

The History Corner

Fritz Robbins on Ambitious Sap – Pies for a Ski Club – and Maple Syrup!

The prolific artist-philosopher, Frederick “Fritz” Robbins, along with his extraordinary wife, Elsie – were town treasures through and through. As the New Hampton Historical Society described Fritz in the *Summer 1999 Newsletter*:

Fritz came to New Hampshire in 1940 and quickly made New Hampton his home. He devoted himself to his work and involved himself with the children of the town and the students at New Hampton School. He loved animals and was a vegetarian because of it; his dog was his constant companion. He preferred the simplicity in all phases of his life. His cape on Old Bristol Road had no central heating or plumbing, and he hauled his water from the river. He chopped his own wood for the fire and stove, on which he prepared his own meals. He admired Thoreau and was intensely involved with nature, but he was no recluse, participating fully in the social life of the town.

Prior to moving to New Hampton, Fritz & Elsie lived in Alexandria, where he published a sporadic newspaper, the *Found Horizon's Herald*, “once a year, maybe.” Below is a copy of the Feb. 24, 1941 edition that highlights, among many items, the following:

- ***Ambitious Sap:*** Jan 23 – Lawrence , our village woodchopper, says the sap ran so hard this thawy day, his crosscut saw was covered with froth in every maple trunk. It stopped as soon as the thermometer slipped back to twilight’s winter norm.
- ***Skii Club:*** Jan. 29 – Pearl and Imogene have been weekending at New Hampton, cooking for a skii club up from Quincy. Pearl baked seven pies to take over.
- ***Ads:*** – *Fine Maple Syrup’s made at Wadham’s Farm*
- ***Mar. 20*** – Pussey willows are out by F. R. spring.
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On a personal note, Fritz inspired so many of us as he biked in and out of the village, his faithful dog running alongside. For many years he had a “booth” at New Hampton Community School’s Spring Fair where he created

portraits in pencil or watercolor. Below is a sketch of yours truly, circa 1958. As it happens, Karen and I now live in the house that received the seven baked pies in the newsletter – as from 1940-55 our home served as headquarters for the Old Colony Ski Club of Quincy, MA.



Yours Truly in 5th Grade

For more information on the history of the town, please visit the New Hampton Historical Society website at <https://www.newhamptonhistory.org/>

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