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Memories of Granville in the Old Days

Our family came to Granville in the 1920's, I was a little over one year old. We had no electricity no hot water no inside toilet or bathtub and no central heating. Moving from Westfield where we had those conveniences and my father had a good tool making job. My mother's old home was up for sale and mother always wished to get back to her roots. It certainly was a step of faith because my father needed to work to support us so he cut wood, picked berries, apples or whatever menial job there was until he finally got a machist's job for Noble and Cooley. He walked one mile each way to work wintwér and summer.

2/9/09
Town Hall
Presentate

Our first way of transportation to school was by covered wagon and my sister Dorothy went to grammar school that way. It was not until 1925 we had our first bus. Each district had a one room school house that eventually was torn down or were sold as a restored house. My mother was born in Granville and attended a school which was located on the right of John Stevenson's, the step stone is still there. This building was also doubled as a town hall until in 1927 our new town hall was built. A two room school house was located on Gary Peterson's property. The downstairs was the first and second grades and upstairs were the third, fourth and fifth grades. The right side of the building was the girl's out house and the left side of the building divided by a tall fence was the boy's out house. A pitcher pump was located on the left of the building and a dipper hung on a nail for us to drink from, no one died of this unsanitary water habit. One school was on the Old Westfield road where my mother taught in the late 1800's teaching nine grades. She walked three miles to it every day winter and summer for six dollars a week-it was located just past the old cemetery. Another school house was by Cobble Mountain, top of Ore Hill in West Granville and Leroy Clink bought it and lived there for quite a few years, another was on Beech Hill in West Granville and one on South Lane where the Amlaws lived.

Habiits we endured were peculiar to many now, to raise one finger in school meant you had to go number one and two fingers meant you had to go number two

The last school before our new Granville was built in 1934 the sixth, seventh and eighth grades went to a room over the old Gibbons Store. There was two toilets on either side of the old barn out back of the store, one stairway leading to the room on the right of the building and if we needed a drink we had to go to the sink in the back of the store and get a drink from the one faucet. There were no special needs teacher so Katherine kearns had all three grades plus slow learners and one 21 year old retarded fellow who was in seventh grade. Katherine {Kearins} Phelon was my very favorite teacher We bought all our own sports equipment but had no place to play except the street and the old Methodist Church floor rhat was slowly deteriorating. Miss Kearins would say when playing basketball don't go near the edges or you miight fall in. It was located between the red house after our telephone building and Waiman's which used to be Quagliaroli's Our graduation from eighth grade was held at the town hall along with the West Granville eighth graders. Each of the students had to write a composition, poem, or sing which I did ,singing Estrolita and In the Garden, a class song always was written and sung. The following night the graduates put on a play written by our teacher and directed by her. I had the leading lady part and Edward Kenney was my boyfriend- I was so happy to wear our teachers blue suit and a fox fur.

The stores had post offices in the back when I was young, Gibbons store, West Granville store, & Deganos store. and Tolland store. Mail was carried by horse and buggy and Mr. Welch from West Granville had a beautiful saddle bag that he mcarried his mail in and it's stored in a glass case in the Northampton. Restauant and hotel. Therð eventually hired a man with a staion wagon who came and picked up mail and brought it from the city. They hired Bernice Dickinson he also took passengers to and from Westfield for 75 cents a trip. Randolph Peterson built a house where our two room school was and built a small post office on the left of his house where he was postmaster for many years, Mary Deganano was postmaster and had her office in the front of her house. Now we have a newer one on Main Street in Granville village and Tolland, West Granville and Granville Center have our mail.

Memories of Granville in the Old Days

2 From there all the mail was delivered by contractors to carry mail to Tolland West Granville and Granville Center.. I kept my mail box at the post office, as I get older I could not go out on all kinds of weather and go to the side of the ^{Carve} ^{Box} ¹⁹¹⁰. RFD carriers were paid by the government, now the carriers bid on the route and the lowest bidder gets the job. You have to use your own cars. Mail has to be delivered rain, sleet, ice and snow. RFD boxes should always be shoveled out or you do not have to leave the mail; you take it back to the post office where you sign in when you leave and sign in the time you get back. I worked for a carrier and helped him sort the mail and sometimes delivered it. The carrier paid me out of his pocket. The schedule is the same winter and summer. I also drove school bus for around 25 years and we were on schedule the same winter and summer. Also if anything happened to a child the driver is totally responsible not th Town of Granville or any of the heads of the school system- just you.

We had five churches at one time in our town," The first church was "The Great Rock" on Beech Hill road where the big rock still stands on the left of Steven Gladdings house. The rock came from the Ripley property and brought over there by Henry Leon Ripley, uncle to Leon Ripley where he now lives., then The First Congregational church where the Old Meeting House is now, West Graanville Congregational Church, Baptist Church and Methodist Church between Sarah Edwards and Harry Waimans, which deteriorated and torn down, the property was the Baptist Church property. Years ago buildings were built on somebody elses"s land and resorted back to the owner if the house burned or torn down. Tha Methodist Chuurch used to hold Catholic meetings there because we had lots of Irish people here at one time. In the 1930's when I went to the 6th, 7th and 8th grades in a room over the old Gibbons store. We used the old Methodist church to play basketball and our teacher Katherin Kearns used to tell us not to get to near the edges or you might fall in. We bought our own sports equipment, not the town. The last class that graduated from the store was 1933-the town built a new school in 1934 This school had only desks for the children, a large desk in back of a black board and an old wood stove to heat the room. We had no water or flush toilets but a his and hers on each end of an old barn out back, when you wanted a drink of water you went to the back of the store where there was a sink and one cold water faucet. We had no place to graduate so used the auditorium at the town hall, West Granvcille came to graduate there too. All together there was 15 pupils. The girls had white dresses and the boys had white shirts and navy blue trousers, I believe for most boys it was their first long pants. Each pupil had to participate, either write a composition or poem,- I sang Estrita and In the Garden of Tomorrow, I had been taking lessons from our music teacher. The next night we had to put on a play our teacher wrote and I was the leading lady. I was so pleased I could wear my teacher Miss Kearns navy blue suit and her fox fur. The town hall held town showers, plays, round and square daning every week, vaiety shows , some of the dancing was can-can, which I was one of them. I loved drama, music and being in plays. My father was in Minstrel Shows there and played his mandolin and sang You can't blacken your face anymore so they were stopped We had fairs there where the 4h displayed all

Memories of Granville in the Old Days

3 Their were fruits, vegetables, stock in the back and, sewing etc. They were fun times when most of Granville came. They had baby contests also but my nephew won and they never had another. There was a popcorn vender out side and food to buy.

The town showers were great, the store would collect money from whoever wished to contribute or they could come to the town hall and bring their own gift. A committee would be the callers and furnish the goodies after the shower ,also collect the money the store collected and the committee got to buy things with the money and wrap the gifts for the couple. Sometimes we would have entertainment as a mock wedding, the man would be the bride to be and the woman the man dressed up in wedding clothes. She would usually be carrying a cabbage head and root as her bouquet. Also they usually had an appropriate poem read. Then the couple sat on the stage and opened presents with a person writing down who the present was from and what it was, she also had a paper plate and put the bows into the plate, Our shower was at the Congregational chapel and during war time in 1941 when appliances were frozen, so I got 50 water glasses, an ironing board and a steam flat iron. My younger girl Carlene got the last shower in town hall and they haven't had one since. We all sacrificed during the World War 2, no new tires, no appliances, food and gas were rationed and they had rent control which was a good thing. We saved aluminum and rolled it in a ball for the war effort, we had civil defense people whio sat in towers built to spot enemy planes, headlights were half blackened and we put black shades in our houses. I worked in a war plant in Springfield, American Bosch which is torn down now, lots of women worked in factories then because men went to war.

In the late 1700's Timothy Mater Cooley came to preach at the First Congregational Church in Granville Center-also called East Granville. He was here 63 years married Content Champlin and had ten children.His home was where William and Coralie Stevenson live now.Timothy also taught as an educator and tutored 60 ministers. Our town was so over populated and the soil was poor as most were farmers so 76 migrated to Granville Ohio to start a new life. Every 50 years we have a Jubilie to celebrate their migration. The last one being in 1995 so the next will be in 2045. I was fortunate enough to go to two of them.

I remember dirt roads and school vacations in March because our roads got so muddy. I remember High school children being transported to Westfield High School by contracted cars, I went to school that way before they had busses to take you. Now you can choose Southwick High school or trade schools either in Westfield or Springfield. We had a two tube radio and you listened by ear phones But my father was very inventive and built a box and put another tube for better reception. He worked at Gilbert and Barker in the early 1920's and invented the dial that tells the gallonage pumped at the filling stions. He never got credit for it on company time so it says Gilbarco on all the pumps.

All our entertertainment was either church or town hall. We had church suppers in the Congregational parsonage's chapel every other week, the ladies would donate food .

Memories of Granville in the Old Days

4 We had bean suppers at the Cong'l Church chapel, on the end of our parsonage; now owned by Ed Jensen. We had them every two weeks and people donated the food. I remember the whipped cake made by the Champlin women from the dairy farm their had which in our day was raw milk and Frank Champlin used to deliver it by horse and buggy. Carl and I lived in the parsonage for ten years after our churches federated.. We not only had the suppers but played games after supper winter and summer. We played Fine or Superfine, Winkum, Button Button whose got the Button and Spin the Platteér. In 1936 we discussed federating with the Baptist Church. It seemed reasonable because we did not have parking or Sunday School rooms and no land to exspand..First we had winter services in the Baptist church.for six months and summer services in the Con'l church six months.. Soon we federated and lost many of our members because they wanted to go just to the Con'l church.. In the 1960's we voted to build a new church where the Baptist church was. Morris Hale tore the old church down and we kept what we could sell.

The town hall was originally built in 1927 but did not have the officers rooms so the assessor, treasuer, town clerk tax collector, bookkeeper, had to do their town business at home; very inefficient so lots of documents got lost. They had a police room on one end of the building and the other end of the building was for the Selectmen to meet once a week. There was two cloak rooms for coats, the left side for women plus a lavatory, and the same on the right for men.. There was a kitchen on each side of the auditorium, the left side had cupboards for dishes from the Oriole Inn where John Stevenson lives in the summer , stove and utensils for cooking and a table where the people who worked on voting days; also had town meetings there. We still vote there but have town meetings at the new school.. We had country dances every two weeks, plays and variety shows, town showers, wedding receptioms etc., town fairs,where the 4h people brought their projects such as vegetables they grew, clothes they sewed and stock they nuriished and were judged and given ribbons once a year..,Town showers were fun where man and lady came and many town folks...

So in 1979 we started a committee to give our town hall more space for our officers, It was voted down at the town meetings many times.. It took several years of the town turning our proposal down furnished by an architect. Finally we have rooms for the officers and a smaller kitahen,smaller auditorium , smaller stage but the only building in town with a stage. It is of Greek Orthodox architecure and have a paved parking lot, a new sewer system and the main door is in the back , keeping the pillars and the front looking like the original builing. Now we have Senior meetings once a month, ~~and~~ ^{and} parties, lunches,school programs, quilting classes etc.

The hills and streets have been named after people past and present. First our town was named Bedford and then they changed it to Granville after the Earl of Granville from England. Ward hill is west of my house, Suhm hill is west of that, Christian hill is named past Bill Stebeveons house east of the Old Meeting house that was once the Con'l church. Named that because it was the only church for a time..

Memories of Granville in the Old Days

5 There were two candy shops when I went to school in the village. One was in the front room in Amy Woods house run by Mary Noble. The other one was in the house where Ledgers house is now. On the right room is where Mary Hunt had her ice cream and candy shop. At noon we kids would go and buy penny candy or ice cream if we had any money. My father was the machinist at Noble and Cooley and had his own shop, I'd go ask for money to buy candy but told him it was to buy bank stamps to save at school. There were two libraries in town, the one in the village which the members of the Library Club raised money to help out with funds to build, and the right room of the house the Jordans live in was our library room which supplied we children on the hill with many books to read. Mary Barnard was our librarian and Mabel Henry was the other librarian at the village.

We had a few blacksmith shops. One was located in the barn in back of the house on the left of our new post office. I believe the name was Osler.

We had a plug in telephone office in the room next to the Gibbons Store. Where Elizabeth Carpenter lives. Emma Tryon was the lady who used the telephone system, she and Porter Tryon lived there then. Also Helen Davin used to be an operator too. She also collected electric light bills and Helen Bettinger collected telephone money. They lived in the houses left of the Tryons.

There were six gas stations, Gibbons store, Humphreys garage, West Granville store, Stacker's, Quagliaroli's and Degano's store.

The gas pumps had a crank on the right to put the gallonage pointer back to zero. This gage was invented by my father who got no credit for it because he worked for Gilbert and Barker's in West Springfield at the time, so they put Gilbarco in every gage as there's, it's still there.

We could slide up and down the different hills in the twenties and early thirties; no cars in those days, mostly horse and buggies. The ripper I steered with ten kids on this long board set on two small sleds with steel runners. The front one had a rope on each side of the front sled to steer it. I was the dare devil so I drove, we'd pull the ripper up and then slide down the upcoming hill, and repeat, so much fun. When we got tired and wet we'd all pile in my house for cocoa.

6Memories of Granville in the Old Days

6Our town is zoned and you have to have an acre of land to build here. Also no commercial businesses here except home businesses- such as Coralie's Pottery Shop, Antique shops, Apple Orchards and Blueberry fields, Humpheys Garage, Design Shop, and Noble and Cooley Drum Shop since 1854. They used to hire lots of employees from summer til before Christmas for they sold good and toy drums plus tamborimes They used to make the embossed American eagle lamps, ice buckets and waste baskets. Now it is a museum and the family makes good skin head drums for real bands. During the Civil War they made a big drum for the fife and drum core during the war. West Granville used to be more populated and then because of the drum shop it became more populated in the village

There were many summer houses mostly on Main Road now that are permanent homes residences., starting west from Christenson's house built for Kate Lynch and her mother from New York Then it was bought by Thomas Payne and family for a summer house. Later above that was Gustave Suhm, Hattie his wife and son Herbert Now Paul Luntta lives there all year. Coming up Ward Hill three houses east was Reverent Reed', and family with four children Reverent was father to Alice Kaynor who built a summer place across the street from me. William Kirk Kaynor came from Springfield with wife Alice and six children., William, Allen, Jack, Kenneth, Gratia and Edward William was the Postmaster of the Springfield office and in 1930's he became our Massachusetts Congressman.. He was killed just before Christmas in an airplane accident. They were a wonderful family and my sister and I got to play with them most every day. Now Daniel McGorty live there, they had five children and adopted twins. On the left of the Granville town hall was a summer house for Henri and Lucy Brown who lived in Porta Rico on an orange grove. Lucy was instrumental in getting the property foe our present town hall and starting funds to build it. It was dedicated in 1927 and Mr. Kaynor was the Master of Cerimonies. We had music and dignatories that spoke and ended up with good food.. It never was an effient for our town officers because we only had the police office and selectmen's office on the ends of the building. It was built in the Greek Revival. We had a stage, two kitchens, a lavatorie on both sides for women and men near halls on both sides to hang your coats, hats and umbrellas. Now with the newer renovated town hall we have room for our rooms for all our officers and half a stage which is well done. Our stage is smaller because we do not have plays, graduations or town showers anymore. We have an Administrtive Assistant now that's there all week and a Chief of Police. Monday nights the other officers are there and we vote there in the main hall but the town meetings are held in the school gym. John Degano wife and two children lived on the right of our town hall and pulled down for a parking lot for our renovated town hall, this was Degano's summer home and lived over his General store in the winter. He also built the side walk between his two houses.

On the left of Henri Brown's house was a summer house owned by Ernestine Reed and husband William. They had two sons John and Theodore, each have a buinessx John owns Mestik in Westfield and Teddie in Rhode Island. Ernestine was a contralo singer.

and sang opera here and abroad She lived to 106 and was a very sweet lady. Now their house is an all season home. The old town hall and school was left of the Reed house where my mother went to school. In the twenties Ed Jensen Sr. put a rope around the building with a team of horses and pulled it down The stone is still there to know where the school/town hall was.

Across the street Austin Scott, wife and six children for the summer, three boys and three girls. They lived in New Jersey in the winter as Austin was president of Rutgers college, one son Seargent and his sister Meg lived in the small house on the right of their house. Seargent loved Granville and boarded in Granville til he died, many of them are buried in Woodland Cemetery on Blandford Road..

The next house on the right was Dr. Holland Stevenson's first wife's parents, the Wright family when it was a summer house, then the Bird's, Jones, the 1800 house and two men lived theret andwere Interior Decorators. Now the Johnson's live there all year. John and Betsy own their fathers summer house, left of the old school/town hall. Dr. Holland married Katherine who had two children John and Betsy ,His first wife had two boys Neal and Gilbert. The houseis still a summer place and he is Presidentofhe Granville Center Water Co.started for usby Uncle John Stevenson/ Dr Holland Stevenson was an ear, eye and thoaat specialist from New York.

Roger North and wife Lucy ;ived left of Degano's store, Lucy was Pearl Phelon's sister. They had two sons Roger Jr. and William. Now full time home for the Macomers/ Lastly Nancy Wackerbarth's mother and fathers house used to be a summer home owned by Dr. Buell Tinker and then the Van Horns who had two sons, one was John Campbell who was a movie star.. Walter Woodger and family usedit all season.

Ciizens Park across from our Country Store was made in honor of Selectman George Woodger and funded mostly by his family. This park was called Jockey Corners yeprs ago and they raced horses around there. In order for the park to be finished two houses had to be torn down owned by Deacon Milo Seymour and a big hole was filled in front of the old grange hall. The old Grange hall has beautiful paneling in it but is ready to fall down. Once it was a very active order for the farmers. We had plays dances etc. there. Then everyone got old and they started card games that traveled from Grange to Grane to see who the winners were.

Gibbons Store started by Murrey Gibbons, then by Benjamin, and Fred and William Clarence Gibbons. They lived in the three houses second from the left of Connors house on the corner, Fred left of Conners,left of Fred was Benjamin and William leftof that. Benjamin was an undertaker and drove a glass hearse. Folks were embalmed and brought to different houses and were laid out in their parlor before burial. I wonder if that's why the funeral parlors are named that. They also had a cheese room in the back of the house, aged in the aging rooms at the store. This store had everythingto sell. They also had three apartments on the left of the store and a room on the left with outside stairs to get to it. They rented it out for dance lessons, dances,and lastly the sixth, seventh and eighth grades with Katherine Kearns Phelon teaching. There was a wood stove in the back and past the desks was a black board.

with a desk in front of our desks. Our desks had a top that opened up to store our books and an ink well to keep ink in for us to dip our pen in to do our papers with.

My mother father and Pearl Phelon used to play for dances in that room once a week walking up and down Christian hill summer and winter. Mother played the piano, my father the mandolin and Pearl Phelon the coronet.

That old Gibbons store buurned after we graduated in 19933 and a new three room school house was built.on Main Road.
