



# HEATH HERALD

## Heath's First Newspaper

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## Remembering Carroll Stowe



*Carroll with Avery Dauer.*

### A Life Well Lived

Carroll Stowe was a character in the best sense of the term. He knew who he was, where he was from, and where he wanted to be. He was our town ambassador; he welcomed all newcomers and helped many of us who moved to Heath or Rowe acquire the necessary equipment to do a little farming and

to cut and haul our wood for winter. He particularly prized resurrecting old machines and getting them to function. He baled tens of thousands of bales of hay with a baler that had been abandoned and when he first hitched on it had trees growing through it that had to be cut before it could be moved.

Life, work, and values were a seamless cloth of land, animal, machines, and people for Carroll. He frequently referred to teams of horses, tractors, and trucks as faithful friends who on a daily basis shared our world of work. He often recalled to the pleasures of plowing snow for the towns of Heath and Rowe, gathering sap with horses, and baling hay with a H-Farmall and International 45 baler. Work for Carroll was about camaraderie and community.

I first met Carroll when he organized a work bee for Fred Lively some 36 years ago. We later did the same for Ken Crowningshield and Ernie Thane. We accomplished in a day what Carroll referred to as a considerable stroke of business. Carroll loved to cut wood. One winter over twenty years ago he, my son, Matt, and I cut thirty cords of wood. It was not easy going. The snow was deep, the tops we cut were buried, and we hauled the wood out to the road on a platform Carroll had rigged on the back of his tractor. When I referred to that winter that we worked together every weekend as the best winter of my life, Carroll was genuinely pleased.

Carroll was an incredibly articulate man. He wrote well and was a celebrated storyteller. He was invited to gatherings well beyond Heath to share his country lore and gentle humor. I could not think of a more fitting way to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the *Heath Herald* than to have his stories turned into a collection as some of you did. He was so pleased by this and received our honoring him graciously and with affection.

Remembering can bring us sadness but it can also be the

occasion for richness and joy. I urge you to reflect on the reactions you have and will receive when you mention Carroll Stowe's name or ask, "Did you know him?" If the answer is affirmative, I wager you will be met with a smile and some gentle laughter. I cannot think of a more important form of recognition for a life well connected with its surroundings, a person wealthy in friendship, and a sensibility well engaged in the celebration of the beauty of existence.

*~ Buck den Ouden  
North Heath*

### Hands of Heath

Carroll Stowe's hands contributed to much of the area's history. They enabled him to keep much old machinery in use long after others had abandoned them - balers, mowers, trailers, Farmall tractors, and trucks. They handled the reins of many horses and ponies while hauling logs, haying, or just pulling a wagon full of people around the countryside. They worked the functions of a McCulloch



chain saw to cut trees and brush for his neighbors, steered and worked the controls of a loader at the Heath Fair and the plow trucks in Heath and Rowe. They fed not only the animals

such as Lucky and the dogs at the Thane Farm and the farm animals along the roadways but also fed himself at neighbors, town functions, private parties, and restaurants in three states. Although they were large hands, they manipulated the delicate cookie jar at the Dickinsons to reach Howard's chocolate chip cookies. These hands worked a pen to write his columns for newspapers and letters to the editors on subjects he cared about, and he described many stories to schoolchildren and adults using his tough but tender hands.

Long may his legacy live in this area and in the hearts of the people he loved. Envision him now holding the country he loved in the palm of his hand.

*~ Jack Cable*

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### Church News

## Changing Seasons

By Hilma Sumner

The changing seasons serve as a visible reminder of the transient nature in all of life. We, in the church, are also impacted with this truth each Sunday when we enter the building and are not greeted with that familiar, booming "hello" and the inside seat of the third pew is empty, vacated by our dear Carroll. Fortunately, we are warmed by our memories and the visible marks of the contributions his labors made in our new fellowship hall.

The church had two successful fund-raisers in August with the Beemers and our booth at the Fair. A big 'thank you' goes to everyone who contributed in some way to these events. Due to a generous gift from the Dickinson Family Fund for Historic Heath, repairs and painting of the outside of the building will begin either this fall, if the weather is still conducive to such work, or next summer.

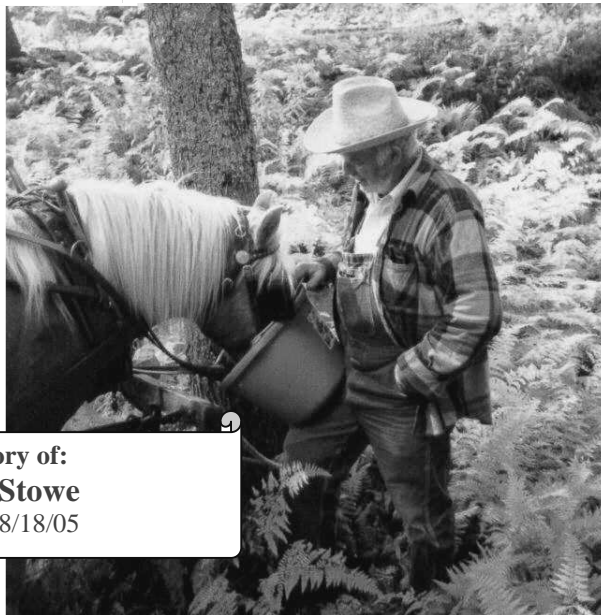
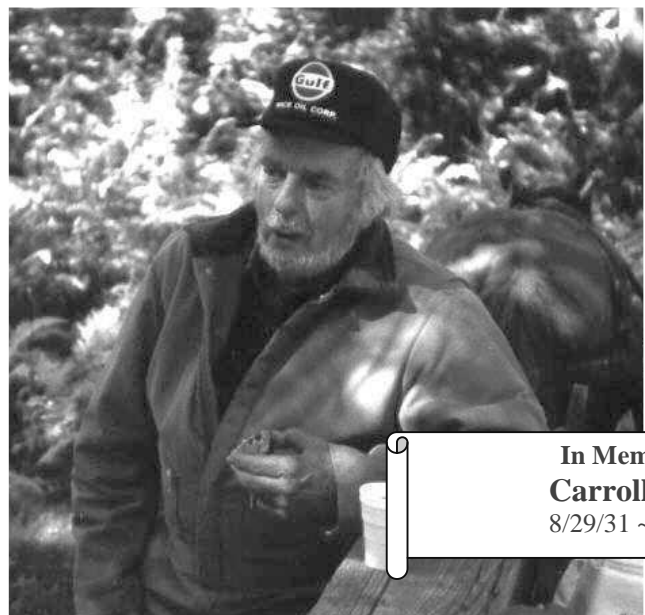
Our worship services continue each Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. and everyone is welcome to come and participate.

## A Fond Farewell To Carroll Stowe



We, the *Heath Herald* Staff, dedicate this collection of articles to their author Carroll Stowe, Heath philosopher, storyteller supreme, and good neighbor, who keeps alive our agricultural past with humor and with great feeling for what we have lost and with caution to hold onto what we value most, our sense of community, the rewards of hard work and good neighbors, and respect for our land and our fellow creatures.

From the dedication in Carroll's book, *The Way it is in The Country*.



In Memory of:  
**Carroll Stowe**  
8/29/31 ~ 8/18/05

## The Magic of Myrifiel: Evolution of a Heath Landmark: I

Donald C. and Margaret H. Freeman

We've always loved old houses. A structure that has been used as a family residence for two centuries or more has a character that speaks to us down the ages of that history, reminding us of its heritage and of our responsibility as its stewards. For us there's nothing quite like reading by a crackling fire on a snowy day in a house erected the year after George Washington first took the oath as president of the Republic.

The first house we ever owned, indeed, was a 1770 Cape on the southern outskirts of Athol, a couple of miles north of the Quabbin Reservoir. This house had a waterfall in its cellar, as we discovered during spring thaw, and taught us the hard way nearly everything we know about the many Things That Can Go Wrong with an old house. We loved it dearly all the same. Later we restored an elegant four-story Victorian brownstone in the Park Slope district of Brooklyn, New York, back when Park Slope was an "up-and-coming neighborhood," before it became Yuppie Heaven. But life took us away from Brooklyn, too, ultimately (or penultimately, as things turned out) to our slice of the Old West, a nondescript ranch house built into a canyon in the mountain community of Topanga, California, near Los Angeles.

As we thought about retirement, there was no question where we wanted to live: the Pioneer Valley, where we had met and married, and had spent so many happy and fulfilling years both personally and professionally. During our last working year we flew East in the dead of winter; as we began the third day of what we thought would be a long and arduous process of house-hunting, we saw Myrifiel and fell in love with it, though we were both somewhat daunted by its size. Snow that had fallen the previous evening sparkled in the sun under a clear blue sky, and the vista of hills to the south across the valley of the Deerfield River was sharply etched in the clear wintry air.

We saw that Myrifiel, unlike most historic houses, was well back from the road; we took one look at the breathtaking view down Myrifiel's front meadow across the Deerfield River Valley; we abandoned the conventional wisdom about carefully researching one's place of retirement, and we decided then and there to buy and restore Myrifiel. We have never regretted that decision for a moment, although we might have reached it less blithely had we been fully cognizant of the disruptions that this complex and difficult project would present during the first three years of our retirement. In the end, though, the reconstruction of Myrifiel became for us a labor of love.

Myrifiel is a two-story house, now on 57 acres of meadow and woods, built in 1790 originally as a Cape, later altered to a Federal style, at 23 Avery Brook Road, east and south of the town center of Heath. The house as we saw it had been restored to its then-current state by David and Pegge Howland after having suffered from neglect for many years. In the three years it has taken us to bring back more of the glories of Myrifiel, we have been able to document some of the house's history. The following account, therefore, is a - necessarily partial - reconstruction of the house's history from our discoveries as we went along.

In 1790, Ezra Gleason brought his wife Polly to Heath and settled on the land east of Avery Brook Road and south of Colrain Brook Road (now Taylor Brook Road). In 1790, the population of Heath was 379. All that is currently known of Ezra and Polly is that they baptized three children during the time they lived in Heath, so that presumably these were the first children to be born at Myrifiel. We do not know what Ezra Gleason's relationship was to Solomon Gleason, who settled in Heath in 1788-89.

The farmhouse that Ezra built in about 1790 was a single-story clapboarded Cape with a central chimney and an attached single-story ell, which probably served as the summer kitchen. According to local lore, the house would have been raised with the help of rum, since it was not until 1812 that Sullivan Taft built "the first house in Heath to be raised without the aid of rum." We know it was a Cape because if it had been built as a two-story Federal, all the windows would have been the same size. At Myrifiel the first-floor windows are smaller in size than those on the second floor.

Ezra sold the house in 1799 to Benjamin Tilden "from Halifax" (which Halifax, Vermont or Massachusetts - or possibly Nova Scotia -, is not recorded). Benjamin's wife died in 1806, and we are told that he shared ownership of the property with his two sons, Arunah (who moved to Hiram, Ohio) and Ariel, who also owned eight acres just north of the old county road, which ran south of what is now Taylor Brook Road. This acreage was apparently sold, along with Myrifiel, in 1815, when John Temple bought the property from the Tildens, who seem at that point to have left Heath altogether. We know that John Temple served in the War of 1812, and married Sarah (known as Sally), the daughter of Jonathan Taylor II and granddaughter of the first residents of Heath, Jonathan and Lucy Taylor, whose 1768 dwelling place is memorialized at the corner of Swamp and Taylor Brook Roads.

John and Sally Temple had 13 children, three of whom became physicians, presumably all born in the house the Temples occupied for 31 years, at which time it passed in 1846 to Horace Temple, who owned the house for another 26 years. At Heath's centennial in 1885, in her reminiscences of 60 years before, Mrs. Sarah C. Emerson named John Temple among the class of "middle aged, substantial, well to do farmers, with their large families numbering as high sometimes as twelve and fourteen. Those were the children that made the good schools at that time and for a few years later. They had only three months in summer, and not quite so much in winter, and the children felt that they must make the most of it. They excelled in spelling especially and mental arithmetic and reading. Indeed Heath was considered the model town of the country [meaning, we suspect, the "hill country," not the entire U.S.A.] for its Sunday school, its common school and its choir of singers." Elizabeth Taylor Ayer,

(*"The Magic of Myrifiel"* continued on page 5)

(*"The Magic of Myrifield"* continued from page 4)

sister of Sally Temple, wrote a letter for the centennial to her nephew Henry Temple, who, if he was a son of John, must have grown up at Myrifield, with memories of the time "when farmers' wives and daughters in good standing wore linen dresses of their own make to church, and also carried pocket handkerchiefs which came from the same source, and carried their best stockings and shoes in their pockets till they were in sight of the meeting house."

In 1872, the house passed from Horace Temple to Samuel K. Gleason, but did not leave the Temple family entirely, since Samuel had married the daughter of David Temple, and ten years later it again passed into the hands of a James C. Temple. The Temple family or families, one way or another, appear to have been involved in the ownership of Myrifield for almost the entire nineteenth century, from 1815 to 1903.

From 1903 to 1915, Myrifield was owned by Dr. Grace Wolcott, a physician who practiced in Boston and summered in Heath. When Dr. Wolcott bought the property, she made many alterations to accommodate her women patients. Myrifield, variously called her summer camp, retreat, and sanitarium, was for Dr. Wolcott a place where her "neurasthenic ladies," as they were called, could rest and recover with fresh air and natural foods. The latter were grown by the farmer Dr. Wolcott hired, who lived in the farmhouse on the other side of Avery Brook Road now owned by Richard and Dorothy Hulbert. A 1910 picture of Myrifield shows what the house looked like in Dr. Wolcott's time. In his



comprehensive history of Heath, Edward Calver notes that "[t]here was provision for occupational therapy, such as weaving, chair-caning, and pea-shelling; and there were out-buildings, including a laundry house." According to her obituary in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, Dr. Wolcott "was one of the first to try the system of providing occupation for nervous patients, a plan which is now in general use." At least two of Dr. Wolcott's patients fell in love with Heath and bought houses here. Miss Ethel Paine (who married John Moors in 1915) bought the Leavitt farm in 1906, originally the residence of Parson Jonathan Leavitt. Mrs. Moors restored the house and called it the Manse. A year later, another patient, Mrs. Mary (Nash) Crofoot of Omaha bought the Harrington farm on the Colrain Stage Road.

Although the out-buildings Calver mentioned are now gone, signs of Dr. Wolcott's sanitarium still existed when we bought Myrifield. There were two virtually identical bathrooms side by side with bathtubs on the second floor of the ell, and all but one of the rooms on the second story offered doorways leading outdoors,

either to the porches or to the verandah, perhaps in case of fire, though we have the impression it was more a desire on the part of Dr. Wolcott's nervous patients to feel they could get outside easily. The second-floor doorway and porch above the house's main entrance that appear in the 1910 photograph may have been constructed during her alterations or may well have been added during the nineteenth-century raising of the second story.

The second roof-raising may have occurred at this time to support and cover the ell's south-facing verandah. By 1912 the windows had shutters, and the west porch sported a second-story

porch with roof, accessed by doors from the two adjacent bedrooms. Outdoor stairs led down from the second-floor



south-facing verandah to the ground in the ell. The shutters, second-story west and southwest doorway porches, and outdoor stairs were removed by the Howlands to restore Myrifield to a more nearly original condition. The ell still has a manually operated elevator, which Dr. Wolcott installed some time after 1912.

By 1915, Dr. Wolcott had apparently not been well for some time, and had decided to spend the winter at Myrifield. It was here that, as her obituary notes, "her earthly life came to an end with a swiftness and directness characteristic of all she did." Calver writes that after Dr. Wolcott's death, "[s]ome of her grateful patients raised without authorization a stone memorial cross on the common, to the dismay of some of the Puritanical townspeople; consequently it went underground for a time but was exhumed and set up at the north end of the Center cemetery," where it stands to this day.

It was Dr. Wolcott who named the house Myrifield. We don't know why she chose that name, although it happens to have been the original name of Rowe before that town was incorporated. There are two explanations for the name, which produce variant pronunciations. In 1762, the Reverend Cornelius Jones first settled in what became Rowe and is said to have called his 10,000-acre property "My-Rye-Field," which became "Myrifield." This pronunciation - with a long vowel on the [y] - is used for our house by many of our fellow Heath townspeople. But another possible source for Myrifield's pronunciation is the Greek word *myriad*, which means 10,000. Because the Reverend Mr. Jones was indeed a minister, he probably knew his Latin and Greek, and so we have reverted to the classical pronunciation, in which the first syllable of Myrifield rhymes with "deer." Dr. Wolcott may have liked the idea of the name referring, somewhat hyperbolically, to the 500-odd acres that accompanied the property in her time, though she may also have known about the "My-Rye-Field" story.

(*"The Magic of Myrifield"* continued on page 6)

(*"The Magic of Myrifield"* continued from page 5)

After Dr. Wolcott's death, Myrifield passed into the hands of the Robbins family, whose best-known member was the theologian Howard Chandler Robbins, one of a coterie of prominent religious leaders who summered in Heath over the years. The eminent religious philosopher Reinhold Niebuhr lived at Myrifield for three summers in the early 1940s, when the house was owned by Dr. Robbins's sister, Dorothea Robbins Landon, and her husband William.

The Landons lived in Northampton, and used Myrifield as their summer retreat. Anna Foster, who lived next door to the Landons in Northampton, would often visit Myrifield on summer weekends, where Mrs. Landon, who loved children, would encourage them to dress up in period costumes. It was apparently Mrs. Landon who had the cottage north of the driveway, where the cellar hole still stands, moved to the lower meadow as a playhouse for the children. We have done nothing as yet with this cottage, although in the process of having its center floor beam mended, we discovered that the cottage, too, dates back to the 1790s.

Sydney Brown, widow of another eminent theologian who spent summers in Heath, Robert McAfee Brown, told us that she remembered a frog pond on the property. We are still investigating where it might have been.

By the 1970s, Myrifield had fallen progressively into disuse. When Dave and Pegge Howland bought the property in 1977, there was a tradition among the local children that Myrifield, which they called "The Asylum," was haunted. But if ghosts really did haunt Myrifield, they must have been friendly ones, as Anna Foster has noted. At the time the Howlands took possession of Myrifield, the gardens were completely overgrown, the porches that surrounded the main house were dilapidated, and the structure itself was unstable. As they worked on stabilizing the structure, the Howlands added a two-car garage on the north side in 1989, and converted the second-floor Back House into an apartment. Paul Burrington, the father of Heath artist Fred



Burrington, worked on this construction, and Fred lived there for several years. Dave and Pegge labored mightily to restore the house and grounds, until the property acquired the grace and charm we saw that brilliantly sunny cold morning in February.



## The Great Birds Among Us

Many years ago, on a trip in Alaska, I felt it a great privilege to see bald eagles perched in high scraggy trees along the water's edge near Glacier Bay. I made a point to remember the sight, thinking it was a once-in-a-lifetime treasure. I recall the vivid feel of that day, the way the light shone, the look of the many birds, so grand and casual all

at once. Life keeps surprising me, for which I am ever grateful, ever astonished.

Perhaps fifteen years ago, I heard from a dear friend, a nature conservator, that a couple of bald eagle nests were being protected, very hush-hush, on an island in the middle of the Connecticut River, just a jet-blast away from Bradley Airport. I was astounded at the thought that these great wild giants, our myth bird, would tolerate not just our urban proximity, but the roar and stench of planes. A few years back, I looked at Web pictures of eagles nesting along the river at Turner's Falls, and I'd heard snatches of stories about other nesting sites east and north of us and around Quabban. Still, I didn't expect them to be in my life, to be my birds like the wild turkeys now are.

It all started to change in a personal way when, two years ago, I looked up and saw flying quite high over my clearing the unmistakable profile of a bald eagle. You cannot mistake it for anything else, so distinctive is its profile and wing stroke in contrast with our regular high fliers. I kept that to myself, both as a treasured sight and also since I thought I'd not be believed. But I knew what I saw.

The clock speeds up. This spring, a car going east on Route 2 slammed on the brakes in front of me, stopping right in the middle of the highway near the Charlemont/Shelburne border. A flock of ditzzy birders jumped out, stood right there in the road and glassed the trees and sky over the Deerfield. I circled back, being Ms. Curious, and they told me they'd spotted a bald eagle. A few days later, I mentioned this to Joey at Deerfield Automotive and he said, ever so matter-of-fact, that the eagles perched right behind his shop all the time, don't you know. Well, I didn't or I'd have camped out behind the garage.

The sightings have piled up these last two months. First was the glorious view of a mature eagle flying west over the Deerfield as I drove east. Then a few weeks ago, another one cut directly overhead, only about 15 feet over me, looking huge and heading upstream from that dam by the 112 bridge. When I fish one of my favorite spots on the river, I often run into an old timer, Dick, who comes over the mountain from North Adams to that same good hole. We chat about how good or awful the fishing is, what insects are hatching, which flies are working or not, why sight fishing with dry flies is so much more fun than

(*"The Great Birds Among Us"* continued on page 7)



(*"The Great Birds Among Us"* continued from page 6)

nymphing along the bottom - the usual fishing blah blah. We also talk about what we see along the river in those long stretches when the fish aren't biting but it's too soon to give up and go do chores. In recent weeks, Dick saw an eagle make four successive talon-splayed passes over the pool at Carbus Bend, all without yielding the sought-for fish. Comforting to know his luck is sometimes as bad as ours. Another day, a pair flew upstream over the water - that must have been a knockout sight!

I know, I hope, that a few years off this will all be thought of as so ordinary and casual an event that we will not remark much. I'm reminded of my first sighting of wild turkeys, which I now take as a regular, though still special event. As I think about first one and then the other of these two fine birds, I believe I side with Ben Franklin who thought the wild turkey ought to be our national bird. But I'm happy to have the surfeit of riches, our land's natural history right here in the present, both these great native birds come home and in our midst.

~ Kathy Stein

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## Rays of Interest

### The Truth Will Tell

By Raymond Pettengill

There is a little body of water just above Wilson Lake in Maine called Rum Pond which is about 500 feet higher in elevation than Wilson with a trail leading up to it from Wilson. The trail is less than half a mile long but very steep and rocky and hard to climb. Back in the 1950s there were no camps on the pond and no road a car could use to get to it. The pond was so small that a seaplane with pontoons had to circle the pond while still on the water to roughen up the water enough so it could take off on one of the waves. Because of this the brook trout that were in it could get up to six pounds or so. The air service from Moosehead Lake had taken in boats that you could rent.

On one of the trips to Rum Pond with my father, father-in-law, and one of my sons, Kevin, aged seven or so, we rented one of these boats. As the boats were small I had them drop me off on a big rock some 100 feet offshore where I could fish all around while they moved to the other side of the pond. Because we did not carry in much food we needed lots of fish for breakfast so that morning my father-in-law had gone fishing in a brook that ran down into Wilson and had a lot of small hungry fish. We cleaned the fish in the water on the edge of the campground where we tented so there were a lot of fish heads lying on the sand in the water.

There was a five-fish limit per day per person on Rum Pond but as the limit for the brook was much higher we did not feel we were breaking the law. However, the fish heads were in the pond. We had not been fishing long before a small seaplane belonging to the Maine Fish and Game Department started to circle the pond. Kevin was a good fisherman and had caught six fish while my father and father-in-law had only caught three apiece. As the game warden's plane landed and was taxiing up to the boat my father said to Kevin, "If the game warden asks, you better tell him you only caught five fish." Kevin said, "I can't do that because dad told me never to tell a lie." As they only had twelve fish in the boat and could legally have had 15 the game warden just checked their licenses and then taxied over to my rock. When he asked me for my license I told him it was in my pack basket over at the campsite and if he would take me over there I could show it to him. Fortunately he believed me and though I did have a license he would have seen all those fish heads in the water and we would have been in real trouble trying to tell them they came from the brook and not the pond.

The moral to this story is, if you can't tell the truth without getting in trouble, you better keep quiet.



## ***Wild Ramblings***

# **Fueling the Fire**



**By Bill Lattrell**

Like a chipmunk gathering acorns in September, I find myself preparing for winter throughout the year, but in a slightly different way. For my entire life I have used wood as fuel for staying warm during the colder months. As a veteran of wood burning, I am keenly aware of the time and effort it takes to stockpile the necessary supplies of wood to sustain my family through the winter months.

My first involvement with this lifelong endeavor was stacking wood as a very young man. As a novice in wood stacking I managed to pile wood in such a fashion as to have the pile tumble over more than once. Since stacking wood is hard enough to begin with, I soon learned to pile the wood in a manner that would remain secure until it was time to be utilized. At about age nine I began sawing wood with a buck saw and managed to “get the wood in” in this manner until I learned to use a chain saw in my late teens. When I first started using a chain saw I was impressed with how much work it could do in a very short time, but I was unimpressed with how noisy it was. No longer was cutting wood a solitary endeavor that blended well with my surroundings.

Despite the noise of modern machinery I still enjoy working in the woods harvesting our family fuel supply. I am fortunate to be in good health and capable of managing the hard labor. Cutting wood helps to keep me in good shape, both physically and mentally.

When harvesting cordwood in our forest I try to be sensitive to the impacts I am about to make on the woods. Generally, I try to thin trees that are unhealthy. While cutting standing deadwood trees I try to leave at least twelve per acre for use by wildlife. I also recognize that while thinning trees it is wise to thin trees of different varieties to make sure to maintain a diverse balance of tree species, again for wildlife use.

My favorite part of cutting wood is splitting the larger pieces. I still split all my wood by hand with an eight-pound maul. Although I own a gas-powered hydraulic wood splitter I keep it loaned out so I am not tempted to use it. While splitting one piece of wood at a time I get to enjoy the quiet of the natural surroundings. I interrupt the solitude only with a loud thump from the dropping maul. If I remember correctly, it was Ben Franklin who said burning wood warms you thrice, once cutting the wood, once splitting the wood, and once when the log is on the fire.

When splitting wood I like to think about each piece. For instance, I am happy to see a nice straight piece of white ash in the pile. I know it will split cleanly and easily. I may be challenged by a piece of ironwood, knowing it will take considerable effort, and likely several hard throws of the maul to break it in two. With a piece of yellow birch I never know what to expect. Sometimes it splits easily, and sometimes I have to “power up” to manage the challenge.

The variety of hardwoods in our forest makes for an interesting woodpile. Black cherry, black birch, yellow birch, white birch, white ash, red oak, red maple, sugar maple, ironwood, beech, and hickory can all be found stacked in my cord woodpile this year. Each has individual qualities that I can enjoy and admire. Dry red maple is great for throwing on the coals to get the fire going in the morning, as is black cherry whereas ironwood, sugar maple, hickory, and beech are the best choices to keep the stove burning through the night. The difference in heat value between different hardwoods is staggering. Dry shagbark hickory will provide about 31 million BTUs of heat per cord, while dry black cherry manages only 23 million BTUs per cord. Knowing the heat value of wood can be helpful in choosing the best wood for the fire desired. If available, I like to burn cherry and white birch in the autumn and spring, and beech, hickory, sugar maple, and my absolute favorite, ironwood, in the dead of winter.

As I work on the woodpile with my maul I also like to think about the real value of each tree to the ecological balance in the forest. When I pick up a piece of red oak to split I am reminded that this tree may, in some years, provide the majority of the food for many mammals in the fall and winter months by the production of peak acorn crops. Similarly, as I wrestle with a piece of ironwood I might consider how this tree often dies on the stump and provides homes to dozens of insect species that in turn provide food for countless birds that excavate the wood to harvest the bugs. Later, the holes left by the excavator birds may be used by flying squirrels and small birds like chickadees for nesting.

And sometimes while splitting wood I think about nothing at all. Splitting wood can be remarkably meditative. The rhythm of splitting wood can be absolving: absolution from stress, absolution from worries, and absolution from the busy world that I find so troubling.

On most weekends, at some point in time, you can find me working on our fuel supply in one way or another. I try to chip away at this task by doing it a little at a time throughout the year. The only time I avoid processing wood is in the dead heat of summer when there is no need to heat things up more than they already are.

If I may, I would like to edit Ben Franklin’s thought on cutting wood. As I reflect on my experience of cutting wood it warms me not three, but four times: once when cutting the wood, once when splitting the wood, once when the log is on the fire, and once as it warms my soul.





## Green Thoughts

### Fall Cleanup



By Pat Leuchtman

October is still the golden season. The sun dazzles and turns the scarlet and gold hills to flame. The landscape is breathtaking. I cannot say the same for the garden. It is true that I still have leeks and kale to harvest. It is true that the brilliant pink Alma Potschke asters are blooming, as are occasional roses throughout the garden. Still, the season is over for many plants. It is time to get to work on fall chores and put the garden to bed.

One fall chore is dividing perennials. I had clumps of purple Siberian iris that had to be moved out of the way of thriving evergreen ground cover. I cut back the foliage and dug up the huge clumps and split them in half. I then did some cultivating of the soil, weeding around the area and mixing a bucketful or two of compost into the hole where I would replant one of the small clumps. I always welcome the opportunity to replant because it's a chance to enrich the soil beneath the plant's roots. After dividing any perennial it is important to give it a good deep watering. We had so much rain earlier in the summer but recently it has been dry so the watering is especially important.

The good thing about perennials is that they increase and make an increasingly generous show. The bad thing about perennials is that they increase and fill up their original space and become overcrowded. To maintain the scale of the garden and the good health of the plant perennials need to be divided every two or three years. I like dividing perennials in the fall because the air is crisp and invigorating. Also I feel plant roots do not cling so tenaciously to Mother Earth in the fall. The soil is easier to work and weeds easier to root out.

I have also been cutting back foliage. Whether or not they get divided, I like to cut back iris foliage so there isn't a slimy ragged mess for the new foliage to grow through in the spring. For the same reason I cut back daylilies, peonies, and other perennials like the Alma Potschke aster, achillea and coreopsis.

All this biomass from the flower gardens goes onto the compost pile along with the spent bean plants, squash and tomato vines, bolted lettuce, and the last broccoli sprouts that have gone to seed. Any regret I feel at the passing of summer bloom is mitigated by the pleasure of building a new big compost pile.

There are people who build their compost pile very neatly and scientifically. There is no area of my life that is neat and my compost pile is no exception. In addition to garden waste I am fortunate to have some henhouse cleanings. I layer the spent foliage and vines with chicken manure. I also layer in some fall leaves and any soil from potted plants that are not being carried over the winter. While I can still get to the compost easily I also throw kitchen peelings onto the compost pile.

In the winter I'll compost kitchen refuse in a black plastic compost bin that is first filled with a couple of bags of leaves. This bin is right on my path to the henhouse. I have found it best to locate the compost bin in a convenient spot; otherwise it doesn't get used.

You can use autumn leaves in any compost pile, but it is also possible to create compost from leaves alone. I have built a wire fencing frame three or four feet in diameter and about as high and filled it with autumn leaves. Since the leaves go into the frame over several weeks they can be packed down more firmly with each addition. They will start to break down very soon and you will find that you can put an unbelievable number of bags of leaves into such a frame.

Composting leaves turns them into wonderful fertilizer and soil conditioner for your garden. There are even some towns that collect leaves and garden refuse and compost them at their dump and recycling site. Residents make their deposits and when they need compost or wood chip mulch they are entitled to go and make a withdrawal.

As I try to trim and weed the garden in preparation for the spring it is also time to think about the lawn. Fall is the perfect time for liming the lawn. Liming changes the soil pH and makes the nutrients already in the soil more available to the grass roots. Lawn fertilizer is never on my shopping list. I rake lawn clippings when it is necessary, but otherwise I leave the fine clippings to decompose and enrich the soil. I consider it a form of sheet-composting, returning to the soil the nutrients the grass has removed.

I rarely accomplish all that could be done in the fall, but come spring I am very glad always that I made the attempt.



## Friends of the Heath School Library

### Mark your Calendars!

The Friends of the Heath School Library in conjunction with the World Eye Book Shop of Greenfield will hold their fourth Annual Book Fair at Heath School on Thursday, December 1, 2005, from 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Come and do your holiday shopping and enjoy the children's enthusiasm as they choose their books!

The individual classes will attend during the day. We will be there until 8:00 p.m. to accommodate the parents returning from work and/or picking up their children.

A selection of hardcover and paperback books for children and adults as well as 2006 calendars, bookmarks, and peace pins and magnets made by Helen Mackie will be for sale. In addition, there will be a special collection of books in the library for those wishing to give a holiday gift to the library.

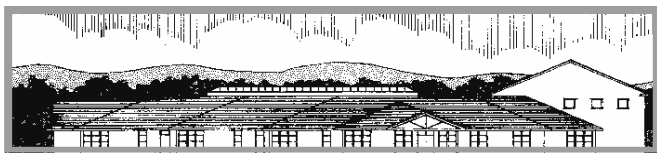
For those who plan ahead and have special requests, call in your list to Jane deLeeuw at 337-8594 or give it to Librarian Wanda Musacchio at the school, and we will order your selections for you.

All proceeds will go to purchase books for the Heath School Library to help make sure that our school library collection will continue to grow.

\*\*\*\*

The Friends would like to thank all who donated and bought to make our Fair Tag Sale a success.

## Heath School News



By Susan Todd

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Heath Elementary School and provides us with a great opportunity to appreciate the evolution of the school, to be grateful for all that the community has done to give this school life, and to reflect upon the next phase of our growth. It is a season when we can draw those people together who have given their heart and soul to the school, thank them afresh, and share memories and dreams.

As we begin this year, it is a thrill to report that this is the first time in our history that we have maintained a stable staff from our previous year. This is a significant step for our new school, and one that offers enormous benefits for our students. Consistency is essential for offering young children a reassuring environment for achievement. Our opening days have been devoted to welcoming everyone back from a truly beautiful summer and spending our energies laying the foundations for providing an excellent year of learning.

**Planning Retreats.** The week before school opened both the LEC and the staff conducted planning retreats. On August 23 the LEC held a potluck gathering to discuss ways this important group could become more effective in advising the principal in developing and implementing its School Improvement Plan. Pam Porter has done an exceptional job in facilitating our meetings with creativity and focus. The staff met for a brunch two days later during which we looked at ways that the ordinary, everyday happenings at our school could become vital avenues for teaching. An example of the ideas that were generated was role-playing during our All School gatherings. On September 16, to mark Constitution Day, we invited James Madison (aka David Gott) to speak with the students about how classrooms and governments organize themselves. Mr. Madison was especially amusing as he was trying to evade the question about whether or not women could vote during his time.

**The Carroll Stowe Handshake.** Carroll Stowe was always at our school on Fridays and sometimes stayed for All School. I remembered my first weeks at Heath and how Carroll and I shook hands - he explaining how important it was for children to understand how to shake hands in the right way. In fact, he agreed to come before the school and demonstrate this skill. At the first All School this year, I shared that memory with the students and decided that we would name a handshake after Carroll Stowe. Surely we will provide something much more tangible for his memory here at Heath, but meanwhile, I hope that the Carroll Stowe Handshake will take hold, for it reflects all his values - the firm grip, the eye contact, and the use of one's name.

**Tutoring Grant.** The United Way of Franklin County

has awarded the Heath School an After School Tutoring Grant of \$850 toward providing tutoring support for its students from October until May. The PTP will also support this initiative as part of its enrichment mission for our students. Although the elementary schools in our district no longer receive funding for academic support, the Heath School has determined that after school tutoring is extremely important and should continue to be included in its School Improvement Plan. If there are any community volunteers who would like to help tutor students, please don't hesitate to call the school.

**BJ's Partnership.** Heath Elementary is very fortunate to benefit this year from BJ's Adopt-a-School Program. On September 22 we participated in a reception at the store to mark our partnership around fund-raising and service learning projects. Both BJ's and Heath are celebrating their tenth anniversaries this year, so it is fitting that we are spending it working together.

**All School Hike.** The destination for our All School Hike this year will be Fort Shirley in Heath. As an EIC school we are consciously choosing areas within our town borders to explore and become familiar with, and this year we will be learning more about the history of this section of town. Last year during EIC week every class chose different areas in and around Heath to visit - including Burnt Hill Blueberry Farm, the Burrington House Underground Railroad site, Bob Dane's glassblowing studio, and the Maitland Forest vernal pool, among others. On the last day the new sixth graders walked from the Heath School to Rowe Pond! (Perhaps that will become a yearly pilgrimage.)

**Davis Bates Storytelling.** A Heath Arts Council grant will bring Davis Bates to the Heath School at Halloween to work with the students on storytelling techniques. We look forward to his visit and the opportunity for our students to experiment with ways to bring suspense and excitement to their audience through the art of storytelling.

**Sensory Room.** This year our classroom configurations are such that we were able to set aside a classroom dedicated to our special needs students who have specific sensory needs. There is now space for the equipment and assistive technology that enable these children to learn effectively. We have a wonderful team headed by Val Lively and Tom Dean, who, along with our one-on-one IAs, Trish Archambault, Sandy Gilbert, Marilyn Klockars, and Diane Rogers, all do amazing work.

The community is always welcome to visit the Heath School. And if you would like to help us plan a tenth year celebration, please let us know.

## HOLIDAY FAIR

Community Hall (upstairs)  
Sat., Nov. 5 - 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Morning coffee and lunch



## Heath School Parent-Teacher Partnership News

We'd like to take this opportunity, with the fall issue of the *Herald*, to introduce or reacquaint town members with the work of the Heath School Parent-Teacher Partnership (PTP). We are parents, school staff, and community members working together to enrich the educational and extracurricular experiences of our students, as well as to support our school staff in myriad ways. We serve also as one important link between the school community and the Heath community at large. We invite you to join us in our vital work in this our 10th year!

The PTP's support of educational and extracurricular enrichments is especially important at this time as our school contends with budgetary constraints. Here are a few of the many programs we support throughout the year: After School Sports Programs, Drama Club, Winter Enrichment, All School Hike, Halloween Party, MCAS Tutoring, Roadside Cleanup, Storytelling and Musical Performance and the list goes on.

The schedule of our organizational meetings for the fall is as follows:

Thursday, November 3 @ 3:30 pm

Thursday, December 1 @ 6:30 pm

Our meetings are short, productive, and fun! Child care and refreshments are provided. We welcome input and support from all sectors.

We are very grateful to B.J.'s Wholesale Club in Greenfield for choosing the Heath School for their "Adopt-A-School Program" this year. We will receive gift certificates and donations throughout the year from B.J.'s to support our many activities. Thank you, B.J.'s!

Finally, we invite all Heathans to join us at our annual Halloween Party on Sunday, October 30, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at the Fairgrounds. A spooky time will be had by all!

PTP Officers '05 -'06

*Dawn Holden, Co-Chair*

*Dana Blackburn, Co-Chair*

*Robin Jenkins, Treasurer*

*Valerie Lively, Secretary*



*The "Reunion Art Exhibition" held at the Heath Community Hall in August featured the works of Keith Cerone, Justin Lively, Tucker Litchfield and Tim Porter-De Vriese.*

## Heath Historical Society Annual Meeting



*Featured speakers Don and Margaret Freeman.*

"The Magic of Myrifiield - Evolution of a Heath Landmark" was the title of the featured talk at the September 27<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Heath Historical Society. Donald and Margaret Freeman gave an illustrated presentation on the life and restoration of historic Myrifiield, a landmark on Avery Brook Road and their present home.

First, the members and guests enjoyed a buffet supper catered by the Heath Senior Center Committee. Many thanks to Val Kamphfer and Eileen Tougas for an excellent meal and presentation.

President Jack Cable called the annual meeting to order. He then called on the Reverend Murray Newman who in turn announced that Carroll Stowe had never been a member of the Society although he had worked diligently on many of its projects. To rectify this several members had collected enough money to make Carroll a life member posthumously, dating from when he had first moved to Heath from Colrain in 1959. The members soundly approved.

A prayer for members who had died during the previous year; the secretary, treasurer, and curator reports, and the election of officers followed. Both Ned Wolf, secretary, and David Howland, treasurer, were reelected.

Michael Coe announced that his book, *The Line of Forts: Historical Archaeology on the Frontiers of Colonial Massachusetts*, which, of course, includes Fort Shirley, would soon be published. The Society will feature the author and his work at a Fort Shirley Day in 2006.

The Society is blessed (as is the president) to have a dedicated board of directors who give 110%. At a recent meeting, the board decided to open the Old Town House and the Center Schoolhouse museums to the public on the first Saturday of the month from May to October. All are welcome. Members bring your friends to view these excellent collections of Heath's history.

*~ Jack Cable,  
President*

## Selectboard's Report

The Selectboard meets every other Tuesday night at 7:00 p.m. in Sawyer Hall.

**Cemetery Commission Appointment** - Gerry Gilbert has been appointed to the Cemetery Commission. Many improvements to the Center Cemetery have been accomplished in the past few years, including the incorporation of a donation of additional property. Gerry has been involved as a volunteer in many of the improvements. We look forward to working with him as a full member of the Commission. We also extend our thanks to Dick Gary and to Bob and Del Viarengo for their work on the Center Cemetery planning and improvements.

**New Police Officer** - Lee Lively was appointed to the Heath Police Department in August. He has been working on various certifications that police officers are required by the state to complete. Lee joins Chief of Police Margo Newton and Officer Chris Lannon who is also a recent appointee.

**Whittemore Spring** - Work is being done by the property owners to preserve the Whittemore Spring and to comply with the order from the Department of Environmental Protection to initiate a regimen of water quality testing. A fund has been established to receive donations for the preservation of this historic resource and site. If anyone wishes to contribute please send donations to The Preservation of the Whittemore Spring Fund c/o the Heath Historical Society, Main Street, Heath, MA 01346.

**Three-Town Landfill** - Work is progressing on the capping of the former landfill. The refuse material has been consolidated in the center of the site and mounded for capping, and fill material has been placed over the pile to shape it for drainage. Soon an elastomeric sheet membrane will be installed, covered with impervious fill and landscaped with loam and grass seed. Burrington Hill Road has been closed in times when there is heavy truck traffic to avoid the possibility of an accident with local traffic.

The Town of Heath has recently obtained a short-term loan for its share of the landfill capping costs. We are still awaiting action from the legislature regarding a grant to offset some of the costs of the project.

**Fall Schedule** - The Board has resumed meeting on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 in Sawyer Hall for the fall unless otherwise posted. Meetings will be every other week until January when preparation of the budget for the next fiscal year may require weekly meetings.

**High Speed Internet Access** - High Speed Internet access may be coming to the Town Hall soon as the Board of Health will be receiving a T 1 telephone line from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. This line will be available to others through the local computer network in Sawyer Hall. Unfortunately, the line will be provided free of charge for only one year.

**Heath On-line** - Take some time to visit the Town's Web site at [www.townofheath.org](http://www.townofheath.org). You'll find Selectboard meeting minutes, school information, and much more. The Web site is a work in progress. Thanks to the computer committee for getting this project up and running. You may contact

the Board at [www.BOS@townofheath.org](mailto:www.BOS@townofheath.org). Send messages to any board or individual via the e-mail address or visit the Heath Web site.

~ Heath Selectboard  
Thomas Lively, Chair  
Brian De Vriese  
Sheila Litchfield

## Our New Town Coordinator



Gloria Fisher, our new Town Coordinator, sees her position as a "dream come true." For 30 years she commuted to Amherst to the University of Massachusetts, two hours a day, where she worked in the Continuing Education Department, first as an assistant to the registrar for conference services and ending as the Coordinator for Public Relations and Communications.

Living the commuter life all those years, unable to take part in community life, her fantasy was to be able to work where she lived and to become part of the community. She and her former husband moved to Heath in 1974. She had always known that jobs in Heath were scarce so when she read the recent advertisement for the town coordinator's job, she jumped at it.

A native of Minneapolis, she lived in Minnesota until the family moved to Natick when she was fourteen. When she enrolled at the University of Massachusetts as an undergraduate, she discovered western New England and fell in love with the area and its beauty. Coming from the eastern part of the state, she says she didn't really know "it was there." She studied English, psychology, and sociology for three years before going to work for the University.

Here in Heath she lived in a rustic cabin for twelve years and says that for the first five, Whittemore Spring was her water source. She then designed her present, one and one-half-story, energy-efficient house and had it built to her specifications. It includes passive solar heat, thicker-than-standard walls, and slate flooring to absorb and retain the heat. She feels it is too small only when her large family that includes her dad and stepmother, her two brothers and three sisters, come to visit. All, with the exception of her sister in Minnesota, are within driving distance.

Gloria took early retirement from UMass but left knowing she still had to work. At first she did free lance proofreading and writing but found that she missed people so she then took a job at the Visitors Center in Greenfield before applying for the Heath town coordinator's job. "It's worked out well," she says.

**Welcome, Gloria.**  
**The University's loss = Our gain!**



## Library Lines

### Summer In Review



By Charlene Churchill

Summer Reading Program: We've completed another busy summer at your library. The theme of this year's statewide Summer Reading Program was: Going Places @ Your Library. Twenty-three children took part in the program this year. Each participant received a certificate of completion, a \$10 Gift Card to World Eye Book Shop in Greenfield, and a summer reading program T-shirt. The Gift Cards and T-shirts were purchased with funds provided by The Friends of the Heath Free Public Library, Inc.

Everyone who turned in their reading logs by August 27 had their names entered in our end of the summer prize drawing. A. J. Maroney's name was drawn for the grand prize of two tickets to the "Big E." His sister, Francesca, and Joshua Rode were drawn as the winners of \$10 gift cards to World Eye Book Shop.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and local public libraries sponsor the Summer Reading Program. The major goals of the program are to encourage children to develop a love of reading and to help them to become familiar with all the resources available to them at the public libraries throughout our country. Wherever they live throughout their lifetime, they hopefully will have access to a public library.

1,000,000 Pennies: As part of the library's exhibit at the Heath Fair we started a drive to collect one million pennies. (How many dollars is that?) This money will go toward building our new library. Collect your pennies (and other spare change) and drop them off at the library to help us reach our goal!

Carroll Stowe memories: Carroll's use of the library, like many of his other activities, was governed by the change of the seasons. He didn't have any time to read in the late spring, summer, and early part of the fall since he was busy with all the outside work he did. When November came around again Don Purrington and I were kept busy finding books that Carroll might like to read. He would not read anything that "wasn't true." Most books he checked out, only one book at a time in most cases, were usually returned with a review the next time the library was open.

Some of Carroll's books came through Inter Library Loan from other libraries in Massachusetts. Some came from as far away as the Midwest and the state of Washington. Often his specialized reading tastes meant that only one or two libraries in the country had the book he wanted, and he often thought the book was so good that he couldn't understand why every library didn't have it!

Library Fact: Public library staff answered almost 105,000 reference questions per week across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 2004.

New at the Library: Adult Fiction: *Until I Find You* by John Irving, *Plain Song* and *Eventide* by Kent Haruf, *Interruption of Everything* by Terry McMillan, *Angry Housewives Eating Bon Bons* by Lorna Landvik, *Fire Sale* by Sarah Paretsky, *Lifeguard* by James Patterson, *Patriots Club* by Christopher Reich, *Diana Lively Is Falling Down* by Sheila Curran, and *No Country For Old Men* by Cormac McCarthy.

Juvenile/Young Adult: *Lightening Thief* by Rick Riordan, *Ready or Not* by Meg Cabot, *Castle In the Air* by Diana Wynne Jones, and *Eldest* by Christopher Paolini.

DVDs: *The Aviator*, *The Incredibles*, *Troy*, *The Story of the Weeping Camel*, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, *National Velvet*, and *Spirited Away*.

### New Library Capital Campaign

The Heath Free Public Library is on the move, figuratively and literally. After more than a century in Sawyer Hall, the trustees have successfully petitioned the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for a grant that will cover approximately 50% of the cost of building a new home on part of the Bray Road property owned by the Town. What about the rest? "The Capital Campaign Committee is busy laying the groundwork to raise the rest," said Deborah Porter, chair of the Board of Trustees. "It's a wonderful replay of the library's first move, when friends raised the money to build Sawyer Hall specifically to house it."

The Friends of the Heath Free Public Library will act as the receiving agent for donations. The group has filed for incorporation and has received its federal tax identification number. An application for tax-exempt status under section 501 c3 of the Internal Revenue Code is pending. And the timing of the campaign? "We'll begin it shortly, and we are aiming to complete it within nine months," said Campaign Committee chair Eric Grinnell. "The sooner we build, the more we save in costs."

~ Eric Grinnell



# Heath Fair

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MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL

"This publication is supported in part by a grant from the Heath Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency."

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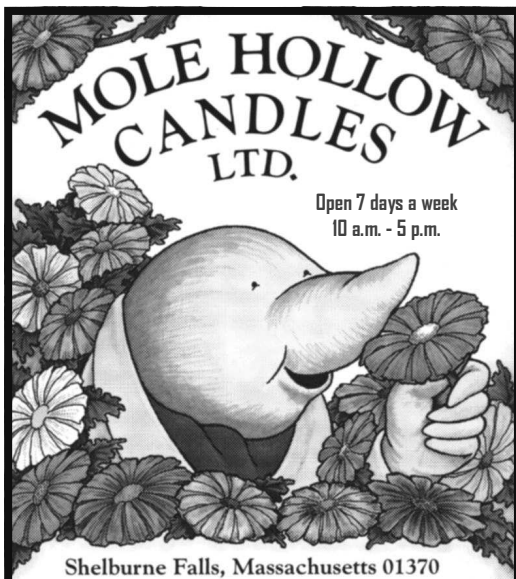
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## The Gift of Forests

*"Without the forests, we should, indeed,  
live in a desolate desert."*

Thus wrote Harold O. Cook in his little book *Fifty Years a Forester*, published in 1961. Cook knew there was a constant need for "watchful care," as he put it, "to see that good management of water, forests, soil and wildlife, all vital to man's survival on this planet, continue unhindered."

Harold Cook joined the office of the Massachusetts State Forester in 1907, having graduated from Harvard School of Forestry that was moved from Cambridge to Petersham, Massachusetts. It was here that the Harvard Forest was born, thanks to a gift of \$50,000 for the purchase of the 2,000 acre tract.

In 1908 the reforestation law was enacted by the State Legislature, allowing owners of private woodlands to deed their properties to the state for a period of ten years during which time the state would replant the land with trees. After ten years the owners could reclaim their improved woodlands by paying the actual cost of reforestation. Those who chose not to lost their property to the state.

One such parcel was 450 acres in Colrain which became the basis of one of the state's finest forests. Some of this parcel lies in the town of Heath and you can drive through it either from Route 8A North, taking a right onto State Farm Road just beyond Pettingill's. Or you can continue on 8A just over the line into Whitingham and take a right onto McMillan Road, or follow Ed Clark Road off of Adamsville Road in Colrain for a few miles to the entrance, marked by a large rock designating the Cook Forest (the plaque has been removed.)

I first became interested in the origin and condition of the Cook Forest this past June when Cook's niece, Martha Morrell, came to visit Dot and Ken Stetson along with two of Martha's former teachers at Clark School for the Deaf in Northampton where she, Martha, had been a student. These teachers happened to be friends of Dot and prevailed upon Ken to take them through the forest that Martha's uncle Harold Cook loved so much.

As a guest that day I caught their enthusiasm and just had to learn more. What I remembered most about the forest as a child was the CCC.\* encampment there in the 1930s. Roads and trails were built, streams cleared, and underbrush eliminated, in general beautification.

Cook wrote that in 1910 104,000 four-year-old spruce, 105,000 five-year white pine, and 110,000 two-year ash were planted. In 1911 135,000 two-year white pine were added. He was in charge of the planting with a Finnish crew from Gardner and Fitchburg. The crew lived at the Lowe farm on Christian Hill. It seems the ash did not do so well due to deer and rabbit browsing, but the spruce and pine thrived and became the most successful in the state, still growing strong at the time of his writing in 1961.

But my interest has gone beyond the forest itself and has developed into a correspondence with Martha in California and H.O. Cook's daughter, Charlotte, in Rockland, Maine, and his granddaughter, Kitty, in Winslow, Maine. It has even included a

visit in August to Rockland to get a glimpse of Charlotte's scrapbook in which she meticulously kept notes and clippings about her father and the forest. I felt "compelled" to see them.

Charlotte, now in her 80s, was most gracious in sharing her memoirs, even making copies of the newspaper articles about her father and, in particular, about the dedication of the forest on October 5, 1967. I was not living in Heath at the time so knew nothing about the event. I wonder if anyone in town remembers, or even knew about it. The dedication was attended by many officials from the Massachusetts Department of Natural Resources as well as by Charlotte Cook, Martha Morrell, and granddaughter Kitty Bammer and family.

In October Martha will be making a return visit, hopefully to be joined by Charlotte and Kitty and myself. It may interest you to know that, even though the plaque is missing from the rock at the entrance on Ed Clark Road, a short distance into the forest, less than a mile, you can find a large rock set back from the road a few yards on the right in a small clearing. This rock is engraved with the following inscription:

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Division of Forest and Parks**

**HAROLD O. COOK STATE FOREST**

**Dedicated in grateful and lasting appreciation**

**Of his devoted and distinguished service**

**FORESTER-CHIEF FORESTER, DIRECTOR OF  
FORESTRY**

**For more than half a century.**

**1907-1962**

Sadly, Mr. Cook did not live to see the dedication; he died in May, 1962. Sadly, too, is the condition of the forest today. It does not seem to have been tended to as well as some of the neighboring state forests. Many trees have fallen and left in clutter, and accumulations of underbrush and the badly rutted roads speak of neglect. But those stately pines remain as a tribute to H.O. Cook, the Forester, and the CCC. workers who helped maintain them during their years there, and also to the work of the Monroe Prison inmates who were brought in for maintenance.

I urge you all to take a ride through this lovely corner of Heath and Colrain before the roads are closed for the winter, and give thanks for the vision of Harold O. Cook who knew that watchful care is still needed for good management of these precious resources, for "without the forests we live in a desolate desert."

H.O. Cook's book, *Fifty Years A Forester* can be found in our Heath Library. Perhaps there will be more on the life and times of H.O. Cook in a future article.

~ Lois Stetson Buchiane

*\*The CCC or Civilian Conservation Corps was established in 1933 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt as an emergency response to the Great Depression and was designed to put Americans back to work. The CCC's two-fold mission was to reduce unemployment, especially among young men, and to preserve the nation's natural resources. Many of the Corp's projects centered around forestry, flood control, prevention of soil erosion, and fighting forest fires.*

## Heath Business Directory

**Bald Mountain Pottery**  
625-8110

**The Benson Place**  
Blueberries & Applesauce  
337-5340

**Fred Burrington**  
Artist  
337-4302

**Coursey Design**  
Interior architecture & design  
337-4751

**D.C. Builders**  
Branch Hill Road  
337-4705

**Robert Delisle**  
Electrician  
337-5716

**Russell E. Donelson**  
Design/Construction/Cabinetry  
337-4460

**Jerry Ferguson**  
Handyman - Lic. Electrician  
337-4317

**Earl M. Gleason**  
Fire Equipment  
337-4948

**Heath Brook Studio**  
Glass and Baskets  
337-5736

**Maple Ledge Farm**  
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## ***The Way It Is In The Country***

*"If it's old, works well and has a purpose in life, don't change it."*

**Heath Sounds**

By Carroll Stowe

*Editors Note: We are reluctant to let ever-faithful writer Carroll go.. We will reprint his columns for several issues and then from time to time..*

I have always been intrigued by various sounds. Every area has sounds that are the same as those of another area but some sounds are unique to a particular section.

A chain saw will shatter the pristine quiet of an early morning and I can wonder to myself if I know who's using that saw? If it's in our area of town I am apt to be familiar with the operator, and I can understand that here's a sound being created by someone cutting logs to feed a sawmill or perhaps building a firewood pile. In either case that sound has to do with earning a living.

The slam and loud report of the swinging tailgate on a dump truck. As with the chain saw operator I wonder if I know the driver of that truck. In this area I'm apt to. There is a knack to slamming a tailgate and it was rather difficult for me to learn. But learn it you do and it is the best way to keep the dump body clean.

While I would rather know that a team of horses was doing a tractor's work, I do like to hear the various tractor-created sounds that help folks put food on the table.

The combined sounds of a tractor at the task of turning a mower conditioner are rather pleasing. All mower conditioners sound the same and all have sounds that differ to the operator's ears. They rumble, thump, chatter and the hay flows out the back in nice smelling swaths.

All haying machinery has a sound to identify it at a distance and out of site. The hay baler is a rather interesting piece to create strange sounds to unfamiliar ears; the steady thump of the plunger as it packs and slices the hay, and every time it makes a revolution the governor\* opens on the tractor to fill its fuel needs. That contrast up-and-down rhythm is pleasing to hear but when it stops for a breakdown the ears might experience sounds from the operator not so pleasant!

The rapid swish and click as the needles make their round-trip is a sound you listen for. With those rumbles, swishes, clicks, and thumps, hay is made ready for the barn and winter feed for this town's variegated animal population.

There is a rather strange sound that deals with the feeding of animals and that is the sound of a feed blower as it pushes bulk feed into the storage bin. This blower handles all manner of animal concentrate feed and creates a penetrating hum that can, when air currents are right, be heard at some distance. A number of years ago I heard this strange noise and was troubled that I was unable to identify it. Quite by accident I learned what that distant hum was and felt rather foolish to not figure it out. I myself had operated a truck with that type of feed blower and had caused the same hum but couldn't identify this one. The feed truck was filling the storage at Fred Crowningshield's.

Here in Heath we can hear a partridge drum, a bear hoot, a church bell peal, or a freight train whistle. I like to hear the deep jingle of the double rings on an ox yoke as the cattle travel without a load.

The same sounds of Heath can be heard elsewhere in this area, but I like to hear them from Sumner Stetson Road.

\* governor - an attachment to a machine (as a gasoline engine) for automatic control.

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## **Whittemore Spring Update**

As many of you know, in lieu of flowers, the Stowe family has requested that donations be made to The Preservation of The Whittemore Spring Fund in care of The Heath Historical Society. The Society's Board of Directors has established a separate account for the fund that at this writing exceeds \$1,300.00.

The owners of the property on which the source of the spring is located are planning to install tiles to encase the spring and then to have it retested. Everyone is making a significant effort to preserve this historic site.

~ Jack Cable

## MOHAWK TRAIL SAFE HOMES PARENT NETWORK

### *Seeking Committee Members, Parent and Community Support*

The Mohawk Trail Safe Homes Parent Network has begun its second year promoting communication among parents to foster a safe social environment for West County youth. Last year, almost 50% of Mohawk families joined the network, pledging to supervise all youth gatherings/parties at their homes; not to allow the possession of or use of alcohol, marijuana or other drugs by youth in their homes or on their property; not to tolerate violence by youth in their homes or on their property; and to establish regular communication with their children about where they are going, whom they are with, what their plans are, and when they plan to return home.

Safe Homes encourages all parents of Mohawk students to join the network by signing the pledge, which can be found in the Mohawk summer mailing (received by parents in early August) and with the handbook and other notices brought home by students on August 30.

The Safe Homes parent committee meets the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. at Mohawk. The next meeting will be on November 1 in Room 104. The committee invites parents and community members to attend meetings, and is looking for some new active committee members.

In addition to parent support, the Safe Homes Parent Network seeks broad-based community support for its mission. Businesses, local town governments including law enforcement, social service agencies, houses of worship, civic and service groups, health care providers, and local legislators are invited to sign a Community Support Statement, which includes the option of being listed in the 2005-2006 Safe Homes Resource Guide to be published this fall.

For further information, contact Rachel Stoler (CCT) at 774-1194, ext. 116.

### Heath's Monthly Precipitation (inches)

(Observed by Heath School Staff and Students)

	<u>Rain</u>
From July 11 '05	2 ½ "
August	3 ¾ "
Up to Sept. 11, '05	0"

#### In This Reporting Period:

The highest temperature was on July 19 and 27: 90 degrees.

The coldest temperature was on September 11: 38 degrees.

It was warm and humid during this period with not much beneficial rain, as the heaviest part of the many thunderstorms went around us. Hurricane Katrina passed us to our west giving us a breezy, on-and-off wet day.

## Community Calendar

### October

- October 6** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.
- October 7** - Library Story Hour, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., every Friday, except November 25, until the end of the year.  
- Heath School All School Hike to Fort Shirley (rain date October 14)
- October 12** - School Committee Meeting, Buckland-Shelburne, 7:00 p.m.
- October 14** - Family Movie Night, Heath School, 7:00 p.m.
- October 16** - The Academy at Charlemont Admissions Open House, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
- October 17-21** - Mohawk Trail Regional High School Booster Week
- October 20-21** - Heath School Parent-Teacher Conferences
- October 20** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.  
- LEC Meeting, Heath School, 4:30 p.m.
- October 21** - Mohawk Trail Regional High School Booster Game, 7:00 p.m.
- October 28** - District In-Service Day. No school.

### November

- November 3** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.  
- PTP Meeting, Heath School, 3:30 p.m.
- November 5** - Heath Ladies Aid Holiday Sale, Heath Union Church, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
- Holiday Sale, Community Hall (upstairs), 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
- The Academy at Charlemont, Cornucopia Auction, 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.
- November 9** - School Committee Meeting, Mohawk Trail Regional High School, 7:00 p.m.
- November 17** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.  
- LEC Meeting, Heath School, 4:30 p.m.
- November 18** - Family Movie Night, Heath School, 7:00 p.m.
- November 24** - **Thanksgiving**

### December

- December 1** - Friends of the Heath School Library Annual Book Fair. Heath School, 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

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## Town Nurse Notes

# Dangers of Tobacco



By Joanne Fortune, RN

There's a lot of literature about the dangers of tobacco; some of it's undoubtedly true and some of it is absolutely false. Most of it is factual but tailored in such a way to support a certain interest. I'm writing this piece on the straight facts about tobacco. Which chemicals are really in cigarettes, how they got there, and the addictive quality of nicotine as compared to other drugs.

I have heard some amazing things about the chemicals in nicotine and cigarettes. Some people would have you believe that tobacco is dipped in industrial and nuclear waste to "preserve the flavor." There are over four thousand chemicals in cigarettes, but this statement is a little misleading because everything (the air, the water, this paper, me, you) is made up of chemicals.

The story of how the chemicals get in the tobacco starts in the tobacco field. Tobacco produces a natural insecticide to prevent insects from eating its leaves. Unfortunately, that insecticide isn't strong enough. Tobacco plants are susceptible to many insects, weeds, diseases, and fungi, and the farmer uses pesticides, herbicides, fumigants, and fungicides to keep the plants "healthy." Unlike food, there is not a good regulatory system to ensure that tobacco has safe levels of pesticides, and up to sixteen applications may be applied throughout the growing season. More than 450 pesticides are registered with the Environmental Protection Agency to be used on tobacco crops.

Three examples of chemicals used are:

- (1) Aldicarb: (dichloromethane): Dichloromethane is a cousin of the highly effective yet environmentally damaging pesticide Dichloro-Diphenol-Trichloro-Ethane, better known as DDT. Dichloromethane is linked to genetic defects as well as problems with kidneys, liver, hearing, and vision. It's both carcinogenic and mutagenic.
- (2) Chlorpyrifos: This is another chlorine-based insecticide that affects the nervous system by inhibiting an enzyme important in the transmission of nerve impulses. It damages blood and lymph cells and can damage the male reproductive system or cause human birth defects.
- (3) Telone is a highly toxic soil fumigant that can cause respiratory problems, skin and eye irritation, and kidney damage.

After the tobacco is harvested, it must be cured in tobacco barns. Almost all tobacco barns built since the early 1970s are equipped with propane heaters. Traditionally, these heaters vented their exhaust into the tobacco barns where it has been found to combine with the tobacco creating certain tobacco-specific nitrosamines. These have been deemed to be carcinogenic.

As if it couldn't get any worse, one additive, ammonia, allows more of the nicotine in the cigarette to boil and it also adds flavoring!

Tobacco crops deplete soil nutrients so farmers use an abundance of fertilizers. Phosphate fertilizer (the 15 in 10-15-10) contains natural radioactivity. Radioactive radon gas is absorbed and trapped in apatite rock that is mined to formulate the phosphate fertilizers. Radon produces polonium, an element that evaporates when burned. The consequence of this, a small amount of radioactive polonium is deposited in the smoker's respiratory system.

Finally, that cigarette is rolled, packaged, and ready to be burned and inhaled. You put back the recliner, turn on the tube, and light up. As soon as you put lighter to tip, chemical reactions start happening that mean some dangerous chemicals become harmless, some harmless chemicals become dangerous, and some just stay the same. Kind of throws a monkey wrench into everything I've already said, but you can expect that what's left of the pesticides and herbicides on the plant aren't going to become a whole lot safer by marrying an oxygen molecule. One bad thing that comes from burning a cigarette (or burning anything for that matter) is carbon monoxide.

When you inhale oxygen, the red blood cells temporarily attach to the oxygen molecules and truck them to the cells where they are used. When you inhale carbon monoxide, because of its chemical makeup, the red blood cells permanently attach to it and become useless. Only state workers should spend their day trucking the same payload back and forth. The cells have to live, die, and be replaced before the capacity to move oxygen will return. An inefficient oxygen transport mechanism will result in a buildup of carbon dioxide (created by the engines in your muscles) characterized by muscle and gut pain while working or exercising. In fact, an inefficient oxygen transport mechanism messes with all the organs of the body.

If you don't smoke cigarettes then you must be a very patient reader, and it is good to consider the addictive qualities of tobacco. Tobacco seems more benign than other drugs because the intoxication is less spectacular than that of other drugs. However, research\* into what makes drugs addictive has shown that the amount of intoxication that a drug affords has little to do with what kind of withdrawal it has in store or how much tolerance the average user will build up. According to the Henningfield ratings, nicotine intoxication is considered less serious than alcohol, heroin, cocaine, and cannabis, but nicotine's withdrawal symptoms are classified as worse than those of cocaine or cannabis, but not as bad as those of alcohol or heroin. Believe it or not, overall dependence rating (difficulty quitting, relapse rate and likelihood of users becoming addicted) is higher than that of any of the other drugs listed.

(\**"Dangers of Tobacco"* continued on page 23)

## Milestones

**Donald E. Hillman** of Colrain died on September 9, 2005. Born in Colrain on January 1, 1922, he was the son of John and Florence Newton Hillman.

In addition to his wife of 29 years, Margaret Ryan Hillman, he is survived by two sons, Ralph W. Hillman of Enfield, CT, and Russell M. Hillman of Belmont, NH; two daughters, Cynthia J. Grenne of Belmont and Tina M. Magnan of Ware; four stepchildren, Michael W. Jones of Arkansas, Sharon M. Betit of Putney, VT, Brent A. Jones of Brattleboro, VT, and Carol M. Jones of Colrain; three brothers, **Smead Hillman** of Heath, Russell Hillman of Turners Falls, and John Hillman of Brattleboro; four sisters, Bessie Sessions of Agawam, Eunice Terrill of Shelburne Falls, Hazel Gilbert of Charlemont, and Flora Spencer of New Port, FL; fifteen grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren.

**Carroll B. Stowe** died on August 18, 2005. Born in Greenfield on August 29, 1931, he was the son of Edward B. and Hazel A. Denison Stowe.

A 1950 graduate of the Arms Academy of Shelburne Falls, he served as a truck driver for the Towns of Rowe and Heath for 27 years and as a spare driver for both towns following his retirement.

An active member of the Heath community, he was a long-time member of the Heath Union Church and of the Heath Agricultural Society and its annual fair committee.

He wrote a column for the *Heath Herald*, "The Way It Is In The Country," beginning in 1979. A collection of his columns was published by the *Herald*, with financial help from the Heath Historical Society, in conjunction with the celebration of the paper's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2004.

In 2002, the Charlemont Lions Club honored Carroll for his countless contributions to his community with the Doc Streeter Award for Volunteerism. This award was especially meaningful since Doc Streeter was one of Carroll's heroes.

In addition to his wife of 45 years, **Margaret "Peggy" Nelson Stowe**, he is survived by his daughter **L. Diane Stowe** of Heath and two brothers, Howard D. Stowe of Oswego, MN, and Richard H. Stowe of Charlotte, VT.

A memorial service was held on August 23 at the Heath Union Church with the pastor Hilma Sumner officiating. Burial was in the Heath Center Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to The Preservation of Whittemore Spring Fund c/o the Heath Historical Society, David Howland, treasurer.

## Requiescat in pace



## Heath People In The News

**Edith Royer**, a longtime resident of Heath and a member of the *Heath Herald* staff for many years, celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on September 8, 2005. She is currently residing at the Buckley Health Care Center in Greenfield.

## Edith Royer

Our family bought our house on Ledges Road as a summer residence in 1967. Our first summer there we met Edith and Andy Royer, our neighbors across Ledges Road. From the very first day,

Edith put us in touch with Heath as a community and the feeling of life there for everyone in town, not just part-time residents.

Edith was born in Colrain, ninety years ago, the daughter of Fred and Blanche Coates, and married Andy in 1941. Although she had no children, she was a good friend and confidante of many children in town, including the young Malones, who lived in our house before we did, the Thompsons, Barbara, Beverly and Brenda, and our own Maud and Louise.

She is one of the people who hold the town together - she was president of the Ladies Aid for many years; everyone I know bought apple pie and a hamburger from her from the booth at the Heath Fair. Every spring, when we first made our reappearance, we would catch up on when the daffodils bloomed or when the last snow fell from the records she kept. When we arrived in the warm months, there was always a bouquet on our dining room table. The Royers had vegetables to give us from their garden long before anything was ready in ours.

As Edith and Andy grew older, Andy became housebound, so she stayed there with him, but she never mentioned a reduced universe. Her brother kept her company in her house until he died. Finally, she was by herself, and contented herself with shopping trips with John Churchill and a busy telephone with brother Fred's children and her many friends in town. At the window outside her chair in the living room was a hummingbird feeder. One day, a large black bear knocked it down, but she continued to have a number of hummingbird customers after it was put back up.

When she needed to be in a wheelchair, she moved to Buckley Nursing Home, where she continues to be, as always interested in Heath and the world around her.

~ Katherine and George Harris  
with help from Dot Sessions and Linda Hill

## Frederick and Josephine Churchill

Frederick Churchill was born in November, 1839, in Rowe. He lived in Rowe, Charlemont, and at the farm in Heath that he bought from his brother Horace in 1871 (what is now 20 Eight A South). Frederick was a farmer and an excellent hunter and trapper of foxes, some of which he tamed. He had other interests including playing checkers far into the night with any opponent who stopped at the house. He also made hard cider in the barn attached to the house that he sold to the miners at the Davis Mine in Rowe while it was running. A newspaper article from February, 1875, notes that Frederick was on the executive committee of a Lyceum\* that was being organized in Heath. The first topic of discussion by the group was to be: "Resolved: That the West holds out greater inducements to young men than the East."

In 1870, he married Josephine Willis in Charlemont. He was thirty-one and she was sixteen. She was known as a good cook, was able to manage many of the farm tasks, and served as the operator for the Heath Telephone Company for several years, with the switchboard in the house. This, of course, made it impossible for my grandparents and their children coming up from Charlemont in the horse and buggy to make a surprise visit. Someone along the

("Frederick and Josephine Churchill" continued on page 23)

("Frederick and Josephine Churchill" continued from page 22)

way always called to tell my great-grandmother that they were on the way, much to my grandmother's aggravation!

Frederick became sick in 1887 and while he recovered, he was again confined to bed in November, 1899, with what the doctor called bronchial consumption. He wanted to live into the new century, which he did, dying at 2:00 a.m. on January 1, 1900. Josephine died in 1931. They are both buried in Rowe, overlooking what, in Frederick's opinion, was the best fox hunting country around.

Frederick and Josephine had four sons and one daughter. Their second son, Wallace and his wife, Laura, bought the farm from Josephine and continued to have dairy cattle and make maple syrup until the mid 1950s. They sold the property to my parents, Clyde and Ruth Churchill, and we moved here in May of 1956. My sister, Hilma, and her husband, Richard Sumner, own the property now.

The Churchill Reunion was first held in 1937 and has been held each year since then except for one or two years during World War II when many of the cousins were away in the military. Almost all of the reunions have been held at the family homestead. Family members often plan their vacations or trips to western Massachusetts around the first Sunday in August when the reunion is held.

Sources for the information above are a pamphlet titled: *The Churchill Family*, genealogy information and family history compiled and written by Elizabeth J. and Alan W. Davenport, privately published in 1980, and other family oral history.

~ Charlene Churchill

\* *Lyceum - a 19<sup>th</sup> century association for the popular instruction of adults through lectures, concerts, and other meetings. Local groups were founded in New England towns, large and small, to disseminate information on the arts, the sciences, and public affairs.*

According to Heath historian Edward Calver, "Heath's Lyceum was organized in 1867 and lasted at least until the first minute book was filled in 1872. It met weekly during the winter...Its program consisted of debates conducted by males, of papers prepared beforehand by families, and "declamations."

## Churchill Reunion

The annual Churchill Reunion of the descendants of Frederick and Josephine Churchill was held at the Heath homestead on August 7. There were 98 family members and nine guests in attendance, making a total of 107 people enjoying the day together. The oldest member present was 92-year-old Richard Davenport of West Springfield, and the youngest was eight-months-old George Thomas Oscar Kipp of Williamstown. Carl and Emily Ayres from Scranton, PA, traveled the farthest.

The family and friends enjoyed a day filled with visiting, food, children's games, softball, horseshoes, and sharing photos and history. Officers elected for next years are: Donnie Churchill, president; Arlene Mikolajczik, secretary; the Williamstown Churchills, food committee; Nancy Richardson and family, children's entertainment, and Tim Churchill and K.J. Churchill, collection committee.

The members of the family graciously thank Dick and Hilma Sumner for hosting the reunion.

~ Arlene Mikolajczik,  
Secretary

## Surprise Visit



Bob and Jayne Dane's Nantucket gallery, celebrating its tenth year in business this year, had a surprise visit on August 13 by President Bill Clinton and Senator Hillary Clinton. The Clintons spent almost half an hour in the gallery, viewing and discussing the artwork. They both have a strong appreciation for glass sculpture. When they were in the White House, Hillary put together a collection of contemporary crafts that included many of the artists represented in the Dane Gallery. The collection is owned by the Clinton Library and is currently traveling to museums around the United States. While they were in the gallery a crowd of about 500 people gathered outside, stopping traffic.

This was the second time Hillary has visited the gallery, and it was Bill's first visit. One of the pieces he focused on was "Bahia" by Bob, the title of which is after the tune by singer Antonio Carlos Jobim from Bahia who has sung the song for the President on numerous occasions. As a jazz musician himself, Mr. Clinton has a special appreciation for this piece.

In its ten years, the Dane Gallery at 28 Centre Street has gone from showing primarily functional decorative crafts to exhibiting the finest examples of glass and ceramic sculpture.

~ Bob and Jayne Dane

("Dangers of Tobacco" continued from page 21)

Nevertheless, having a longer active life is a goal worth fighting for, and quitting tobacco is definitely a good fight. 'Tis the season to give up tobacco. If you smoke and would like to quit, come to my office in the Community Hall between the hours of noon and 1:00 p.m. on Tuesdays to talk about it and make a plan. If you don't smoke, please don't start.

To see me for any health issues (physical, mental, emotional) you're facing, you need not make an appointment. If you'd like to call, my number is 774-2958.

Alas, this is my final article for the *Heath Herald*. It's time for someone else to step forward with fresh ideas and a new slant. Thank you for all your kind comments regarding the articles I've written. Here's to your health!

~ with Cabe DeLisle

\*(NYTimes 8/2/94)

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your word,  
and your  
friend."*

*~ Henry David Thoreau*

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