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APRIL/MAY 1986

# HEATH HERALD

HEATH'S FIRST NEWSPAPER 35¢

## OLD TOWN HOUSE RESTORATION

by Sue Silvester, Secretary  
Heath Historical Society

Driving through town one hardly notices the reticent little Town House, built by Col. David Snow in 1834, nestled in the background of this New England town common. The white clapboard structure may be small in stature, but not only has it paid its dues, so to speak, serving well the growing town of Heath as its once bustling town hall, but also it houses a host of relics, artifacts and memorabilia preserved by the Heath Historical Society.

The Town House was entrusted to the Society by the town in a 199 year lease dating from the turn of the century. Last fall Harriet Read, in a gift to the Society, underwrote the cost of removing the asbestos siding on the east wall of the building, uncovering the windows and repairing and repainting the clapboards. This siding had been placed there by her father, Frank Carpenter, in 1935 as a fire protection against the Churchill barn which was nearby at that time.

This spring the building has reached a state of despair as its rock foundation continues to wrench itself away from the structure. Massive stones which support the building have dislodged themselves in such a formidable way as to pose a threat to the very existence of this important historic edifice.

Inside the building the threshold has pulled away from the floor joists exposing enormous gaps, and in the center of the main room a mighty heave of floor boards looms ominously. From the beautifully arched ceiling area huge chunks of plaster have plummeted to the floor, symptoms of the foundation's growing plight.

The plaster has been cleaned up by Curator Bill Thane, and the cracks in the walls could be disguised for a while longer as a sign of age, but the careful observer will note that the growing malady can be treated at this point only with major modifications to the structure itself; i.e. with a new foundation.

At the request of Heath Historical Society President Michael Coe, several proposals were submitted by contractor Bruce Cromack and these were discussed at the last meeting of the Board of Directors. Several options were presented. All of them use a poured concrete foundation with stone facing above ground. The variations considered are to excavate and build the foundation beside the present structure, then move the building onto it; or jack the building up and construct the foundation under it in the present position. Each of these plans could be done with either a full basement or with only a 4 foot foundation providing crawl space under the building. . . . . continued on page 3

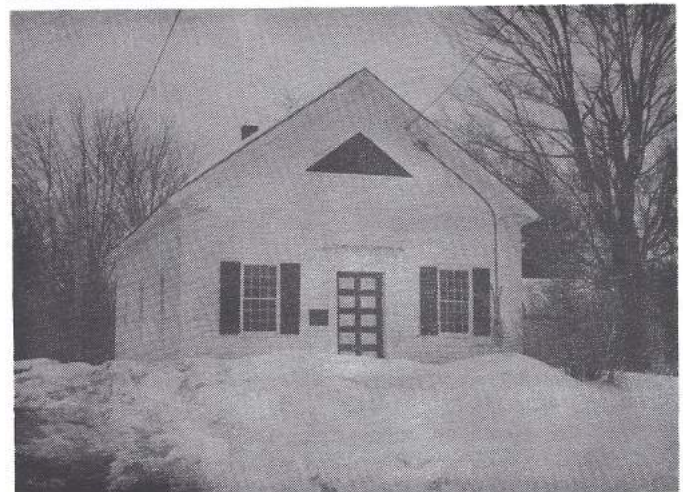
## ONLY ONE CONTEST IN TOWN ELECTIONS

The annual town meeting will be held this year on Monday, May 5 in the Community Hall. All registered voters will have an opportunity to vote for the town candidates of their choice between 1 and 7 PM. Then at 8 PM the meeting will convene to act upon the articles on the town warrant. The last date for new voters to register for this election is April 15.

The only contested position is for that of Assessor, with incumbent John Moriarty being challenged by Alan Nichols, who is a write-in candidate.

Running unopposed for another term are incumbents Patrick Venneri for School Committee, Bruce Cromack for Finance Committee and Earl Gleason for Planning Board. Doug Wilkins is the sole candidate for the one year position of Town Auditor left vacant by Newland Smith. Susan Silvester is running for the Library Trustee position left by long-term member Theresa Pettengill, and Paul Lively remains unchallenged in his bid for the Selectman's slot after Anne Steinbock decided not to seek reelection. Although Walter Gleason announced his candidacy for the Selectman's post in late March, he rescinded his decision shortly thereafter.

In the only contest of this year's election, incumbent John Moriarty declined to submit a statement about his candidacy, indicating he had nothing to say. Challenger Alan Nichols issued his statement concerning his interest in the Assessor position which is included with other candidate statements given on page 3.



Old Town House built in 1834  
Still stands after 152 years - how much longer?  
(Photo by Sue Silvester)



(At Town Hall unless otherwise noted)

By Pat Leuchtman

By Pat Leuchtman



## CANDIDATES' STATEMENTS

### ALAN NICHOLS - Assessor

I am running as a write-in candidate for the Board of Assessors.

The Assessors should work as a board. They need to communicate and cooperate openly with the taxpayers and, in order to help not only the town but all of us individually, the tax bills must go out on time.

### PAUL LIVELY - Selectman

I seek the position of Selectman so that I may be of service to the people of this town. My many years in public service gives me the experience to do the job.

I am interested in having more participation by all the people in the governing of their town. I believe that this can be achieved by more effective communication by the Selectmen.

I am dedicated to promoting openness and integrity in government of the people, by the people and for the people.

### SUSAN SILVESTER - Library Trustee

As a candidate for the position of Library Trustee, I bring to this office a lifelong interest in books and 15 years of library experience in public schools. I am especially interested in grant writing, archive preservation, bibliotherapy, collection development and program design.

The Heath Public Library is a valuable town asset and as a trustee I would strive to provide support for its continued growth. Just as a school library is the heart of an academic institution, a public library is the culturally stimulating, intellectual center of a community.

### DOUGLAS WILKINS - Auditor

I taught for many years in the Mohawk Trail Regional School and am currently a teacher in the Brattleboro public schools in the business department, having returned to education after gaining experience in commercial business management.

In addition to my business accounting experience I have a good deal of computerized accounting experience. I feel I can help the town keep accurate books and help streamline the accounting process.

### PATRICK VENNERI - School Committee

My name is Patrick Venneri and I am currently the chairperson of the Heath School Board. It would appear that I am running unopposed for a three year term on the Board. Since the town will then have me through default I will use this space to express my philosophy concerning public education. While as a taxpayer I hold firmly with the concept that the administrators of public education espouse extreme fiscal responsibility, as a parent and elected public official I must keep before me the precept that we are dealing with our most important and cherished possessions - our children. To stint on their education, to attempt to cut corners, is to imperil our and their future. I will work with the Selectmen and Finance Committee accepting any input they offer with the budget, keeping firmly in mind the major part of the town budget is for the education of the children. I will do my utmost to provide the very best public school education for every child in Heath. Thank you for this opportunity to address you.

### BRUCE CROMACK - Finance Committee

My wife Catherine and I have lived in Heath for the last 24 years and love the town.

As a taxpayer and business man, I am offering my time and knowledge to assist in the fiscal planning and management for the town.

### EARL GLEASON - Planning Board

I am a fifty-three year old part-time farmer, part-time Fire Chief and nearly full-time fire equipment dealer.

My interest in town activities has spanned nearly thirty years, first serving as an assessor in 1957. Since that time I have served at various times as Selectman, on the Finance Board and two different times on the Planning Board.

My interests on the Planning Board are to find methods to increase the tax base, to keep open spaces by finding some agricultural pursuits to replace the disappearing dairy farms. I believe Heath needs some businesses to offer employment to its residents. I feel very strongly that the Town of Heath should provide for cluster zoning as it is in the New England tradition to have groups of houses or villages and open spaces.

## OLD TOWN HOUSE... continued from page 1

While all these are viable options and would provide needed support for the structure, the monetary consideration is a prime factor in what will be decided. The Society recently received a gift of \$5000 in memory of Otto Carley Groll; this money will be used as seed money to begin restoration on the Town House, possibly this summer. Any donations for this worthy cause will be gratefully accepted by the Society.

The Bylaws of the Society state that "the purpose of the Society shall be the preservation of the Old Town House....preserving documents, relics and individual records of the patriots and early settlers within the town and maintaining a place where relics, documents and historical records relating to the town may be seen and studied by the public."

If the Society is to fulfill its obligations, it is essential that its immediate priority be the preservation of the Old Town House.



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by C. Richards Steinbock, Chairman  
Heath Board of Assessors

During the special town meeting, and at two prior meetings, this same Finance Committee chairman compared us repeatedly to a town of similar size, which he insisted was getting its reval for \$3 -5,000 - by the same company which offered to do do ours for \$25,000. Well, as it turns out, a member of that town's board of assessors told us that his town is being asked to appropriate \$30,000 for its reval - that \$3-5,000 is what they pay yearly for computer maintenance. Perhaps our FinCom chairman heard only what he wanted to hear, or perhaps he's merely ignorant regarding assessing and reval.

We still have a bit of property inspection to finish, so if you see a strange mud-covered car pull up on Saturday or Sunday, it may be us.

[Editors' Note: The statements and words used in the above article are those of the author and do not in any way represent the opinions of this paper or its staff.]

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## REVALUATIONS - AN UPDATE

by Alastair Maitland

It will be recalled that, in the wake of the January Special Election defeat of the proposal to over-ride Proposition 2 1/2, the Town turned down a bid from the assessors for an appropriation of \$15,000 to finance the costs of the triennial revaluation, and instead voted to appropriate \$5000 to enable the revaluation exercise to get started.

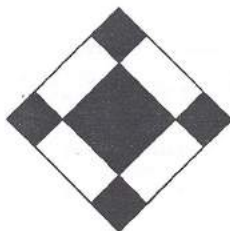
At the same time the voters directed the Selectmen and Assessors to get together and agree upon the scheduling and financing of the tasks to be accomplished in this regard.

The discussions that followed were hampered from the start by the absence of any clear official version of the text of the Special Town Meeting directive. And for some time the focus was on form rather than substance as the two sides attempted to reconcile their joint duty towards the voters with the Assessors' rejection of anything smacking of a "contractual agreement" between themselves, as an independent board of elected town officials, and the Board of Selectmen.

The upshot was an announcement on March 24 by the Selectmen to the citizens of Heath which, if it did not exactly reflect a meeting of the minds, explained that, since the Selectmen had been able to monitor both the progress and the costs of the revaluation through the submission of bills and through progress reports by the Assessors, the directive given to the two Boards at the Special Town Meeting was in practice being honored. The Selectmen were accordingly planning no further action in this matter.

In retrospect it seems regrettable that the town was not afforded a better opportunity of weighing the option of reducing the revaluation update costs by means of the "factoring" approach as discussed at a previous informational town meeting. (In simple terms "factoring" or "trending" involves adjusting a town's valuations by an across-the-board factor. This interim measure is explicitly provided for in the state's guidelines for local assessors and is there to be used, as and when appropriate).

This option, significantly less laborious and time-consuming and consequently less expensive than the approach the Assessors have chosen, might have been seen by the State Bureau of Local Assessment as especially appropriate to Heath, given the relatively recent (October 1984) initial revaluation and the high quality of that operation, which received the state's commendation. And it is an option which Mr. Chester Zaik, the County Assessors Consultant, has confirmed to the HEATH HERALD would have received his blessing. Above all, it is an option which would have bought time for the Town in its ongoing revaluation program and which would have spared all of us much of the controversy and acrimony of recent months.



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## FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

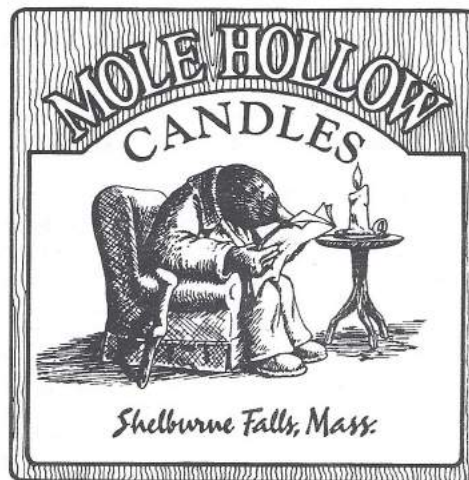
by David Howland, Chairman  
Heath Finance Committee

As is to be expected this time of year, the Finance Committee is getting ready for the annual town meeting on May 5. There is still much work to be done to prepare the warrant.

The FinCom has met with the School Committee to consider the effects of Chapter 188 on the budget. This is the Act designed to improve the public schools of Massachusetts. There is no question that state aid for education is up this year - some \$7000- and there may be other monies available under terms of Chapter 188.

The overall increase in state aid is \$38,582 over last year's aid - \$135,558 versus \$96,966 for last year. Unfortunately at this time there is uncertainty over the amount of Free Cash. If we fall short in this account, it will adversely affect the benefits of state aid. Federal revenue sharing funds have been slated for burial in Washington, but they still may be resurrected. These rather complex situations make it interesting and challenging to look to the future. In any event within two weeks before the town meeting, matters will be sorted out and proposals will be made for the voters' consideration.

As regards remarks made by Richards Steinbock, our Assessor Chairman, elsewhere in this issue of the HERALD, the FinCom has the greatest respect for the tradition and complexity of the assessing profession. Because the subject of revaluation was not brought up at the annual town meeting of May 1985, the Fincom was surprised by the request of the Assessors for \$15,000 in the middle of the FY'86 tax year. Our research for the special town meeting in January turned up information about recertification that prompted us to question the Assessors' proposal. Considering the history of the time and cost of the first revaluation (completed only a year and a half ago) that action seemed not only legitimate to us, but consistent with our interest and responsibility in seeing that Heath receives the best return on the dollar for its taxpayers. We would welcome an objective approach and a reasonable solution to the problem.



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## CIRCUIT RIDER'S REPORT

by Susan Wright  
Shared Administrative Assistant

The Shared Administrative Assistant (Circuit Rider) Program is now well into its second year as of January 1986 and the planning, grant-writing and administrative assistance the program provides has begun to show many benefits for the Town of Heath. For the information of HEATH HERALD readers, I will describe a few of the current projects I am working on for the town.

In November 1985, the Towns of Colrain, Heath and Monroe received a \$913,886 Community Development Block Grant, initiated by the Shared Administrative Assistant, from the Executive Office of Communities and Development to address housing rehabilitation and economic development within the three town region. The program will provide funds to assist homeowners and landlords with an affordable means to repair and upgrade single and multi-family homes and to identify the needs for economic growth and development. A Small Business Assistance Program will provide technical assistance and low interest loans to small businesses. Loans repaid from the program will be returned to the towns as program income, providing revenues for other community development projects.

An Incentive Aid Grant of \$8500, awarded to provide Training for Franklin County Planning Boards, was designed and prepared by the Shared Administrative Assistant. This grant will provide several training sessions which will help the Heath Planning Board to be knowledgeable about issues such as zoning, water quality, open space preservation and farmland protection.

The Heath Conservation Commission received a \$2120 grant from the Incentive Aid Program for four training sessions designed to respond to environmental matters concerning the protection of the town's natural resources including the identification of wetlands in the field and natural resource planning.

In January 1986, the Shared Administrative Assistant submitted an application to the Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire Conservation District for financial assistance with the completion of Open Space and Recreation Plans in Buckland, Colrain, Heath and Shelburne. The \$2000 grant was awarded late in January and work has already begun on these plans.

Work is also being done on a grant to receive funding for technical energy audits on the Town Hall, Community Hall, Town Garage and Fire Station. These audits, when complete, will make each building eligible for funds to implement energy saving measures.

The Shared Administrative Assistant is also involved in coordinating compliance for Heath with the state's Right to Know Law and has assisted the Heath Park and Playground Board with a town wide survey on open space and recreation needs.

In the near future, I hope to submit an application for Heath to the State Town Road Assistance Program for \$150,000 in road repair funds. I also anticipate assisting the town with an application to the Town Commons Program when funding is available and perhaps assisting with an application to the proposed Town Rehabilitation Program.

Please feel free to contact me at any time at my office at the Shelburne Falls Town Hall (625-9831). I would be happy to talk with you about projects and ideas you have for Heath.

## PLANNING BOARD REPORT

by Robert Dane, Secretary

On March 1 a Management Training Session for Franklin County Planning Boards was held at Greenfield Community College. All five board members from Heath attended what proved to be a very informative series of lectures and discussions.

The first talk, given by Larry Smith, the Senior Planner from Northampton, covered our responsibilities and powers. The Planning Board conceives of and draws up regulations which are approved by the town or its various boards. The Planning Board has the power to grant special permits, but beyond that the enforcement of zoning and subdivision regulations is up to the other boards. The Board of Health has the most power in implementing these regulations.

Another talk was given by Harry Dodson, a landscape architect from Ashfield and a member of the Franklin Land Trust. He made a very strong case for cluster zoning through a series of slides and diagrams. Cluster zoning has its roots in the traditional set up of New England towns, with houses clustered in a "Center" area surrounded by larger areas of "Open Space." Through this type of zoning, rural sprawl may be avoided and the character of our towns maintained.

This cluster type of zoning could well be applied in Heath for any future subdivisions that may develop.

The workshop ended with a question and answer period when board members were able to bring up some of their particular concerns. Although the workshop was long (8-5), and we were all tired by the end, we all felt we came away better informed and better equipped to do our job.

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## SELECTMEN'S HIGHLIGHTS

by HERALD Staff

The Selectmen have agreed for the town to pay the annual bulk-mailing permit fee and to allow organizations with general town business to use the permit if the organization pays the postage. This renewal fee has been paid in the past by the HEATH HERALD and has been used by the town itself in some mailings. The town has reimbursed the HERALD for these fees.

Sue Hunkler has been appointed Dog Officer replacing Michael Smead who resigned last November.

A Heath task force is being organized to advise the administrator of the economic development part of the Block Grant program. So far, Steve Belitsos, Carolyn Armstrong, Harley Hunkler, and Anne Steinbock have joined the group.

The Selectmen have gone through two rounds of preparing the new town budget, in conjunction with the Finance Committee, taking steps to hold expenditures within the limit set by Proposition 2 1/2. They have held a meeting with the Finance Committee in the steps to finalize it for the annual meeting.

The Assessors are submitting regular bills to the town on the basis of \$10 per hour for their revaluation work until the \$5000 voted at the January town meeting has been exhausted. Approximately \$2500 has been expended so far.

The draft of a Vacation and Sick Leave policy has been presented to the Highway employees for their review and comments.

A project request for the improvement of Sadoga Road has been made by the Selectmen.

The heavy use of salt and sand on the roads this winter has depleted that budget and transfers will have to be made.

Chairman Anne Steinbock testified before the State Senate Committee concerning a bill filed in the legislature that would provide for 7.5 million dollars to rehabilitate town halls throughout the state. The bill is expected to emerge from the committee in a few weeks.

The Selectmen urge all registered voters of the town to attend the annual town meeting on May 5 and vote in the election of officers. An informational meeting has been tentatively set for Monday, April 28, at 8 PM in the Community Hall to present the articles on the town warrant and to allow for discussion and questions at that time. Copies of the warrant and budget will be available for all who attend.

## REPORT FROM THE TAX COLLECTOR/TREASURER

by Linda Marcotte

It seems amazing that nearly a year has gone by since I was elected Treasurer/Collector. It has been a busy first year as Collector with the mailing of the 1985 tax bills last August and the mailing of the 1986 tax bills in February. Collection on the first half of the 1986 bill has been good with 47% paid to date. Please note that the balance of the 1986 bill is due by May 1, 1986 or interest and any applicable fees as allowed by law will be added to the amount due. I have also just mailed the first 1986 Motor Vehicle Excise bills. Also note that the Motor Vehicle bills are now due in full, 30 days from date of issue.

I am sorry to report that I am not as far along as I had hoped to be on collection of back taxes. I still have a fair amount of data to enter into the computer and, if someone is interested in helping (computer knowledge is not necessary), please let me know. I am also realizing the enormous possibilities for errors on my part due to inexperience in the tax taking process. I am going to solicit cost estimates from attorneys and possibly a tax collection agency to see if my existing budget would cover the cost of hiring a more experienced person to help clear up the bulk of the back taxes. I feel that a more experienced person or agency working with me and training me would make the process go more smoothly and enable me to keep the process going in the future. The hiring of an attorney or collection agency would depend on the cost involved. I don't wish to spend more on the tax collection process than I have estimated.

## FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS

by Chief Earl Gleason

The Department responded to chimney fires on February 8, 15, 24 and March 12. On March 25 several firefighters and two trucks responded to Whitingham to a house fire.

Twenty-two people, fifteen of them Heath firefighters, have been meeting each Thursday evening for a first responders course consisting of standard first aid, emergency child birth and extrication. This class is instructed by Sheila Litchfield.

Fire Wardens meetings for this period were held in Bernardston for the February meeting and the March meeting is at Granby. The Tri-State annual meeting was held on February 27 and ended a busy year as president for me. A meeting of the building inspector, Steve Judge, and the fire chiefs from those towns in the program was held in the Court House on March 20. The purpose of the meeting was discussion on making our inspections work for each department and a general discussion on how we can aid each other.

Lastly, the Department unplugged a chimney for a resident on March 21.

\* \* VOTE MONDAY MAY 5 \* \*

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## THE DEACON MOSES SMITH HOUSE

by Alastair Maitland

[ Editors' note: This is the 20th in a series of articles on the older houses of Heath which have been published in the HEATH HERALD from time to time over the past seven years.]

I had always known that for anyone seeking information about Heath, past as well as present, the best source - the real fountainhead - was the Director of the Heath Central Intelligence Agency, Esther Dickinson. So that, when invited by the HEATH HERALD to do a piece about the house I live in on Route 8A, I naturally turned to Esther for assistance and guidance.

As a preliminary step I had dug into Edward Calver's 1979 History and Guidebook and had followed his trail northwards from Charlemont Hill and over Burnt Hill to the Green and Walker lands, through the almost impenetrable Old Testament thicket of prolifically philoprogenitive Asaphs, Elijahs, Jobs, Jonathans, Benjamins, Asahels, Reubens, Isaacs, Calebs, Obadiahs, Jonahs, Arons, Abners, Elis, Jesses, Othniels, Nathaniels, Ebenezers, Samuels, Asas, Solomons, Seths, Jacobs, Josephs, Pelatiah, Ephraims and Shearjashubs. But, at about the point on 8A where the old Myrifiel-Rowe Road takes off up the hill towards Paul Burrington's present home, I lost my way and turned back.

It was then that Esther took me by the hand and guided me back into the clear light of day. More precisely, she directed me to page 124 of the Calver tome where there is not only a neat pen-and-ink drawing of the house - complete with the stone fence built on the south side in the 1960's - but also the statement that the house was "taken up" in 1808 by Moses Smith, one of the children of Pelatiah and Rhoda Smith (whose house on what is now Royer Road was the subject of an article in the December 1985-January 1986 issue of the HEATH HERALD). According to Calver the Moses Smith house was built by (Colonel) David Snow, who is described by Pearle Tanner in the Heath Sesquicentennial book as a housewright. He was also a Man of Property. He "owned a great deal of real estate, seemed to own a large part of the center (and) owned some land in Dell." Mrs. Tanner tells us also that Snow built the present Union Church in Heath (1833) as well as the "Historical hall" or Old Town House (1834).

Deacon Smith and his eldest son, the Reverend Lowell Smith, were among those converted by the Reverend Moses Miller during Heath's "Great Revival" in 1822-23. Lowell was to become one of the two Heath missionaries whose lives and work were the subject of Amy Barry's Book of Heath Essay, "From This Mountain House." In 1839, a few years after Lowell Smith's departure for the Hawaiian Islands, his father sold the house in Heath and moved to the more benign climate of Greenfield.

The Smiths were followed by Otis Gale and later by Otis' brother Daniel, who is reported to have added a "carriage house" to the Heath property (then extending to some 125 acres) and to have made "other improvements." Daniel, as Calver notes, was "political, like his father," Luther Gale, serving as selectman, assessor, school committee member, justice of the peace and state legislator.

Precisely when the Gale family's tenure ended is not clear. But thanks to the collective memory of Esther Dickinson and her brothers and some useful input by Ralph Sumner, we know that the Gales were

succeeded - perhaps after an interval - by Morris M. Stacy (1906-14), by Eugene James, his daughter Nellie and his mother (1914-20), the John Mansons (1949-64) and Alan Janus and his wife Phyllis (1965-69), from whom we acquired the property. Some time between 1920 and 1938 the property may have been owned by Carlton Davenport. At some stage during this period the house was rented by Alex Tatro, who was then employed by Miss Grant, then living in the Graebner-McCutchen house on 8A.

So much for the history of the place. As to the house itself I have always felt that its appeal lies as much in its location as in the simple elegance of its facade. It is held in the affectionate embrace of the stage road as it moves in a sweeping curve northwards. And it is guarded by an ancient sentinel, the majestic maple of which Clyde Churchill once said: "Indians slept in the shade of that tree."

There is no sign of Daniel Gale's "carriage house." There is now nothing grander than a 2-car garage. And one wonders what Gale's "other improvements" were. Whatever they were they must have succumbed to the general neglect from which the house evidently suffered in the years before the Mansons' tenure. "It looked like a total wreck," some have said. The Mansons appear to have undertaken a major restoration and rehabilitation exercise, involving amongst other things the modernization of the kitchen. And it was probably they who made the happy decision to change the color of the exterior from white to barn red. Further rehabilitation was carried out by the Januses, who were responsible for the afore-mentioned stone fence as well as for a new barn, equipped with a couple of horse-stalls. The barn builder was Wilbert Rainville. Since the Janus era the house has been provided with a new roof, and a couple of sills have been replaced. There has also been some propping-up-and-pulling-together to arrest middle age spread, together with some internal rearrangement - the elimination of a downstairs "winter bedroom" in order to enlarge and brighten the sitting-room.

Except perhaps for the great brick fireplace with its old brick oven in the center of the leg of the L and the carved mantel-piece in the study, the interior is unremarkable. The simplicity of the exterior is continued inside. It is the sort of house in which you never have any difficulty in orienting yourself. I only wish that Colonel Snow had paid more attention to the design, shape and depth of the cellar. But you can't have everything.



Deacon Moses Smith House c. 1805

(Photo by Alastair Maitland)



## THE SKI RACE: SOME AFTERTHOUGHTS

by Alastair Maitland

Much thoughtful and imaginative planning together with the combined efforts and cooperation of a wide range of townpeople had given sufficient advance assurance that the Second Annual Cross-Country Ski Race scheduled for Sunday February 9 would be a resounding success. And assurance was made doubly sure when the weatherman decided to play his part by providing ideal conditions - dazzling sunshine, seasonably cool temperatures and crisp, crackling snow. No fewer than 116 skiers, of all ages, presented themselves at the starting-line, and for a time the town center took on the aspect of a Swiss Alpine ski resort at the height of the season.

It should be recorded that a husband and wife from Pelham, Massachusetts, David and Trina Hosmer, came in first and second respectively, with times substantially lower than the winning time in last year's inaugural Race. Mrs. Hosmer, a member of the U.S. Olympic squad a few years back, declared that the course had been extremely challenging as well as wonderfully scenic. She and her husband vowed to return next year. Most fittingly, the first Heath skier to finish was Steve Marcotte who, with his volunteer helpers, had undertaken the task of preparing and grooming the 15 kilometer trail.

Those principally responsible for the success of this second Annual Ski Race - apart from the 17 land-owners involved and Steve Marcotte and his crew - were the members of the Park and Playground Committee (Carol Sartz, Debbie Porter, Catherine Nichols and Bill Lattrell). But there was a considerable supporting cast of volunteers, including the team assigned to the registration of the participating skiers and, most important, the members of the Chilblain Brigade who, like Steve Belitsos, stood for hours on end on frozen roads, ensuring that the various crossing points were adequately maintained throughout the Race and offering vocal encouragement to any skiers whose spirits might have been flagging.

Success breeds success. And the interest shown in this year's Race clearly indicates that the support attracted by last year's inaugural event was something more than a manifestation of Bicentennial fervor. The Park and Playground Committee and others have accordingly been giving some thought to the shape of things to come. The consensus is that the Ski Race should indeed be an annual event, and the concern now is to see what practical lessons can be drawn from the first two years' experience. Amongst the points that have been raised are: the need for additional volunteers to handle the registration of entrants, the provision of food and hot drinks for the maintenance crews out on the course, some more effective warning system to help snowmobilers to recognize the ski trail, better local and regional media coverage, and the desirability, as a safety measure, of introducing some mid-course time limit.

It should also be recorded that a self-appointed panel of judges voted unanimously to award the Laid-Back Prize (Ordinary Street Clothes Category) to Dennis Avery of Charlemont, who impressed fellow competitors and spectators alike with the consummate ease and flowing grace with which he sailed along the trail - in both directions - looking for all the world as if he had just stepped out of his study after a bout with Henry James for a spot of gentle restorative exercise.

## FAIR RIBBON QUILT SHOWN

by Caroline Smith

An interesting and unusual quilt made by Carrie Hamilton McCloud, who was born and brought up in Heath, was among others in a quilt exhibit held recently at the Museum of Our National Heritage in Lexington.

Carrie made the quilt from the many ribbons won by her father Myron Hamilton and his brother for their prize cattle at country fairs throughout the area between 1920 and 1935. Over 100 of these ribbons, including many from Heath Fairs, were feather-stitched together to make a colorful red, white and blue quilt. Carrie included a number of her own ribbons won for plants and preserves. The earliest Heath Fair ribbon noted in the quilt was from the Fair in 1924.

After Carrie died in 1947, her son Ronald McCloud of Springfield gave the quilt to the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association in Deerfield. In addition he gave the PVMA several old scrapbooks containing many newspaper references to Heath.

Myron Hamilton raised his cattle and farmed in North Heath and later moved to the present Rainville place in South Heath. His father Charles Hamilton came to Heath about 1866. Emerson Hamilton, on the Colrain Brook Road, is the nephew of Carrie Hamilton. The Hamiltons are direct descendants of Jonathan and Lucy Taylor, the first permanent residents of Heath.



Nearing the finish line !  
Tina Hosmer follows her husband  
(Photo by Carl Sewall)

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## A RABBIT COMES HOME

by Lewis L. Nichols

[ Editors' Note: This is one of over 3000 "Topics of the Times" written by "Nick" and published regularly in the New York Times over many years. This particular "Topic" was selected by Nick's wife, Helen Nichols and is one of her favorite articles. We are grateful to her for permission to reprint it here. ]

A rising clamor outside suggested the dog had discovered something of interest, and investigation found a rabbit. It was a very small rabbit, not long in this world. It must have strayed from its nest and, finding retreat cut off, sought to hide in a universal and normal fashion - by simply closing its eyes. It had soft fur and its ears were flat down and it quite understandably shivered. The attentions of the dog were friendly and of good will, but the dog never has known its strength, and an affectionate paw can be heavy. When the rabbit was brought inside, the incident was regarded at first only as a rescue from the dog; and while that was literally true, the dog had meant no harm and was sincerely sorry.

For a time the rabbit crouched on the floor, possibly awaiting another blow. When that did not come, it presently opened its eyes and then held up its head. What it saw was not the meadow or the trees, so it closed its eyes again quietly and kept them so for a long time. A nest of grass was arranged, with a small pen, for it was clear the rabbit was in no condition and lacked the size just then to face the outer world of freedom. When it finally began to move around, it crawled into the corner of the pen and lay there trembling until its guardian found a wool-lined slipper and placed it in that. The slipper was very small, as though designed for the purpose, and with a sigh that was almost audible the rabbit went to sleep.

While it slept there was a good deal of discussion about a name but on this there was neither agreement nor a final decision. While it slept there there was also discussion about what it should eat when it awakened. The dressing was carefully washed from some pieces of lettuce, under the logical theory that, since the guardian does not care for pepper on lettuce, no rabbit would either. The rabbit, however, had not yet learned about lettuce, which is an acquired taste, and it was so small it had not yet learned about clover leaves. Mealtime was over when the guardian finally thought of milk and a medicine dropper.

There were elaborate preparations for that. First the bottle which was to hold the milk had to be sterilized, as well as the dropper. Then the milk itself was heated to a few degrees above room temperature and was tested for warmth. However, during these extended preparations it became increasingly obvious even to a casual glance that the rabbit was finally feeling the effects of the day. It took neither a man of science nor a physician to estimate the chances as a little less than even, and it seemed well to offer a hint that sometimes it is impossible to recover from injuries. The hint was ignored, for hope is always on the side of the sunshine.

The milk and dropper were finally ready, and the rabbit had its meal. It was better afterward to remember that the milk was warm and sweet and that the rabbit enjoyed it very much, and when it had finished it went to sleep without trembling. While it slept, there was discussion of what it would be like when it grew older, and the general picture made it a suitable companion for Paul Bunyan himself. In a

month or so it would be able to chase dogs and frighten cats, and at harvest time it would visit the garden of a neighbor - who is a strict agriculturist and so without humor - and would return from there with produce for the table. At bedtime the rabbit seemed to be sleeping quietly.

Just before dawn a sudden glare of lights in the house showed that someone was up and about and it was not long before it was learned what had been found. The hour before dawn is the coldest hour of the day, and it is, perhaps, not the best time for a clearly thought-out dissertation on theology. It was possible just then to state only - abruptly and as a fact - that sooner or later everything in this world goes elsewhere. In view of the circumstances, it was possible then to say that in the elsewhere would be someone whose particular pleasure would be in caring for small rabbits, looking out for their welfare. "Mr. Lincoln," the guardian said suddenly, and then after a moment's reflection, added with firm assurance "Mr. Lincoln will look after him."

The hour before dawn is not the best time for either theology or learned thoughts on what the scholars call the perspective of history. The two, quite obviously, can be the same. In the hour before dawn of a bleak and rainy morning it was good to think only of a prairie clearing on a sunny summer's day. A young man with a long and gentle face would be splitting rails there, while at his feet crouched a rabbit so small it had no name.

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## FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

by Pat Leuchtman

The Friends of the Library, an organization devoted to helping the Heath Library, has been inactive for the past few years, but there is interest in reviving the group. A brief meeting was held in January and it was decided to hold a kite flying party on Saturday, April 19 at the Fairgrounds. Kite flyers of all ages are invited to bring a picnic lunch and their kites at noon for an afternoon of fun.

The Library is a very important part of our community. Circulation figures have generally shown a constant increase; 4,927 books were checked out in FY'83 and 5,553 in FY'85. Also 110 requests were filled through the Interlibrary Loan program and 3,196 additional books were borrowed from the bookmobile last year. This is in marked contrast to another small town, which only filled 14 Interlibrary requests and borrowed 556 books from the bookmobile. Heath is obviously a town of readers and our librarians have been very responsive to our preferences and requests.

Traditionally, Friends of the Library have helped the Library in a variety of ways. Because much of the money allocated by the library budget is designated for certain uses, some needs are not adequately covered. Friends can hold fund-raising events and use that money as they wish. In addition to fund-raising, Friends can also volunteer time to the Library and help with shelf reading, cataloging, typing, filing, indexing, story hour and whatever other special need arises.

A small town like Heath can never hope to pay for all the valuable services that our Library provides; Friends can be an important resource. If you are interested in becoming a Friend of the Heath Library, call Sue Gleason, President, or talk to Alli Thane, Librarian, when you check out your next load of books.

Heath has many seasonal residents who may wish to be a Friend and do what they can while they are in town. Their interest and help are welcomed.



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## "STEPPIN' OUT FOR HEALTH"

by Sharleen Moffatt, R.N.  
Town Nurse

The week of April 7-12 is designated World Health Week. This year the Department of Public Health is sponsoring a program entitled "Steppin' Out for Public Health." The purpose is to interest many people in communities in the idea of walking as a valuable exercise towards good health. They are urging communities to, on a given day, get out in mass and walk together. The children in the Rowe School will be doing a two mile walk from the school to the Mill Pond and back. They will be urging any and all interested parents and citizens to join them. Look for posters and more information in the newspapers and plan to join us !!

On May 15 there will be a Stress Management Seminar held at the Rowe Fire Station at 7 PM. The guest speaker will be Bob Rottenburg. This educational program is being co-sponsored by the Heath and Rowe Boards of Health in conjunction with the Mohawk Valley Medical Center. The program is free and everyone is urged to attend.

Anyone in need of a Tetanus booster should contact me. I have the vaccine and there is no fee. You should have a booster every ten years, or sooner in the event of a puncture-like wound.

## ELSA BAKALAR GIVES GARDEN TALK

by Pat Leuchtman

Elsa Bakalar, who is known for her own lavish perennial gardens on the east Oxbow (Hosmer Road) as well as gardens she has designed for others including the Four Columns Inn, Newfane, Vermont, spoke about gardening and her garden design business at the 40th Annual Garden Symposium held at Williamsburg, Virginia, April 6-9.

The theme of this year's symposium was Gardens, Great and Small. Elsa was joined on the program by gardeners, authors and speakers of national repute including Pamela J. Harper of Virginia, Sabina Mueller Sulgrove of Ohio and John B.E. Simmons, curator of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, England.

The offerings of the four day symposium included large presentations by the main speakers. There were also a number of small and more informal gardeners' clinics. Elsa's clinic program was entitled Small Northern Gardens and she was assisted by Frederick McGourty of Connecticut who used to work for the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens and wrote many of their booklets. He now devotes most of his time to writing, consulting and running his own nursery.

In addition to the presentations, participants had an opportunity to visit Colonial Williamsburg's gardens and other area public gardens and museums. Elsa also visited the gardens at Winterthur on her way home.

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## SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORT

Compiled by Herald Staff

The School Committee has been working in four major areas: Equal Education Opportunity Grant (EEO), Elementary School tuition agreement with Rowe School, first contract with Rowe Teachers Association (RTA), and Early Childhood Education Grants.

**EEO Grant:** The purpose of the EEO Grant is to raise spending levels in "low spending" towns to a level closer to 85% of the state average expenditure per pupil. The amount of \$8,652 is now available to Heath for this purpose. In the fall the school committee and the town (in a special town meeting) voted to accept these funds. It has been found that the only way to use these funds is for tuition. It is planned to do this.

**Rowe School Tuition Agreement:** After many months of negotiation the old "P" factor will be replaced. The tuition rate which is within the range of rates at other elementary schools in the area will be the basic per pupil rate for all five years of the agreement. In a yearly adjustment to reflect the impact of budget increases Heath will pay a percentage of the increase. This percentage will eventually reflect Heath's percentage of the students in the total school population. The final agreement will be written up by a lawyer, presented to Heath voters at the May Annual Town Meeting and, if approved, will be signed by both school committees. We hope to gain financial stability with the set rate per pupil. Changes in our tuition costs should only come from changes in numbers of students and increases in the operating budget at Rowe School. Under this plan the FY'87 tuition rate will be \$1900 per pupil. Subsequent year rates will increase as school budget costs rise according to an agreed formula. Our information indicates that with this agreement Heath will still have the lowest elementary education costs in our area.

**RTA:** The teachers unionized in the fall of '85 and negotiations began in December. The negotiations are proceeding well. The contract will probably be multi-year and will cover conditions of employment and finances.

**Early Childhood:** The Heath committee voted to apply for this grant to try and foster pre-school education in Heath. We were ready to form a council to write a grant but have found that the state has failed to provide funding for this group of grants. The project has therefore been abandoned for the moment at least.

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## MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL NEWS

by Sue Silvester

The annual April vacation will be held the week of April 20-26.

On May 17 the Sophomore Class at Mohawk is having an all-day auction commencing at 10 AM on the school grounds. Donations for the auction are needed and arrangements may be made with the following students: Tonia Cromack in Colrain, 625-3262; Chrissy Lynch in Charlemont, 339-6675; April Hudson in Rowe, 339-4214. You may call Mohawk (625-9811) regarding any question you may have on the auction. At the same time, the class will also be holding a spring car wash, so you may drive away in a sparkling clean car loaded with the terrific bargains from the auction!

The school departments of the nine-town Mohawk School District are offering development screening for three and four year old children in compliance with state and federal law. The purpose of the screening is to identify children who may need special services or a specific program before entering school. The screening is offered throughout the year by appointment. A parent orientation to explain the screening will be held on Tuesday, April 29 at 2 PM in the Teacher Center at Mohawk. Services available for three and four year old children will be discussed. Please contact Lois Holm, Early Childhood Coordinator, at the Mohawk Special Education Office, 625-9811, if you plan to attend the meeting.

As part of National Library Week activities, the Resource Center will sponsor the annual Faculty Tea on Wednesday, April 9, at 2:15 in the Library. This traditional event honors Mohawk faculty and staff and it provides them the opportunity to peruse newly acquired material.

### ROWE SCHOOL NEWS

by Sue Silvester

Instrumental music teacher Mr. Ted Wirt has asked for donations of musical instruments for the school music program. He is enthusiastic about the potential for a large elementary school band, but more instruments are needed so that all the children interested will have an instrument to play.

Students in the 4th and 5th grades will be participating in the biennial trip to Cape Cod National Seashore April 9-12. The children will not only enjoy an academically educational and exciting learning experience, but they will also participate in group activities such as cooking, cleaning and spending time together in an environment outside of school. Enthusiasm is running high for this special field trip!

The Rowe School Improvement Council met in February and has decided to spend the grant money allocated to Rowe on a new set of encyclopedias and a VCR for classroom use.

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for April 7, 8 and 16. Parents are asked to call the school for an appointment with their child's teacher.

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## CHURCH NEWS

by Amy C. Barry

Holy Week began with a Joint Maundy Thursday potluck supper and Communion Service held at the Rowe Community Church. A Sunrise service was held Easter morning at 5:30 AM at the Heath Fairgrounds followed by a breakfast at the Community Hall and the Easter Church service at 11 AM. As has been the custom for many years, Easter lilies filled the front of the church on Easter morning, placed there by members of the congregation in memory of loved ones.

Another item of interest having to do with the Heath Church concerns Reinhold Niebuhr's Serenity Prayer. A few weeks ago Irmarie Jones of the Greenfield Recorder called to get the original words of the Serenity Prayer for her sister in California. After a little research, I discovered that the Prayer usually printed on embroidery kits and used by Alcoholics Anonymous is not the genuine version written by Niebuhr and first spoken in the Heath Church. A few years ago Arlene Thane did the original prayer in cross stitch and it hangs in the outer room of the Church.

The original Serenity Prayer is as follows:

God,  
Give us the grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed,  
Courage to change the things which should be changed,  
And the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.

### SHARLEEN MOFFATT TO DIRECT GIRL SCOUT CAMP

Sharleen Moffatt will be the new director of Camp Stonehenge in Leyden, the Western Massachusetts Girl Scout day camp serving girls in Franklin County.

Sharleen chairs the Shelburne Falls area Girl Scout Association and served as the Camp Stonehenge nurse and nursery unit leader last summer. She is the town and school nurse in Heath and Rowe.

The camp offers a two-week session, July 28 to August 8, Monday through Friday each week, 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Bus transportation is provided from most Franklin County communities.

Activities include swimming, camping skills, nature study, cook-outs, an optional overnight and optional pony or horse rides each week.

Girls need not be Girl Scout members to attend but must be entering grades 1 through 9 in September. Registration is on a first come basis. Further details can be obtained from the Girl Scout office on Haydenville Road, Leeds, MA.

Gordon E. Taylor d/b/a



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## FROM THE HEATH PARSONAGE

With Easter just past I am aware that my family and I have been with you for almost an entire half year now. In that time, we have nearly survived our first Berkshire winter, we have made many new friends and we are well on our way to feeling quite at home in your midst.

In my days at seminary I have often heard it said that a minister coming into a new parish setting faces many of the same joys and challenges as does a man or woman entering a new marriage. There are questions to be answered about how we are going to get along together, about how we will divide up the various jobs that will need doing, and about what kind of commitment we will have to each other.

I wanted to take just a minute of your time to let you know, after six months, that the marriage seems healthy and growing. Our worship services are times of warmth and community sharing, we are working on a fledgling youth program, and we have plans to embark on a process of church growth which will carry us into the coming years.

At this Eastertide, as we remember the new life of Christ in His Resurrection, I invite you all to join in the new life of our church communities. The churches in Heath and Rowe are exciting places to be and I wouldn't want anyone to miss out.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Kevin Pleas

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## MILESTONES

by Edith C. Royer

Brittani Marian Elizabeth was born January 5 to Kevin and Kathy Sprague of Rowe. Brittani is a granddaughter of Russell and Ruth Johnson of Heath.

Keith Robert was born January 31 to Mr. and Mrs. Elsom Eldridge III of Manchester, NH. Keith is the grandson of Carol and Elsom Eldridge and great-grandson of Betty Eldridge. They all spend summers in Heath.

David Mathew was born March 5 to Renee and Michael Schofield of Rowe Road.

Chelsea Margaret was born March 13 to Karen and David Moore, Jr. of Sumner-Stetson Road.

Ross William was born March 12 to Arlene and William Thane of Brunelle Road. Ross is the grandson of Alli and Ernest Thane.

Grace Landstrom attended the wedding and reception of her granddaughter, Terri Duffy, in Saugus, MA on March 1. Several other relatives from Heath also attended.

Dianne Reilley, daughter of Patricia and Henry Leuchtmann, was married on March 14 to Jerry Waitkus in Queens, New York. The couple was attended by the groom's four sons and a reception was held on March 15 for family and friends.

Ruby Bruffee Austin died on March 27 in Northhampton. Mrs. Austin lived in Heath for many years owning the present Barry house. She was an ardent researcher of genealogy.

## HEATH PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Polly Malone McDonald and her husband, Stephen. McDonald, from Texas, recently visited her aunt Helen Nichols. This was Stephen's first visit to New England and it had been a number of years since Polly had returned to Heath where she was born and brought up.

Sophie and Michael Coe returned recently from a visit to Spain.

Phyllis and Chuck Kades have returned from a trip to Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan. While in Tokyo Chuck's 80th birthday was celebrated at a party given by his Japanese friends.

\* \* VOTE MONDAY MAY 5 \* \*



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## 8TH ANNIVERSARY FOR THE HERALD

With this issue the HEATH HERALD enters its eighth year of publication. The goal from its inception has been - and still is - to present up-to-date, factual and interesting news of Heath without taking a biased position. In some cases it is very difficult to obtain information and stories and in other cases the report or story is too extreme. The HERALD however tries to minimize any editing necessary to put these stories in printable form. With the situation now in town showing deep divisions and some acrimony, the HERALD does not seek to widen these rifts but only to present the differing points of view so that they can be openly and constructively discussed and understood.

The Staff of the HERALD continues to appreciate the support of its readers and writers as well as the advertisers who all make this paper possible. Again, we welcome all letters, comments and suggestions from our readers.

. . . the Editors

## CORRECTION

In the last number of the HERALD under Heath People, Jeremy Lively who made the Dean's List at GCC was incorrectly listed as the son of Fred Lively. He is the son of Paul and Marcella Lively. The Editors apologize for this error.

## DOG LICENSES AVAILABLE

The 1986 Heath dog licenses are now available from the Town Clerk. All dogs are required to have rabies vaccination before licensing.

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