



## *The Guide*

*Town of Duane Newsletter  
May 2013  
Vol. 5 No.2*

### Town Wide Garage Sale: June 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>

Every other year the Duane Angels sponsor a town wide garage sale. This year the garage sale will be held on Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>. Individuals may donate items to the Duane Angels or conduct their own garage sale. Items donated to the Duane Angels will be sold at the Fire Station. All proceeds will go to the Duane Fire Department. The town wide garage sale will be advertised and maps will be available showing residents having a garage sale. Maps will be free and can only be obtained at the Duane Fire Station. In addition to the garage sale, the Duane Angels will be sponsoring a bake sale and selling hot dogs and burgers. Raffle tickets will also be available for the following items: dinner for two at the Trailside Restaurant, Amish made oak rocking chair donated by Bill Brunelle and a wood carving donated by local artist, Avis Brown. The winning tickets for the wood carving and dinners will be drawn on Sunday. The winning ticket for the rocking chair will be drawn at the Halloween Party held in October. For additional information concerning the garage sale contact Pam LeMieux at 483-4885.

### New Bay Addition To Fire Station Nearly Completed

The Duane Volunteer Fire Department will soon be able to utilize a much needed bay area attached to the current building. The project was started last fall and is nearly completed. The back part of the addition will house the Duane Food Pantry. The front part will be used to house one of the fire trucks. The vehicles will be able to leave and enter the building with greater ease. Once again many thanks go out to our volunteers for their fine effort.



### Summer Paving Project

Duane Highway Superintendent, Ned LeMieux Junior, recently shared with me his paving project planned for this summer. Ned would like to use the CHIPS (Consolidated Highway Improvement Programs) funds to blacktop Old Meacham Road. Due to the high cost of paving, the project will be spread out over the next few years. His plan is to start at the intersection of Rt. 26 and Old Meacham and pave the first half mile this year. Next year use the CHIPS money to do the next half mile and so on until the entire road is paved.

# My Morning Walk

It's Saturday, May 18th. The sun is up and it's 9am so there are no bugs in the air yet. Joanne and I decide to take a walk on the Town Trail located behind the church on Rt. 26. As we pull into the parking area located just to the east of the church a large trail map greets us. The map is the fine work of Ned LeMieux Senior. From the parking lot you can enter the trail by walking straight ahead or by walking to your left behind the church.



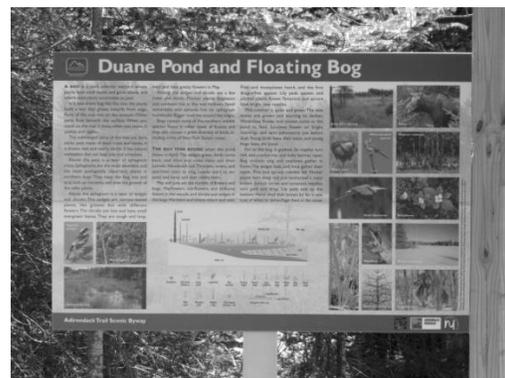
We entered the trail by walking straight ahead. The trail was dry, wide enough for two people to walk side by side and quite level. I immediately noticed the smell of pines and heard several song birds.



We came to an intersection with another trail going left and right. I remembered the trail sign and we walked straight ahead. After a ten minute walk we were at the viewing platform.



The viewing platform overlooks the pond. It has a roof for protection from the sun or rain. Next to the platform is a picnic table in case you decide to bring a snack to eat. At the end of the platform is a very informative board explaining the pond and bog. I could see several animal tracks leading to the water.



To return, we stayed to the right and made a loop back to the church. I would say the entire walk took no more than 30 minutes. What a great way to start the day!

# Town of Duane Historical Notes

Prepared by: Gloria Gori, Town Historian

## Granddad's Memories of His Hop Yards

Harvest time for the hop yards was just before Fair time. Granddad's father would hire 50 people, many of which were entire families, mom dad, and all the children. Each family would find boxes and baskets in the yard, and were given tickets for each box. A ticket would be handed in for every box filled at the end of the day. The family was paid one dollar for every box filled. It would take nearly all day to fill a box for the boxes were large. The women wore gloves to protect their hands. They had to contend with hop lice, which didn't bite, but "they'd just crawl on you and irritate you". If a family had a large family, they could pick five or six boxes a day. A small family was hard pressed to pick one box a day because the weight of the layers would keep settling the hops. The men would pull the poles after the hops were picked and the boys would strip the vines from the poles while the women and girls continued to pick.

"What was the hop kiln liked?" Gramps, "Well, it was a big kiln, there with a big stove, it would take three foot wood, and you had a platform that came out there." Wood was piled under the platform. Pans near the stove were filled with sulfur and the steam from the sulfur would coat the hops and bring a yellow cast to them. A large scaffold was built over the stove with a floor made of slats and covered with a mat. A large stove pipe came up from the stove and then went right around in a square under the slat floor and then up into a large chimney. The hops were placed on the mats four to five inches thick and the heat would penetrate through the slats. It would take about three hours to dry one batch. Gramps said his parents and brothers would have to work all night long at the kiln to keep ahead of the pickers. The hops would rot quickly if they didn't get them drying in the kiln.

The next step was taking care of thee dried hops. Gramps, "Oh, there's where the fun came in." The dried hops were taken to another storage shed that had a trap door. The trap door opened into a big box lined with a big mat, like brand sacks, on the floor and sides of the box. Two brothers would get inside this box and then open the trap door that had a shoot that drop the dried hops onto the floor. The brothers would tread their feet back and forth treading the hops down. They had a stomping ho-down in that box until they reach the top of the box before they could get out. They then had made a weight press that they operated with levers where they could lower the press into the box and compact the hops even more. The sides of the box were held in place by pins. These pins were taken out and the sides of the box fell down. Gramps, "Then they had pins, they'd take them sides down, they had pins and pin that in, and then they sew that all up with a big long needle and hop twine, all the way around that bale. When you got done there was a pair of scales there waiting to weigh it -135—and you'd take that and put it up against the wall and then do the same thing right over again, put the box up and start treading. You would hardly have two bales alike, and then the next one might be 220 or something like that, you know. There was quite a knack to it. Yes, where you'd get in and tread—they couldn't get out, they had to stay there. Then you had these levers with notches

where the board would be pulled down, see, with that mat. Yes it was pretty good. All the way through to Malone they had them like that."

The question was asked, "How much was a bale of hops worth?" Gramps, "Oh that's a hard guess there, sometimes they weren't worth their salt. Sometimes they weren't and other times they were pretty good." Prices quoted from Emmet Wells "Weekly Hop Circular" published in N.Y. City, Nov. 26, 1880 were; Choice 22-23 cents/lb., Medium 20-21 cents/lb. Low to Fair 18-19 cents/lb. Many years later at using this pricing one 220 bale would be worth \$50.60. "What was the reason why hops would be valuable one year and not the next?" Gramps, "Well, you've got me there. Well, whether it was the brewing business, they weren't getting so much money out of them making their home brew or beer out of them, I don't know, or the other fellow was yipping you and putting it in his pocket." The buyers would then come and take a sample from the bales. They would use a drill-like object and two tongs that would pull out a square of the hops to judge its quality. Bill King and Dick Slaughtery were the buyers. Finally the bales were hauled to the train station in Malone to be shipped. To complete the harvest they had to return to the Yard, pick up all the poles to store over the winter and rake all the drying vines and burn them to destroy the hop lice and any lingering mold.

Great Granddad had one of the largest hop yards in Chasm Falls. Childs had the largest and the Skinners had a large yard where the Malone Golf Course is located today. "do you remember Schroeder's Hop Yards in Duane?" Gramps, "No- no, that was before I came here. Here where this house is was all hops all these flats were all hops, yep, all hops." Gramps home was directly across from my house. Growing hops was a major part of Duane's history. If you take a walk today, you might find hop vines growing wild. Gary Cring did and he transplanted the vine by an arbor in his front yard. This plant might had survived from the Schroeder days. Thank you Mr. McGowan and Mr. Langlois for having the fourth-sight to conduct these interviews to preserve our past and bring it alive again for our generation and those to follow.

Gloria Gori, Town of Duane Historian

***Editor's Notes:***

Much appreciation goes out to Gloria for her fine historical work concerning our town. As she mentions in this article you can still find hops vines growing in the woods and along the roadside. I live on Ayers Road which was once part of the Schroeder hops farm. Driving along the south end of the Ayers Road you will see hops vines growing up poles and trees. I have included a photo of some of the hops from my vines. Recently North Country Public Radio has carried three stories pertaining to north country farmers growing hops. You can read the stories on your computer at: <http://www.ncpr.org> "From Milk to Beer: Dairy Family Switches to Hops" by Sarah Harris, April 29, 2013.



## **Highlights from Town Board Meetings**

### **February 20<sup>th</sup> meeting:**

*Absent:* Laura Paquin and Mark Young

The Town Board agreed to invite the existing benefits representative for the town to the next board meeting.

The Town Board agreed to consider reimbursement for half of the Highway Superintendent's cell phone bill.

Supervisor LeMieux presented correspondence from Barbara Wood requesting a gate be installed on the Ayers Road side of the Hoose Cemetery. The feasibility of this request will be researched.

### **March 20<sup>th</sup> meeting:**

*Absent:* None

Insurance Coordinator (benefits representative) Pat McGuire addressed the board regarding medical benefits and upcoming changes. He addressed a number of questions from town employee, Pam LeMieux.

Supervisor LeMieux addressed the board regarding the 2013 Safe Act. He asked for input on key provisions of the Safe Act so that he can prepare for the upcoming area supervisors meeting wherein this will be a topic of discussion.

Supervisor LeMieux discussed the condition of the Church owned by the town. The front wall is in need of repair. The board favored looking into the possibility of soliciting assistance from BOCES. The Supervisor will look into the feasibility of utilizing the services of BOCES.

Regarding the request from Barbara Wood for a gate to be installed on the Ayers Road side of the Hoose Cemetery, Mark Young agreed to look into the acquisition of a gate for the project.

Supervisor LeMieux presented correspondence he received from the Association of Senior Citizens. The organization is seeking representation from the town. Supervisor LeMieux will contact Gerald Gillmett (former Association member) regarding responsibilities and expectations. A notice will then be placed in the Malone Telegram seeking interested individuals to represent the Town of Duane.

### **April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting:**

*Absent:* None

Supervisor LeMieux addressed the board regarding the previous discussed possibility of soliciting assistance from BOCES for needed repairs to church. Bill Layman from BOCES expressed concerns about liability and insurance.

Supervisor LeMieux discussed the upcoming Supervisors Conference and the Adirondack Park Local Government Conference. Supervisor LeMieux to attend both; Town Clerk, Sue Nitto, to attend Adirondack Park Local Government Conference.

### **May 15<sup>th</sup> meeting:**

*Absent:* None

Supervisor LeMieux provided the board with a summary of the Supervisors Conference and the Adirondack Park Local Government Conference.

Representatives, (Chastity Miller, Ray Miles and Dave Rhodes) from the Franklin County Recreational Trails Association provide the board with an informational packet. Their goal is to provide recreational trails to the residents of Franklin County. They hope to accomplish this through private land easements.

## **Dates of Upcoming Meetings and Events**

June 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> – Town of Duane Garage Sale

June 19<sup>th</sup> - Town Board Meeting at the Fire Station 7 PM

July 17<sup>th</sup> - Town Board Meeting at the Fire Station 7 PM

August 21<sup>st</sup> - Town Board Meeting at the Fire Station 7 PM

September 18<sup>th</sup> - Town Board Meeting at the Fire Station 7 PM

Next issue of *The Guide* to be mailed out at the end of September 2013.

Any suggestions or questions concerning *The Guide* should be directed to Gary Cring (483-2611).