

Steve Botti “Mystery Photo” in *Journal Inquirer*

In September 2007, Richard Tambling (1951-2010), features editor at Manchester’s *Journal Inquirer*, asked the public for help in identifying a picture that had no information on it, but was in a group of other unidentified photos that had run in the newspaper in the 1970s. Richard’s follow-up story appeared October 5, 2007.

Here is a transcription of Richard’s column:

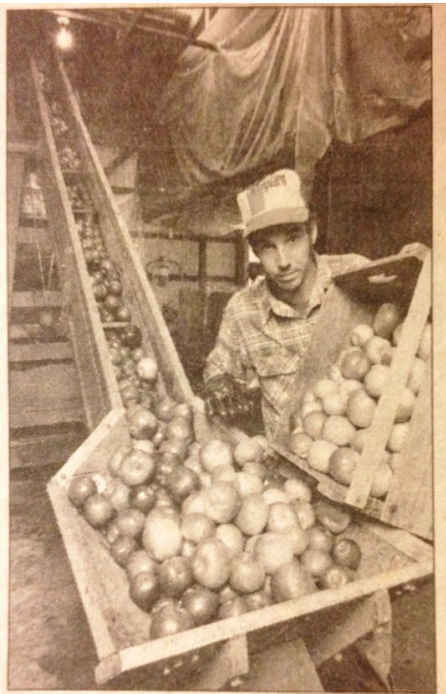
J.I. Readers easily pick out apple farmer

The Picture Puzzle photograph on September 28 showing a man with a harvest of apples in containers and on a conveyer belt attracted a windfall of identifications from helpful readers.

No fewer than 14 people called or emailed to tell us that it was Steve Botti at Botti’s Fruit Farm on Bush Hill Road in Manchester.



Steve Botti at old cider barn, Bush Hill Road, Manchester, circa 1980.



The photos, mostly from the 1970s, are part of a series of old *Journal Inquirer* photos that were poorly catalogued. The newspaper is printing them and asking readers to help identify them.

Barbara DeLorge of Somers (Steve’s her brother-in-law), Howard Jacobs of Manchester, John Shane of Ellington (Steve is married to John’s wife’s cousin) and John Pantaluk of Manchester, along with Joanne Chlupsa, Larry Bielen, and Carol Bruzzi all helped us out this week.

Tom and Sharon Muska of Applebrook Farm in the Broad Brook section of East Windsor told us that the man “pressing cider is Steve Botti of Bush Hill Road in Manchester. His family made excellent cider, and he taught us how to press cider many years ago.”

Steve’s cousin Bruce Botti guessed that the photo was taken in the late 1970s or early 1980s and thinks it was “taken in the old barn that was off the road by the farmhouse.”

Bruce wrote, “The farm, started by our grandfather, is still family-owned by Steve and his wife, Linda.”

Gail Rosenberg recalled the farm, which no longer sells fruit or cider, quite poignantly. She wrote, “There was just a small sign on the road next to a dirt road and you had to drive up the driveway to the farm. We always used to get our apples there this time of year and he always gave us ‘One for the road.’ He also had delicious cider and there were always children there on class trips to see how cider was made. This was in the late 1970s.

Eventually, a large shed was built on Bush Hill Road [webmaster’s note: new barn, built in 1987, after a fire destroyed the barn that was down the dirt road near the farmhouse.] and apples, cider, jams, etc. were sold there. They eventually went out of business. What a loss.”

Two children of Steve and Linda Botti also called in – Christine Botti and Steve Botti, Jr. – with Steve estimating that the photo was taken in the early 1980s.

He says the orchard stopped selling fruit and cider to the public in the late 1990s.

He added that along with people who recall buying fruit at the farm, anyone who snacked on a red delicious apple that was handed out to young visitors to Santa Claus at Wickham Park years ago probably was eating a Botti apple.