BELMONT — When the first fall chill is in the air, it’s become a family tradition for many Lakes Region families to head for Smith Orchard in Belmont for apples, pumpkins, cornstalks and “all things autumn.”

Rob and Wende Richter have owned and operated Smith Orchard ever since they purchased the orchard from original owner Charlie Smith 30 years ago.

With 200 apple trees dating back more than 80 years, the Richters continue to offer their delicious antique apples but have also introduced more than 2,000 newer trees over the years. Many of those are dwarf and semi-dwarf trees, which provide quicker yields and make their fruits easier to pick.

Today, they offer varieties such as the ever-popular McIntosh apples, Cortland, Honey Crisp, and Macoun, a popular eating apple. They also have Ginger Gold, Jona Gold (a cross between Jonathan and Golden Delicious apples) as well as both Red and Yellow Delicacies, which are later picked varieties.

Laura of Moultonboro was up bright and early last Saturday morning to pick apples with her family. She said she has been coming to Smith Orchard since she was a child and now brings her daughter, grandchildren and her dad Robert Paul.

“I like this orchard. I’ve always come here,” Paul said. “The trees are easy to get to and it’s a really nice area.”

Young Troy from Laconia hopped out of the car with his mom Heidi and was eager to start picking apples for their household. While Troy wanted to make his own apple cider, mom bought the beautiful setting for the event. Chef Kevin Holligan provided Waldorf Salad, Roasted Pig, Apple-Sweet Potato and Potato Hash, and a ham, bacon, or sausage omlette that of course also included apples in the recipe.

“This was our second year of holding the brunch and we sold out once again with more than 100 people buying tickets for it. It’s just a lot of fun and a nice way to enjoy a fall day here at the orchard,” said Wende Richter.

Smith Orchard is open every day from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. For more information on the orchard or to schedule a special event, please visit their Web site, www.smithorchard.com.