

OUR HOMETOWN

YOUR HOMETOWN'S STORY.

Told by those who live in, love and know their town.

Produced by New Hampshire PBS



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OUR HOMETOWN Tells Your Community's Story



OUR HOMETOWN is a television series produced by New Hampshire PBS that explores the people, places, culture and history of New Hampshire's towns and cities. Over the course of the series, each of New Hampshire's 221 towns and 13 cities will be covered. The program is hosted by New Hampshire author and storyteller Rebecca Rule.

Each episode is produced in partnership with a community, and engages residents and businesses in telling their stories. These are video-recorded and five - six stories are edited into a 30-minute television program.

All of the stories shared by the storytellers are posted online. Prior to the broadcast premiere of an episode, a free reception and screening is offered to the community. The program is available on-air and online.

How The Program Is Produced

Connectors Meeting. New Hampshire PBS producers meet with key community leaders to plan the project. Major themes and topics about the community are outlined, and an initial list of storytellers is drafted. A plan and timeline for producing the program – from promoting the storytellers gathering, to getting the word out in the community, to identifying venues and volunteers – is reviewed.

Storytellers Gathering. Prior to production days, New Hampshire PBS producers and host Rebecca Rule talk with community members about the program, how to participate, and how to identify and tell an engaging story.

Production Day. Participants arrive at a scheduled time, ready to tell their story for the program. Individually, participants are interviewed on-camera and video-recorded. Events, people, places, history are all good themes to start with – and if you're not sure which story to tell, the OUR HOMETOWN producers can guide you. The visuals you provide will tie the story together and add the personality that brings the story to life (photos, documents, memorabilia, ephemera, video, home movies). We can scan them while you're on site telling your story; also, you can do it yourself and bring them to us on a CD or DVD or memory stick.

IMPORTANT: All material shared with OUR HOMETOWN producers must have release forms signed by the original owner (including you).

Program. The program's broadcast premiere follows the community screening of the OUR HOMETOWN episode. Each story is edited and posted online, along with the full program, is available at nhptv.org/hometown.



Tips For Telling Great Stories

from Becky Rule



MOST IMPORTANT TIP: Relax and have fun! Everybody loves a good story and you are doing your community a service by telling this one. Without you, it might have been forgotten. And we can't have that!

What Makes a Story Compelling to Hear

- The story has a beginning, middle and end.
- It hooks listeners with something really interesting. Jump right in. If it interests you, it'll interest them.
- Consider why you chose the story. The "why" will help you decide what to tell and what's not relevant. A lot of storytelling is deciding what NOT to include. Sometimes the breed of cow matters (Holstein or Guernsey); sometimes a cow is just a cow.
- Let the story tell itself as much as possible. Stories shape themselves naturally. What happened, when, to whom... Include juicy details – usually in chronological order – that lead us logically and with some suspense ("...I wonder what will happen next...") to...
- An ending that reveals, surprises, inspires, provokes thought, and satisfies. If you can picture yourself closing the book after a sentence – that's the end.

A Bit of Advice

- Be yourself. If you're a quiet, thoughtful person, tell your story in your own style. If you're outgoing, use gestures and exclamations as you might normally do, too.
- Don't memorize. Picture it. Remember the story as if it happened to you. Recall the images as if they were experiences or as if you were watching them unfold on a screen.
- Describe what you see.
- Shorter is better.
- Repetition works.
- If you're enjoying and appreciating the story, your listeners will too.
- You may bring notes, but we will ask you to not read directly from them. We will piece your answers together later, taking out many of the "ahs" and "ums," plus any mistakes or false-starts you may make.
- We want you to sound as good as possible, so relax. If you need another take to tell your story, that's just fine.



STORY IDEAS BRAINSTORMING PAGE

Story topics to consider: *family • friends • work • places • events • organizations • music • theatre culture • recreation • athletics • academics • politics • tragedy • comedy • history*

Questions to spark story ideas:

What's one of your most meaningful places in your hometown? Why does it have meaning for you?

What were some of your favorite places in town to visit as a child?

Can you remember a time when the community came together to support you or a loved one?

Is there a person in town that taught you an important life lesson?

What are some fond memories of growing up or raising a family in your town?

What are some moments you realized you had a community of friends and/or neighbors?

What's your favorite town legend?



