Then there was the every Saturday afternoon movie at Latchis Theatre on the Common. 2:00 pm sharp it started. You had to be there early and stand in line, pay your 12 cents (I was under 12) and 5 cents for popcorn. My sister paid 17 cents because she was over 12. Every Saturday, the auditorium was full and bursting at the seams with kids. Shouting, screaming, running around - we were all excited. Sometimes Mr. Archambeault would have to put the lights up, and tell us kids to quiet down and behave or he would shut the movie down. Saturday was almost always a western - Hop Along Cassidy, Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, sometimes space movies. In later years, my father, Bert Fraser, operated the projector upstairs, so we got in for nothing. We went more often too (I wonder why) But it was great fun.

In my neighborhood I especially remember some neighbors who lived at the end of Knight Street. They had all kinds of animals over the years - goats, horses, and the like. It was the best place in the world to go visit when I was 6 or 8. I loved playing in the barn upstairs. There was a door upstairs that opened out onto a manure pile down below. What fun it was to climb upstairs, jump down into the soft manure pile. run up the stairs and do it all again. When we would get home, my mother would be horrified. 'Where have you been.'- 'What have you been doing?' she would holler at us. I guess I have always loved the smell of a farm ever since.

These are some of the things I remember then growing up in Milford. Now, there are many more people in Milford and most of them we don't know, but certainly would love to. Come to our program on May 16 and hear other Milford residents speak of their remembrances then and now of Milford. It should be a good time of comparing, and sharing of a time long gone, but not forgotten.

We have had a very busy year at the Society this past season. Much work has been accomplished on the inside of the Carey House and we are now getting back to normal. Please stop in during open house and see the wonderful work that has been completed. Again, my heartfelt thanks to our dedicated Board of Directors and all you loyal members who have given of your time and energy to the work that was undertaken. We do still need volunteers in many areas. If you have an hour or two to spare, please contact one of our Board members - Open Houses, Perry Negatives, etc. Don't miss the upcoming meeting May 16. Sarooch Ricciardi, our Program Chair, has several local residents lined up to speak of their memories of *Milford, Now and Then*.

POLLY COTE, PRESIDENT

Many new things have happened this year to improve the quality of the building and grounds. The most important of which was the installation of a brand new oil fired furnace. Ciardelli Fuel Inc. installed the furnace after complete removal of all the existing asbestos in the cellar. It was long overdue and seems to be working just fine so far. For those of you not aware, the other one was over 75 years old! About time we had a new one, I guess.

Lighting in the barn has been tripled for much easier viewing of the artifacts. High intensity fluorescent lights have been installed and they are quick starting for easier use in the winter. We also purchased two window unit air conditioners for more comfort this summer, as it gets really hot inside the building during the peak heat periods. I'm sure this will make it much easier for any visitors this summer also.

Also sorely needed was a new basement bulkhead, which was replaced along with the new barn lights. The old bulkhead was in terrible condition and needed replacement badly.

The interior of the building has been repainted and is now quite a bit brighter and cleaner looking. The artifacts have been mostly replaced and it definitely gives the rooms a cheerier look.

I am still looking for help on the computer from people who are interested. Please let me or another board member know if you are.

BRANT WILSON, BUILDING & GROUNDS

CURATORS REPORT

The highlights of this past year include the third grade tours. The tours took place every day the week of April 17 to April 21, 2000. Each morning two classes would arrive at the Carey House. One group would have a tour of the building and the other group would visit the historic sites around the Oval, Middle, School and Nashua Streets. Then the groups would switch tours and return to school in time for lunch. It was a busy week and made possible by the help of tour guides: Ed Carey, Polly Cote, Janet Craig, Bill Dyer, Noreen O'Connell, Nancy Schooley, Brant and Joyce Wilson. Several fifth grade classes visited also in the spring. This year plans are being made for the third graders to come in June.

Other highlights of the year are the newly painted walls and ceilings and the improved lighting in the barn. I hope you will take time this year to visit the Carey House to see how nice it looks. Most of the artifacts are back on display and most of the information labels have been posted again. At this time some few items have yet to be set out. We wish to thank the many members who have volunteered time and energy putting the furniture and displays back in place. Particular thanks go to Rosemary McEntee who spent some hours reorganizing the kitchen storage area.

The committee meets twice a month and our current focus is on the Civil War and Military History Room. It was decided to expand the name of the room because so many artifacts have been added to those from the Civil War. We have been working to establish the history of all the items there.

We are indebted to Amanda Wilson and a group from UNH who created a database for the Historical Society membership and artifacts. Eventually the holdings will be entered into the computer and easily accessed. Members of Boy Scout Troup 407 with Scoutmaster Scott Benson have agreed to do data entry for us but with the disruptions of the year we have not been able to start this. We hope that this project will be well started next year.

I am, as ever, grateful to the Committee, the Board of Directors and to the membership for their interest, cooperation and hard work.

LOUIE CAREY, CURATOR

Open House is the 2nd weekend of each month of the year, still needs more volunteers. If you are able to host an open house give me a call (603) 673-1998. August 2000 was a busy month with the Carey House being opened a number of times for people with a special interest in the Hutchinson Singers. Also, a musician interested in the instruments in the Hutchinson Room visited.

The painting of the rooms of the Carey House postponed open house in January and February 2001. Once the painting was completed many hours were spent with the tedious job of rearranging treasures in the Carey House.

Thanks to all who have helped.

Janice Adams

Secretary and Open House Chair

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The Carey House is open:

**2nd Saturday & Sunday of every month 2PM – 4PM
2nd & 4th Tuesdays 9AM – 11AM**