

Baldwinville Station, Baldwinville Center and

by Diane Kane



Baldwinville Station serves home cooking in the center of quaint Baldwinville, a village of Templeton.

photo © by Diane Kane

Baldwinville Station

Route 202 • Baldwinville Center

Baldwinville Station restaurant has been a breakfast and lunch gathering place of families and friends for more than a decade.

When former owners Mike and Jenn DeCarolis decided in June 2018 to follow other pursuits and put the restaurant up for sale, Diana and Shawn Graham saw their opportunity. From 2007 to 2013, Diana and Shawn—both alumni of Narragansett Regional School in Templeton—had owned Rockin’ Robin’s restaurant across from the Athol Area YMCA.

Diana and Shawn continue Baldwinville Station traditions by giving customers home cooking at affordable prices. Sometimes simply called The Station, the two-story building nestles on the hillside and radiates a homey atmosphere. Two large open rooms often filled with laughter and smiles provide plenty of seating for up to sixty-five patrons and more.

Railroad tracks wind behind the restaurant where the original Baldwinville Railway Station stood when railroads provided long distance transportation by passenger rail no longer running. Freight trains still pass by.

The restaurant serves hearty, classic breakfasts with a menu that speaks to the building’s origins. The

Reed’s, New Braintree, offer home cooking

Conductor consists of two eggs, toast, meat, and home fries for \$5.75. The Engineer offers two eggs, sausage links served with two thick French toast slices for \$6.99, and the Hungry Hobo provides two eggs, meat, home fries, and toast with choice of two buttermilk pancakes or two thick French toast slices for \$8.99.

I visited on a Tuesday morning to find the place bustling with activity. Settling onto a comfortable wooden stool at the horseshoe shaped counter, I looked over the extensive menu and ordered the Train Wreck: three eggs whipped with onions, mushrooms, tomatoes, green peppers, broccoli, bacon, ham, sausage, and choice of cheese— just one of the Station’s tasty omelets. At \$9.59, it came with choice of toast and home fries, grilled or deep fried. I had wheat toast and home fries grilled to perfection. Everything came out piping hot, and the portions would satisfy the heartiest of appetites.

For lunch, The Station offers a nice variety of choices including sandwiches, wraps, salads, burgers, and fries. Homemade soups and chili always take their place on the menu. Daily specials include meatloaf on Monday for \$6.99, lazy chicken cordon bleu typically served on

Tuesday for \$7.99, and roast turkey dinner, sometimes on Thursday, for \$8.99.

Ample parking in the back has easy access to the main entrance. Take Exit 19 off Route 2 and catch Route 202 north to Baldwinville Station at 9 Circle St, Baldwinville, and experience for yourself the popular destination for breakfast and lunch. *Their motto: Friends and Family Gather Here . . .*

Open 5:30 am to 2 pm seven days a week. Breakfast served throughout open hours. Lunch served from 11 am to 2 pm weekdays only.

Reed’s

753 Barre Road, Route 67

New Braintree

Reed’s in New Braintree has been a family affair since 1977 when Ed and Sue Reed bought the country store and restaurant in the rural South Quabbin.

Walking in the door of Reed’s instantly transported me to a time gone by and dearly missed. The spacious wood and stone dining room filled with comfortable

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region's restaurants support local farmers and artisans

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tables and chairs has a relaxed atmosphere. I was drawn to the counter seating overlooking a clean and well-organized cooking area. I settled in and watched in awe as Ed, owner and head chef, filled each order with quiet precision and TLC. Sue, his wife and co-owner, greeted me with a warm welcome.

I looked over the many enticing menu offerings. I considered the special: turkey, cheddar, apple, and honey Dijon panini. When I asked Sue what she recommended, she said, "Why, Sue's Favorite of course!"—grilled turkey, onions, pepper, cheese, lettuce, and tomato in a pita or wrap. How could I resist? With a pickle and a choice of Sue's homemade coleslaw or red-skinned potato salad, it's a winner at \$8.99.

While I ate, Sue told the story of Reed's Country Store as Ed operated the grill, occasionally nodding and grinning at Sue's rendition.

"When we opened, we were a true country store. We carried groceries, ice cream, and cigarettes and served coffee and homemade baked goods," said Sue. "We also had gas pumps out front and a full package store license."

In the mid nineties, removal of the gas pumps prompted the Reeds to do away with all the convenience items and liquor and to focus on the restaurant.

In addition to family, Sue gives credit to Jess Rice, a part-time employee, who has been with the Reeds for nearly twenty-five years. "She's played a huge part in our success."

Over the years, the Reeds have expanded their menu to include breakfast and lunch as well as Friday night dinners that can include beef short ribs, baked haddock, and chicken Parmesan. Appetizers run about \$8, and entrées cost between \$10-\$19. Leave room for Sue's homemade desserts that include chocolate layer cake, lemon cheesecake, or strawberry pie for \$5.

"We enjoy the challenge of preparing and serving varied menu requests," said Sue. With little need for advertising, the catering business keeps them busy. Ed is always eager to try new things, which has included preparing Indian dishes as well as a Nigerian goat entrée requested by certain wedding parties.

Sue and Ed use fresh meats and produce from local family farms including Stillman's, Pollard's, Howe's, and Still Life Farms. Ragged Hill Dairy supplies eggs and milk, and Rose 32 bread is a staple. "We had been incorporating fresh, local products long before farm-to-table caught on," Sue said. "We are happy to see people embrace the concept and support local farmers and artisans."

Open 8 am to noon Sunday, 7 am to 2 pm Tuesday through Saturday 5 to 9 pm Friday.

Diane Kane, a writer and former chef, published *Flash in the Can*, a collection of short stories. She lives in Phillipston.



Nature's Nuances by Clare Green Forest Bathing

*In Nature's infinite book of secrecy,
a little can I read.*



—William Shakespeare

Infinite nature. Infinite secrets. Infinite love. Infinite forgiveness. Truly. The mere act of walking in nature provides us with soul, heart, body, and spiritual sustenance. If encouraged, it restores us to wholeness.

Consider a fall foliage hike in any one of the beautiful forested areas of the North Quabbin and South Quabbin regions.

One of my favorite hikes begins in New Salem near the town common to an open wooded path to Millington's stone walls submerging beneath the Quabbin edge. With visual reminder as clear testament to its storied past, the path speaks volumes about its own history. Peaceful reflections may accompany you as you bathe in the New Salem forest.

Or consider a self-guided fall hike at Phillipston's Red Apple Farm complete with smells of apple pie baking, cider donuts, and fresh apples to pick. Follow trails with clear apple signage marked by North Quabbin Trails Association. Check in at the farm stand with any questions.

Enjoy your walk in the woods. Be sure to bring all of your senses, including your heart, which may help weave your experiences into inspiration and renewal.

Is it any wonder that a practice known as forest bathing or Shinrin Yoku developed in Japan with a multitude of associated health benefits?

"In Japanese," said Dr. Qing Li, "we have a word for those feelings too deep for words: yugen. Yugen

gives us a profound sense of the beauty and mystery of the universe. . . . The art of forest bathing is the art of connecting with nature through our senses.

"The term was invented in 1982 by Tomohide Akiyama, then director general of the Agency of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan. He said the people of Japan needed healing through nature. The idea was also part of a campaign to protect forests. If people were encouraged to visit forests for their health, they would be more likely to want to protect them and look after them."

We are fortunate in the Quabbin region where many folks inherently understand the values of the woods and work to preserve and enjoy them on many levels.

As my son, Ned Green, often hiked along Mount Grace in Warwick, he wrote in his journal, "Today was Poetry." I can only imagine his ease with accepting the gifts of the day that came his way. Immersed in the forest, he breathed its vitality into his being.

Peace. Perhaps yugen?

May a moment of yugen be yours as you saunter, forest bathe, and walk along during autumnal beauty in our vibrant region.

Clare Green, retired educator from Warwick, welcomes folks to visit her woodland labyrinth or stop by for a cup of tea.

photo Old Cellar Hole, Quabbin Reservation
© by Rick Flematti

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