

East Trout Brook School District #28



East Trout Brook School, 1913

East Trout Brook Road was in the Launt Pond area, it closed in 1922 when the land became part of the New York State Forest Preserve.

Josephine Lockwood Tiffany—school memories:

"The school building was located $\frac{1}{4}$ mile down the road from the Middle Tub Mill Pond. The building was unpainted, as you entered there was a hall where wraps were hung and wood piles were placed at each end of the hall. A bench with a water pail and wash basin was also in that hallway. There were two interior doorways, one for the boys and one for the girls. When you went through either doorway you could see the teacher's desk on a platform at the front of the room. The wide floorboards were so worn down that the knots stuck up higher than the rest of the floor. A long bench on the roadside of the school was where the children sat, closest to the teacher and there they recited their lessons. Handmade double desks were made from lumber from our local sawmill and were arranged from smallest to the larger desks in the back of the room. The school building was never updated but the handmade desks were replaced with factory made ones around 1913. In the center of the room was a low flat topped chunk woodstove. Library books were stored at the back of the room near the chimney. We were excited when The Book of Knowledge Encyclopedia was added to the library around 1911.

Our small school yard was far from being level and was surrounded on two sides with woods about thirty feet from the school building. A small meadow across the road from the school on the James Vail property was where we played games and rode downhill on homemade sleds and scooters. Children took turns getting our water from a spring in the pasture just beyond where we played in the meadow. We all used to share a water dipper until Vida Bates our teacher during WW I, followed the new State Health rules and made us each bring our own cup.

Miss Bates also started the Arbor Day celebration at the school. She got us to set out perennials and destroy the burdock and other weeds. Daylilies were planted and these were beside the road even after they widened the road for the Bear Spring Forest Preserve, you can still see some there today.

The first teachers roomed and boarded at the James Vail farm. Some earned extra pay by cutting firewood and stacking it in the school woodhouse.

One of our teachers, Lester Bradley, promoted the idea of the Federal Government to purchasing the valley for the Catskill Forest Preserve in 1922."