

Barn Home

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By Dale Sutton

My family of six boys and three girls grew up on a large farm in upstate New York. Yes, we lived through the Depression, World War II and the Korean Conflict, always keeping 1,000 laying hens and 30 head of purebred Guernsey cattle. The selling of milk and eggs gave us the money to buy food and some extra funds to repair the house and barns.

After finishing high school, I headed to college in Kentucky and later became a teacher. I taught elementary school for 30 years while living in a small village called Coxsockie, in New York. Little did I know that while teaching all those years I was yearning for a return to farm life.

Many times during my teaching career I would visit relatives living on a farm more than 30 miles away in the Catskill Mountains. They were getting elderly and enjoyed seeing my wife and I on our Sunday visits.

As the years passed, I could see the barn was in need of much repair. My cousins could not afford the repairs and this was bothering them. Upon leaving one Sunday, I mentioned to them that if they ever wanted to sell the barn, we would be interested in buying it.

The years passed and the barn was quickly deteriorating. As we were leaving their farm at the end of one visit, we were told they were finally ready to sell the barn. After coming to an agreement on price, we bought the barn and six acres.

I didn't realize how much I had been missing the country life. To be outdoors alongside a small mountain stream and to watch grass greening in the spring may seem trivial, but to me it is a wonderful sight.

The barn I repaired is now my home. Hard to tell from the road it is anything except an old barn! I have a pond, a small stream and about five acres of grass to mow.

That is how I spend my golden years on the farm: Watching the grass grow and keeping an eye out for those pesky rocks that keep getting in the way of the mower blades each spring. As they say, "You can take the boy out of the farm, but you can't take the farm out of the boy."