



Nordmont hotel

Sept. 21, 2016

TOURING SULLIVAN COUNTY'S MUSEUM . . . while dusting

During down times at our recent Sullivan County Fair, this writer took the opportunity to read one of the many publications that the Sullivan County Historical Society has to offer for sale. One such book is that of *Letters from Elizabethtown* by Howard Peterman. His collection has snippets of history that focus mainly in and around the Nordmont area and also

include his insights into what fascinated him throughout his lifetime. A little background about the man: Mr. Peterman was born June 4, 1907 and died at 101 years of age on July 6, 2008. He'd been married to his first wife, Naomi Travelpiece for 41 years and his second wife, Josephine Taylor for 34 years. He'd attended the Sonestown School and graduated from Muncy Normal School in the class of 1926. He was an auto mechanic by trade, retiring in 1973. To read about his life and times is to take a trip back in time and his flair for the simple telling can set your imagination to whirl. Here is just one such story.

There was a photo submitted to the Sully in 2001 of what was termed as the Nordmont Hotel. Mr. Peterman writes a reflection with this explanation: "The large building in the picture was not a hotel, but a boarding house. Many men had to leave home in order to find work, so all lumber camps and big sawmills had boarding houses for these drifters. And there were always a few houses for families of company men that operated the mills.

"At the time of the picture, the Lyons Lumber Company had a big sawmill just above Picture Rocks and had been using Muncy Creek to float the logs from Sullivan County down to the mill. This required teams of horses. There were many families that took boarders for extra income, and there were livery stables where the horses were kept in every town.

"The big boarding house in Nordmont was at the foot of Schoolhouse Hill and the road to the railroad station. A cast iron watering trough was at the end of the building, and no doubt supplied water through a wooden pipe. It was a high spot, and Vandine later built a home on the site.

"When I first saw the boarding house, Highram Sellers operated it, and later I remember it was gone. It must have burned down and Sellers moved to the Joseph Newman farm up the Laporte road. This was no doubt about 1910-1912.

"At this time, my Uncle Philip built the Nordmont Hotel, and his brother-in-law operated it for many years. Uncle George Fiester raised his family there, and it still looks much the same as when built."

What was the Nordmont Hotel still stands today but is a privately own hunting lodge. It is 'memory stones' such as this one from Mr. Peterman passing onto us that can allow us to stand in the living shadows of history, so to speak.