



**June 13, 1998, Missing Hikers!**

By Barbara Eastman , Written in February 2023

A tradition at Appalachian Mountain Club - Cold River Camp (AMC-CRC) is in May and June the camp offers free lodging and meals to groups of volunteers in exchange for their services of needed work on cabins and hiking trails. This was the weekend for Chatham Trails Association (CTA). As it turned out, it was a wet one. The forecast said a front was coming through with 1 – 2 inches of rain. Rain had started during Thursday night and by Friday it was raining hard and by Saturday it was obvious the forecast needed to be revised as already brooks were over their banks in places and dirt roads had washouts.

Saturday evening, Frank and I were visiting with friends (Jack Harrington, Ted and Ingrid Barrett, Marvin & Judy Schwartz, and Gwen Stose) in the Lodge, enjoying a fire in the fireplace. As we were about ready to go home (9:30 PM) the Lodge door was thrown open by a drenched woman wearing hiking boots, socks, nylon shorts and tank top, mumbling she needed help.

So that was how Frank and I happened to be on scene, so to speak, when the two girls were reported missing somewhere between Baldface Mountain and Wild River.

The woman kept repeating she needed help, had left a group on the trail. We realized within a few minutes she probably was hypothermic, needing warming and food. Judy and Ingrid got her into a hot shower, dry clothes, and some food and brought her back to the Lodge where she told her story.

The group was taking part in “Self-Reliance Project” teaching girls about the outdoors, self confidence, and decision making. Gerry Cahill, as physical education teacher and Joan Alexander, teacher, were the leaders from Barton, Vermont. They had arrived at Cold River Camp Friday afternoon after leaving a vehicle at Wild River. It was raining quite hard, but forecast was not for a major storm, and although CTA members urged them to wait until next morning, the group decided to hike part way and set up camp for the night. They were experienced, well equipped with gear and food, and the temperature was mild, near 60 degrees.

The group of six girls were Nicole Laramee, 15, of Irasburg, VT; Kara Cook, 16, of Irasburg; Laura Harvey, 15, of Orleans; Windy Bowman, 16, of Irasburg; Anne Laramee, 15, of Coventry; and Emma Rowe, 14, of Montpelier.

Anne and Emma were faster hikers and Cahill let them go ahead to a shelter on Saturday mid-day, and the group remaining



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## Notes from the President

I have to say how grateful I am for all that Barbara Eastman did in keeping our Chatham Historical Society going for its first thirty years. The amount of work she did collecting and cataloging is impressive and inspiring. I have learned so much from her and treasure all of our conversations. She was a wealth of information. We will be putting together a photo exhibit for the Celebration of Barbara's Life on July 29<sup>th</sup> from 1-5 PM at the Specialty Foods Pavilion at the Fryeburg Fairgrounds.

There continue to be lots of fun and interesting things happening at CHS. Thank you to all who have contributed in ways large and small. Our chili and bake sale held at Nate and Kate's Maple Weekend did well. At our Annual Membership Meeting in May we had a potluck supper and a game of Chatham Trivia created by David Crouse. (An example: the area between Slope and Eastman Mountains was called "Egypt" by the old-timers.) Congratulations to the winning team: Alan and Alina Eastman, Paul Loscocco, Susie Eastman, and John Morris. Everyone learned twelve new things and will read our Chatham History book with new eyes, looking for next year's trivia questions.

On April 29<sup>th</sup> we explored five cellar holes along the south end of Butter Hill Road. We also saw what we think is the foundation of a school, stonework along some of the streams, a stoned well beside the road, and the rusty remains of an old car by the site of the 1936 landslide that took part of the Barnum's house. Thanks to Sean Garland for helping us locate the interesting sites. As we neared the present home of Chris Lewey we came upon a table furnished with welcome refreshments! Thanks, Chris!

Welcome to our new members, Judy Bogdanovich and Gail & Jim Calomb. Gail has also been elected to serve on our Board. Many thanks to Judy Bailey who has resigned from the Board after many years of dedicated service.

We have the first section of our Historic Houses exhibit ready for feedback. Please stop in and tell us what you find interesting, and what more you'd like to know.

We encourage you to share memories and photos that we might use in a publication called Pages for Kids of All Ages. We are also looking for someone able to do some simple sketches for this project.

We are planning to do some carpentry work in our basement: adding electrical outlets and new lighting, reinstalling the heat ducts, and putting in a new ceiling. We would gladly accept any donations to our Building Fund. We would love your help on our Fundraising Committee or our Exhibits Committee. Please let us know if you have a little time for helping or ideas to share

We hope to see you on a Tuesday morning during our regular Open Hours and also at our summer programs and events.

*Jeanne Eastman*



Barbara Eastman awards 2nd prize to Erin Hennessey in the Reading Contest



Barbara Eastman, Librarian and Chris Logan at the 1987 Chatham Community Library Open House

The following essay was written by Andrew Irwin, a senior at Fryeburg Academy, as part of his application for a Chatham Historical Society Award. He is this year's winner and we are pleased to present him with a monetary award!

"Are we there yet?" I asked.

"Almost," my mother replied.

Like most other kids, I usually asked this question out of car-ride boredom. When I asked this time, however, it was more meaningful. We had been driving on bumpy backroads for what seemed like hours to get to our new house in Chatham, NH, when we finally passed a sign welcoming my family into our new town. We made the turn onto a dirt road that led to my future home and proceeded for several miles. As I glanced out the window at the seemingly endless forest, I noticed that the wooden telephone poles lining the road, commonplace in many towns, came to an abrupt stop.

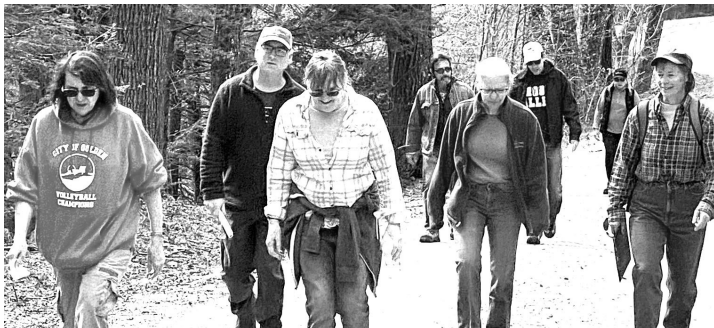
The unpaved road wove through stands of white birches and sugar maples for a few more miles. I got ready to pop my habitual question again but was interrupted by our arrival at a red rectangular structure standing in the shade of the dense forest. This would be my new home. I took a minute to examine the yard and it did not raise my spirits. New Hampshire winters are notoriously long and dark, and seeing scant, overworked solar panels raised my skepticism to ever plug in an electrical device. Thoughts of the Ingalls family from *Little House in the Prairie* fetching water from the well filled my brain. Putting my skepticism aside, I stepped onto the dusty driveway to explore, only to be greeted by a wall of mosquitoes. They filled my nostrils and buzzed in my ears, and I immediately ran inside to escape. Moving from a much larger community to this new lifestyle with the lack of functional amenities was a big transition. There were no other kids to play with, nor modern conveniences, and it would take time to adjust.

Despite the initial hardships, I came to believe that learning to go without certain comforts was a blessing. As I entered my high school years, I began to appreciate the situation even more. While initially hard, living my life off-grid helped me foster a connection with nature and provided a peaceful atmosphere where I felt grounded and safe. Having to use a flashlight to brush my teeth at night, while bizarre at first, made me resilient in difficult situations. To do more with less and channel my creativity. To be patient in stressful times. To live without the constant pressure to check social media. Having to leave my house early in the morning to access internet in order to finish an essay was exhausting, yet it tested my resilience. It, in turn, brought my family closer together.

Living in Chatham, particularly on our remote plot of land, was initially scary but calming, sometimes lonely but comfortable. I enjoyed feeling a little bit dirty. In a way, it is cleansing. I have learned how to push myself. My upbringing has guided me to make choices that, while physically uncomfortable at times, yielded great rewards. Ones that I can apply to every part of my life. I have learned how to adapt to uncomfortable situations and how to live a unique and challenging lifestyle. Looking back, I see the bigger picture and view it with great respect. I developed an appreciation for the natural world and at the same time an understanding of the modern fast-paced world. I feel that I am prepared for both.

Often, kids feel dread when they have to leave their friends and school to move to a new home. Initially I did also. However, after experiencing a simpler way of life, I felt enlightened. By the time I settled into my new house, I didn't need to ask when we were going to get there. I was already there.

Home.



History hike on Butter Hill Road.  
Time for chatting with neighbors as  
we looked for the cellar holes.

would meet them. However, the group missed a trail and ended up going the wrong way. Realizing the two girls ahead of the others were missing (last seen about 1 PM) Cahill left the group with Alexander to return to CRC for help. The brooks were very high; trails with water ankle- to knee-deep. While trying to cross the brook she was swept off her feet and carried downstream for several feet before she was able to get out. She had multiple bruises over her body. She said she left her pack near where she fell into the brook thinking if she didn't survive searchers would know where she might be found. She gave descriptions of the girls, their clothing, etc.

Meanwhile at CRC, Fish & Game was notified and a complete description given of the conditions in Chatham, what the girls looked like, and how they were equipped. At once Jack and Ted left to try to contact the group. The water was so high they had to turn back to CRC where they got ropes and more equipment and returned to try to reach the group on Baldface. Fish & Game Sergeant Bob Bryant arrived at CRC about 4 AM Sunday morning with a crew.

Bill Waste, manager for CRC, was notified early Sunday morning of the situation, and he said CRC office and cabins should to be used as needed. Also, canned groceries left over from last fall that were stored in our base-ment could be used if needed. Rescue and Saco Valley Fire, Androscoggin Search and Rescue, Mountain Rescue Service, and Solo were alerted.

I left to go home about 4:30 AM Sunday to sleep a few hours. Frank stayed at CRC to talk with Fish & Game. As he knew back roads, area, trail heads, etc. he worked to send volunteers who were arriving to check out each road every couple hours to see if the two girls might come out, and make sure all volunteers were accounted for and had returned. It rained all day and water made trails hard to navigate. At mid-morning he took the CRC van and met the teacher and four girls who had walked out and got them back to CRC. Tired, cold, and worried, but all were alright. After hot showers, dry clothes, breakfast, and sleep, they stayed at CRC to await their families' arrival. I returned to CRC before noon with canned goods that I thought Gwen could use as she said there was no word of the missing girls and did not know how many we'd need to feed or for how long.

By mid-morning Sunday the girls' families had arrived, as well as the school principal, John Castle; volun-teers from the whole area; and NH National Guard. WMUR TV Channel 9 out of Manchester arrived with their mo-bile van with a dish mounted atop. And, of course reporters. It was quite a sight for CRC: about one hundred search-ers plus families, etc.

Volunteers had been out searching since daybreak, returning, for at most, to eat a meal. The temperature re-mained in the 50s in the valley, but wind and colder air brought sleet to the mountain, and still it rained. Roads and fields were flooded and ditches washed out. Still no word of the girls. Gwen and her crew had hot meals for all eve-ry 5-6 hours all day. Searchers were exhausted battling the hard conditions on the trails, drenched even with rain gear, and worried about the conditions of the girls. Finally the rain tapered off near night. It was decided by dark it was too dangerous to be on trails for searching, and the search would resume Monday at daybreak, after 18 hours of searching Sunday.

Monday Androscoggin Search and Rescue sent a crew in from Wild River Campground and soon they saw two girls walking on the trail who identified themselves as Anne and Emma. Word was received at CRC around noon that the girls had been found in good condition and were walking out seven miles to vehicles.

Families of the girls wanted to go to meet them immediately, but Frank said he could take the van and family so they wouldn't have to drive vehicles and could be with the girls. Reporters said they wanted to follow. The fami-lies wanted privacy, but Fish & Game said he couldn't stop them from following. It was voiced around in the families that they would get to the van at a certain time, and Frank would go out the Main Gate. As he started to leave, report-ers raced to their cars in the parking lot, but a big group of well-wishers were grouped by the bird bath, and by the time they moved, Frank had left – but which way did he turn? The family got their privacy!!

Campers at Wild River made tents, etc. available for changing into warm clothes, and the van started back to CRC with the girls and their families. When the van was in the Notch with an ETA, all at camp were waiting to greet them.. Gwen and I stood on the Lodge porch, arms around each other, watching while reporters and the vans with



cameras aimed toward the Main Gate. I said to Gwen, "Want to bet Frank will come in the back gate?!" He did!! Talk about a Chinese fire-drill; action wouldn't hold a candle to the cameras and reporters trying to get turned around to aim at the van coming in the back way.

According to *The Chronicle, the Weekly Journal of Orleans County, Vermont*, Emma Rowe told the reporters, "We were never lost. We knew where we were." She said that they had a trail map and stayed on the trail they were supposed to be on. After they realized they were on their own, they crossed several large streams, some as high up as their waists. During one crossing Anne lost her sleeping bag and sleeping pad. They decided to set up camp and wait until the next day. Both girls climbed into one sleeping bag to keep warm. The next day they couldn't cross a stream near Perkin's Notch, so they built a shelter and waited either to be rescued or for the water to recede. They stayed in the shelter twenty hours. They rationed their food and worried about the rest of their group. Monday morning, with the water still rising, they decided to hike down the Wild River Trail, where they were met by rescuers in ten minutes.

End of story? Not quite. Frank and I contacted the school two years later, and the principal invited us to the girls' graduation in 2000, which we attended. The girls and families met us after the graduation ceremony to visit and remember our brief acquaintance for a weekend two years previous that ended so well with a tremendous amount of help from all involved. I often wonder where and what those girls are doing twenty five years later.

P.S. We learned after the storm that 14 inches of rain was recorded in North Chatham; and Gorham, NH received one inch. Crazy weather! Also Fish & Game said the girls did everything right and praised them for their decisions.

### Raffles! Raffles! Raffles!

**Item #1 – Dinner for 4-6 people:** In your own home, Chef Tad Furtado will use locally grown ingredients to create a meal of your choice, or a special French meal that he has learned in France! He will cook, serve, and clean up, while entertaining you with his ideas and stories. Only 100 tickets will be sold. \$10 per ticket.

Tickets for the following items are \$1 each, or 6 for \$5.

**Item #2 – Your choice of homemade blueberry or apple pie** in a covered glass platter.

**Item #3 – Painting of Cranes at Sunrise**, by Ann Landers.

**Item #4 - \$25 gift card to Stow Corner Store.**

**Item # 5 - Vintage Gund Bear 1983 :** brown, plush, jointed 6". An 85th anniversary Bear....previously loved....gently..

Please send a list of which items you would like your tickets to go toward when you send a check to CHS, 1061 Main Road, Chatham, NH 03813. Include contact info. We will fill out the tickets for you! Drawings will be held at the Town Picnic, September 9<sup>th</sup>.



Left  
Item # 5



Item #3

This does not do this painting justice, it is stunning in color!

## Upcoming Events

**July 15** – “The Stories Cemeteries Hold,” with Bob Hanscom. We will meet at the Chatham Center Cemetery at 9 AM and hear about Bob's Hanscom ancestors as well as their neighbors: the Clay, Meader, Cobb, and Reshaw families.

**August 25** – Ice Cream Social and Ukulele Concert, 6:30 PM at our schoolhouse.

**September 9** – Town Picnic, 1 PM at our schoolhouse lawn. Bring a dish to share.

**September TBA** – Historic Quilts program with a speaker from the Lowell, MA Quilt Museum

## Board of Directors

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Contact us : 1061 Main Road, Chatham, NH 03813  
chathamnhhistoricalsociety@gmail.com  
www.chathamhistoricalnh.org

603-307-0783

Business meetings April – October, 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday,  
6:30 PM

Open Hours: Tuesdays 9-Noon  
We look forward to seeing you!

## In Memory

Our deep sympathy to the families of these loved ones:

**Jane (Bryant) Hennessey**, 82; passed away February 23. Jane attended a one-room school in Stow. She loved her home gardens and local history. She was a Life Member of the CHS.

**Helen (Bryant) Morgan**, 92; passed away March 25. Helen was raised on the family farm in Stow and went to the school at Stow Corner. As a girl, she worked at the North Fryeburg corn shop and her aunt's tea room, The Jolly Ginger Snap, in Fryeburg. After graduating, she worked for the IRS in Augusta. Later she volunteered at the Sawyer School, with the local Girl Scout troop, and worked at the voting polls in South Portland. She loved cooking, sewing, knitting, and visiting friends and relatives in her beloved Stow area. She was a long-time member of the CHS.

**George Fernald**, 88; passed away April 29. George grew up on the family farm in East Conway, NH. He taught French and Spanish for 48 years at Milton Academy in Massachusetts, where he was twice awarded the Talbot Baker teachers award and named a Master Teacher. George traveled extensively and loved learning and animals. He was a Life Member of the CHS.

**Barbara Eastman**, 86; passed away May 1. Barbara attended school at Stow Corner. She was a charter member of the Chatham Historical Society, serving as curator for over 20 years, and was the glue that held it together for more than 30 years. She cooked hot lunch meals for the Chatham Center School from 1957 to 1969, was the Chatham-Stow librarian from 1967 to 2017, served as Town of Chatham Treasurer from 1982 to 1993, was on Fryeburg Rescue from 1971 to 2004. She served on the Chatham School Board from 1970 to 1978, was Supervisor of the Checklist (Town of Chatham) from 1980 to 2012. In addition she volunteered at the Saco Valley Fire Association's annual Chicken BBQ for over 20 years. Barbara's hobbies and interests included reading, crocheting, and genealogy. She also documented local history in over 40 scrapbooks.



As seen in the 1958 Fryeburg Academy Yearbook, "The Bell:" David Crouse, June Crouse (left), and Jane Bryant (right) work on the school Newspaper, the *Fryeline*. The girls were life long friends starting in 1st grade at the Stow Corner School.

## The Peddler's Pack

A bundle of news from the neighbors over the years

**2023** – On April 4<sup>th</sup>, **moose tracks** were seen in the driveway of our Chatham Historical Society.

On April 29, a **LifeFlight helicopter** landed in our field after a single car accident in Stow.

**Ken McAlister** from a 1982 interview by his granddaughter, Maryann Eastman: When the banks closed in the Depression, I didn't have any money in the bank. If I had a nickel it was in my pocket. I was logging for N. T. Fox. He was a millionaire, but he had to borrow money from me to get to Portland.

**Irving Bryant**, Helen (Bryant) Morgan's father, had an apple orchard on Toad Hill Road.

**Frank Eastman**: The beams from the old Hanscom house on Butter Hill Road were used to build the house for Betty Olson, later owned by Kenyon King's parents. It was a lot of work to make hand-hewn beams, and when a house was abandoned the building materials often were taken to use somewhere else.

**Millard Chandler's 1936 diary**: Aug 29, Harold (Andrews) & I worked all day at Carlton place tearing barn & house down to get material to put floor in hen house.

**David Crouse**: I believe that one of the early peddlers that came into the Cold River Valley was Henry Rosenbloom from North Conway. It's possible that it's his wagon in the picture taken at the AMC

Camp. A later peddler in the valley was Salem Solomon, who I believe came up from southern New Hampshire in a station wagon loaded to the roof with mostly clothing. He used to stop at my Crouse grandparents for lunch. In the 1940s and 1950s, there were two bread trucks, a fish truck, a grain truck, the Fuller Brush man, and the Raleigh Man who sold a variety of spices, flavorings and several home remedies.

**Bruce Ela**: When I was little, (my great uncle) Sim Charles took me fishing. He'd say, "You have to be patient." He'd throw the line in and lie back in the grass and doze, until he felt a tug.



Peddler arrived at the AMC Camp around 1920

### Donations

**Elwyn Wheaton** – color prints of sixteen “Special Places” in Chatham and a collection of old kitchen tools.

**Clara L. Eastman** - the hygiene textbook used by her great-aunt, Clara H. Eastman, in 1902.

**Monetary Donations** - Ann Landers, Cynthia McAllister, Bob & Pam Katz, Lonni Lewis, June Kelley, Gail McSherry, Susan Millar, Brenda Hitchcock, Clem & Ellen Nelson, Gene Chandler, Carol Hudson.

**Susan Logan** - total proceeds from her “no-sale” yard sale.

**Donations in memory of Barbara Eastman** – Jo Radner, the Wheaton Family, the Wardwell Family, Margery Eastman, Steve & Jeanne Eastman, Al & Jacky Stearns.

Thank you so much for your generous support!

Chatham Historical Society  
1061 Main Road  
Chatham, NH 03813

### Dues and Donations

Chatham Historical Society is a non-profit 501(C)3 Charitable Organization

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Dues \$10/year, \$100/lifetime
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