

LOWER GILMANTON HISTORY CONTINUED

3/1/2016

2/28/2016 George Kelley passed away at age 95.

3/1/2016 – Grammy Hawkins birthday

I spoke with Danny Webster this am and have more information regarding property foundations surrounding Kelley Corner School House. In addition, Danny has once again given us permission to clear more of the trees between Route 129 and the Schoolhouse to increase visibility. Danny also told me he would check out the well on this parcel to see what condition the well cover is in. He stated he had it covered at one point in time, but Lori has noticed it is no longer covered. I informed Danny of what the LGCC is currently doing and what our future plans are and he is in agreement and I promised to keep him in the loop.

The foundations in front of the Schoolhouse are of a house and barn. According to Danny, Steve and Lillian Smith resided there when he went to school at the Schoolhouse. Lura Bunker McClary had also told me they were present when she went to school there. The well that is currently on Danny's property beside Route 129 originally was owned by the Smith's and had a pipe that went to the Smith's residence. In addition, Danny reports that Mr. Smith mowed that area and it was a field.

Sometime in mid-1940's the Smith's became too elderly to live there and they went to Canaan to live with their daughter, Frances. The Smith's sold their property to a Mr. Andrus who used to work in Pittsfield. Danny tells me he hitched a ride with Mr. Andrus to Pittsfield in 1946. Sometime shortly after this date, Mr. Andrus moved to Tilton and sold the property to a Dr. Fortin who was a dentist from Massachusetts. In the late summer of 1950 Danny recalls seeing the house set up on blocks about to be moved and it broke his heart to see this. Dr. Fortin moved the house to Stone Road – now known as Meetinghouse Road and it is the first house on the right going down Meetinghouse Road headed to Smith Meetinghouse. I knew the Fortins when I was growing up and lived at Lofty View Farm before Mommy died. Marion McIntyre and her husband purchased the house from Fortin.

When Dr. Fortin moved the house, he no longer wanted the property and sold the property that still had the barn to the Kelley's and the triangle between Route 129 and Schoolhouse to Danny. This is how Danny came to own ¼ mile of frontage on Route 129. Eventually, the barn was too far gone and the Kelley's tore it down.

Brown's foundation is part of Danny's Conservation Easement. Danny does not recall the names of the Browns who lived there, but he does recall seeing the house burn. Danny was between 4-6 years old at the time and it was at night. He saw the flames from his house and

wanted to go down, but his father, William Webster, would not let him telling Danny he would probably get hurt. Mr. Webster feared the sparks from the Brown's house burning would ignite their house or the schoolhouse, but fortunately, this did not happen. Danny recalls hearing rumors that the buildings were intentionally set so the Brown's could claim the insurance money, but cannot confirm it. The pond is called Brown's Pond as their house was the closest one to it.

Sanborn Dam – According to Danny this was referred to as a 'ram' which drove water up the steep hill to Sanborn's farm to irrigate his land. At this point in time Steve & Frank Bosiak are purchasing not only the dam water rights to the dam, but the land across Sanborn Hill Road of approximately 49 – 50 acres from their cousin, Patty Bosiak. This land contains downstream – the remains of the first grist mill in Gilmanton which was built by Joshua Bean.