

Winters In Providence

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As our winter turns colder, I think of the times when Providence would be snow bound for days, sometimes for weeks. Roads were closed. Very few people had cars and when they were used, often had troubles trying to get up the hills. One of the roads that was closed was Tabor Road. Clute Road was also closed as the plow trucks couldn't go there.

Fox Road and Drager Road were also closed as the cars couldn't make the hill. There were no houses on these roads in those days so they were closed off for the winter. Now these roads are open and there are many homes being built on them. Fox Road has changed from a sand road to a modern busy one with ten houses within fifteen years having been built there. There is also a school bus run.

During those earlier times, a snow plow truck was equipped with a small plow and a man doing the lifting. He had to stand in the wind, cold and rain. What a job it was. Sometimes they would stop at a nearby house to warm up with a cup of coffee as the plow truck had no heat and our winters seemed longer.

Now and then they carried snow shovels to help with the big drifts, sometimes teams of horses were put to use near the fields to help move snow. Some snow breaks or snow fences were put up every fall in yards and fields to help with the drifting. It helped in many places.

Some of the trucks seemed to have more traction by backing up the hills using sand to help along the way.

One Easter morning, I remember at least twenty cars, all parked on the Barkersville Road hill. The occupants, all dressed up, were trying to make their way up the hill to visit patients at the Homestead Sanatorium to bring them gifts of plants. They would come into the store trying to warm up until the trucks with sand arrived and helped them up the hills to their destinations on the icy roads.

Many such winters are imbedded in my memory, but the one closest to my heart, and will remain such always, is the one of walking to the one room school where the teacher would make us hot chocolate and help us warm up by the wood stove before school actually started. She would read a chapter from the book "Anne of Green Gables" to us until it was time for us to begin our lessons.

We are seeing many changes now. Most of our town roads are open year-round except for a few that are left to nature throughout the winter. School busses pick up our children at their doors, and because of better running cars, we can be out to Route 29 in only ten minutes. But the memories of all those earlier winters, with all that snow, will live with me forever.