

Baughman House 1

Dick Baughman and Liz Marshall met to talk about the history of Dick's house on 60 Etna Road in Etna.

Jan. 17, 2025

Liz

So here we are. Dick Baughman, Liz Marshall of Etna. We're here to talk about the history of Dick's house on Etna Road. Number 60. So, Dick, why don't you begin by just giving us an overview of what you know about your house?

Dick

We purchased this house back in 1965, and at that time, Etna was not a fancy place to live. In fact, we tried to buy a house in Lyme, which we couldn't afford, and we noticed our little, what's now our house on an ad in the Valley News. I called the realtor George Levitt. He said, it's too small for you. And I said, oh, we'll look at it anyway, and we did. And it was just a little old cape, like so many others along the road. We knew very little about the history. It came with three acres of land, good frontage, and it was what we could afford at \$16,000. So that was 1965, and we purchased it, and it's easy to remember the date that summer, because while I was signing the papers for the house, Amelia was delivering our third child, who was Eric. So if anybody remembers Eric, you can imagine him as a delivery. So it was a typical cape, but it had a front porch on that made it look Victorian, and a little gingerbread around the kitchen door, which also made it look kind of Victorian. And somewhere I'd seen a date on a threshold that said 1801, so I thought it was probably more or less accurate. And then I heard stories about how the house hadn't actually been built there, but was dragged down there in the mid 1800s. And so I became fascinated by why anybody would move a house three miles, drawn by oxen back then, and that's when I learned more about the background and the fact that it actually was built in 1769 as among one of the first 50 in the town of Hanover.

Liz

And the same year that Dartmouth was founded, right? 1769.

Dick

Yeah. And so it was built.

Liz

Tell us about where it was originally sited and why.

Dick

It was originally sited in Hanover Center. What we call Hanover Center now is not the geographic center of town. The geographic center was called the Town Lot. Our house was built right on the Town Lot, which was, I forget how many acres, maybe 110 or so, maybe more than that. There were very few houses actually on the Town Lot, but ours was one.

Liz

So the town lot is not where the green in Hanover Center is today. That's about a mile away, right?

Dick

So to get from current Hanover Center to where this house was built, one would start on the Wolfboro Road. Now, the interesting thing, of course, about the Wolfboro Road is that that was the road that the king and the colonial governor had commissioned in order for the governor to come over to the first Dartmouth commencement. However, the road wasn't finished, so they didn't make it over on that road until the second year or so. The first commencement, I think, was about 1772. pretty rough going.

Liz

Your house was first on what is now called the Cory Road, probably back then, too. That's all overgrown with trees, but do you think it was fields back in those days?

Dick

There were many individual farms back then, but yes, the Cory Road was late.

Liz

You told me once that the Corey Road was a way to get from the Wolfboro Road or Hanover Center to Enfield. It goes around Moose Mountain on what is now Ruddsboro Road.

Dick

So there were only two houses on Corey Road, of which ours was one and the other was Corey's, and that one burned down.

Liz

Walker Weed's house is down there, where the Corey Road meets Three Mile Road, right?

Dick

That was the south end, and then the north end was up by Wolfeboro Road. The Corey Road was an important road, and there is a picture of the big stone culvert bridge on the Corey Road. Why was such a big bridge built there? Well, it was because that was going to be the main route from what we call Hanover Center to get to Enfield.

Liz

I think there is a picture, and we have scanned it, or it's in with the documents that are at the Etna Library now, and it's a picture of a group of you who walked the Corey Road or Wolfboro Road and found that bridge.

Dick

Oh, it's been there, it's well documented, but one has to wonder why was this beautiful stone bridge, they call it a culvert, but it's a bridge, and why was it there? It's because originally the main road was going to go from Hanover Center down to Enfield that way. And then Hanover, the geographic center of town, just never really was developed as such, and so what we call Hanover Center now was important because of the churches and taverns and the location of high population.

Liz

So you took an interest in the history of your house, and you learned that it was originally built in 1769 on the Corey Road, and there was a family that lived in that house for quite a while, and then it was subsequently moved.

Dick

It was John Wright, the Wright family. Now, to make it complicated, there were two John Wrights in early Hanover, and the John Wright that is not part of my house is the one whose descendants were Wilbur and Orville Wright of aeronautic fame. So that was a John Wright, and his family eventually went to Ohio, and then the Kitty Hawk and all the events of modern airfare were quite independent of Hanover Center. But one doesn't realize much that that Wright family came from Hanover, and so that was a John Wright, not my John Wright.

The other John Wright was one of three generations who lived in our house, starting from its original building, which looked very much like Walker Weed's house, which is number 30 on Three Mile Road. And Walker was quite convinced that the people who framed his house in 1768 came back and did our house in 1769.

And so that went from being early settlers, where everybody had a farm, to where by the time the Wright family was there, the timber had all been harvested. You either raised sheep, or you moved your house and went somewhere. I haven't been able to find the information on the actual moving of our house three miles. It was all downhill, many teams of oxen, and Niles Lacoss, who lived next door, said he had all this information.

Liz

Niles lived next door to Walker Weed.

Dick

Niles died very soon after giving me this information, and I haven't been able to find it, since that's one of my challenges.

Liz

Do you think that the house was brought down on the brook or alongside the brook?

Dick

I think it came down on what was then open land, to the house where Burt Hughes had lived. What can we say about Burt Hughes' house? It was on Chandler Road.

Liz

Chandler Road, okay, Chandler Road being off of Rudsboro Road, heading up towards Three Mile Road. That's right. And so— Behind the house where Miles Lacoste lived.

Dick

Somewhere, probably in those fields, because that land had all been cleared, and that was in the sheep by then, and here you were a sheep farmer or a hardscrabble farmer, neither of which was very attractive, and so it was a change in the economic life of rural Hanover. at that point Etna village was just beginning to grow. With the mills. And of course the first mill here in Etna was in 1768, I believe, the grist mill, and of course there were the four major mills here in the village, although there were close to a dozen mills going from up on Moose Mountain down through the village and down Rudsboro Road, and then eventually came out into the Connecticut River. So it was fascinating that the house was moved. It showed how well built it was.

Liz

And you think that they laid down trees, rollers, trees, tree trunks, and ...

Dick

Yeah.

Liz

So was the Hart family was the next family to own your home?

Dick

The important family was the Hart family.

Liz

Do you think they were the ones who moved your house, or was it the Wrights?

Dick

I think it was the Wrights who had it moved, and that was around 1850, and then it was after— wars were important in those days, not only the revolution, but for instance, the family who first had it up there. They're not listed in the town as far as being in the revolution, but in fact, the middle Wright son went over to—

Liz

Lake Champlain, and Ticonderoga.

Dick

He went to Ticonderoga and when the battle was over he came back to Etna, and that was one of the sons of the original builder of our house. So the focus of development was originally up near where this house was on the town lot, but that never developed as it was, and so when what kept people employed was down here in the village, they moved the house down here too, which is fascinating.

Liz

It was a long trip to get from up there to do three miles in those days.

Dick

That was the Wright family from up until about 1850 or a little more and the last descendant that I had any information on moved down into Walker Weed's house at 30 Three Mile Road and lived there for about 20 years after the familial house had come down to where it sits now in Etna.

Liz

You told me you saw a date of 1801 somewhere on your house early on. Do you think that's when it was moved, or do you think it was moved well before or after that?

Dick

It was moved around 1850, and I think it may have been some repairs or something, but it's well-documented that the house was framed in 1769, which is fascinating. So that's kind of phase one of the history of our house, from its inception to about 1850. And then Jasper and Harriet Hart are the next couple. Jasper Hart came back from the Civil War, and they were at the Enfield Show (Shakers?) a person with their adopted son because they didn't believe in human-to-human touching. So it was coming back from the war, having his bride and his adopted son, William Hart, that they started the long involvement of the Hart family from about 1860 until World War II, around 1940.

At that time Etna was very important economically because of the mills, and especially the Etna Ladder Factory, and the fact that those were sold all over New England. It was a big, going concern. And the owners of our house had the mill right across the street on...

Liz

That was a grist mill, right? The one across the street?

Dick

The one across the street was lumber and steel.

Liz

The Metcalf's house, but a little bit up, right?

Dick

A little bit up from there.

And then when diesel engines came in, it meant there was less dependence on the water power, and there never really was a whole lot of water to run the mills year-round. But the people, the Hart family, we've been through three generations of the first family up in Hanover Center, and the Hart family went through two or three generations in Etna, including running the mill. And there were still logs down there in the very early 1900s, but soon it was all diesel-driven. And so no need to have mills just along the brook. And as far as our house was concerned, Jasper and Harriet Hart had seven children.

Liz

So were there a number of different people who lived there for maybe 20 years, between like 1945 and 1965?

Dick

Oh, there were two or three families, but nobody's was there very long.

Liz

or did much to the property.

Dick

In fact, we bought the house from Tom and Anne Byrne. Oh, that's right. They were there. Tom and Anne had children about the ages of our three children. They wanted to be in town for schools. Sure. That's why they sold the house. We wanted to live in Etna, so we bought the house. Yeah. And then Tom and Anne ended up doing two other—restoring two other homes in Hanover Center. And they did great work.

So that was the second phase of 60 Etna Road, which was from about 1850 or 60 until 1965.

Liz

You put an addition on in addition to the dormer that came later.

Dick

And then the little red barn.

Liz

What about that? Was that barn—so as you drive into your house, there is the red barn on the right-hand side. Was that part of the house when you first moved in?

Dick

It was. Anyway, the second phase of our house went essentially up onto World War II, and then we have lived there.

Liz

And you added the barn out back, I'm guessing. What about the stone walls?

Dick

Some of them had fallen down a lot, and so that kept me busy quite a bit. Then we made a dam for the pond.

So anyway, getting back to changes, that barn came from Kimball Union Academy.

Scott graduated from Kimball Union and had stayed in touch with people down there. He found out that this barn could be had if it would be removed in three weeks so Scott and Eric and I and Jay Barrett, we three or four, took down the barn at KUA and brought it up. I spent the winter taking nails out and so forth and the following spring we had a barn raising. We did a lot of straightening nails as well.

And I have photographs of many photographs of putting up that structure, which we can put with this program at some time, but that was a great experience.

Liz

You were just mentioning the pond that you built.

Dick

There was a swampy area out back that wasn't good for man or beast, and there had been a dugout pond up on the top of the field out back, and so I had wondered about scooping out that upper pond again. It had probably been dug right around the turn of the century with—well, I know who did it. He did it with a horse and a scoop, and so we wondered about re-digging the upper pond, and the conservation people came in and said, goodness, this big swamp you have back here, all you have to do is build a dam. You could have a two-acre pond. Well, that sounded too good to be true, and it was, but eventually—

Liz

Yeah, with the zip line going across.

Dick

We had church parties down there and department parties with my dermatology department at the Hitchcock. So we've really enjoyed the pond.

Liz

It's a beautiful property, and you've done a beautiful job on the grounds.

Dick

We calculated we had about three-quarters of a mile of stone walls in here, right?

And we really didn't talk about the third phase of the House, which I would take from World War II to present, because Etna underwent such a change. So I think it would be useful for us to have some pictures and discussion of the changes in Etna during that time.