

Roxey Stockwell Given Founder's Day Award

by George Shute

Wednesday, February 14, 1979

Mrs. Roxey Stockwell, a long-time resident of Gilmanton Corner, was the recipient of the local PTA Founder's Day Award at a ceremony held February 7 in the Gilmanton Elementary School.

The presentation was made by Terri Ralls, PTA president, before an audience of organization members and guests.

Citing 1979 as "the year of the child and the theme of the National PTA," Mrs. Ralls said:

"We are gathered here tonight to pay tribute to a lady who has given fully of herself to the children of this town for more years than I can remember. Indeed, our recipient has long been known as one of the busiest ladies in our town. In 1940, for example, besides raising a family of her own, Roxey Stockwell and her husband, Harmon, built the original Corner Store, which became virtually the town social center.

"During World War II, the store's windows featured photos of men and women in the service. In addition Roxey waged a one-woman campaign to see that socks, mittens, and food packages were sent to all townspeople in the service. She wrote dozens of letters to service men and women."

Pointing out that in the early forties, Mrs. Stockwell had one of the few phones in town, the PTA president said that no matter what the hour, if there was an urgent call for someone in the community, Roxey left everything to make sure the call was received.

Mrs. Stockwell's career as a teacher was also reviewed, with Mrs. Ralls relating how Roxey taught the first and second grades in the Academy from 1950 to 1959, then in the 1960's taught in Alton and later conducted special classes in Franklin.

"During Roxey's tenure at the Academy it was no uncommon sight to see her before and after classes, pitching in to help her late husband, Harmon, with his custodial duties," Mrs. Ralls recalled. "Later, after retirement from teaching, Roxey spent over a decade making special efforts to contact new people in town, parents and children alike, to make them feel at home in the community. She invited them to join in cake sales, Memorial Day Services, parades, swimming lessons, church services and Bible School. Through the years, she left something very special with many of us."

"Her exemplary Christian conduct," Mrs. Ralls concluded, "might well serve as a model for all."

In accepting the award, a Holy Bible for children, which will be inscribed by her and placed in the school library, Mrs. Stockwell thanked the audience, many of whom were her former grade school students, now with children of their own, and declared herself taken completely by surprise.

"My goodness," she confessed, after her granddaughter Nancy Lines, escorted her to the dais, "I thought this was an award for my daughter-in-law Beth."

Mrs. Stockwell was also presented with a huge bouquet of long-stemmed red roses. Following the ceremony refreshments were served of punch, coffee, tea, cookies, and a Valentine cake, for which Mrs. Ralls would like to thank all who served and contributed the food.

As Mrs. Ralls said: "This is your night, Roxey Stockwell." Indeed it was — as well as a night to remember.



Roxey Stockwell, winner of the Gilmanton PTA Founder's Day Award.