

HEATH HERALD

Heath's First Newspaper

\$1.50

Volume 36, Number 1

April/May 2014

When, in some obscure country town, the farmers come together to a special town-meeting, to express their opinion on some subject which is vexing the land, that, I think, is the true Congress, and the most respectable one that is ever assembled in the United States.

—Henry David Thoreau

At a Townmeeting held in Heath on the Eleventh day of March in the year 1799 - on the fourth article voted to grant two hundred dollars to pay the Recd. m^o Strong with year Salary - \$ 200

to Repair Highway, five hundred and twenty five Dollars 525

For the several Schools two hundred Dollars 200

Contingent Charges two hundred and twenty dollars 220

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for the

aid of the Town will accept the Road

Laid out by the Selectmen of Charlton and Heath

fall which

Hereof fail not and make Return of the amount with your doing, therein

the time of said Meeting. Dated in Heath the twenty

Second day of March 1799

of the Independence of the United States of North America

John Brown

Heath March 28. 1795

Certificate of money raised in the town of Heath for the year 1834

the within warrant by posting up attested copies thereof as within

Heath Nov 27 1863

Joseph B. Lusk constable of Heath

White

Stephen Thompson

Jonathan

David

James White

Joshua Thayer

Highway Surveyors

in Town meeting April 7th 1798

following proposal was made by Capt Joseph White

that he will finish the meeting house to the Towns

acceptance, so that he will do the work as fast as the

will pay him; and that he will receive the following

articles for pay viz neat Cattle, Swine, Sheep, Beef

Pork, Grain, flour, Hides, flanked Beavers, Deer, Sats

and Boards suitable for the meeting House; but

is to receive

Warrant for Meeting Dec. 26 1864

Heath Herald

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Whether you write an article or share your photos or tell your story, you are all contributors. You are the paper.

Milestones

If you wish us to include any important family or friend announcements please send the information via email to

TheHeathHerald@gmail.com

with a cc to lyrajohnson@yahoo.com or speak with Lyra in person at the library in Sawyer Hall.

Logo

The *Heath Herald* nameplate proudly features a reproduction of the original *Heath Herald* logo designed by Harriet Read for the *Heath Herald's* first edition in April 1979.



Contributor Information

Articles must be submitted in a file in .txt, .doc or .odt format by **May 10, 2014** to be included in the June-July issue. Please send submissions as attachments even if they are just a few lines of text. It saves us a step as we rush to deadline.

All submissions and images must be sent to our email address, TheHeathHerald@gmail.com. If sending a document with embedded images, please include separate image files as well to facilitate editing.

Image Guidelines

Digital image resolution of 300 ppi or greater is preferred (images taken at 3.5 megapixel or greater will usually be sufficient). Please include information about the image, including the names of people shown if such information is not included in an accompanying article.

Send us email with questions, or to receive more detailed photo submission guidelines.

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Town Meeting Musings

When I was first asked to write about why I go to Town Meeting I started to have serious thoughts, but then I had to be honest... I go to Town Meeting because it is fun! Who doesn't love a chance to fold their paper ballot into a hot dog or hamburger? (Thank you, Bob Gruen.) I go because it means running into people I only see twice a year – Town Meeting and the Fair (Hello to the Rabbits!)! I go because it's a chance to find out who will be the Field Drivers for the coming year. And most importantly, it's a chance to be part of what makes living in Heath so special – a caring, supportive and thought-provoking community.

Yes, Town Meeting is an important process. It is a space where every individual registered to vote can speak and be heard. It is a chance to effect change in town. Do I always understand what is happening? No! Do I sometimes disagree with the way a vote goes? Yes! However, I know my participation of being there to listen to people's views makes the town of Heath possible.

I am in awe of the people in our community that have spent decades on committees helping our town thrive. It only takes a couple of hours on a Saturday morning to show them the respect and attention they deserve for the year of work they've completed. I look forward to seeing you at Town Meeting. I'll be the one eating deviled eggs and donuts by the Friends of the Heath School Library table! Ω

—Emily Cross



Bloom!
 A springtime Gala to celebrate pollination
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 ☉ Hands on workshops ☉
 ☉ Piti Theater's *To Bee Or Not To Bee* ☉
 Visit www.bensonplace.org/events
 after May 1 for times and other details.
 This is the last event of Hilltown Bee Week!

A Special Senior

Believe it or not, Grace Crowningshield is 90! You'd never realize this because she is so youthful and fun-loving. She was born in Marlboro, VT on Feb. 8, 1924. As a young woman she worked as a waitress at the Skyline restaurant on Hogback Mountain in Vermont, and probably because of this she never missed waiting on tables at all of our town event suppers.

In 1956 she married Ken Crowningshield of Heath. Together they ran Ken-Gra farm on Route 8A, where they milked cows and raised rabbits. She was very active and an officer of the Heath Fair for many years. She still lives in her home on Route 8A with her cat, Tiger, and enjoys reading, cooking and sewing. She says she's going to plant a garden this year, so good luck to that, Gracie! Ω

—Alli Thane-Stetson

Friends of the Heath School Library invite you to...

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
BREAKFAST BUFFET AND BAKE SALE

May 10, 2014
9:00AM—End of the Meeting

All proceeds go towards increasing our students' access to great literature through events and new book purchases.

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If you are willing to donate a food item for the sale please contact Emily Cross at 337-4816.

Thank you to all who have donated in the past!




Photo by Art Schwenger

Missing Paul Burrington

Paul Burrington was a man who worked with his hands. He had an appreciation for the old rugged farmhouses that grace the Heath landscape. As a carpenter, Paul knew old houses, their quirks, their problems, but also their charm. He was skilled in modernizing homes without compromising the beauty of them, and worked on many of the old houses in town. Paul transformed my own house from a much beloved but run-down summer place to a cozy year-round home. I always imagined that his skill in working on old houses came from growing up in Heath at a time that required practicality and ingenuity, but that also saw the beauty in bringing something old back to life. Ω



—*Deb Porter*

Mister Man

3 a.m. The phone rings. None of us likes those early morning calls. It's usually not good. This one was about my father, he'd had some sort of attack and he wasn't breathing.

So it began . . . and I knew. In that place down deepest, I knew. He was gone.

That morning and the days after were a blur of seeing good friends and family, and of remarkable local support. It's why we all live here in the first place, or why we don't leave. It's our Oz, our Brigadoon, it's home.

My father's life in town was a source of many stories. He was born and grew up in Heath. All of South Heath was his world, which centered on the family farm and the surrounding lands. He was the smallest and youngest, and had a habit of being quiet from the start.

As a boy, he was once told that all he really needed was "a good handshake." I guess he took it to heart and started to work on his strength. He was raising a piglet at the time and he would lift it each day. He added to this by lifting an anvil by the horn. I guess you can see where this is going; my dad's handshake was memorable.

In thinking about father's last handshake, it was like all his others, solid and unwavering; a true testament of the man. Every meeting we had ended in a handshake.

This was a man who quietly did more than his part without any fanfare, like so many of the men in town that I grew up admiring. My father's character truly was the essence of Heath as I experienced it. He was part of these hills.

His love of the land started at a young age. As a lad, he was in the Grange and Future Farmers of America. Then as a teen, he raised award-winning Ayrshire cows.

Later, when he married and started a family, it seemed that his beloved farming was fading into a former era, so he turned his hands to carpentry. In those days a builder had to be plumber and electrician as well as mason or anything else that was needed in fixing a house, barn or homestead. Eventually,

he was a licensed building contractor with a five-man crew.

For many years, Dad was a police officer in Heath, under Chief Robert Law. He also served as a selectman, and was the President of the Agricultural Society when it was voted to move the Fair to its current grounds. My father, Doug Stetson and Howard Thompson all put mortgages on their homes to buy the land by the Center Cemetery.

Of all the things Heath was to Dad, the closest to his heart was its woodlands. He loved to be out hunting, fishing, getting in wood or just going for a walk after dinner. I always suspected that he used hunting as an excuse for a good day-long walk.

He was almost as happy to go to the woods with his saw, his old John Deere 40 Crawler and a wood trailer. One time the old two-lunged engine of the crawler called in a partridge with its thumping sound. The partridge had taken it as a territorial display and for a few years after we enjoyed the antics of that bird. Soon Dad could call the bird like calling a dog, and the bird would come trucking down through the woods. It was amazing and more than a bit humorous to watch. Dad had a way of being laid back and knowing that on some level things like that were subtle gifts. He'd call it "the good stuff."



Well Mister Man, my father, Paul Burrington was the Good Stuff too . . . a quiet and gentle man, with the strength of mountains. He'll be missed, but if you want to know him, head for the woods. Thank you again for your support. Ω

—*Fred Burrington*

Photos courtesy of Fred Burrington

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My Cousin Paul Burrington - Better Known as MaGee

When my Aunt Hannah had her twins, it was my first exposure to two babies at once. I was six at the time and it was very exciting! As we lived near each other, our families were very close. I was the same age as Paul's sister Jane. We referred to our cousins as Hop, Cathy and Jane, but Paul and Erma were always just the "twins." After a time, they did gain their own identities. Paul became known as MaGee.

I remember thinking how adorable they were in those small seats in the front of South School when they started first grade along with classmates Walt Gleason and Dot Sumner. A special memory of our school days together, (something MaGee never let me forget) was when playing baseball at recess I pitched the ball, and to my dismay, hit MaGee in the eye—quite a shiner!

As the years went by and my husband and I moved back to the Heath farm, we once more formed a close relationship with Paul and Nan's family. Our children grew up together; we were back and forth a lot and had many enjoyable times together. As my husband Bob was chief of police for Heath, he deputized MaGee and they answered many a wide range of calls together. They also spent time together plowing snow at night as relief drivers.

MaGee was very active in the Heath Union Church. He and Nan helped with many suppers put on by our Young Adult group. The lower level of the Church is one of the many projects he worked on over the years. MaGee was also a member of our church choir when we would put on cantatas for Easter and Christmas. Our practices would occasionally be interrupted by a breakout of laughter started in the back row from him and his fellow singers.

Being a multi-faceted craftsman, Paul always was the person I would call concerning plumbing, electrical and structural problems here at our house. Always with successful repairs, and always sharing a cup of coffee or two, and if I had them ready, Swedish Butterhorns!

I will forever miss MaGee's welcoming smile, big hugs and his greeting: "Good to see you." As my son Fred so perfectly stated, "He was one of the good guys." Ω

—Ruth E. Johnson

Heath Town Meeting 1885

At the adjourned town meeting the town raised \$1200 for highways and bridges, \$600 for schools, \$300 for the poor, \$350 for town debt, \$350 for contingencies—total \$2800. The town voted to celebrate its centennial, about Sep. 1st, and chose a committee of five, of which Charles B. Cutler is the Corresponding Secretary, to make arrangements for it. Notice of the particular day on which it will be held will be given in due season. All former residents, and all interested, are to be invited to attend and take part in the celebration. Correspondence from former residents of the town is solicited. The committee earnestly request anyone having interesting facts or incidents relative to the history of the town to communicate the same to the secretary at Heath.

Wm. M. Sandford lost a valuable workhorse by getting his leg broke.

The auction sale of the property of the late Hart Cressy stands adjourned till Tuesday, the 17th, at 1 p.m.

We are very glad to see our former neighbor, Mr. J. P. Yeaw and wife of Salem, Wisconsin. They are spending a few days visiting their many friends at this place.

The silo question is agitating the minds of our young farmers in this place. Will Upton, C. J. Hager and Fred E. Gleason are each making due preparations to have one in readiness for their crops the coming fall. Success to the boys.

Wm. E. Gleason has purchased the Yeaw farm of S.H. Gleason, and taken possession of the same. Price, \$1750.

L.W. Fairbanks has purchased of H. Coulliard that celebrated breeding mare that he recently brought from Kentucky.

Miss Jane Hunt is slowly recovering from injuries received by her fall some time since. Ω

—Gleaned by Nancy Thane
from newspaper clippings provided by Lois Buchiane

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Heath Agricultural Society

The snow begins its slow retreat and Heath begins to cautiously rejoice in the longer, kinder day. The winter most certainly earned its title this year.

Most winters see the Heath Agricultural Society (HAS) slowly considering the upcoming Fair. Do we want to make any significant changes this year? What will the Parade Theme be? What musicians will we be able to line up? Who will design the T-Shirt this year? The last few months have included such steps as per usual. This winter is different though. It has been marked by a new experience for the HAS.

Through the commitment and effort of Jessica Van Steensburg of WeCanFarm on Royer Road, the Heath Agricultural Society organized and held a new event this year, The Cellars and Cave Tour of Heath. Approximately 60 participants traveled to Heath from as far as Springfield and Keene to observe and discuss strategies and practices of traditional root cellar design, and cider- and cheese-making. Doug Mason and Bob Bourke explained the craft of making cider, Sue Draxler and Andrew Kurowski each showed us their well-researched root cellars, and Sheila Litchfield demonstrated the art of making cheeses, hard and soft. Following the tour all participants were invited back to a potluck feast of chili, soups, breads, cheeses and brownies at the Community Hall. Conversation and reflection filled the space. The energy was nothing less than amazing – as was the experience of The Cellars and Cave Tour. Thank you Jessica and thank you to everyone who helped to make this experience so wonderful.



The Cellars and Cave Tour was one of many ideas that the HAS has considered. The choice to organize a new event is exploratory: it is an expression of our interest in offering additional, and more regular, educational opportunities to the community and to the public. Having now seen the excitement, support and interest generated by this event we will continue to develop new ideas that cultivate community, support/celebrate agricultural practices and provide useful information and connectivity to the public. It is in our, and everyone's, interest to do so. And with that acknowledgment I would ask anyone and everyone to consider participating in the Heath Agricultural Society. It will be exceedingly difficult to act upon our many ideas without additional support and involvement from the community. So please consider participating to help the Heath Agricultural Society grow and realize a fuller expression of its mission to support agriculture.

Our next event is the June Draw that will be held at the end of June. The Clarks do a lot of work to organize this event and we are grateful for their long-standing commitment. It appears as though we will also host the upcoming 4H Fair. Following these events is our largest event: The Annual Heath Fair. We are already preparing the Premium Book . . . start thinking about what amazing craft item, baked good, photograph, Lego sculpture or scarecrow you might want to create for this event. All of this information will be available on our website. Please check in regularly for information on events and dates. And should you wish to explore direct participation in the Agricultural Society, please contact me at justin@thelivelyheathan.com. Ω

—Justin Lively, President




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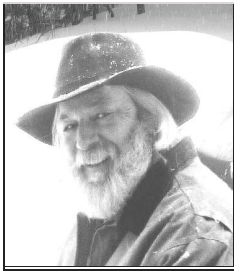
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Wild Ramblings

—Bill Lattrell

The Pioneering Spirit

It is March 7, about 12 degrees Fahrenheit, and the sun is high in the sky and downright giddy. Dazzling shafts of sunlight pierce through the naked tree canopy above my head in this snow-covered hardwood forest. The deep snow is frozen and is a perfect environment for snowshoeing. I expect the temperatures to rise later today; it is predicted that they will exceed the freezing mark. Those who have years of experience on snowshoes will testify to the fact that varying conditions in the snow cover can be downright difficult. Having one snowshoe perched on top of a frozen crust in the shade of a patch of conifers and the other sinking in the unfrozen snow in the open sun can be troublesome. Yes, to be expected this time of year but troublesome nonetheless. Therefore I am limiting my time in this terrain covered with about two feet of snow to the morning hours. I will be out of the woods by the time conditions change.

These woods are my chapel. I come to them when I need inspiration. And these days that is quite often. After a few minutes in this forest, no matter the time of year, I easily enter a state of relaxation. Anything that has been bothering me disappears from my mind. I feel happy. And after an hour or so I fall into a deeply spiritual place. It is as if I've entered a new dimension where I can see everything, especially the natural world, differently. And the best part is that it is right out my back door.

On this day I wander along the edge of a dense grove of hemlocks. The edge of this dense overstory leads to the top of the mountain. Snowshoes are very efficient when it comes to climbing a steep, frozen, snow-covered hillside if they have crampons. The snowshoes that keep me on top of the snow have non-detachable crampons and so the journey up this very steep incline is strictly about aerobic conditioning and balance. Balance is always an issue on snowshoes. Because they are giant extensions of your feet to which your brain has not been hard-wired, they can prove to be a bit tricky in underbrush, varying snow conditions and when climbing over deadwood.

At the top of the mountain there is a mixed hardwood forest. It contains red oak, sugar maple, white ash, black cherry, yellow birch, black birch and white birch. White birch is one of my favorite trees. Many refer to this tree as paper birch. This name comes from its paper-like bark, which is one of the primary ways it can be distinguished from gray birch. The white birch is not particularly long-lived as are some of the other "hardwoods," but they have both an aesthetic and ecological quality that makes them stand out in the forest. It's hard not to notice a stately white birch tree. About halfway up the mountain in this hardwood forest I stop. In hopes of getting a view of the mountains to the north in Vermont I turn around 180 degrees. Turning around on

snowshoes for the average-sized person is not particularly difficult. However, due to my large 250-pound frame my snowshoes have to be about 36 inches long to keep me on top of the snow. Maneuvering what feels like two canoes attached to my feet in a half circle so that I can face in the opposite direction is much easier said than done. All in all, these difficulties pale in comparison to life in the woods without snowshoes, where with every step I would be struggling with the more than knee-depth crusty snow. The sheer effort required to navigate such conditions without snowshoes would render the situation much too hard to be worthwhile.

As I look north I notice the view of the distant mountains is still pretty obliterated by taller and fully foliated hemlock trees but I can see an interesting sinuous trail, essentially a long line of depressions in the crust that marks not only my trail but the short history of this little trek. The light is just right to see my wanderings over a fairly large distance and appears like artwork in the snow. It is strikingly symmetric.

Turning around while maneuvering my snowshoes back in an uphill direction puts me back on track to my destination. Another 20 minutes of exertion will bring me to the top. The effort required will be well worth the reward.



As I move up the steep slope I wonder if the sap is rising today. It is that time of year when people are setting their taps in maple trees. Soon we will be able to see steam rising from the tops of sugarhouses throughout the region. And speaking of syrup; many people don't know that a truly delicious syrup can be made from birches. Alaska and Minnesota both have a birch syrup industry although it is much smaller than the maple syrup industry found in the Northeast. Birch syrup has its own distinct flavor and is quite expensive because of its rarity and the longer hours it takes to produce the product. It takes beaucoup buckets of birch sap to make a gallon of syrup at a ratio of about 100 to 1. In fact, the total worldwide production of commercially available birch syrup last year was less than 2000 gallons, hence its great expense. Syrup can also be made from walnut and butternut sap, which is even rarer. I've yet to try either black walnut or butternut syrup.

After some strong effort I arrive at my destination. At the top of this tall hill is a large, almost flat, area. I can tell from

Continued on next page

Wild Ramblings continued from previous page

the tree species composition and the size of the trees that it is a young forest. When I use the term “young” as it applies to forests it can’t be related to “young” as it applies to a human life span. A young forest could be anywhere from 30 years to 150 years. I like to think that if I lived to be 150 years young I’d be a pretty happy fellow, although I must admit the odds are heavily stacked against this idea. Typically a young forest of 100 years old may still hold some of the pioneer trees. Pioneer trees are the first tree species to grow in an old field. Poplar and white birch are two such species. The poplars will get weaned out by larger, stronger trees first but the white birch can hang on for quite a while. White birch can grow fairly tall, perhaps 70 feet under ideal circumstances, and so can keep up to the competition for quite a while. It is usually the overall strength of white birch branches that are its downfall. They are not terribly sturdy and over the course of 100 years or so some very epic weather events are likely to be encountered. Winds of greater than 70 mph, ice storms that leave more than an inch of ice, early snowfall before the leaves have left the branches, can all prove fatal for the white birch. We had one such killer event in the great ice storm of 2008 in these northern hills of Massachusetts.

The notion of a tree being a “pioneer” is inspirational. The first tree to recreate a forest. The first tree to put roots into deep soils just waiting to correspond with a forest. The first tree in an area long covered with viewsheds of open fields is simply epic. It is as glorious in the world of forests as humans migrating to the New World. With each field that succeeds to a forest we have a new beginning. A fresh start for trees, plants that inhabit the understory of the forest, and for wildlife. These transformations border on the miraculous. They are simply wonderful.

The white birch found in our area reside in the southernmost parts of their range. This species, typically found from southern New England to the boreal edge of the tundra of Canada, is extremely hardy and aggressively takes over and stabilizes large areas of the boreal forest after forest fires kill huge acreage of the conifer forest. The white bark is full of oils and so weather-resistant that when a small white birch dies and falls to the ground the wood inside the bark will often rot, leaving a hollow core of paper birch bark surrounding a very large air space. This weather resistance puts the white birch at a decided advantage over many other deciduous species found in the Far North.

At this summit I am immediately attracted to some large white birches that seem to call to me. The bright white bark contrasts sharply with the raised areas of mottled black. Patterns resembling a multitude of Rorschach inkblots speckle the white background along the entire trunk. Thin curled edges of paper-thin bark flutter in the breeze making a quiet chattering noise. I stand at the base of the trunk with my chest against the tree and look up. The tree is tall, very straight, and somewhat unassuming. The contrast of the white trunk against the blue sky is breathtaking.

About four-fifths of the way up the tree I can see the remnants of quite a few broken branches. These are without a doubt victims of the heavy ice storm of more than five years ago. New growth can be seen growing out of the broken branch stubs. Some of these new branches are getting large now and capable of carrying the significant weight of many green leaves in the summer. This older white birch has struggled valiantly to live. It has grown

many new branches so that they could hold enough leaves for adequate photosynthesis to occur in order to convert sunlight to sugars necessary for the tree’s survival. Growing new branches takes large amounts of reserves and the balance between energy expended to have the capability of producing enough energy to thrive is a delicate one. This tree appears to be over the proverbial hump, meaning that it looks like it will be here for some time to come. I marvel at its will to survive. Trees have evolved to take on life with a complicated system of chemical reactions, some of which we now know are modes of communication from one tree to another. I find this to be humbling. That trees can communicate without thought is simply amazing. It seems to leave little room for misinterpretation. Compare that to human communication where misinterpretation seems to be one of the primary and often fatal flaws.



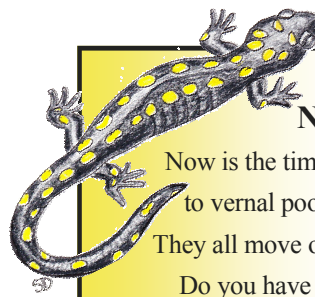
As I step back from the tree I get a glimpse of a changing forest. The age of this forest is about 130 years. The forest is becoming dominated by red oaks, a few white pines, red maple and yellow birch. There are still a few remnant poplars. The heavy overstory and lack of sunlight on the ground’s surface can no longer support white birch seedlings but the mature ones may last for another 40 years. Their eventual fate lies in the hands of weather and climate patterns. Eventually they will yield to a storm of some kind. The carbon sequestered will slowly be released back into the soil along with other nutrients and the rest of the maturing forest will be healthier from these nutrients newly added to the soil.

I feel the snow softening under my snowshoes. The sun is getting high in the southern sky. It is time to return home. As I tread down hill in the deep white cover wafts of cool air emanating from the melting snow cool me as they blow over my sweaty brow.

I’m a little older now. I no longer move with the speed of a much younger person. I know that I will keep wandering the woods, both here and afar, until my last dying breath. Like these great white birches my appearance on this landscape is temporary. Perhaps we have both lived up to whatever meager purpose this planet has asked us to.

I can only hope that this is true. Ω

—Bill Lattrell



Nature Note

Now is the time Spotted Salamanders migrate to vernal pools to mate and lay eggs.

They all move on the first wet night of spring.

Do you have a vernal pool near you?

—Sue Draxler

Democracy in New England

In an essay on “liberal democracy,” a political philosopher at Oxford University noted that there are only two examples in history of a polity being governed by pure democracy: Periclean Athens and the towns of New England. It is an astonishing point, but I believe a case can be made.

We here in New England are doing something amazing. We govern ourselves democratically. Here the people are sovereign. It isn’t tidy, or pretty. We do not always, or even regularly, make wise decisions. Indeed, as Churchill once remarked, democracy is the worst form of government imaginable – except for all the alternatives.



Photo by Art Schwenger

We do, within a framework of federal and state law, govern ourselves. We impose rules and regulations on ourselves, and we have the capacity to enforce them. We create public functions (road-building, schools, administration and law enforcement), and we authorize taxes to pay for them. And if we don’t pay those taxes, our property can be seized.

There are governments everywhere that call themselves democracies. But only here in New England is decision-making put in the hands of the whole citizenry acting directly for themselves.

Not everyone attends our Town Meetings, far from it most of the time. But every adult resident is entitled to attend, and sometimes, when issues get hot, attendance can be considerable.

How did this extraordinary situation get started and established, and why has it persisted here in the hills of western New England? It began in the 17th century in and around Boston, and it came up here to the hills at the middle of the 18th century (around 1750, give or take a decade or two). It began naturally, as an outgrowth of the form of Protestantism (mainly Congregational, with some Baptists) practiced by the British people who moved up here. These folks had to build roads and churches and school buildings, and they had to pay for these accoutrements of civilization. And in due course, they had to decide how to respond to the “tyranny” of Britain, resisting taxes levied in a distant Parliament to support the Crown’s imperial policies.

The cities of New England have abandoned direct democracy, and many towns, even some in our area, have resorted to representative town-meeting government. But we

know that is fundamentally different from what we practice here in the towns of western Massachusetts.

As our late neighbor, Reinhold Niebuhr, used to say, man’s capacity for goodness makes democracy possible; man’s inclination to evil makes democracy necessary. Woe betide anyone who tries to take it away from us. Ω

—Donald Robinson

*Retired Professor of Government and American Studies,
Smith College*

Coming Home

Returning to Heath in January 2004 after several decades “abroad,” I soon came to understand that Heath had become a very different place. By “abroad” I mean in other states: New York, New Jersey, New Hampshire and Ohio. Of course in some instances I was either a student with no special stake in the affairs of the town or city, or was a resident in a wealthy suburb where our status was problematic. In all cases it seemed there was little opportunity to make our voices heard. No Town Meetings.

Now, back in Heath as February approached, I anticipated Town Meeting time only to discover that I had to wait until May! Long gone were the days of all-day Town Meetings held at the Town Hall – a “vacation” day for students in the four grade schools. At least the upper-graders were expected to attend to observe democracy in action, with a time to see and hear passionate expressions of concern for schools and roads. And, of course, the dinner that followed at noon!

Nevertheless, I have felt it important to attend each Town Meeting; now only a half-day experience – no dinner, just the delicious spread of breakfast goodies: coffee cake, quiche and deviled eggs, etc. The meetings themselves are more “orderly,” but there is still the opportunity for citizens to voice their concerns (pro and con). This became very apparent in the recent past when the issue of a new town library was on the agenda, necessitating a second meeting so large it was held in the school gym. It seems the entire citizenry of Heath attended to voice their concerns for spending the enormous sum of money required. Regardless of the outcome it was heartwarming to be a part of expressing our rights and obligations as citizens.

I have been observing the news from one Franklin County town where it has taken three attempts to call a Special Town Meeting with enough members for a quorum. It is a sad commentary on the seeming lack of commitment on the part of its citizens. May that never be the case here in Heath! See you at Town Meeting! Ω

—Lois Buchiane

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Made to order by the **Heath Fire Department** crew
 Heath Community Hall, Saturday: April 26th, 2014
 7:30-10:30 a.m.

Menu:

pancakes ♦ local maple syrup ♦ homemade toppings
 Heath Blueberries ♦ Colrain Apples ♦ sausage patties
 ♦ Coffee Roasters coffee or juice

Cost: \$ 8.00 adults
 \$ 5.00 children (12 and under)
 \$27.00 family of 5 or more

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Green Thoughts

—Pat Leuchtman

Farming and Foodcraft in Heath

I never knew about the Livestock Conservancy until I met Jessica Van Steensburg. Jessica and her partner, Jeff Aho, live on Royer Road where they have established their three-acre WeCanFarm operation. They breed heritage pigs, and raise heritage turkeys and heritage chickens. Most of their livestock will be sold – one way or another. Jessica’s motto: “I raise sold animals.”

Some of Jessica’s purebred Hereford breed pigs will be sold to others who want to breed heritage pigs. Because Hereford pigs are rare, she will be prioritizing sales to breeders, but some will be sold as feeder pigs to people who want to raise their own pigs for meat. “Not every piglet has good enough form to be used for breeding,” Jessica said. Their heritage cross-bred piglets will be sold to people who want to raise their own meat, clear woods or enhance a breeding operation.

Henry and I have raised pigs in the past, although I can’t tell you what breed they were. We raised pigs because we wanted control over how they were fed and how they lived



I didn’t know about heritage breeds, and asked Jessica why they chose these. “Old breeds are not bred for confinement, they thrive in traditional environments. They are hardy; they can forage and survive winter. They grow winter coats. Herefords are good for a small farm because they do not grow as large as some breeds. Males can weigh up to 800 pounds, and females up to 500 pounds. Also, Hereford sows are known to be good mothers,” she said.

By the time this issue of the *Heath Herald* is in readers’ hands, Jessica will have her first purebred Hereford litter as well as the first litter from their Large-Black/Berkshire sow. Jessica explained that they will be keeping their Berkshire boar, Frederick (they name all their animals), to both diversify their breed offerings and to cover (breed) the younger stock. “We keep Grunter, our Hereford boar, in our breeding program

to preserve the Hereford breed, which are particularly difficult to find in New England.”

Because she raises heritage breeds, Jessica joined the Livestock Conservancy whose mission is to secure and sustain old breeds of poultry, cattle and swine. They also work to develop a demand for these animals as meat, which will require sufficient breeding stock. Their website, www.livestockconservancy.org, contains a lot of information about the breeds they have worked with in every category from horses to rabbits.



This year Jessica is raising Red Ranger chickens. These are a dual-purpose breed, which means they are good for eggs and meat. “This year we are testing their growth to see if they are a good fit for our farm.” Jessica is a devoted record-keeper, keeping track of growth, feed costs and overhead. “I track everything except my time.” Last year they raised Black breed turkeys, but this year they will raise Blacks and Narragansetts. Both are flavorful and have good temperaments. “Last year I brought five turkeys down to the Fall Festival at Just Roots Community Farm in Greenfield. They got a lot of attention. People are not used to seeing turkeys close up.” Jessica is now Director of Management and Administration at Just Roots.

When Jessica is not working at Just Roots or with her own animals, she participates as a member of the Heath Agricultural Society. The main purpose of the Society has been to organize and support the annual Heath Fair, but now there is interest pursuing other activities, as well. The Society is always looking for new members, and the thought was that perhaps if there were other simple-to-organize projects, they might be able to attract new people.

The first of these ‘what else’ projects was the Cellars and Cave Tour on March 8. “The idea is to offer the opportunity to see what average people are doing to raise their own food. Others might then be inspired to take the plunge,” Jessica said.

“The emphasis is getting people to try something new.” Fifty-two people signed up for the tour, many from out of town, which meant that five groups were formed to rotate through the different operations. I took one of the groups around which included a young couple from Springfield. Our talk between sites was about what kind of a town Heath is, and what experience each of us had with ‘farm’ chores, or what experience we were looking forward to.

Continued on next page

Green Thoughts continued from previous page

Hosts for the tour were Bob Bourke and Kara Leistyna of Bourkeshire Farm and Doug/Nina Mason, each with a cider cellar, Sue and Andy Draxler of ColMax Farm and Meredith Wecker and Andrew Kurowski of Benson Place Farm, each with a root cellar, and Sheila Litchfield of Dell Farm, with her cheese cave. While we got to admire Sheila's cheese cave for aged cheeses, she did make the point that she also makes fresh cheeses like chevre, mozzarella and ricotta. One of the encouraging things about seeing two different cider cellars and two different root cellars is the suggestion that any project can be done in a number of ways. Success does not require strict adherence to any list of instructions. At the same time, I must say that the hosts had done a lot of research, and were meticulous in their operations. Cleanliness is key in cheese- and cider-making because it is controlled yeasts and bacterium that give both cheese and cider their distinctive flavors.

It was clear that the Tour was a huge success. Afterwards everyone gathered at the Community Hall for a fabulous lunch prepared by Agricultural Society members. There was a great deal of excited and enthusiastic conversation as tour participants had a chance to talk to and laugh with each other, and think up ideas for more projects like a Heath garden tour (vegetable and ornamental), companion planting, chickens or who knows what else.

Justin Lively, president of the Heath Agricultural Society was on hand during the day doing what had to be done, welcoming the tour participants and thanking all those who organized and made the day possible. "Stay tuned," Jessica said. "We want more ideas from other people." Ω

—Pat Leuchtman

Photos Courtesy of Jessica Van Steensburg

Heath Town Meeting 1887

The town meeting is to be held on the 28th to decide whether the town will accept of certain new roads as laid out by the selectmen. One, the principal and longest, runs from the new bridge near Henry Fairbanks' mill to a point in the present highway west of George Carpenter's, and is over a mile in length. Another one is west of the present "Trask Hill" road, and is to avoid that hill. The other is north of G.G. Gould's house, and is calculated to avoid the great drift that appears in that locality every winter. The cost of the whole will probably be from \$1500-\$2000. This question comes up: Are the tax-payers of this town ready to vote for the Fairbanks-Carpenter Road and increase our tax to the amount of \$1 on every \$100 of property?



Memorial day will be duly observed in town. The exercises will begin by assembling at the centre at 8:00 A.M.; then the company will go to the North burying ground, there decorating the graves, where there will be singing and speaking. The Centre cemetery will next be visited and the graves decorated; then there will be a gathering either at the Grove or at the church where people will have a basket lunch, and followed by singing by the children and choirs. A delegation will be appointed to visit the South cemetery to decorate the graves there. The veterans are especially requested to participate in the exercises of the day and all citizens are invited to be present.

It is hoped that the owners of horse-sheds on West Street will either repair them or remove the ruins.

George R. Tucker is about going to Westfield to work.

Mr. Lamb of Springfield is making his old home and friends a flying visit.

Miss Rosa Gould is a little more comfortable.


Miss Cora Vincent has returned from the West after a year's absence.

Isaac Yaw has gone to South Adams, with family and hired man, to build a house, where he owns some building lots. Ω

—Gleaned by Nancy Thane
from newspaper clippings provided by Lois Buchiane



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Photographic Artist: Paul Turnbull

Paul Turnbull was chosen as the featured Heath artist for this issue of the *Heath Herald*. Sadly, Paul died on Tuesday, March 11. An exhibit of Paul’s work is in the Community Hall. So the next time you are in the Hall, take time to look around, and you will see that Paul is there in attendance.

Paul had recently added a new honor to his list of artistic achievements when he was presented with the 2013 *Award for Contributions to Photography in the Pioneer Valley* at the Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists’ Annual Holiday Banquet held Jan. 16 in Northampton, MA.

The Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists noted that it bestowed this award to honor Paul for “his extensive contributions as an educator, curator and mentor in the Pioneer Valley for decades. President Emeritus of Hallmark Institute of Photography in Turners Falls, Paul served as Director of Education. At the Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography he was the Inaugural Executive Director, curating and mounting 16 exhibitions of world-renowned photographers. He has held teaching positions and guest lectured throughout the Northeast. Many photography organizations have benefited greatly from his efforts, including the Vermont Center for Photography and the Valley Photo Center. He is noted for his expressive and often meditative approach to the art of photography, resulting in 26 one-person exhibits, plus inclusion in collections and publications world-wide.” Ω

—Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists

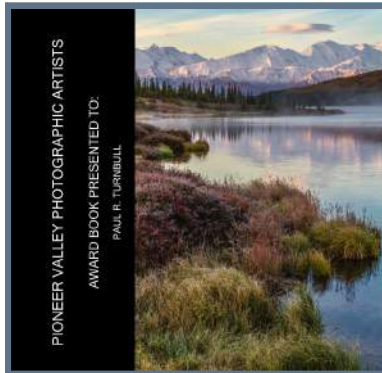


Paul Turnbull Honored

Many years ago a few of us attended (and completed) the intensive program at Hallmark Institute of Photography in Turners Falls. During our time there, this mysterious figure would appear, often at critiques at the end of each phase. He would always make constructive and respectful comments. This was Paul Turnbull. Just a couple years before I learned how to spill chemicals in the print lab or electrocute portrait clients in the studios, Paul directed the educational program at Hallmark. While there he helped develop the innovative curriculum of teaching technical, aesthetic and professional photographic practices, which continues to this day at the Institute. As a result, he was the ongoing President Emeritus at Hallmark, keeping his finger in the mix.

I could talk about Paul’s stellar meditative-style photography, his one-person shows, magazine credits and more. But that would miss the key contribution Paul made – which is HOW he did what he did. First of all, he was tireless – as an educational innovator as well as a helper of all things photographic. Secondly, and I think most importantly, Paul was a kind and always respectful person, who gave his time generously to mentor countless photographers in Western Massachusetts and far beyond. Ω

—Tom Wyatt
Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists



School News

Heath Student Athletes

My name is Oliver Diamond and I am going to be writing a new column for the *Heath Herald* discussing some of the happenings and interesting events concerning teens in Heath. For this article I interviewed four Heath Elementary alumni, Lily Boyd, Caity Wilkins, Tucker Jenkins and Emma Loubsky-Lonergan about their athletic interests and recent seasons in sports.

Lily Boyd is passionate about horseback-riding. A senior at Mohawk High School, Lily has been riding since the age of five with Biscuit Hill Farm in Rowe. She is a member of an IEA (Interscholastic Equestrian Association) Team, which travels to different events and competes with horses given to each rider. This winter, she has been riding off and on and recently placed very well in the Regional Finals. Lily will now be advancing to the Zone Finals, where, if she continues to do well, she could advance to the National Finals! Next year, Lily is attending Cazenovia College (NY), and will be getting a degree in Equine Management.

Caity Wilkins is a junior at Mohawk, where she recently finished a very successful downhill ski season in which her team won first place in the South Division. Caity succeeded individually as well, placing fourth in one of her races. Caity is currently playing on two indoor soccer teams at IAS (Indoor Action Sports) in Greenfield. The teams she plays on comprise students from Mohawk High School, Franklin County Technical School, and Northfield Mount Hermon. When she was very young, Caity's brother sparked her interest in soccer. She began playing at Heath Elementary School, and it is still her favorite sport today. In the future, Caity is looking forward to pursuing soccer in college.

Tucker Jenkins is a senior at Mohawk. Like Caity, Tucker plays indoor soccer at IAS in the winter. His team made it to the semi finals and placed third in their league. Tucker, along with many other talented athletes, began playing soccer at Heath Elementary. When the winter is over, Tucker is out on the baseball diamond! This spring he will be playing for the Mohawk Varsity Team. Tucker plays a range of positions, including shortstop, second base and pitcher. He began playing baseball at Heath Elementary and returned to be a coach at the school in 2012. Currently, Tucker coaches two age groups of young players in Ashfield on Mondays and Fridays. He hopes to play baseball in college, earn a minor in Sports Coaching and continue teaching younger players.

Emma Loubsky-Lonergan, a sophomore at The Academy at Charlemont, played point guard on her basketball team and had a very successful season facing schools such as Stoneleigh-Burnham and Putney. After starting at goalie for The Academy's varsity soccer team this fall, Emma is presently playing on The Thunder, another IAS team. Her teammates come from Northampton, Greenfield, Colrain,

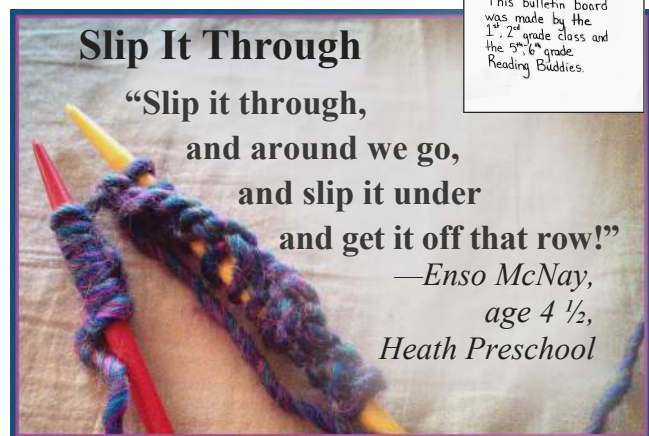
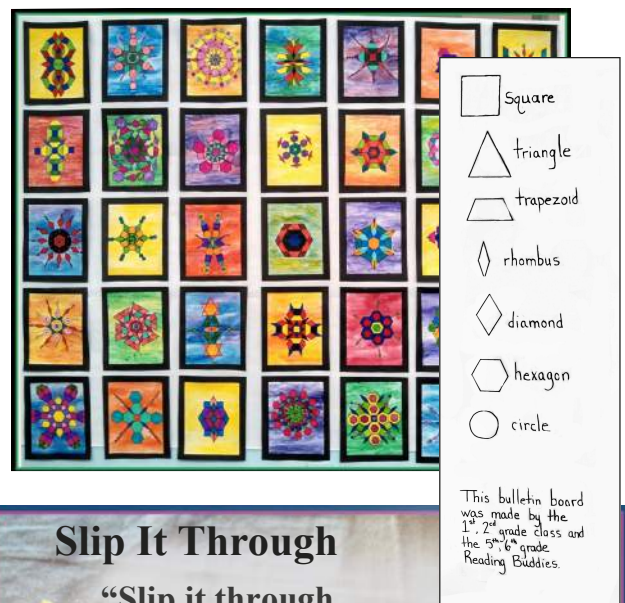
Rowe and Heath. Their record is an outstanding 22 wins and no losses. Emma credits many of her achievements as a goalie to the focus and toughness she learned playing baseball at the Heath School. Emma would like to play soccer at a high level in college and is interested in studying sports medicine as well.

These four fantastic athletes all began much of their playing in Heath and have excelled in each of their sports as individuals. Unfortunately, I was not able to mention all of the numerous fantastic athletes from Heath in this article. We are very lucky to have such a talented group of teens in our town! Ω

—Oliver Diamond

Heath School Artwork

Exploring shapes with a Shape Quilt and Shapes Poster



Enso McNay created this little poem on the spot as his mother taught him how to do his second row of knitting. Ω

Images courtesy of Kerrie McNay

Questions about Heath Elementary School?

Contact: **Eric Glazier, Principal**

eglazier@mohawkschools.org 413-337-5307

How Robot Became Metal Man

I wanted to make a box, but we didn't have enough wood – so we made a robot. It is made out of bolts, springs, screws and other hardware. I call it Metal Man.

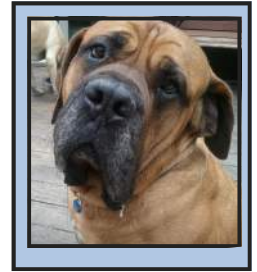
—*Oleander Brenizer, age 6, Grade 1, Heath Prime Red*

Photo courtesy of Sue Draxler



never have obtained because of Bill and Cooper. I am so very grateful to them. I cannot express how much it means to me to know what happened to my beloved Bubba and to be able to bring him home.

I later learned that after leaving my house, Cooper, sitting next to Bill in the truck, started to howl when they drove past the area where Bubba was found and did not stop until they came to Route 2 several minutes later. This howling, a means of long-distance communication, was either Cooper's goodbye or greeting to a now-found soul.



Bubba

Thanks to everyone for caring so much. Ω

—*Sharon McCutchen*

Photos courtesy of Sharon McCutchen

A Tale of Two Dogs

I was overwhelmed by the outpouring of help and support when Bubba Gump, my English mastiff, went missing. People I loved and knew and people I had never met were willing to do *anything* needed to help find him. I would never have been able to get through this without them. In gratitude, I would like to tell you the story of how Bubba was lost, found and irrevocably lost forever.

On the bitter cold night of Jan 21, Bubba, who weighed 160 pounds, suddenly sat up from lying in my lap. He then stood up with his head down and appeared a bit out of it. He seemed to see something in a corner but when I looked nothing was there. I thought maybe he just wanted to go out since it was his usual time but was a bit surprised when he ran off. He never returned and I spent most of the night on and off searching for him with a flashlight without success.

In the morning, one of the first people I called was my friend, Bill (Lattrell), who is of Native American descent. He brought with him one of his bloodhounds named James Fenimore Cooper – Cooper for short. Cooper and Bill were able to differentiate Bubba's tracks and scent from my other dogs almost immediately. Bill could tell from the tracks that Bubba was either afraid or very ill, and soon after that where he appeared weak and disoriented.



Cooper

At several places in the course of tracking him, he could see where Bubba had rested. At one point, Cooper stopped suddenly and air-scented across a valley.

Although we continued to follow the tracks, we found Bubba's final resting place exactly where Cooper had told us it would be. Bill was able to reassure me that Bubba did not freeze to death but after an acute struggle fell over and died. Cooper was very sad but when praised for his good job he realized how much he had done and became proud as well. Bill ported Bubba out, uphill, on a big rescue sled while Cooper stayed with me. I am completely devastated by Bubba's loss, although now I have closure that I would

A Minute in Heath History

From the town records; a resignation letter for the coveted town position of Field Driver.

May 10, 1997

Mr. Moderator, Friends and Neighbors,

It was many years ago at an Annual Town Meeting the Town of Heath bestowed upon Robert Gruen and Budge Litchfield one of the highest honors imaginable. It was with a sense of awe and deep gratitude that we humbly accepted the distinguished position of Field Driver. During the ensuing years we have done our best to live up to your high expectations. We have trained, made contingency plans, and at times have fulfilled our responsibilities in a manner that would have made Billy Crystal and the cast of City Slickers green with envy. It is therefore with the deepest regret that we tender our resignations from the distinguished position of Field Driver. Aside from the fact that in recent years our feet have become slightly less swift and our wind a bit shorter, we feel it is time to share the spotlight and allow other Heathans to feel the pride that goes along with this vitally important job. In all humility, we must also admit that the generous compensation this august position has thrust upon us has led to a painful level of tax bracket creep. Thank you for these many years of trust and support, and best of luck to our proud successors.

Signed: Budge A. Litchfield and Robert Gruen

And now for the rest of the story . . .

“Field Drivers are charged with the responsibility of restraining any large farm animal that is ‘at large’ and not under the control of its owner, conveying to the town pound and caring for the animal where it remains until the owner pays any fines and retrieves the animal.” Ω

—*Gleaned by Hilma Sumner, Town Clerk*

THE WAY WE EAT

Recipes using local foods, by local folks, gathered from far and wide

Maple Cream

We are just coming off the maple season, and in my view there is nothing that makes me feel richer than having my yearly supply of syrup in the freezer. Yes I said freezer. I learned many years ago after having a jug of syrup get moldy, that syrup keeps better in the freezer.

My favorite way to enjoy maple syrup was introduced to me at a Heath Church supper. It used to be that each summer the church put on a sugar-on-snow supper with imported snow from Mount Snow. As a teenager, I loved waiting on tables at these suppers because we always had plenty of sugar-on-snow after all the paying customers had been served. It was there that I learned the trick of eating sour pickles and doughnuts to counteract the sweetness of the syrup, thus making it possible to eat even more.

One year, there was far more leftover syrup than even the waitresses could eat. Not wanting to waste even a drop of the precious stuff, Earl Gleason poured it into a large bowl and told us all to take turns stirring. As a “city” kid, I had no idea what we were doing but I dutifully took my turn at the bowl. Sitting around that table, passing the bowl around and listening to stories told by Walt and Earl Gleason and Dick Sumner, who at that time were all in their early 20s, is one of my fondest childhood memories. Of course it also helped that in the end we were all rewarded with a large bowl of maple cream. It was like magic watching the hot runny syrup slowly turn to cream.

Fred Lively, (Tim and Veronica’s dad) was known for his maple cream and Tim has continued his tradition of making it. Here is his method given to him by his father.

Steps for maple cream

- 1) I boil the syrup to just barely soft-ball stage.
- 2) I then pour it in a bowl and beat it with an electric mixer (about six minutes) until it starts to thicken up.
- 3) I then finish stirring it with a wide spoon until it starts to crystallize.

You have to keep sampling it ‘til you feel it start to get “gritty.” The best way for me to explain it is like when you use baking soda for toothpaste and you feel the paste on your teeth that feels like very fine sand.

- 4) When you get to this point it is ready to be put in a container.

The key is practice, practice. . . Ω

—*Deb Porter*



A Few Notes About Town Meetings

The Annual Town Meeting is a time when the citizens of the town get together to decide on the town budget and other town governmental issues. Any registered voter may attend, and all have an equal say – one person, one vote. What the voters decide at the Annual Town Meeting IS how the town runs for the coming year. “We, the people” really DO run the government here in Heath!

As the elected Moderator for the town meetings, it is my duty to see that the meetings run fairly and according to the law. I don’t decide what is voted on, or who gets to vote, I just run the meeting. Each meeting has what is called “The Warrant,” the set of proposals or motions that the voters will vote on at the meeting. The Selectboard prepares the warrant and include items they need, as well as any items from other town committees such as the planning board, and also any petition articles that come from the citizens of the town.

The general flow of the process to approve or deny any proposal, or warrant, is as follows: When a motion is made, it is read out loud, someone from the audience says “So Moved,” and then someone says: “Second.” Once a motion is on the floor, one of the sponsors of the article is invited to speak first – it is their article. After the first person has spoken in favor of an article, someone who might have objections is invited to speak. People “from the floor” (all present) are invited to speak in turn to the motion under discussion. When it seems like everyone has had their say, or things are starting to get repetitious, I will gently steer folks toward a vote. If a majority of the voters vote to end discussion, then we immediately go to a vote on the motion.

The actual voting has four layers. The first “layer” is a voice vote. If it is close, or someone wants a hand count we will do so. The third level is used when the hand count is very close or if the state needs a formal count. When that happens, two people from the floor are asked to help count each person as they stand for or against the motion. The final method is a paper ballot, generally used if the issue is sensitive and people wish their votes to remain private. We often do that for big issues, like the vote on the new school many years ago.

During the rest of the year we on occasion have Special Town Meetings, usually to fix small errors that come up, or to approve the movement of small amounts of funds from one area of the budget to another. Nothing major is done at these meetings, unless a very unusual set of circumstances arises. If the business can wait until an Annual Town Meeting, that is what happens.

Heath Town meetings are a wonderful form of government, and I strongly encourage all Heath voters to attend! Ω

—*Doug Wilkins, Town Moderator*

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Selectboard Report

Meeting Schedule

The Board meets every Tuesday evening at 7 p.m. in the Community Hall unless posted otherwise. This schedule will be maintained throughout the winter and spring months.

Special Town Meeting

A Special Town Meeting on March 11 made transfers from surpluses in some accounts to accounts anticipated to run deficits before the end of the fiscal year. Most of the anticipated shortfalls occurred in highway-related expenditures owing to the extended harsh winter conditions this year and some unexpected equipment repairs.

All Boards Meeting

The Selectboard hosted the annual All Boards Meeting Feb. 11. This meeting is a chance for all Town of Heath boards and committees to report on their activities over the past year. It is a wonderful way to hear about the work going on and to allow for networking among committees. Committees are encouraged to share the successes and challenges in performing their duties. An exchange of information and ideas is always encouraged.

Budget Hearings

The Finance Committee and Selectboard began hearing budget requests from Town departments in January. Written requests were to be submitted by Jan. 7. This process is an important step in developing the budget for FY15, which will be discussed at the Annual Town Meeting in May.

Municipal Complex Committee

The Municipal Complex Building Committee received six responses to its request for qualifications for a designer to conduct a feasibility study for the Heath Municipal Complex. This includes highway department facilities, fire station, emergency operations office and police department. The committee reviewed and ranked the six responses and agreed on a highest-ranked proposal from Reinhardt Associates. Reinhardt has successfully completed a number of similar studies in western Massachusetts and is highly recommended for this type of work.

The committee met with John MacMillan, president of Reinhardt Associates, on March 3 for a kickoff meeting to begin the work of gathering data and becoming familiar with the Town's needs and existing conditions. Personnel from each affected department were designated to be interviewed for the study. At least one public informational meeting will be scheduled as the work progresses to update residents on the progress of the work and to provide feedback on the project. The study will be completed in time for a report to the Annual Town Meeting.

The committee is composed of Bob Bourke, Chair; Bob Viarengo, Secretary; Ken Gilbert, Jeff Simmons, Mike Smith and Brian De Vriese.

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Heath Online

Please take some time to visit the Town's Web www.townofheath.org. You'll find Selectboard meeting minutes, other board meeting minutes, school information, various announcements and much more. You may email us at BOS@townofheath.org. Send messages to any board or individual via the email address, or visit the Heath web site. Ω

—Heath Selectboard

Sheila Litchfield, Chair

Bill Lattrell

Brian De Vriese

Finance Committee Report

The Heath Finance Committee continues to work closely with the Selectboard on a Town budget for the 2015 Fiscal Year that will be put before the voters at the Annual Town Meeting in May.

The Town faces some difficult questions. There is one piece of good news: total valuation (i. e., what gets taxed) has risen from \$88,758,780 to \$90,562,957, a difference of \$1,804,177 or 2%. When valuation rises, the tax rate drops, assuming a constant budget.

The problem is that the budget is unlikely to remain constant. Heath's share of the operating budget of the Mohawk Trail Regional School District (MTRSD), according to Superintendent Michael Buoniconti's report to the MTRSD School Committee, will be \$776,172, an increase of \$54,530 or 7.56% over the FY14 MTRSD assessment of \$721,842. The capital assessment will be \$8,675, a decrease of \$2,879 or 25% compared to FY14's capital assessment of \$11,554.

Heath's total MTRSD assessment thus will be \$784,847, a net increase of \$51,051 or 7% over the FY14 total assessment of \$733,196. Still higher education costs will result from Heath's assessment for the Franklin County Technical School, which has been estimated at \$41,533, an increase of \$21,590 or 108% over our FY14 assessment of \$19,943. This increase is largely a consequence of the fact that the number of Heath students at Franklin Tech has doubled from 2 to 4.

Heath's total assessments for education, therefore, will probably rise from FY14's \$753,339 to \$826,380 for FY15, an increase of \$73,041 or 9.7%. To restate this calculation in simpler terms, because of the increase in total valuation for FY15, Heath can sustain the FY14 tax rate of \$19.12 if it limits its overall increase in expenditures to \$31,412 or 2% (holding constant the Town's income from state aid and estimated receipts, and using \$50,000 from the Town's reserves of Free Cash to reduce the tax rate). But the one item in our budget—education—that is the largest and over which we have the least control will rise substantially. The likely effect on the FY15 tax rate from education expenditures alone will be an increase of 46¢ in the tax rate, again assuming no reduction in the Town's income, no increase in the amount we use to reduce the tax rate, and no other major new expenditures.

Continued on next page

Finance Committee continued from previous page

Other significant outlays being considered include two additional used vehicles for the Highway Department at a likely total cost of \$10,000, a new cruiser (cost still to be determined: probably around \$35,000) for the Police Department, replacing the two existing cruisers that are old and in bad repair. Substantial repairs are needed to the transfer station, at an additional cost of about \$17,000.

It's difficult to be precise at this point about the final effect on the tax rate of these considerations. The side of the ledger about which we have the least reliable advance information is the income side. The Town has a higher balance in Free Cash (\$185,621) than we have had in recent years, and we may recommend using more than the customary \$50,000 to reduce the tax rate.

If we used an additional \$50,000 in this way, that would reduce the tax rate by 55¢, offsetting the significant increase in education expenses. But this move might create more problems than it solves, because it would inhibit another long-term initiative we'd like to recommend to the voters: establishing separate Stabilization Funds for large vehicles and machinery and for the capital outlay program for Heath Elementary School that the Town will have to begin funding in the FY16 budget. The Town now has \$194,156 in general Stabilization funds, and we may recommend an addition of \$100,000 from Free Cash to this balance, with the individual Stabilization Funds created from the general account. Part of our thinking is that having these Stabilization accounts in place will help keep the tax rate more consistent in future years.

The Finance Committee and the Selectboard will be spending a lot of late nights in the Community Hall in the coming weeks to arrive at final recommendations to the voters on these matters. Ω

—Don Freeman

The Heath Finance Committee
 Gloria Fisher
 Kathryn Inman
 Jeff Simmons
 Ned Wolf, Secretary
 Don Freeman, Chair

WHO YA GONNA CALL?

Town Nurse:

Claire Rabbitt, RN

Library:

Don Purington, Director

Lyra Johnson-Fuller, Library Asst.

See www.townofheath.org
 for further details and contact information.

Transfer Station Winter Hours

Tom Flynn, Attendant

Summer hours begin the last week in May

Wednesdays 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Saturdays 8 a.m.–4 p.m.

Heath's Monthly Precipitation

Observed by Heath School staff and students

	Rain	Snow/sleet
From Jan. 10	¾"	10.0"
February	0"	24 ¾"
To March 10	0"	½"

In this reporting period:

Even though it was cold it still snowed, with 10 inches on Jan. 2. The period from Jan. 19 through March 7 produced 25 days with a morning start in the single numbers or below zero. A benefit of the cold weather, depending who you talked to, was that it kept the BIG snow storms from dumping a lot of heavy, wet snow.

—Tim Lively and Heath School Students

Letters to the Editors

Dear Jane, Jan, and Eileen and company,

Thank you so much for your wonderful work on the *Heath Herald* all these years. I am a frequent contributor of waste related news and events and I really appreciate the Herald running all my articles and notices. Jane was kind enough to subscribe me so I can see when my submitted pieces run, and I fell in love with the paper. I bring it home to read and my husband and I both enjoy the articles.

Jessica and Rebecca and the other new staff, you've got big shoes to fill but knowing you two, you are up to the task! I was thrilled just now to read that you will be involved, and Heath is lucky to have the two of you on board. (I'm only addressing the people I know personally here!)

Kudos to you for going paperless, and best of luck in this transition. Thanks again.

—Amy Donovan [Summer 2013]

My sincere thanks for sending the Dec/Jan Issue of the *Heath Herald*. Well done! Apparently I was one of the subscribers who never received the original sending so I was particularly pleased to receive this copy, my first cyber-sent *Heath Herald*.

Continued on next page

Letters to the Editors continued from previous page

This was a particularly beautiful issue, specifically Howard Dickinson's cover. When I was a young lad, still in my teens, Howard was my inspiration to become a photographer and while I've never done so professionally, I do have some pretty good shots, thanks in part to Howard's patient counsel. My thanks to all for keeping this paper up and running! Through it I maintain my link to home.

—Bruce Patterson [Fall, 2013]

I would like to thank the Heath road crew for keeping the roads so good in the winter. You all are very hard working and dedicated to the public. SALUTE

—Ellen Jenkins [Winter, 2014]

Dining with History
A bit of snow; a bit of romance
 Jan. 25, 2014

Ruth Johnson and Lois Buchiane chat about winters of their childhoods at a recent Heath Historical Society's "Dining with History" potluck supper. Ω

—Nancy Thane



Photo by Doug Mason

Save the Date!

Heath Historical Society presents
 Dining with History

“Summertime Fun!”

Saturday July 12

Museums open 3 to 5 p.m.

Dining with History 5 to 7:30 p.m.



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Heath Union Evangelical Church

We are a community church, and sincerely invite all to join us on a Sunday.

Church Phone:337-5367
 Pastor Phill Grant: 413-648-9077

The Pastor is always available to the public. Just call.

Adult Sunday School..... 9 a.m.
 Sunday Worship 10 a.m.
 Pastor's Hours Thursdays, 4 to 6 p.m.



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Milestones

Births



Elliot Scully-Henry was born Jan. 13 to Jesse Porter-Henry and Amy Scully of Chesterfield, MA. He is the grandson of Deborah Porter and John Henry of Heath and Linda and Fred Scully of North Adams, MA. Ω

Julia Grace Sampson was born at home in North Heath at 8:05 a.m. on Feb. 23 to Lawrence Sampson and Rebecca Dorr Sampson. The midwife in attendance was Rebecca Corliss Beck. Julia Grace's grandparents are Carol and Gib Dorr and Victoria and Larry Sampson, all of Watertown, MA. Ω

Obituaries

Paul F. Burrington

Paul F. Burrington, 78, of 98 Main St, Charlemont, formerly of Heath, passed away Feb. 12 at Baystate Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield.

Paul was born in Heath on Aug. 6, 1935, the son of Frederick W. and Hannah E. (Landstrom) Burrington. He attended local schools and was a graduate of the former Arms Academy in Shelburne Falls. On April 10, 1954, Paul married Nancy Chattin.

Paul was a self-employed building contractor for many years, but he is most remembered for his service to his community. Paul was at one time a selectman of the Town of Heath, past president of the Heath Fair and served on the Fair committee for many years. He was a member of the Heath Police Department, and years ago, operated an ambulance service for the town using his own family station wagon as the ambulance. Paul was also a member of the Future Farmers of America and the Heath Union Church.

Survivors include his wife of 59 years, Nancy Burrington; three daughters, Neena Burrington of Heath, Betsy E. Beebe and her husband Sheldon of Westminster, VT, and Sue Croteau and her companion Bob Miller of Shelburne Falls; a son, Fred Burrington of Colrain; four grandchildren, Carrie and Amy Croteau, Justin and Jessica Beebe; three great-grandchildren, and his twin sister, Erma Lowd of New Haven, VT. Ω

—From the Greenfield Recorder, Feb. 14, 2014

Paul R. Turnbull

Paul R. Turnbull, 75, passed away on March 11, 2014 at Baystate Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield, after a brief illness. Paul was a native of Arlington, MA. He is survived by his wife of 33 years, Janice Boudreau, two sons, two grandchildren and other family and friends.

Paul Turnbull was a photographer and consultant from Heath, Massachusetts. Early in his career, Paul owned a studio in Chelmsford, MA. Paul was connected with the Hallmark Institute of Photography in Turner's Falls, MA from 1975 - 1992, holding positions of instructor, academic department

head, executive director and president. He was also a partner with Janice in Turnbull/Boudreau Photographers. He became Inaugural Director and Curator of the Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography in 2005, continuing through 2009. Paul had numerous solo exhibits of his work throughout New England and has been published in countless books and publications. He was also a guest lecturer and teacher for many organizations and schools and was an exhibiting member of the Vermont Center for Photography.

Paul focused on corporate, editorial, and stock photography as well as photography for art museums, galleries, collectors and fine artists. "His meditative approach to camera work speaks to the restorative qualities of nature, the dignity of human history and an inexplicable quest for spiritual understanding."

—From the Greenfield Recorder, March 18, 2014



Our Neighbor Paul Turnbull

Paul Turnbull was our neighbor for 22 years. Twenty-two years is a long time, and in that long time, he was unceasingly kind and thoughtful, gracious, friendly and funny.

Paul was a highly accomplished artist, yet remained down to earth and unpretentious. He was equally at home rebuilding his woodstove as hosting a gallery opening. From Monhegan Island to Montego Bay, Paul moved through his world with an easy grace, and unassuming elegance. He was an artist yet escaped the notorious temperament. He was modest about his many professional achievements and awards. He didn't boast of his accomplishments. He allowed his work to speak for itself and made others the center of his attention.

Paul observed nature with the soul of the finest photographer, and human nature with the soul of a humanist. He had an innate dignity of bearing, and granted the same to others. He was wise and witty, and his humor was often incisive and irreverent. As the expression goes, he didn't suffer fools gladly, but if you happened to be the subject, he made sure you never knew it. He was a gentleman. His generosity of spirit was effortless. It was his nature.

He was genuinely warm and welcoming. He gave the best hugs. My big orange cat, excellent judge of character that he is, would often trek across the road, waltz through the front door and up the stairs for a cozy nap with his Uncle Paul.

He loved life intensely, with a reverence always evident in his photography, and with joy, so like his sunny reggae, the music we heard each time he stopped at his mailbox near our house. He loved his family deeply and his wife, Janice, beyond all measure.

Our little neighborhood and the wider world will always remember the presence of this lovely, warm-hearted man. Our lives are the richer. We remember Paul each time the light is picture perfect on the hillside, or on a certain tree against the sky. In other words, always. Ω

—Diane and Patrick Morrissey

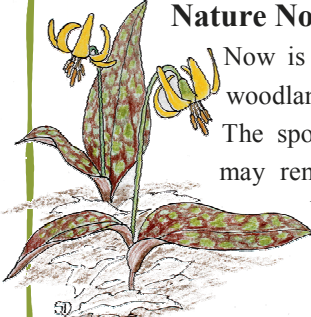
Paul Trumbull continued from previous page

Thoughts on Our Friend and Neighbor

So difficult to grasp his dying, such a quiet, vivid presence in our corner of Heath. That presence emerged within many conversations in the field between our houses, which I hayed under his watchful eye. His words were fair, thoughtful and pointed in themselves, but paled in salience next to his photographs. These ranged over landscapes and people like a searchlight, spotting the elements he framed in them with clarity and affection. Never harsh, he saw, and shared in his printed images, perspectives that seemed to go down to the bone. Surprising for a photographer, he spoke carefully, often amending his language as it emerged, so that you had to listen carefully, patiently.

An accomplished professional, he nevertheless shared his field not only for talking and haying, but also for grazing our horses or cows, despite the occasional disaster: once a cow broke through the thin electric fence, unbeknown to anyone at first, charged into the shed under his barn, and proceeded to knock over and sully a very expensive Ducati motorcycle. Mortified, we approached him to pay for damages. To no avail. He graciously minimized this insult, which led us to be much more careful in adopting Frost’s idea, that [better] fences make good neighbors. Never openly demonstrative, we hugged the last time we saw each other; in the field. This memory mitigates the loss we feel. Ω

—Martha and Leighton McCutchen



Nature Note
 Now is the time to look in moist woodlands for Trout Lily Flowers. The spotted pattern on the leaves may remind you of the spots on brook trout—which is how it got its name.
 —Sue Draxler

Heath Union Evangelical Church
 The church is very grateful to Wendell Barton for volunteering to repair the floor and replace the carpet in the church foyer. Many thanks to you, Wendell.
 We are now on Facebook. Look for us, see some pictures and read our news @Heath Union Evangelical Church.
 We are having a pancake breakfast, free to the public, on Palm Sunday, April 13, at 9 a.m. Come, enjoy, then we welcome you to join us for church at 10.
 —Alli Thane-Stetson

Community Calendar

April 2014

- 3 Senior Brown Bag, dessert & games
Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.
- 4 Preschool Story Hour, Heath Library 10:30–11:30 a.m.
- 13 Free Pancake Breakfast, Heath
Union Church, 9 a.m.
- 17 Senior Lunch, Community Center, 11:45 a.m.
(reservations required, see below)
- 18 Preschool Story Hour, Heath Library 10:30–11:30 a.m.
Easter Egg Hunt with baby chicks and story,
“Dorris Byrd,” by Jessica Van Steensburg
Last day to register to vote for Annual Town Meeting
- 21 School vacation starts
- 26 Heath Fireman's Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser
7:30 to 10:30 a.m.
Posting for Special Town Meeting
- 30 Last day to register to vote for Special Town Meeting

May 2014

- 3 Posting for Annual Town Meeting
- 9 Town Elections noon to 7 p.m.
- 10 Annual Town Meeting
Breakfast Buffet and Bake Sale,
9 a.m. to end of Town Meeting
Old Town House and Center School Open House
immediately following Town Meeting to 2 p.m.
- 17 Bee Bloom Gala, Benson Place
Bridge of Flowers Annual Plant Sale
FCSWM Bulky Waste Day, 9 a.m. to noon
See www.franklincountywastedistrict.org for details
- 22 Senior Lunch, Community Center, 11:45 a.m.
(reservations required, see below)
- 31 Friends of the Library Bake Sale 9 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

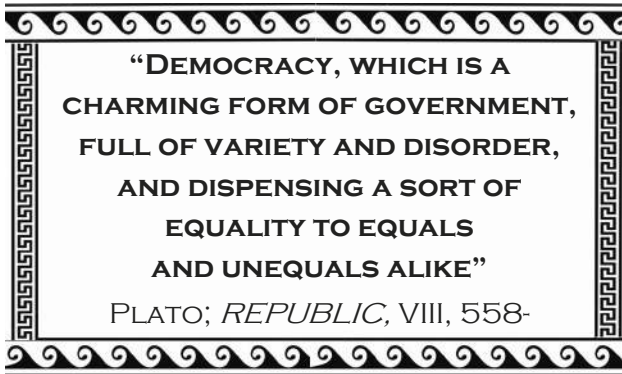
Senior Luncheons

RSVP to 337-5728 between 9–11 a.m. by the Monday before the luncheon date.

Senior Exercise Class

Held every Tuesday, 11 a.m. to noon and every Thursday, 10-11 a.m. at the Senior Center. This class is for osteoporosis prevention. It is for people 55 years and older and is **FREE**. Ω

The Bridge of Flowers Annual Plant Sale
When: Saturday, May 17, 9 a.m. to noon
Where: The Baptist Lot, Main St., Shelburne Falls
 Thousands of perennials, annuals and other garden related items will be for sale.
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