



Vol. 1 No. 2 JUNE 1979

HEATH HERALD

NEWS AND VIEWS

25¢

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

By Anne Henderson

Almost 100 people attended the Annual Town Meeting at 8 PM on Monday, May 7th, in the Heath Community Hall.

Results of this year's elections were announced by Town Clerk, Lucia Finck. Those elected were: Selectman - Paul Lively, Town Clerk, Treasurer, and Tax Collector - Catherine Nichols, Assessor - Richards Steinbock, Finance Committee Member - David Howland, School Committee Member - Lynn Miller, and Library Trustee - Alli Thane.

The Town then moved on to the election of Town officers not elected by ballot. The Assessors assumed the task of Fence Viewing. Winn Warriner became Tree Warden. Budge Litchfield was elected Field Driver; and Earl Gleason and Don Churchill joined the Planning Board.

Relatively few questions were raised about this year's budget, and after a few minor revisions the total amount of \$368,000 was passed easily.

After some discussion, the Town voted to appoint a committee to compile the current Town By-Laws. These By-Laws will be presented to the Town for review and possible revision at the next Annual Town Meeting.

Some of the evening's most interesting discussion centered on proposed changes to the Zoning By-Laws. Articles for consideration included present zoning classifications, special permits, cluster-development, and posted sign regulations. The Town rejected cluster development, but upheld the state mandated article dealing with the issuance of special permits for "scientific research, development, or related production."

In response to the Town's request for more information from the Selectmen, minutes of their meetings will be posted. They will again hold meetings weekly at 8 PM on Tuesdays.

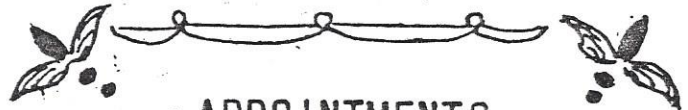
The meeting adjourned at 11 PM.

SCHOOL REPORT

By Catherine Cronack

June is a special time of year for many. We would like to send sincere congratulations to the following young people leaving Rowe school headed for the next step in their lives, High School: Daniel Boehmer, Kyle Clark, Laurel Clark, Patricia Kain, Christopher Lively, Dominic Lively, Crystal Peters, Michail Platek, Christopher Seaver, and Roberta Tripp.

In addition Joseph Kincannon graduates from Mohawk Trail Regional High School and Paul Fournier from Vocational Training School. Congratulations to you both and best of luck for the future.



APPOINTMENTS

The Selectmen announce the following appointments:

By-Laws Committee-

Pegge Howland (Chairman)

Ed Calver

Anne Henderson

Catherine Nichols (Town Clerk).

Dump Representatives-

Ken Cole

Paul Lively

School Committee Member-

Marietta (Kincannon) Drummond

Other Town appointments to be filled include-

Dog Officer

Town Auditor

Historical Commission Member

Registrar

Zoning Board of Appeals Member

LETTERS

To the Editor:

Nobody that I have talked to is very happy with the new Town Report. There were several typographical errors, and the Finance Committee said in Town Meeting that part of their report had been omitted.

My chief complaint is the omission of the tax list and the condensation of the Selectmen's financial report. I believe that the people who pay the taxes are entitled to have all expenditures spelled out so that they know to whom their money was paid. The listing of the property owners is a very good source of information to many people. When I was Town Clerk I consulted the listing many times. I don't think that the saving in printing cost is enough to justify the inconvenience.

The delay in getting the Town Report delivered was another irritant. One went to the meeting with no time to digest the information and vote intelligently.

Mary L. Sherman

Note: The Heath Herald welcomes letters from its readers and is glad to publish them as space permits. Letters should be brief and must be signed.

HEATH HERALD

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Editorial Staff

Pegge Howland
Caroline Smith
Alli Thane

Advertising

Art
Business
Circulation

Mike Bakalar
Harriet Read
John Read
Terry Pettingill

Contributors to this issue:

Anne Henderson
Marlene Housner
Richards Steinbock

Address all comments, suggestions, and inquiries to P.O. Box 54, Heath, MA 01346.

A NEW CHURCH PARSONAGE?

As many of you know the members of our Heath Union Church voted in 1977 to sell the old parsonage and to build a new one.

We have purchased land on Bray Road, near the top of the hill. Our plans are nearly finalized and when we have completed the many technicalities required we hope to start construction.

We have a limited amount of cash but at present day prices it won't go too far. We hope that much of the work will be donated.

We thought that you might be interested in helping with our project. If you care to help with clearing the site, excavation, building, or donating money, please call one of the committee members or write Star Route Box 18, Heath, MA 01346.

The Building Committee

Rachel Sumner

Ralph Dickinson

Paul Burrington

ART NEWS

Charles Seaver from Heath had an exhibit of metal sculpture at Greenfield Community College through May 23. Much of the sculpture is made from found farm equipment and machinery. Charles is also involved in wood-carving and teaching at the Rowe school this year.

Marlene Housner, another artist living and working in Heath, will have an exhibit of her paintings and pastel drawings at the Forbes Library in Northampton during July. Marlene's larger major paintings will be exhibited next October in Greenfield Community College's main gallery.

The "Artists in Residence" program has just completed its second exciting and productive year at Rowe school. This year the children had the opportunity to share one to three day experiences with such artists as Eric Carle and Jane Yolen, published writers; Catherine Sears, sculptor; Terry Noyes, Emmy Award winning film-maker; and Sara Pirtle, musician and song-poet. Sarah Benson of Charlemont is the permanent Artist-in-Residence, working daily with the children in music, improvisation, and movement.

ANNOUNCING

HEATH, MASSACHUSETTS: A HISTORY AND GUIDE BOOK written by Edward Calver and published by the Heath Historical Society. Copies are available from the author and from Dolly Churchill, Custodian of the Society, for \$8.00 (slightly more by mail). Please make checks payable to the Heath Historical Society.



PLANNING BOARD REPORT

By John Holdsworth

In the next several months, the Planning Board will draw up a plan to provide direction for future planning decisions in Heath. This plan may include: development of natural resources; methods of broadening the tax base; ways to retain working farms and a rural atmosphere; protection of historic sites and buildings; and many other things.

At future meetings, cluster development will be discussed and the proposed by-law relative to cluster development which was voted down at the annual Town Meeting, may be rewritten.

Many people who replied to the recent Planning questionnaire asked for information on conservation, development of fire ponds, and other subjects. The Planning Board will respond as soon as possible to all those requests.

Planning Board minutes are posted at Peter's Store and at the Post Office following each meeting, which are held on the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month at 8 PM in Community Hall. The agenda for the next meeting will be included with the minutes for each meeting.

The Planning Board members are; Earl Gleason, Chairman; Thomas Lively, Secretary; John Holdsworth, Representative to Franklin County Planning Board; Susan Gleason; and Donald Churchill. The Board would like to publicly thank former members Jay Bradbury and Bruce Cromack for their service to the community while on the Planning Board.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

By Edward Calver

Some 20 years ago, not long after I bought for \$900 and began reclaiming 5 overgrown acres, a cellar hole, and a barn partially converted into a camp and then abandoned, I was asked to give a paper on Dell before the Heath Historical Society. At a loss for material I asked Ruby Austin, who took me to the Registry of Deeds and showed me how it works. But I found that I could not do Dell without doing much more of the town, and decided that I would collect the early owners of the whole of Heath. The story of Dell is done at last; it is one chapter in "Heath, Massachusetts: A History and Guidebook."

The cellar hole needed filling. I used a shovel and wheelbarrow to grade my hillside (and fill the hole) and was nicknamed "the human bulldozer" by some of the locals --who were then willing to help with my history. Collecting, sorting, and organizing detailed facts is a slow process, and during that drawn-out period I learned a lesson: Taking enough time is an important factor in writing local history. Welcome information turned up surprisingly often, so that the book holds much more than it would have if I had forced it to a conclusion 10 years ago. In fact 2 old photographs, valuable ones, came to me less than 2 hours after I thought I had the manuscript ready for the printer (which is why there are 50 drawings rather than the 48 advertised on the title page).

Twenty-five drawings are of buildings which no longer exist. They as much as the words are a part of the record, and may help to make them vivid. They were collected from old newspapers, postcards, books, and snapshots treasured up in candy boxes with other memorabilia, some now scattered and gone.

And so I improved my physique and put down roots. I thought of adding to the title page a modification of the formula used in submitting a doctoral dissertation: "In partial fulfillment of the requirements for"...'adoption as a New Englander in the Town of Heath.' Writing the book has been a pleasure, and the town needed a history. Over the entrance of a great historical library appear the words: "In Darkness Dwells the People That Knows Its Annals Not."

1979 ASSESSOR'S REPORT

Statistics:

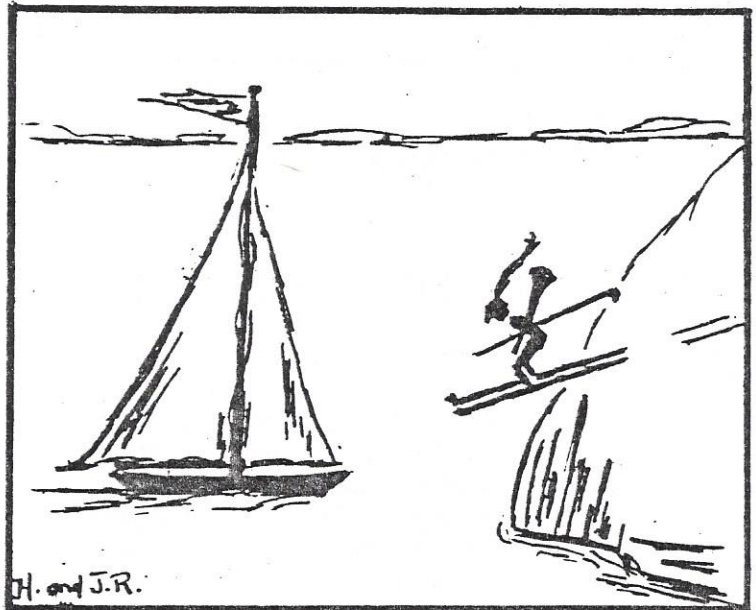
Real Estate Valuation	\$ 8,865,883
Personal Property Valuation	1,058,475
Motor Vehicle Valuation	436,850
Real Estate Taxes	274,842
Personal Property Taxes	32,813
Motor Vehicle Taxes	20,316
Tax Rate	\$31 per \$1000 valuation
Number of Dwellings	287
Commercial	2
Trailers	76
Farm Animal Valuation	\$ 223,025
Farm Animal Tax @ \$5/\$1000	\$ 1,115
Forest Land (Chapter 61)	464 acres
Forest Land Tax	\$ 1,438

The value of property in Town, both real and personal, as assessed by the Board is \$9,924,358. The State says that our "Equalized" valuation is \$12,300,000. This is the figure arrived at after we met with State tax officials, both here and in Boston, and managed to convince them that their original proposed valuation of \$13,200,000 was way off base. We expect that when the new equalized valuations come out we will be going through the same go-around again. It is interesting to note that the total valuation of the state remained the same from 1976 to 1978, while the value of western towns like Heath rose.

Meanwhile we are measuring every building in Town, noting their condition, size, type of construction, age and any other factors involved in placing a value on them. We are applying square footage construction figures, supplied by the Commonwealth, to arrive at what we hope will be an accurate value for each structure. Armed with this re-evaluation, we hope to be able to convince the State that the Town is not quite worth the outrageous amount they say it is.

Another reason for the re-evaluation is the fact that the information is going on to computer tapes at LHS Associates, Inc. of Andover, and we would like to have our information as correct as possible. LHS will then be able to print up the tax bills valuation books, and file cards from our information. This will reduce the time lag we have between setting the tax rate and issuing the bills. Also should our Town records ever be destroyed, will will have duplicate records in the computer.

The Town needs to obtain a good set of tax maps. These would be of great help in determining boundaries, types of land, and should we ever hit 100% valuation and be forced to classify property under Proposition 1 (Chapter 540), will be a legal necessity. A good set of tax maps costs \$30,000 - not an expenditure to be taken lightly. However, we will need them at some point, and they will be cheaper now than later. A calendar of tax related deadlines will appear in the next issue of the Heath Herald.



H.H. jumps into Summer

HEATH FAIR

The Heath Agricultural Society is in full swing with plans for the 62nd Annual Heath Fair. The days to remember are August 17-18-19. Ken Crowningshield is at the head as President, Carl Crowland as Treasurer, Marjorie Deardon as Secretary, and Frederick Crowningshield, Luis Pazmino, and Evelyn Hillman as Directors.

Highlights to remember are: Friday- Pony Drawing, Donkey Baseball, and a musical show featuring Blue Grass and Country Music played by the "Raintree Group" from Amherst. Saturday- Horse Drawing, Hall Exhibits, Chicken Bar-B-Que, Music by Dennis Avery of Charlemont, and dancing until midnight. Sunday- A parade featuring the Hatfield Fife and Drum Corps, an Old Time Fiddlers' Contest, Oxen Drawing.

Start planning your exhibits, hobbies, flowers, baking, and many others. Let's make it a big and successful Fair.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

By John Read

The Heath Historical Society received a generous gift of a book entitled "The Christian Patriot" portraying the life of Col. Hugh Maxwell. It was written by his daughter Priscilla, who died in Heath in 1851. The donor of the book, Mrs. James Treloar of Detroit, Michigan, is a fifth generation descendant of both Col. Maxwell and Rev. Johnathan Leavitt, Heath's first minister.

The book is an interesting saga of the Revolutionary War days in the life of Col. Maxwell, who died in 1799. He built and occupied with his family the house on South Road now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Sumner.

The Heath Historical Society, believing the story would be of interest to all Heath folks, had the book retyped and duplicated in April. You may obtain your copy of this historic book from Mr. John A. Read, Plover Hill, Heath or from Mrs. Rachel Sumner, South Road, Heath, MA 01346, for only \$3.25 per copy. Add 50¢ for mailing. Make your check payable to the Heath Historical Society.

In other news, the Society plans to have another Bazaar in July. Last year's was a great success as organized by Dolly Churchill. The Society's Annual Meeting will be held on August 4th in the Community Hall, so mark the date on your calendar.

COMING IN AUGUST

- * Kids' Baseball
- * Heath Fair
- * Planning Board Survey Results
- * Tax Deadlines



THE DAY THE HORSE DID THE HITCHING

By Carroll B. Stowe

(This story was told to me by the late Howard Thompson who lived his entire life on a farm in Heath)

When farm work was slow, Howard would work out with his team, sometimes for Charles Packard, also of Heath. Mr. Packard used to make his living getting out ash logs which he sold to Clark's Mill in Brattleboro. He cut on lots where other timber was being cut to go to a portable mill on the lot. Ash was worth much more as tennis racket stock than as saw logs. Howard's job for Mr. Packard was to work a skid horse. The horse this story was about was named Roanie.

Mr. Packard has a job in Hancock, Mass. where this event took place. He and Howard travelled every day from Heath, so it made a long day. The lot was on a very steep hill. So steep that the best way to get the logs down was by bobsled, in order that one end of the logs would drag and help hold the load back some.

One day on this steep hillside, the teamster had gotten a load of logs bound on his bobsled and was ready to make a rather rapid descent, when he found there was an obstruction of some kind where he had set the sled. The team was unable to gee or haw enough to get by whatever it was that had attached them to the hillside. The teamster called to Howard to come with Roanie and try to dislodge the bobsled and its cargo. Roanie was brought up behind the load of logs, and a chain was hitched to the sled and to Roanie's skidding whippletree. Howard was sure there was nothing he and Roanie could do for the situation, but he asked the skid horse to try, which he did. No one gave a thought to what might happen if Roanie succeeded at his task, but he did succeed. The sled, logs, and horses came loose and down they started. What would become of poor Roanie? "There goes a damn good skid horse" thought Howard. There before Howard's eyes went Roanie backwards, but only for a short distance. He sat down on that load of logs, front feet and all. He travelled that way to the bottom of the hill. The driver never knew that Roanie was on the load with him until they stopped.

It is awful to imagine what would have happened to that horse if he hadn't gotten that unscheduled ride.

BROWNIE SCOUTS "FLY UP"

According to Victoria Thane, the Heath/Rowe Brownie Scout Troop 111 had their annual Fly-up Ceremony on June 12th at the Rowe Town Hall. The six girls who became Junior Girl Scouts are Lori Laffond, Dawn Boutwell, April Hudson, Tanya Davin, Lee-Ann Howe, and Victoria Thane.

In the past month the girls visited the Charlemont ambulance and had a tour of the Franklin County Public Hospital.

Leaders of the troop are Mary Howe and Cindy Laffond.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

By Earl M. Gleason

Recently, Walt Gleason, Dawn Peters, Dick Giard, Danny Gleason, and Earl Gleason attended the Tri-State Mutual Aid Annual Field Day held at Mohawk Trail Regional High School. Heath's new fire truck was on display. Normally new equipment is exhibited only the first year of its existence but in this case the committee said they would like to have our truck shown for a second time.

Several members recently attended a radiological monitoring course. Tom Rabbit completed the intermediate course and David Thane, Mary Howe, Dick Giard, and Earl Gleason completed the advanced course.

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

By Anne Henderson

On April 26th, a Special Town Meeting was held in the Heath Community Hall to consider two issues.

The first article dealt with an appropriation of \$8000 for the completion of Sawyer Hall. That article was withdrawn in favor of a substitute which proposed the transfer of \$5000 from Revenue Sharing for the same purpose.

The second article for consideration dealt with a proposal to appropriate and transfer from Revenue Sharing \$7500 for the purchase of a wood chipper. This equipment is to be used in conjunction with a CETA project to clear Heath's roadsides this summer. The article passed by a two-thirds vote. The chipper has been ordered and the Town expected to take delivery within a week.

BOY SCOUTS

By Todd Sumner

Boy Scout Troop 86 of Charlemont has just seen the end of another productive year. Our leaders, Mr. Donald Leger and Mr. Bill Thane, have done their best to make it a success. At our weekly meetings in Charlemont Fire Station lectures and demonstrations are given, and achievements are worked on. During February vacation, we participated in the Klondike Derby held at the Grange Hall in Ashfield. There we had to load our sled, then pull it around the course to various stations where we demonstrated first-aid, knot tying, fire building, and other outdoor skills. Our Troop has been fortunate to produce three Eagle Scouts, Doug Purrington, Scott Purrington, and Wayne Porrovecchio. As a fund raiser, we held a Turkey Raffle in November, and plan to make this an annual event. Our summer plans include Summer Camp, hiking and swimming. The troop is sponsored by the Charlemont Fire Dept., and we thank them for their support.

TOWN CLERK'S HOURS

Catharine Nichols, our new Town Clerk, announces her office hours at the Community Hall.

Tuesday evening 7-10
Wednesday Morning 8-12
Friday Afternoon 1-4
Saturday Morning 8-12

4-H RABBIT CLUB

By Todd Sumner

The first Annual Clover Patch Rabbit Club Show was held Saturday, May 5th, at the Heath Fairgrounds. It was a windy, blustery day, but we had an excellent turnout with 65 rabbits and 2 guinea pigs shown by 22 exhibitors. Mr. Wm. Alexander, from Guilford, Vt. judged the Purebreds, while Mr. and Mrs. Richard Tower, of Rowe, were in charge of the Pets. Mr. Ronald Allen, Jr. of Westfield, Mass., won the Best of Show, with his New Zealand Red, while Mr. Bradley Toobs of Shelburne took best opposite sex with his Chinchilla. Ms. Diane Stowe of Heath had the Best Pet, Ms. Ree Sumner of Heath had the Best Guinea Pig, and Wendy Atwell won the Judging Contest with a total of 48 points. The show was a great success, and thank all who helped in running it.

MILESTONES

Two former Heath residents are celebrating their 90th birthdays in June. Pearl Tanner, who lived in Heath for over 30 years from 1912, celebrated her 90th on June 1. Pearl was the Librarian, and was the organist at the Heath Church for a good many years. In addition she was a major contributor to the Heath Sesquicentennial History in 1935.

Clyde Varney, who lived on the Avery Brook Road from 1921 until 1969, was a town officer. He is 90 years old on June 15.

We send them both all good wishes for many years to come.

LIBRARY NOTES

By Edith Gleason

I had hoped to tell you that we are putting the finishing touches on our new library, but the hopes have not been realized at this date.

So the Library will start the summer at Bill Wolf's garage. We plan to move the first week in June if the weather permits. Hours will be Tuesday 7-9 PM, and Wednesday and Saturday 1-5 PM.

The Heath Directory has been out about a month. If you have any comments or suggestions, call Edith Gleason 337-4948. If you didn't get your copy, pick one up at Peters Store, the Library, or the Post Office.

Of special interest to the youngsters: The film strip projector is back. It has a new belt and has been cleaned and oiled. We also have two new filmstrips, "The Loon's Necklace" by Elizabeth Cleaver, and "Noah's Ark" by Peter Spice.

A Trustees' meeting was held May 17th. Ms. Louise Canus talked to us about the L.S.C.A. grants.

NEW BOOKS AT THE LIBRARY

Rise of Theodore Roosevelt - Edmund Morriss
Sphinx - Robin Cook
Koster - Stuart Struever
Great Religions - Merle Severy
Our Fifty States - Margaret Sedeen
Wild New England - Ogden Tanner
Family Kitchen Cookbook -

Louise Andrews Kent

New England Over The Handlebars -

Marshal Farney

Christian Patriot - Hugh Maxwell

Snow Leopard - Peter Matthiessen



ELSON ELDRIDGE

1914 - 1979

A seeker and in behalf of others an explorer of the depths and the outer reaches of the mind in search of the simple fundamentals of human relations and human values he had little patience with the superficial the pretentious, the sophisticated, or the complex, and small use for conventional modes of thought. At the end of a little traveled road in Heath he found solitude, the grand sweep of a magnificent horizon, and congenial friendship.

RAIN, RAIN !

We all know May was a wet month, but did you know how much rain fell in Heath? - 7.9 inches according to Esther Dickenson, our official observer. This was much above average but not a record. From January through May, 31.24 inches fell, and January set a record of 11.64 inches, but this was not all rain!

CLASSIFIED

FRESH WINDS FARM Paul & Marcella Lively & Sons. Excavating-Loam-Sand-Stone 337-4331

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INTERESTED in a PLAY SCHOOL for ages 2-4? Call Debbie Porter 337-4715 or Sheila Litchfield 337-4957, evenings

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