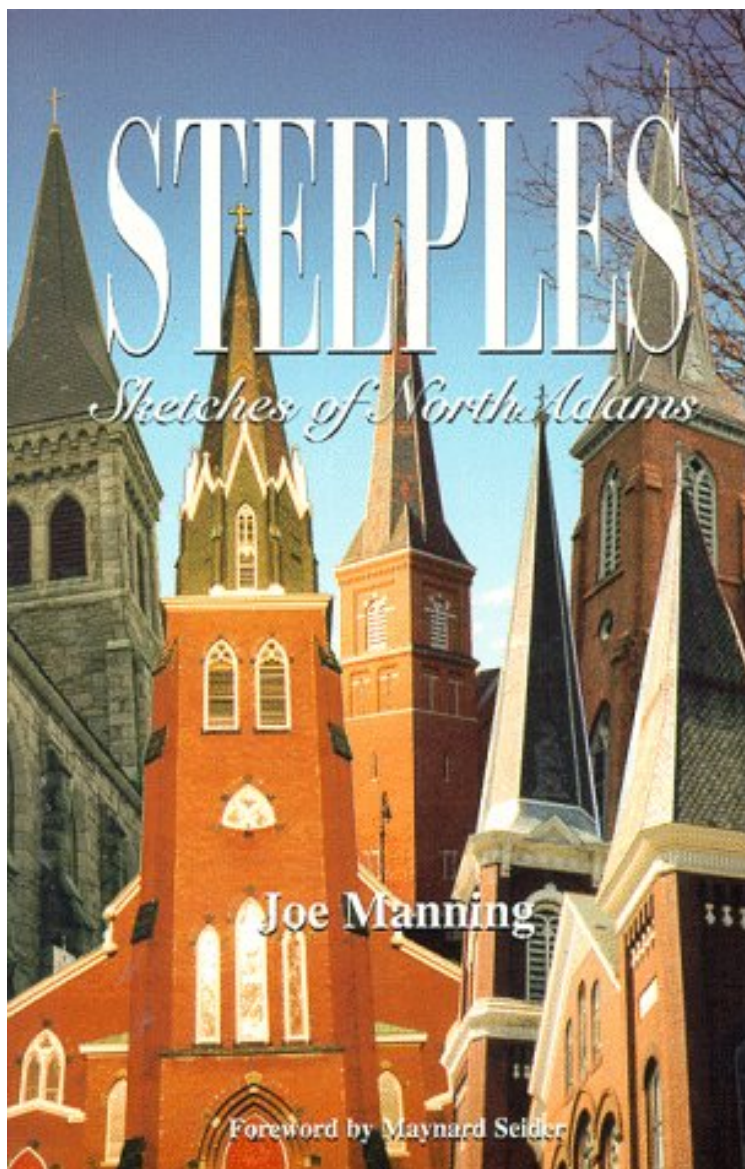


(Free download) Steeples: Sketches of North Adams

Steeples: Sketches of North Adams

Joe Manning

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Joe Manning : Steeples: Sketches of North Adams before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Steeples: Sketches of North Adams:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I am from North Adams, Edward Vallieres Sr.By French RevolutionI grew up in North Adams so I just love North Adams and Joe and his stories.I have written a book "Autobiography of Edward J. Vallieres Sr. My first seventeen years in North Adams Mass. I have a several copies of the book published by "Blurb". I am not sure what to do with it next, I only planned to provide copies for family.I live

in St. Louis Mo. and have talked to many of my relatives and friends who have never been to North Adams and a few have spent some days there and loved; the town, Mass MoCA, the people, the restaurants, and the beautiful mountains. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very helpful in research By frances soucie Much information was provided. It was sent very promptly and in good condition. The person I gave it to liked it very much and used it to compose a project. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Memories By Bill Hodgson Having been born and raised in North Adams, I have been impacted by Manning's ability to paint "word pictures" of memories of my past. I felt as if I were standing with him during his interviews with North Adams residents. I eagerly await his sequel.

STEEPLES offers an unusual blend of poetry, oral histories, and photographs, which combine to form a portrait of an old Massachusetts factory town. North Adams is an ideal example of how the face of America has been changed by the urban renewal projects of the 1960's and 1970's, the decline of the industrial revolution, and the flight to the suburbs and the shopping malls. The author was fortunate to have the opportunity capture a snapshot of North Adams as it struggles toward recovery. In 1999, the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA) will open in twenty-seven brick factory buildings left vacant by Sprague Electric, formerly the city's largest employer. The story of the city and its immigrant people is told through the oral histories, which will remain a valuable document as memories fade with time. The photographs show the city as it was, as it is now, and as it may never be again. The poetry evokes the stillness and nostalgia of a quiet Main Street and the beauty of the geographical setting in the Berkshire Mountains. Now in its second printing, STEEPLES is required reading for several courses at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.

"A truly wonderful book. Every town should have a book that is written with as much love and insight." -- Sally Spillane, WKZE Radio, Sharon, Connecticut. "A unique work. An outstanding job in recording, translating, and sharing the voices of our city." -- Lisa Jarisch, Director, North Adams Public Library. "I am fascinated by Steeples. It gives me a real sense of North Adams and of a time that is all but forgotten. Steeples is a treasure!" -- David Plowden, photographer and author. "Joe has given us a lot of good material: visual, poetic, and narrative. We thank him for coming." -- Maynard Seider, Professor of Sociology, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. "Manning obviously has the listening skills and the sensitive antennae on which a writer depends." -- Ruth Bass, Editor of The Paper. From the Publisher Now in its second printing, Steeples is required reading for several courses at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. The author has been a guest lecturer at the college as well as at Williams College. Mr. Manning is an advisor for several oral history projects in the North Adams public schools, and he has recently obtained a \$1000.00 grant to expand the project. Manning also helped plan and run the Neighborhood Expo, an all-day interactive celebration of North Adams history. He is now at work on his second book about North Adams. From the Author On August 14, 1996, I made the first of more than sixty visits to North Adams, Massachusetts, from my home in Connecticut, to gather material for my book, "Steeple: Sketches of North Adams." I read about the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA), which is being built in a complex of empty factory buildings in North Adams. The idea intrigued me, so I made my first visit to the city. MASS MoCA will be the largest museum of its kind in the world when it is completed in 1999. It is located in twenty-seven buildings vacated in 1985 by Sprague Electric, formerly the largest employer in the city. Twenty-five years ago, three-quarters of the historic downtown commercial and residential buildings were torn down as a result of an ill-advised urban renewal project. MASS MoCA promises to be an important part of bringing the city back to life. I am strongly influenced by Edward Hopper's vision of America. His paintings of city streets, mill buildings, and Victorian homes are full of melancholy and nostalgia. After my visit, I was haunted by the church steeples, the beautiful brick and stone buildings that remain on Main Street, and the surrounding mountains. North Adams looks like one long Hopper mural spread across the Hoosac Valley. It is natural that I should want to write about it, so I drove back several weeks later just to walk around and record my observations. I was planning to write only poetry, but I decided to record some oral histories when I met several delightful citizens in their nineties. I deliberately approached the book with no biases or agenda, letting the theme of the book come to me. After conducting interviews with more than forty persons, composing many poems, and taking hundreds of photographs, I found that all of these elements took on common themes. Creating the book from this raw material was exciting, because I discovered that everything fit together in a dramatic narrative. During this long, rambling journey in search of a book, I have become the curious out-of-towner who asks questions, the man with the camera, the tape recorder, and the note pad. I have been the familiar visitor who stares up at the steeples, charges up hilly neighborhood streets, and lingers at the coffee shop window, writing down everything he sees. My many visits to North Adams have made me a familiar figure around town. In April of 1997, there was an exhibition of my photographs at the North Adams Public Library. I have made a lot of new friends. I often drive up before dawn and hang out with some of the old-timers at "The Bean," a popular Main Street coffee shop. I've learned so much about the city, that I can usually hold my own in conversations. People are so friendly in this town. I've had a wonderful time.