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Tales

from the general store



salt

: cultural journalism
in New England

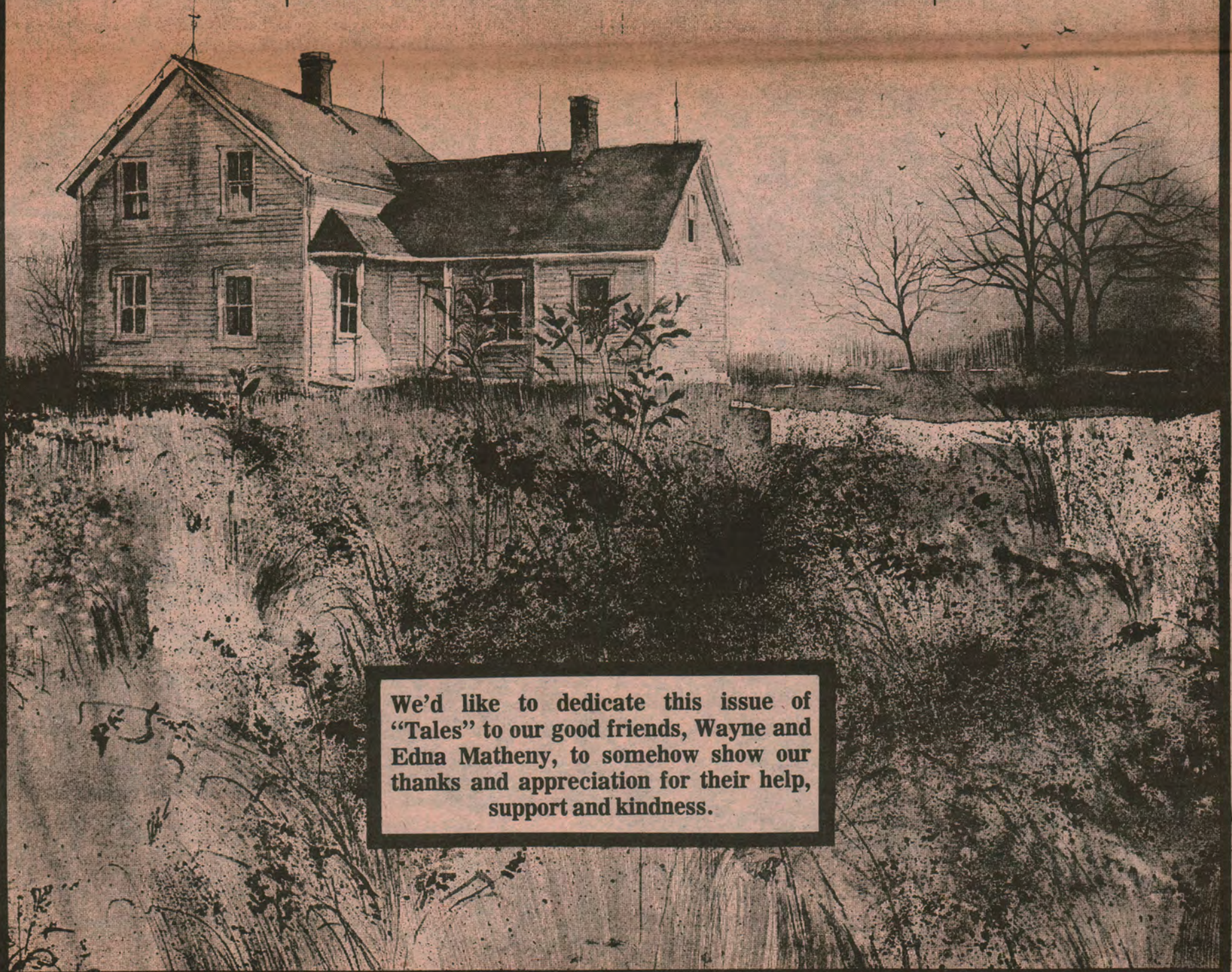
Spend some time in Bellair this summer

The Tales from the general store summer staff is ready. We've got people from all over who are going to spend the summer in Bellair to help restore the buildings, raise money and publish three monthly issues of the magazine. But we need you, too.

Throughout the summer, we'll be having several events to help raise money and have some fun. Check your local newspapers and listen in on the radio for the exact dates of the happenings. We'll have things like concerts, old movies, an art show, an ice cream social and a square dance, just to name a few. We're going to try to have something going every weekend.

We're also going to need some help restoring this old town. Our Kick-Off Weekend June 8-10 heralded the foundation work on Jake's Restaurant. It's quite a job. But when folks get together and help each other, the task seems a lot easier and even fun.

So come out to Bellair. We'll be around there most of the time, and we'd love to see you. The Bellair General Store will even be open on a day-to-day basis all summer long. So don't miss out. Come over and be a part of history in the re-making.



We'd like to dedicate this issue of "Tales" to our good friends, Wayne and Edna Matheny, to somehow show our thanks and appreciation for their help, support and kindness.

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The Salt project is a cultural journalism program in Cape Porpoise, Maine, which preserves the history and culture of New England. A semester-in-residence program has been developed for students to sharpen their interpretative, writing, photography and design skills by publishing "Salt" magazine.

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Ninety-three-year-old Crawford County resident and storyteller Thornton Stephens shares some of his favorite tales and anecdotes. Some segments have appeared in shorter forms in a story about Thornton in "Tales" #1.

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Salt, a cultural journalism project in Kennebunk, Maine, which preserves the history and culture of rural New England, celebrated its tenth anniversary last year. Founder Pamela Wood reminisces on the past ten years and looks to the future in an editorial reprinted from the journal.

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Elizabeth Reed was the first woman in Illinois to be legally executed by hanging. She was convicted of poisoning her husband with arsenic. And thousands of people gathered in the northeast part of Lawrenceville to witness her death.



Ray Elliott

The EUB Church isn't gone yet

By the time I had graduated from high school and hit the road to learn how the rest of the world lived, Bellair and thousands of other small rural villages across the country had outlived their usefulness and were on a downhill slide toward extinction.

Each time I returned to Bellair, I was reminded of its decline by the death of people I'd known all my life and the decay of the houses and farms they'd taken a great deal of pride in during their lifetimes. The people and places who remained changed with the times. Old homes and landmarks were torn down or remodeled with vinyl siding, false ceilings and other modifications that bastardized these remarkable structures.

Matchbox houses and pole barns replaced the two-story farm houses, wooden-frame barns and other outbuildings that had served large farm families for generations. Times changed, needs changed. I realized that, accepted it.

But as the years ticked off, I also began thinking about how to preserve some of the architectural treasures that are so representative of the development of rural America. In the mid-sixties, I was living in St. Louis and made it home every few weeks.

An old two-story schoolhouse that had been used as a barn since I could remember was still standing. The old Bellair General Store was open for business. People lived in the old hotel. One church no longer held services. Another had an active congregation. The school I had attended for six years was closed.

I'd drive through town, visit with people I loved as I did my own family and go back to St. Louis more depressed about the state of decay than I had been on the previous visit. Once I drafted a letter in my mind to a well-known citizen about how the decay affected me, planning to send the letter as if I were a stranger.

"I was passing through Bellair the other day," I thought, "and was struck by how much your peaceful village still represents the architecture and the rural way of life in days gone by. Nothing would be more fitting as a dedication to those who paved the way for us than to preserve some of the buildings built to serve their needs..."

Nowhere in the deed does it say anything about the land reverting to the previous or subsequent owners...

Of course, I never wrote the letter. It would have served little purpose other than as a catharsis for an emotional longing to keep a bit of the past intact for posterity. I was reminded of those feelings recently when I began hearing rumors that because of the wording in the deed to the Evangelical United Brethren Church (EUB) in Bellair it was in danger of being turned into a machine shop, a parking lot or simply torn down.

Historically, the church was one of the five original local EUB missions organized in 1866. According to the "History of Crawford County Illinois," church was held in the school near the cemetery east of Bellair until the trustees were authorized to build a church on May 26, 1888.

The school board decided to build a new two-story school in Bellair and sold the one-acre lot and school to the trustees of the church in 1892. On April 13, 1905, the trustees purchased a lot across the road from the Bellair School from James and Susie Robinson.

Following the description of the property in the deed was this stipulation: "The Grantors is to have the Preference of the above tract if sold by the Trustees if it fails to be used for Church Purposes if agreement can be made with said parties."

For years, church members believed the land would someday revert to the landowners if church services were no longer held there. And regular church services were discontinued in 1964 after most members had died or moved away. Thus, the recent rumors and concern about what might become of the church.

But that lot was sold back to the Robinsons, and the church trustees purchased one-quarter acre from Ransom Bledsoe on June 22, 1905. The church has stood there since it was moved to the site on turntables pulled by horses during the summer of 1905. Nowhere in the deed does it say anything about the land reverting to the previous or subsequent owners at any time, for any reason.

That's good news to me. As a kid growing up in Bellair, I saw the comfort it gave many of the people who attended the EUB Church regularly. The peace I saw in their eyes and on their faces, heard in their voices or noticed in their deeds came from years of faith in God.

While the church has stood empty for nearly 20 years and the paint on the woodwork and the patterned ceiling has started cracking and peeling, the altar, the pulpit and the pews remain untouched by the passage of time. Song books and hand-held fans fill the backs of the pews.

An unopened Bible rests on the pulpit. A picture of Christ beckoning to the fishermen hangs behind the altar. The attendance and offering board near the old upright piano remain blank. And the rope to ring the bell hangs from the belfry and lays curled on the coat hooks at the back of the church.

It may be decaying a bit, but the old EUB Church should be able to keep on standing for a while longer where it has and as it has for nearly 80 years. I can't help but think that those faithful church members long since gone would be happy about that.

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Letters

Reader knows possible identity of woman

EDITOR'S NOTE: Reader Scarlett Williamson received the following response regarding the possible identity of the unknown woman whose picture appeared in the letter's section "Tales" #6. Anyone else have any ideas?

Even before I saw you were wanting it identified, the thought "Is that Aunt Laura?" flashed across my mind. I am referring to my great-aunt Laura (Holmes) McKnight.

I am not sure of this, but you might try that name on some of the older residents of the Porterville-Annapolis area. I know I've heard the name Glenn Clements from somewhere. Whether it was from her and Grandmother Lamb or from being mentioned in the past at East Porterville Church where I visit occasionally, I'm not sure.

We discussed the background of the picture and wondered if it could be at the Porterville Store. We are sure it is neither the Annapolis Store nor her home—where Ed Davis lives now.

Just received our "Tales" and we really enjoy it. I would be interested in hearing who this turns out to be.

NINA BOWEN
LaPorte, Indiana

Family came from Bellair area

Some of our family originally came from the Bellair-Yale territory. At one time, some of the "oldsters" owned the Bellair Store Building.

GERALDINE HITT
Wichita, Kansas

Mother remembers 'Ye Old Time'

I was happy to receive the copy of "Tales." I think it is a great thing you are doing over there. Here is some "Ye Old Time" information my mother has been telling me.

My mother, Maude Harris Huddleston, is making her home with me. She was reared two and a half miles south of Bellair and remembers quite well of various businesses and happenings then. She has many memories of visiting with her grandmother, Martha Harris, who lived in the first house west of the post office.

Her first recollection of the general store was when it was operated by Perry Miller and Issac Shire. Mr. Shire also taught music. Another general store was operated by Walter Holly. She also remembers when the two brothers, Mike and Frank Myers of Hume, came to Bellair and drilled some oil wells in the vicinity.

There were two doctors there at the time—Dr. Ferguson and Dr. Kisner. Dr. Ferguson ran the post office, and his daughter, Fanchion, operated the switchboard that was located there. My mother remembers Wash Edmonds, the blacksmith, and seamstress Nora Cooley who made her a dress. Jim Tyhurst

was the cashier of the bank at that time.

She has eaten in Jake Emmet's restaurant and shopped in Nancy Bell's home, where she carried a small amount of merchandise. At that time, there was only one church in Bellair—the United Brethren. The feed mill was operated by Logan Byers. She visited the sorghum mill that was run by Levi Biggs, which was three miles south of Bellair, several times.

After her marriage to my dad, Marvin Huddleston, he and his brother, Joe Ault, bought the general store from Mick Harris in approximately 1915. Sol Huddleston moved from Yale to Bellair and worked in the store for them. Dad managed the store three days a week, and Joe managed it the other days.

Both men lived in Yale, but they often stayed overnight at the hotel and ate meals many times at the Suzie Robinson home. When they left Bellair, they sold the general store to H.W. Harris of Yale.

Mom is now 93 years old and very alert to "Ye Old Times." She enjoys talking about those good old times. If anyone remembers her and would like to come for a visit, we would be happy to have you.

We wish the Tales staff continued success with its project in Bellair. And we hope to come and eat when the new restaurant gets operating.

CORAL STANLEY ANI
MAUDE HUDDLESTON
Newton, Illinois

Sparks kids grew up near Bellair

We are the Sparks children (Geneva, Cleon and Freda) who grew up and went to school in Bellair. Our mother's name is Nora Sparks, and Alf Livingston is our grandpa's name. We were raised on our home place east of Bellair. We have many good memories of Bellair and the general store.

THE SPARKS KIDS
Ontario, California

Goin' hog wild over history

I couldn't agree more with your comment "preserving the history and culture of our past." And to help pass the word along, I cut out several clippings of your event (1984 Hog Butchering) and mailed them to relatives of mine who live in Lawrence, Jasper and Richland Counties.

Not all are farmers, but do share your feelings of the good, neighborly customs we held so dear in our yesteryears. My father always helped our neighbors at butchering time until our town passed a law forbidding livestock to be kept within the city limits. Then he bought some land outside the city for us to have our hogs and milk cows. Eventually he had to give that up, and we had to buy out of our local meat market.

I have many pleasant memories of those days, and once got the "fever" to collect

figurines of hogs! Ha. Still have one toothpick holder showing a pig (pink) beside a tree stump. On the side of the stump, there is an image of a man's face which I have been told is Thomas Jefferson's. Newspaper cartoonists depicted Jefferson as a gourmet who had the appetite of a pig. True or not, it is adorable and I treasure it.

Best of luck and good fellowship at your event.

MRS. VIOLET COWGER
Greenup, Illinois

Letters help to keep in touch

I was sure surprised that you printed my letter in your magazine. I have heard from folks I hadn't seen or heard from in 50 years. They saw my name and remembered me. I am grateful you put my letter in the paper. Thank you so much.

MYRTIE BOYD BLAIR
Decatur, Illinois

How 'bout Hazel Dell history?

Could the record of Hazel Dell be put in this paper of yours? I have several pictures of the town years ago—say like the 1920s. The town is about all gone now, only a blacksmith shop and a small grocery store. It could be a good write up for your paper if you have someone to put the news and pictures together.

DOROTHY TAGGART
Greenup, Illinois

EDITOR'S NOTE: We appreciate the story idea. We're always looking for interesting people, places and things to write about. Photos help make the articles more complete, so send yours along and we'll take good care of them.

Encouraging notes

We enjoy "Tales" so much. I feel we need this type of material to help heal our nation.

AUDREY BRIGGS
LaPorte, Indiana

Glad to receive another copy of your magazine, and to hear that you won out in the (mail) controversy. Interesting to know that the face-lifting is continuing. Bellair has been stagnant for too long.

I may have made a mistake in my grandfather's death as given in the last issue (If Grandpa could see us now, "Tales" #6). He died in 1894 and was 92.

Thanks for the progress being made.

JOHN L. FREELAND
Mansfield, Ohio

Please send me back issues 1-5 (just saw #6 and loved it) so I can pass them on to local history buffs.

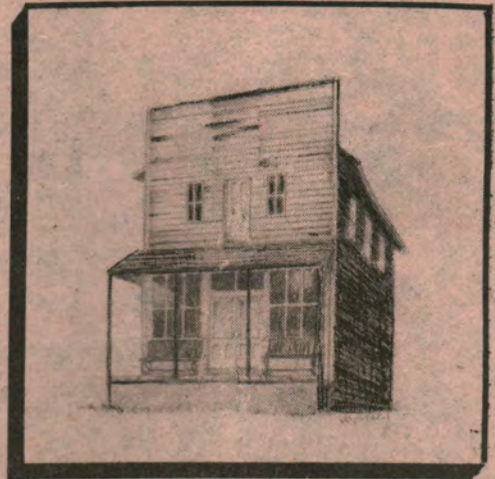
CAROL LEE NEWLIN
Paris, Illinois

I read and reread many articles in "Tales." One I especially enjoy is by Thornton Stephens. In fact, we have an old rocking chair that he recaned for us.

WILLIAM G. LITTLE
Robinson, Illinois

Tales

from the general store



'The difficult is easy;
the impossible takes a little longer.'

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Tales from the general store, inc. is a non-profit foundation established as an educational and charitable organization to preserve the history and culture of the Wabash Valley region of eastern Illinois and western Indiana from the days of the general store era. The foundation will conduct one summer workshop and several weekend workshops throughout the year in cultural journalism for area residents, both students and non-students, who are interested in journalism and history.

Throughout the year, grade school, high school and college students will also have the opportunity to learn about their history and culture by talking with people who have experienced them. These students may also have the opportunity to participate in or observe such activities as hunting, trapping, fishing, butchering, furniture making, soap making and other customs from the past.

From these experiences, the workshop participants and students will record oral history, write stories, take pictures and collect tales, recipes and remedies that portray the rural life of long ago and a bit of what remains today. "Tales from the general store," printed and distributed as an insert to the Robinson "Daily News," Lawrenceville "Daily Record" and Casey "Daily Reporter," will contain these stories. The program will be experimental and community related, in the tradition of educator John Dewey, where students learn by doing.

Workshops for the publication will be held at the Tales from the general store, inc. headquarters in Bellair, Illinois, where the foundation is engaged in the restoration of that village which dates back to 1844. Initial funding for the project will come from tax-deductible donations. Future funding will include donations, grants, subscriptions, syndication, book sales and other sources from services or merchandise provided by Tales from the general store, inc.

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Anyone may submit articles, photographs or drawings for possible publication in "Tales from the general store." If published, all material becomes property of Tales from the general store, inc. No responsibility for returning submissions can be assumed; however, every effort will be made to return all submissions.

Subscribers to the Robinson "Daily News," the Lawrenceville "Daily Record" and the Casey "Daily Reporter" will receive the magazine as part of their subscriptions as long as the Robinson "Daily News" prints and distributes it. Non-subscribers to the three newspapers may purchase individual copies for \$1 each or annual subscriptions for \$4.

Address all correspondence to: Tales from the general store, inc., Rural Route 2, Orlong, Illinois 62449 or phone (618) 569-5171.



Don, Ralph, Mack and Marjorie Harris (children left to right) were photographed with this bridge building gang at the bottom of a hill approximately one mile west of Bellair, circa 1915.

Did you know ...

compiled by
Bob McCoppin

Doomsday prophecy was his teaching

Members of the Christian Catholic Church now believe that the earth is round. But it wasn't so long ago that the leader of the Zion-based church from 1907-1942, Wilbur Glenn Voliva, proclaimed the world was definitely flat. And he backed it up with an offer of \$1000 to anyone who could prove otherwise. He never paid off. Whenever evidence was presented to him to collect, Voliva would sweep it from his desk and tell the claimant he was crazy.

Furthermore, Voliva was fond of prophesizing the end of the world. He first predicted the date to be September 10, 1934. The prophecy drew world attention, and people everywhere waited nervously (though it later was learned that Voliva himself had had his cellar stocked with coal for the winter a week before the doomsday). When the day came and went, Voliva postponed his prophecy to 1943.

He bombed again, of course, but by that time he had died. The church has been trying to live down his ideas ever since.

—an old, undated newspaper account

A little Lincoln history

The Thomas Lincoln family, of which President Abraham was a son, passed through Palestine in 1830. They stayed

overnight in the old Dubois Tavern as they traveled from their Indiana home to a new site between Greenup and Charleston.

Later, Abe recounted first seeing jugglers perform at the square in Palestine.

The Lincolns also were said to have visited the home of their relatives, the Robert Lincolns, who lived southwest of Annapolis, near Porterville. That log cabin no longer stands, however.

—from the Robinson Daily News
date unknown

What children had to learn

Here's something that will make learning the three R's look like a piece of cake. Things weren't so easy in the days of one-room schoolhouses, when children also had to learn:

- 1) How to make a bed with a feather mattress.
- 2) How to wash dishes with Lewis Lye soap.
- 3) How to comb and braid long hair.
- 4) How to take a bath in a wash tub.
- 5) How to wind shuttles for a loom.
- 6) How to button and unbutton long underwear.
- 7) How to lace and tie high-top shoestrings.
- 8) How to gather eggs under a sitting hen.
- 9) How to get the cows at milking time.
- 10) How to close the hen coops at night.
- 11) How to gather duck and goose eggs.
- 12) How to bring in wood for the fire.
- 13) How to pump water for the livestock.
- 14) How to clean lamp chimneys.

—submitted by Leona Race

The preservation of Palestine

The town of Palestine might not be around today—might have fallen victim to the Great Fire of 1911—had it not been for the exploits of a few well-dressed, God-fearing, bucket-wielding men. The following treasure is from a newspaper clipping dated May 21, 1911:

"Last Sunday morning as the people were gathered at the different churches for worship there was heard ringing out the alarm of fire. Men turned from worship to fight fire and there waged for more than an hour one of the fiercest struggles ever witnessed in this place. Men dressed in suits of the latest style, patent leather shoes, and collars and cuffs fresh from the laundry, fought like firemen dressed for the occasion...

"Anyone thinking that Palestine has no fire department need only to visit the scene of the fire of last Sunday and they must be convinced that no town of its size on the face of the earth can beat it. That the whole block was not wiped out is a wonder. There was a strong wind blowing directly against wooden buildings and everything in favor of the fire, but it was stopped and extinguished right against an old wooden building as dry as powder.

"To the Bucket Brigade belongs the credit."

The fire, which caused \$7000 in damages according to the headline, was of unknown origin.

Courthouse blues

Palestine was made the Crawford County seat in 1816, and was a growing, successful

town at that time. However, it did not have a great deal of luck in providing the county with a courthouse.

While a tavern first served as a temporary courthouse in 1819, the structure that was being built for this purpose was struck by lightning three times and never completed. In the 1820s, judicial quarters were obtained wherever the county could rent space.

In 1830, a courthouse made of wood was built by Benjamin Myers and his six brothers. But it was destroyed by arson the night before it was to be received by the authorities.

After a third courthouse was finally erected, the county seat was moved to Robinson in 1843. And Palestine was relieved of its cursed responsibility.

—from the Robinson "Daily News" and "Crawford County History"

Indian mounds discovered

Fifty-nine mounds built by the Hopewell Indians have been found on the west side of the Wabash River near Hutsonville. The mounds were used to elevate houses and forts.

Ranging in height from six inches to five feet, most of the mounds have disappeared. However, three are known in this area—one south of Palestine, one on Merom Bluff and another in Turman Township.

The mounds in Merom served to protect the Indians' ceremonial center and villages. The forts can still be indentified today.

The mound which survives in Turman Township is one of nine original mounds. Excavation of these has revealed them as

possible burial sites. The digging has brought up animal and human bones, stone implements, flints and colored pottery.

In fact, the Turman or Mann cemetery is located on this mound, which is near the site of Fort Turman, and which William Henry Harrison passed by on his way to Tippecanoe. To locate this mound, go east on the road past the Monroe Melon Market to the first road going south, and shortly after crossing a plank bridge, look for the cemetery on the east side of the road.

—submitted by Elva Tennis

Writer gets job in Los Angeles

Donna St. George, who wrote 'about subsistence farming in the first issue of "Tales," has recently accepted a job with the Los Angeles "Times." She previously served internships with the Seattle "Post-Intelligencer" and the Washington "National Journal," and served one year as managing editor of the University of Illinois' campus paper, "The Daily Illini."

History books available now

Much of the information presented in Did you know is drawn from "History of Crawford County, Illinois." The two-volume set includes family biographies, local history and antique photographs. Copies can be obtained at \$30 per volume through Keller's Printing Company, Outer S. Cross, Robinson, (618) 544-7734.

Adventures with wild asparagus

by Diane Meyer

Summertime in the suburbs. The typical 6 a.m. pleasantries is sleeping. Roger Camplin is not the typical suburban man—at 6 a.m. he's out picking wild asparagus in the vast fields of suburbia. I was awake enough to accompany Roger on his latest asparagus expedition.

Traditionally, Roger blindfolds those who go asparagus picking so they won't come back to his "secret spot."

I have Blindfold Phobia.

He hesitantly broke his code of secrecy to accommodate my neurosis. He should've hesitated a little longer—I love asparagus, too.

A man of many interests, Roger is a life-safety consultant, biker, camper, soccer player, writer, story teller and wild asparagus forager.

"I've always felt more at home in the countryside seeking an understanding of what's around me, rather than being engulfed in institutionalized knowledge," Roger said. "I've come across many delightful people with similar interests."

One such "delightful" person, a 60-year-old neighbor, introduced Roger to wild asparagus hunting by announcing one summer, "These are great asparagus days." Roger curiously tagged along for the journey. He's been foraging ever since.

In an attempt to enlighten his children to the wonders of the natural world, Roger included them in his quests as personal asparagus apprentices. During some of their more discouraging asparagus endeavors, Roger inspired his "little people" in their search by creating folktales.

"As the kids grow up, they believe my tales less and less," he said, "but they eat more and more asparagus."

"As the kids grow up, they believe my tales less and less," he said...

Through these folktales, which are now rituals with the Camplins, Roger has written "Wild Asparagus," the manuscript of a book about asparagus, fact and fiction.

"With this book I hope, in some small way, to pay my dues for the gift of enjoying a life that includes wild asparagus," he explained. "I want to make the book enticing to others. I've had so much fun picking asparagus and making up tales that I'm even believing them myself."

The night before the search, Roger told me one of his tales—what could be considered the ultimate asparagus picking dress code: the footwear code, shirt code, pants code, sweater code, jacket code, hat code, jewelry code, perfume code, make-up code and even the hair code.

Before searching, the forager



Roger Camplin carefully hunts an unsuspecting asparagus in his now not-so-secret foraging spot.

must be familiar with the behavior and personality quirks of the wild asparagus—asparagus are gifted with a "spirit."

Natural dress is a necessity since asparagus will scoff at anything polyester. In essence, only naturally-fibered clothing, shaded brown, green, yellow or orange will be accepted by the asparagus. The forager doesn't need to blend into the grass, but asparagus don't respond well to flame-colored ruby or royal blue azure clothing.

"A duck or deer hunting camouflage outfit is not recommended," Roger said. "They are as artificial as a polyester leisure suit."

Proper footwear involves quality wool socks and well-worn, thick, leather boots to avoid the cool morning dew. Wool, being organic and natural, is readily accepted by the asparagus. They also respond well to old, ripped, faded, labelless pants and jackets. Asparagus are very modest.

"Typical garb could include a long-sleeve shirt with a few buttons missing and a worn out elbow," Roger said. "Faded overalls or jeans with minor rips or patches, if not gaudy, are also appropriate."

A hat is probably the key part

of the picker's gear which will actually contribute more to their image than any other article of clothing. "Old well-worn felt hats, veteran straw hats or wool stocking caps are all appropriate," explained Roger. "Scarves are well received if they're not a guise for hair rollers underneath."

Some general taboos include never taking along items that asparagus could find foreign or undesirable including keys, lighters, combs or money. Also, the forager should not wear any jewelry, make-up or perfume.

"People who have had a haircut prior to the last full moon do not do well in the search," Roger said. "Naturally, people with beards, mustaches and bountiful crops of hair are better received by the asparagus."

Also, never wear a watch. "Time is left to the asparagus—it will make time speed along or stand still without the technology of mankind interfering."

Asparagus will be found only if they want to be, according to Roger. However, if they successfully evade the forager, they've been known to snicker at their feat. Quite a mistake. The experienced asparagus picker will immediately hear the laughing and spot their locale.

Early morning searchers have an advantage since they're likely to catch the asparagus waking up—thus giving up their hiding place with a yawn. Those who arrive too late in the day won't be able to take advantage of the yawn technique: that's when the movement method comes in handy. The asparagus will turn their heads to observe

Asparagus will be found only if they want to be...

the better-dressed forager; those inadequately outfitted will be ignored by the asparagus.

Also, wild asparagus usually grow in clusters. Where you find one, you find another—"even asparagus need friends."

The morning of my first asparagus pursuit I was prepared: no make-up, no jewelry, no worldly possessions. I wore grey wool socks, faded and ripped army fatigues, well-worn hiking boots, a decrepit brown tee-shirt and a tattered moth-eaten golf jacket.

We arrived in a field near some railroad tracks (asparagus like the melodic

humming of the trains). Pheasants whistling, birds singing, winds chanting, Roger explained, "with all this noise you can hardly hear the asparagus laughing at you."

He instructed me to watch where I walked, to follow closely behind him and to listen to my stomach—"The hungrier you are, the keener your sights."

I quickly observed the strange, growing phenomenon of the asparagus. I'd see one stalk, walk away, return and find four more stalks in the same spot I'd searched before. Roger cajoled in the background, "Look, one just yawned. The asparagus is doing a number on you."

I learned to appreciate the necessity of dressing and behaving properly for asparagus—they wouldn't have accepted me any other way. "You see," Roger said, "now you're a believer, too."

Eventually the asparagus felt comfortable with me and came out of hiding. I felt like a murderer cutting the first few stalks, but Roger assured me that picking asparagus is like getting a haircut. "You never have to feel badly," he said. "It always grows back."

It didn't take me long to overcome my fear; I caught on quickly.

Roger maintained that first time foragers step on more asparagus than they pick. He was mistaken. "Your're picking up real good—too good. I should've blindfolded you. Now I'll have all of southern Illinois in my asparagus patch next year."

Here are a few of Roger's recipes from his manuscript, "Wild Asparagus."

Asparagus soup (cream of)

Wash and remove tips from one pound of fresh wild asparagus. Simmer tips until tender in milk or water. Drain and set aside. Cut stalks into one-inch pieces and put into a pot with 6 cups of veal, chicken or vegetable stock.

Add ¼ cup chopped onion and ½ cup chopped celery. Simmer for 30 minutes covered, and then strain through a sieve.

Melt 3 tablespoons of butter and add 3 tablespoons of flour, stirring to make a roux. Then stir in ½ cup cream and the strained stock.

Heat and add the tips. Serve immediately with salt, paprika and white pepper.

Fried asparagus

Trim, wash and pat dry fresh wild asparagus. Heat ½-inch cooking oil in skillet.

Dip spears into beaten eggs. Roll in fine, dry unflavored bread crumbs.

Slide spears into hot oil and turn when crust has formed on bottom side. When done on both sides, drain on paper towels and season to taste.

Thornton sez:

by Thornton Stephens

Annapolis, Illinois. April 7, 1984.

Greetings. I am writing this intending to try a new erasing pencil. At the same time, I wanted to tell you how I am getting along doing my own housework. With most things I seem to get along very well. About the worst mess I made was when I attempted to make some apple pies.

I had watched some cooks especially so I could do the job. Well, I got my fruit ready and then the crust—it didn't especially handle like I had seen others do the job. My crust seemed to be much thicker than ordinary

crust. And I baked it until I knew it must be done.

But when it came time to serve it, well, that's a horse of a different color. I couldn't cut that crust. I just had to pry it apart the best I could where it had baked apart.

Well, I eat the fruit out. But that crust—my, my. My store teeth just wouldn't take it. I scraped it out in the varment dish. And now to my sorrow, I no longer see our neighbor's dog that in times past would drop in and clean up what was left for him.

Now do I owe my neighbor an apology for the death of his dog?

Training Dogs To Catch Fur-bearing Animals

My brother Felix had the best knack, or should I say best luck, training dogs to find or catch fur-bearing animals that I ever heard of. He could take most any kind of a dog, and after a short time, that dog would go to the woods by his self and catch a fur-bearer and bring it home alive.

Felix could just show the dog a fur-strecher board in the morning, and by night the dog would bring in an animal whose skin would fit that board. It didn't matter what kind of an animal the board had been used for, he brought in the same.

Well, this went on one winter 'til a nice warm day in March. The weather was so nice that Felix's wife, Pearl, set up the ironing board on the back porch to do her

ironing.

The dog happened to see the board and supposed it meant he should find a fur-bearer whose skin fit that board. The dog disappeared, but along about, the folks heard a hog squealing.

When it was delivered, the folks of course turned it loose, but the dog got a good supper and several friendly pats as though he had done good work.

Well, as time went by and the weather got warmer, Pearl was hoeing out close to the toilet and the dog was sleeping in the shade of the toilet. And when he finally woke up and set up, he didn't know just what he was seeing, but it was the toilet house with the gable end next to him.

Thinking it was a giant fur board, he raised up and started for the woods howling most pitiful. He was never seen again.

That Old White Sow

When I was just a five-year-old boy my dad would say, "Here, Thornt: Take this chaw of tobacco and this five ears of corn, and go take the corn to the old white sow."

My dad's hogs were wild and afraid of people because he was mean to them. I remember that I was terribly afraid of his big old white sow. She had been segregated up in the field by a hay stack, because she killed and ate chickens. She had bristles and red eyes, and I never wanted to meet her any time or place.

I chanced to meet her one morning as she suddenly came around the crib. I picked a quarter of a brick and threw it at

her and hit her square on the end of the nose. In a few days, she lost a premature litter of pigs.

When Joe and Lewis were cutting wood, they happened to destroy the nest of four young squirrels. They brought the squirrels home and put them in the buttery. The squirrels thrived on the bread and milk, and by warm weather were big enough to live outside.

Something happened to three of them, but the other one went to the orchard and built him a nest up in an apple tree out south of the barn about 100 feet down in the orchard. Each morning he would come out on the yard fence to just south of

the house and take a cookie from our hand.

Just to see what his nest was like inside, I climbed about 15 feet and was feeling inside the nest when I heard an awful commotion back a little west of where I climbed through the stake and rider fence.

A litter of pigs about a week old were hid in the smart weeds from the flies and were shaded by the fence. Felix, my little five-year-old brother, had followed me out that far and saw the pigs and grabbed one by both hind legs. The pig and Felix both screamed with all their might.

The old white mother sow was on the job with her bristles raised high and her

mouth opened wide and woof-woofing at the top of her voice. But the most unbelievable thing was that she was not trying to harm Felix. I waved my club a few times, and she backed up. That was when I jerked the pig's legs from Felix.

The racket all stopped suddenly, unless the sow puffed a few times. I grabbed Felix up and poked him through the fence where we both lay for half an hour—trembling so bad we didn't try to walk.

I never wanted to tell this story because people would say, "Wasn't he a brave little lad," when the opposite was the truth. And I never again was scared that bad.

Grandmother Stephens

You remember I told you we knew very little about Grandmother Stephens, except that her name was Elizabeth Oldham, and she was Pennsylvania Dutch. She married Grandfather Stephens, a deserter from the British Army in the War of 1812.

But for the sake of this story (and mind you, it is just a story), let's just imagine one of her ancestors came over on the Mayflower. His name was Whelheim Oldham. He joined with the pilgrims while they were in Holland, and came back to England with them when they decided they would finally go on to America.

You know the story—how, after much delay, the whole outfit with all their plunder, grub, tools and clothing loaded into two little old ships, the Speedwell and the Mayflower, and set sail across the stormy Atlantic Ocean. After many days sailing, the Speedwell began leaking so bad it was decided to go back to England for another ship if the Speedwell could not be repaired. But it was not practical to repair the Speedwell, nor could another ship be had.

If they were to get to America there wasn't anything to do but all pile into the Mayflower and start across that way. They were badly overcrowded on board, and to make matters worse, it was not long until some very stormy weather was encountered. They might sail forward a few knots one day, only to be blown back the other way the next. The waves were high, the winds were severe and all the people on board began to fear they were as good as lost.

By day and by night William (as he was called) Oldham walked the deck, wringing his hands, shaking his head and muttering to himself, "We will never make it, we will never make it."

This went on day after day, night after night, until all on board were pretty sure poor William had indeed lost some of his

marbles.

One morning, William failed to show up on deck at the usual hour. Someone went to look about him and reported his bed had not been slept in. The ship was searched high and low, but the missing man could not be found.

The sailor on watch the evening before happened to remember he heard a loud splash in the water at about eight bells the evening before. He said it sounded like a large fish jumping, and thought nothing about it at the time.

Everyone was saddened by the passing of poor William, and a memorial service was said for him. Then, as he had no heirs, it was decided to divide up his property and allow someone else to occupy his bed. One man wanted his ax, another his gun; but neither could be found. Just why he would want to throw them overboard was hard to imagine.

As a matter of historical record, the pilgrims finally reached America—not Virginia, as they had hoped—but New England. Late one evening, the lookout shouted, "Land-Ahoy!" Sure enough, through their glasses a low green coast line could be seen in the distance.

The anchor was dropped at a safe distance from the shore. No landing was planned 'til morning, as a smoke was seen on shore and the woods might be full of hostile savages. Next morning, Miles Standish and his six soldiers, with their blunderbusses held ready for instant action, manned a boat and headed for shore with the help of some sailors.

As they came closer to the shore, they could see a house like none of them had ever seen before. It seemed to be a log pen covered over with some kind of boards. Smoke was coming out of a chimney at the back of the house.

The boat was tied up to a large rock. The soldiers lined up in battle formation behind some low hazels, then marched boldly up to the house where a man could



be sitting in a Partlow chair reading the Sunday supplement from behind a cloud of smoke which would emerge from time to time.

The reader being hid behind his paper was not aware of the approach of the soldiers until they were within a few feet of him. Then, as he stood on his feet, he dropped his paper and corn cob pipe. With a shout of joy, he shook the hand of each soldier, embraced them and pounded them on the back as each in turn returned the compliment.

Yes, you have guessed it. It was William.

Of course, he had a bit of explaining to do when they got around to it. Well, he said he thought the ship had no chance to

make it, and he didn't have much to lose, so he took a dead reckoning on the North Star and plunged in, headed for America.

"It was quite a swim, but as you see I finally made it."

He said he had built his house, had ten cords of wood cut and had a hog butchered. Just then, the door opened and a most beautiful young lady with long braids of dark hair stepped out on the porch. Imagine the surprise of the visitors to see her there. All the more so when William informed them she was his wife, and she was a princess—the daughter of a great chief.

You can have this story for what it is worth. It is just the rambling of an idle mind.

On being ten

Salt:

A n

EDITOR'S NOTE: "Salt" is a journal of New England Culture that was born in a Kennebunk, Maine, high school in 1973. In the Winter 1983 issue, editor and founder Pamela H. Wood wrote the following column about "Salt" celebrating its 10th anniversary and looking forward to the next 10 years. We think it captures the spirit and the essence of culture journalism projects across the country and what they are about.

by Pamela Wood

Unless he was too large or too small for his age, the boy I saw walking down School Street was about 10 years old. He caught me where I laugh the hardest, and I had trouble steering my car. I say he was walking because he wasn't mounted on wheels, and his feet were doing the work, but as grownups define walking, you couldn't call it walking.

He pushed himself off the ground with his right foot in a crooked right-angle hop, slid on his left foot, and then tilted right against gravity again. His arms were outstretched as if he had just learned to ride a bicycle without hands, and his head bobbed loosely on its own, with no obligations to the rest of his body.

He looked like a drunken whooping crane or a helicopter that had lost its controls, but he was, of course, just a 10-year-old boy going home from school. Going home on a sun-filled afternoon, going home a little late (did he have to stay after school an extra half hour?) with the sidewalk to himself so that he could move along it any way he wanted.

There is some kinship between "Salt" on its 10th birthday and the 10-year-old boy, but it's not the same. There is some real gratitude to be alive and a youthful itch to hop and be part of a sun-filled afternoon, but not that kind of untamed exuberance that turns 10-year-old boys into drunken whooping cranes.

There is some real gratitude to be alive and a youthful itch to hop and be a part of a sun-filled afternoon...

Another image surfaces on the eve of "Salt's" 10th birthday. Last night I saw Mary Turner again, not in person, but in a taped program on public television. There she was, climbing down the side of her hilly farm in West Peru, Maine, with the help of a crooked staff. The staff was a third leg as she tended her calves and geese and chickens, then it became a wand to shoo the animals where she wanted them to go.

I hadn't seen Mary Turner since "Salt" students watched her make butter in an old round churn that had belonged to her mother. She had given us molasses cookies, and, at the prodding of her old friend, Monty Washburn, had told us stories that were laced with her own bawdy wit. If Chaucer had been around, Mary might have been in the "Canterbury Tales." As it was, she appeared in "Salt," first in 1975, then again in 1977.

Seeing Mary Turner again affected me the same way as watching the gyrations of the 10-year-old boy, for both carry their age with an intensity that touches the heart. Age, for Mary Turner, is not a withering of what she is, but an intensifying of what she is. Now almost 80, she has a thorny grace won by standing her own ground all these years.

Still, neither Mary's age nor the boy's youth seem to apply to "Salt" as we approach our 10th birthday. Human life spans don't explain us, because we are neither young nor old. We are not a fixed body that is born and laps with youth, matures as a steadfast adult, and gains grace in old age.

We are like the changing waves, rising, falling and reforming to rise again. Over ten years of our life, a continuing flow of people—young and old—have mingled their efforts together to rise as one wave, spend themselves as one force, recede, regroup and rise again as the next wave.

Scores of people like Mary Turner and hundreds of students not much older than that 10-year-old boy have worked together in ever-changing waves that never bear the same parts, but always keep coming.

That's how "Salt" feels to me at age 10. I see tides of faces. I see Mary Turner, I see Herb Baum, I see Ida Alen, I see Reid Chapman, I see Ada Foss, I see Harvey Bix, I see Alberta Redmond—all these people whose character and work shape the waves like the wind and the lunar pull. And I see all those students, 300 of them now, over the course of the years, throwing the full force of their energy and their excitement and their imagination into what they are doing.

by Ray Elliott

Our mission as teachers is quite clear. It is, quite simply, to help our students master the information they must have to be able to take their destinies into their own hands. Said another way, it is to help our students come as close as is humanly possible to having control over their own futures.

—Eliot Wigginton
"Foxfire" founder

Back in colonial times, the printer was a man of considerable influence in his community. The life of the colonial printer that Benjamin Franklin describes in his autobiography illustrates just how significant was his influence. Books, newspapers, pamphlets, everything printed, passed through the print shop and the printer's hands.

And the intelligent printer like Franklin published his philosophies, beliefs and ideas on any aspect of colonial life. He was more than a printer; he was a reporter, a philosopher, a lay preacher, a commentator, a businessman and, sometimes, even a politician.

He educated his readers. Franklin began publishing "Poor Richard's Almanac" in 1732 and published it for 25 years, slanting it to the "common people, who scarce bought any other books."

In addition to owning the print shop, the printer was often the postmaster and owner of the tavern and coffeehouse. Places where people met or gathered to discuss issues of the day. Everything and everybody came together near the printer. Common education occurred there.

Sort of like a colonial print shop is how Norman Sims, University of Massachusetts journalism professor originally from Paris, Illinois, views Salt, a cultural journalism project located in Cape Porpoise, Maine. Sims sees the print shops as being similar to small universities. Today, however, he says that our universities are "fragmented into separate disciplines."

Salt is a school where English, history, journalism, sociology, anthropology, folklore, art and design are blended together as the students publish "Salt," a journal of New England culture. Sims is on the magazine's academic board, a post he shares with professors from Smith College, Cornell University, Dartmouth College, Bowdoin College, Purdue University and the University of Illinois.

Together they formed a plan for a semester-in-residence program where college students spend a semester in Maine for credit. Students from around the country go to Maine and sharpen

their interpretative, writing, photography and design skills as they study local culture and publish the magazine. Each student is expected to produce one major bylined article during the semester.

But that's getting ahead of the story. Salt hasn't always operated at that level with that kind of support. Pam Wood, a 54-year-old mother of four, started it all back in Kennebunk, Maine, High School in 1971.

The former full-time journalist and Radcliffe College graduate was teaching high school English. As a new staff member, she got the "bottom-of-the-ladder" group in a track system where students are "tracked" according to their abilities.

Relating her experience (for what must have been the thousandth time) with this group of "underachievers" from which the Salt project evolved, the gray-haired robust Wood sat in the upstairs part of the Salt headquarters at the time.

The white-shingled, two-story building that was Salt headquarters for three years—before a recent move a few doors up the street—overlooks Cape Porpoise Bay. The building previously served as an antique shop and a schoolhouse.

In the Kennebunk High School, Wood said an outdated text was used for the class. The initial story was about a flapper party.

"How relevant," she said, laughing and stretching back on the couch in the living room-kitchen, surrounded by old copies of "Salt," magazines from other projects, shelves of books, stacks of tapes and other assorted papers and equipment you'd expect to find in any other school office.

"But I assigned the story," she said. "The next day I asked them what they thought of it. 'It stunk,' they told me. 'You're absolutely right,' I said and put the book away in the corner."

From there on, Wood began the process of finding other ways for her students to learn. One of her assignments was for them to bring in hunting regulations to read. By the next year, she was well on her way to founding Salt and teaching in a way that students learned what she was hired to teach them while they learned about their own culture rather than reading about a flapper party.

She was assigned a folklore course that "treated folklore like dead butterflies." A couple of weeks into the course, she asked the class what they thought about throwing away the book and producing their own.

The class liked the idea and began publishing a book with a Xerox machine. According to Wood, it was crude.

"But it grew out of looking firsthand at things and people around us," she said. "We went out and talked with people who have made the culture of Maine—the Indians, the immigrants, the fishermen, gathering information from

them all and getting stories from them."

It wasn't long before she heard about the Foxfire project, started in much the same way in 1967 in Rabun Gap, Georgia, by a young Cornell University graduate, Eliot Wigginton. He had almost quit teaching before he had hardly started.

A student tried to set his lecture on fire during class the first six weeks. Desks were covered with graffiti; chalk, tacks and anything that wasn't nailed down were missing. He collected water pistols and dodged paper airplanes until he considered resigning.

But before he did and before he decided to really clamp down on his students by imposing a hastily-thought-up punishment of putting "Xs" in the grade book, paddings, visits to the office and suspensions from class, Wigginton, too, walked into class one day and asked the students, "How would you like to throw away the text and start a magazine?"

That's how he describes it in the introduction to "The Foxfire Book," the first of eight books of collections taken from the "Foxfire" magazine and published first by Anchor/Doubleday Books, then by Foxfire, anyway.

Of course, Wood and Wigginton weren't the first educators who have advocated a "learning-by-doing" philosophy of education. John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Maria Montessori, Jerome Bruner and many others had been practicing and writing about various learning philosophies under the general category of experiential learning for more than 50 years.

Much learning has always been done by doing. Colonial printers, like many other trades and professions, including law and medicine, had learned by becoming apprentices to master craftsmen and professionals.

But Wigginton was the first to bring such innovative concepts to American education with such national acclaim and financial success. "Foxfire" books became best sellers and has been one of the most successful publishing projects in the history of Doubleday Books.

After Wood heard of Foxfire, she called Wigginton, and he flew to Maine to offer his experience to help with her work. Salt was selected as the name for the project "because it is a natural symbol for the magazine: the salt of the sea, salt-washed soil, salt marshes, and salty people, the kind who won't use two words if they can get by with one."

An example of that New England culture and humor is used on a brochure describing the Salt program. "I was raised on salt water, mother never had no milk," the quote above the picture of crusty-looking Cecil Kelley, Jonesport, Maine, says.

"Salt" magazine moved forward with the discovery of other Cecil Joneses. Wood and Wigginton helped launch other cultural journalism projects across the country and into Alaska. Because of Foxfire's success, Wigginton believed these projects could be started virtually anywhere.

In fact, he had written in the

movement in B minor

introduction to the first "Foxfire" book, "Looking beyond Rabun Gap and 'Foxfire,' I can't get over the feeling that similar projects could be duplicated successfully in many other areas of the country, and to the genuine benefit of almost everyone involved.

"Daily our grandparents are moving out of our lives, taking with them, irreparably, the kind of information contained in this book. They are taking it, not because they want to, but because they think we don't care. And it isn't just happening in Appalachia. I think, for example, of numerous Indian reservations, Black cultures near the southern coasts, Ozark mountain communities, and a hundred others."

And the projects did spread. No one probably knows exactly how many are in operation today, 17 years after Foxfire started and nearly 13 after Wood started teaching in Kennebunk and Salt was founded. But it is known that there are Foxfire-type projects in many states, Australia and other foreign countries.

All the while, Foxfire and Salt have led the way. Besides leading the Foxfire project to national acclaim and helping start other projects, Wigginton has spoken about cultural journalism at conferences and seminars across the nation.

Wood wrote "You and Aunt Arie: A guide to Cultural Journalism" in 1975. Aunt Arie was a mountain woman living alone in a mountain cabin. She was one of Foxfire's first contacts and served as an inspiration to cultural journalists everywhere. Salt enjoyed school board support for four years and incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in 1976. In 1977, the project was selected as "a state and national demonstration program for innovative projects" and drew "from a pool of 14 high schools and their dropouts in southern Maine."

"The Salt Book," a collection of the magazine's best articles from past issues, was published by Anchor/Doubleday the same year. Maine's Bear Island's most famous son, the late R. Buckminster Fuller, said it was "the best book ever written about seacoast Maine."

About that time, the relationship between Salt and the school board in Kennebunk started to sour. A new school board took over, and it wasn't as pleased with Salt as had been the previous board. Wood suspects that board members didn't feel comfortable with a program that was in the school, but which had published a book, had formed a non-profit organization and was, accordingly, separate from the school.

Whatever, it wasn't long before Salt decided to leave the school and strike out on its own. That resulted in taking the money from book royalties and a \$14,000 loan and buying Herb Baum's boatyard for its new headquarters. Baum was the grandfather of a former Salt student, and the boatyard had been the subject of an earlier "Salt" story.

A \$300,000 grant from the United States Department of

Labor made it possible for Salt "to run an apprentice program for economically disadvantaged York County kids between the ages of 16 and 21." Students could now not only write about their culture, but they could actually make anything from lobster traps to boats.

The next year a half-million dollars from the federal Office of Youth Opportunity (OYO), part of an experiment in which 18 programs across the country were funded "to help determine how kids best learn," helped Salt expand its program even more.

More than 300 students participated in the program, and 16 new teachers and counselors joined the Salt staff. The magazine, now being put together on the second floor of the boatyard, was improving. Plans were already in the making to publish another collection of "Salt" articles.

Things went sour again. The OYO grant restricted students to no more than 320 hours of participation in the program. According to Wood, "that was only long enough to raise their expectations and then drop them."

Grant writing takes time, and Wood found herself spending too much time writing grants and not enough time working with students and doing her own writing. That's when Salt's board of trustees, many of whom are former students, decided to redesign the program once more. And that's where Norman Sims and the magazine's academic board of advisers entered the picture.

By 1980, Salt's student base had ended when federal funding of programs like Salt was halted. It was time to seek another direction. But that's all history. Salt and Foxfire have both been written about in the national media, been the subject of television specials—Foxfire was even dramatized in a play by the same name by Susan Cooper and Hume Cronyn and performed at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis.

With all the publicity and national attention, it was only natural that help would come along just when the program was in a state of transition. Sims wrote Wood sometime in 1980. She laughed as she recalled receiving the letter.

"He said, 'I teach at the University of Massachusetts, and I have followed Salt for a number of years, ever since I heard about it. And I want you to know that I've seen myself spawning from that movement, your movement, and I want to acknowledge a debt and a beginning.'"

"I teach a course called cultural reporting at the university. It's a strong course, and I want you to know what is happening. And I also want you to know that if there is any way to help Salt, I will."

"I said, 'Okay, how'd you like to be a trustee?' So he is. Then he brought in people like Mark Kramer."

Kramer is on the staff at Smith College and a frequent contributor to magazines like "Atlantic Monthly." He was interested in the program because he pieced the link between Salt and his kind of writing.

Others weren't too difficult to find. Tom Riley, University of Illinois anthropologist, is a native of Kennebunk. But he didn't join the academic board for that reason alone.

"One of the reasons he is so strong about our program," Wood said, "is because we said, 'Tom, we see our program as very valid for students in sociology and anthropology because it involves valid field work and research, but also because what we are saying to the student of sociology and anthropology is you write to reach an audience: learn to write well, learn to document well.'"

Riley agrees.

"That cross-discipline approach worked well in designing Salt's new direction," he said.

The Semester-in-Maine program was designed for sociologists and anthropologists

and historians to learn to write well, to photograph well, to understand how to reach an audience; it was designed for journalists and photographers and artists to learn to look for significant content.

"We've had students from colleges," Wood said, "that I think prove that this interchange of skills and content are integrating of the disciplines—so that the anthropologist becomes the artist and the artist becomes the anthropologist—will work."

One way this concept seems to work for the Salt program is that students are given a chance at the advanced level to test their interests before they go out into the working world where they don't often have the opportunity to do that on campus. Wood offered an example of how that has worked with past students.

"DeeDee Dunne came here from Hampshire College and Paris, Illinois, as a senior, doing a senior project, pretty well convinced that her major direction and major interest was as a folklorist and an anthropologist," Wood said. "On the other hand, we had Lisa Powless coming in here from a Catholic girls' school, St. Catherine of St. Paul, Minnesota, pretty well convinced that as an English major, she wanted to be a writer."

"All right. Both of them were taken through the whole process: interviewing, writing, organizing, tearing out the hair, rewriting, all that stuff. And at the end of the semester, they had completely changed roles."

"DeeDee found that her real fascination was with writing. She wants to be a writer and is willing to go through what she'll have to go through to become a writer."

"Lisa found that when she was intensely writing that that is not what she wanted to do. She did not want to whip out words the rest of her life. She found that her fascination was with the content and that she liked the research side of this. And there's nothing wrong with fin-

ding out at that level and that intensity where it is that you want to plow yourself into."

Now employed at the Bennington, Vermont, Museum, Dunne sheds a different light on how she benefited from her semester in Maine. While she does think "the Salt program is full of good ideas and has a strong supporting faculty," she sums up her experience there in a word.

"Negative," she said in a recent phone interview, adding that "they were great in letting me use their darkroom."

That criticism comes from what Dunne called "organizational problems," resulting from the faculty being too busy producing an issue of the magazine to spend enough time with the students—two of them during the semester she spent in Maine.

"A few times we sat down and had good discussions," she said. "But most of the time I felt isolated from the program. It's important for a student to have direction from the staff, to set goals and reach them. After a while, my goal was to leave."

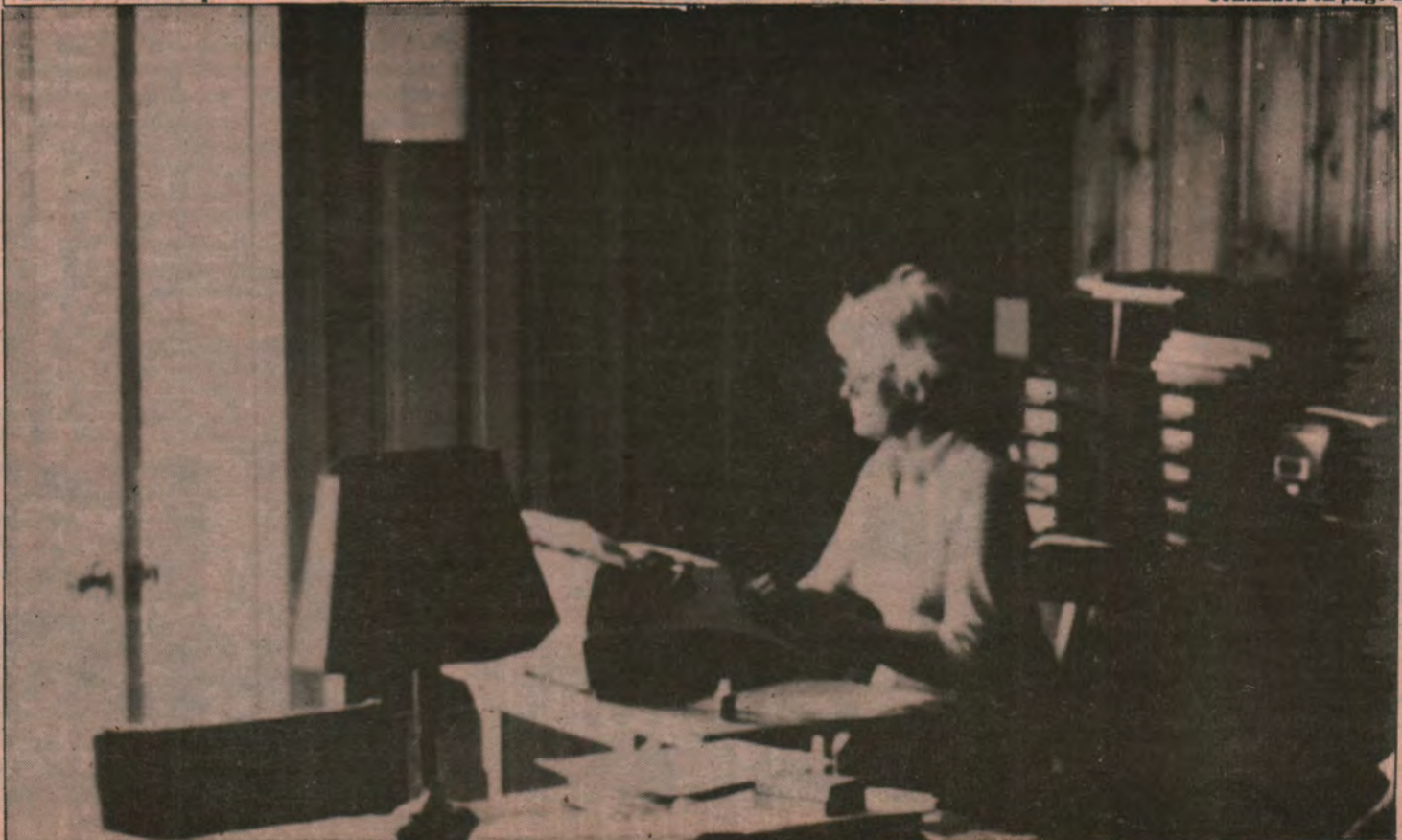
On the other hand, another Hampshire College student, Becky Shedle from Washington, D.C., feels positive about her semester in Maine and has recently been appointed a Salt trustee.

"I was used to working without structure," she said from her Washington home an hour before catching a plane back to New England. "That lack of structure is good, I think."

Both Dunne and Shedle agree about the disorganization, though. And they agree that the problem is the result of Salt "outgrowing high school" and being "new in terms of dealing with college students."

A recent grant from Exxon Oil Company could help solve the organizational problems. Such grants provide money for staff salaries and administrative expenses necessary to spend the

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Salt founder Pam Wood works in her office overlooking Cape Porpoise Bay.

Bellair and the General Store

by John L. Freeland

In memory of those living,
And their memory they would share,
No one today can remember
Of the beginning of Bellair

But history tells the story
How the town then became
A busy little village
And Bellair was its name

They came from all over
And they built a general store
These very busy people
Back in eighteen-forty-four.

And they weren't lazy
And they lived very well
They built their own houses,
In these houses they did dwell

They took to books and learning
And were busy as bees
Learning the Holy Bible
And the children the ABCs

To church they went on Sunday
To hear the preacher preach
And their teachers on weekdays
Had the little tots to teach

A doctor came to the village
And a banker both to explore
The town of Bellair
Centered 'round the store

At times all would gather
Showing in their own way
How easy it is to be friendly
And pass the time of day

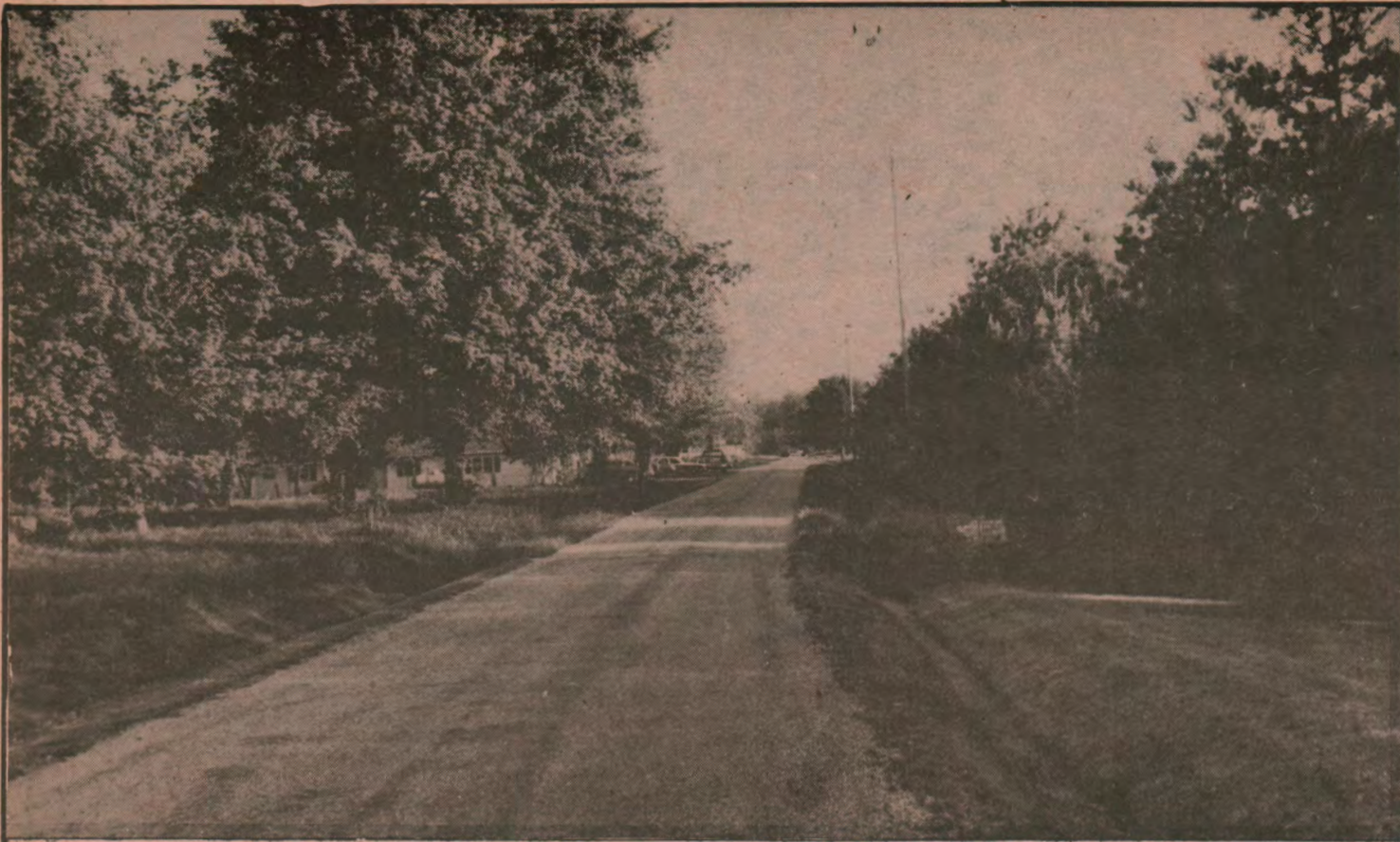
On Saturdays they'd come to the store
With their eggs and their so and so
And they traded all they had
For ribbons, nails and calico

Their days then were happy
But soon would be no more
And there'd be no fun and laughter
In the old general store

For places became void and vacant
And closed was each door
And soon only one was left standing
The one general store

We know that that things are changing
All around the old general store
And may we soon again be reminded
Of the year of '44.





This present-day view of Bellair is from the northwest corner of town. Today approximately 50 people live here.

Bellair beginnings— a pioneer family's life

by John L. Freeland

At the time Bellair began, Illinois was considered by many as being the West. George Freeland, my grandfather, came in his covered wagon and was a typical pioneer. He homesteaded 400 acres that became known as The Freeland Farm. After living in a cave with a family of seven children during the winter of 1846-47, he built a house upon a hill that has since been leveled down almost even with the surrounding landscape.

The little village of Bellair had started in 1844, two years before Grandpa's arrival. And no doubt there were several buildings already in use two years later. When George Freeland and family arrived, there was the general store, at least, and a few dwellings in and around Bellair.

The little village of Bellair had started in 1844, two years before Grandpa's arrival.

But the population must have been sparse, and George decided the location he chose because he liked the elbow room to turn around in. Very likely, he'd been informed along the road of a little town ahead known as Bellair—where there was a general store and a few of the many facilities needed by a family of his size, such as a school, a church and perhaps some people to neighbor with. It

would be interesting to know just why he chose this part of Illinois and Crawford County in which to spend the rest of his days.

On the way across Ohio from the town of Kenton, he came to Indiana and crossed the Wabash River into Illinois. I've often wondered why Grandpa didn't take the old Lincoln Trail he was likely on for a time and reach the north section of the state.

Northern Illinois had been enriched by the Great Ice Glacier of the millenniums back across prehistoric times. The Great Glacier ground rock and everything before it into fine pieces, making northern Illinois a Garden of Eden, rich beyond description.

He'd left a very fertile area near Kenton, where the population had thickened by the arrival of many pioneers. He had made some money on the sale of the 180 acres he acquired over the 23 years he'd lived in Ohio. Considering his growing family of seven children, I guess he thought he needed more acreage in order to make a good living. At the time, he had enough money to buy a good deal more cheap land from the government at \$1.25 an acre.

He might have been told by those living along the trail that all the land in the northern part of Illinois had been taken, and his only chance was to go south from what was later called Route 40.

One day late in 1847, the pioneer stopped the team upon the top of a hill a short distance from Bellair on what became

the Bellair-Annapolis Road.

No doubt the whole family was tired out from the tedious trip, and they felt as though they could go no farther. Where they stopped the team was a far different spot from where they lived for a number of years. The road must have been but a rail overgrown with weeds. And the landscape was more or less level, with the exception of the hill over which they'd just come and stopped.

...the pioneer stopped the team upon the top of a hill...on what became the Bellair-Annapolis Road.

As we do not have any diary or record of the details about what happened at the time of their arrival, we can only guess what they did from what anybody would have done under the circumstances in which they found themselves.

To you or I, the thick growth of trees, brush and weeds would have discouraged us and we might have gone on. But perhaps these Freeland had expected as good. This land had never seen a plow; probably hardly a foot had waded through the mesh of weeds and thickets. The children were probably clamoring and demanding that they reach a destination, so they eagerly scrambled from the

covered wagon and started exploring what might become their home.

It would be like starting all over again. All they had was in the wagon and what George had in his pockets. There was no shelter to cover them in rain or snow, and fall and winter were coming fast.

What did they say to each other? "If we stop here and go no farther, where shall we sleep at night?" one might have said.

Leaving the team to recover from the hard pull of the long day, they probably wandered around thinking that in time they would love this spot—after a lot of hard work. Upon the hill they could see a great distance in different directions. This was a likely place to spend their years.

"But what about a house?" one of the children must have asked.

And we can hear the answer. "First I'll have to fill out some papers before this land is ours. Thank God, I've got the money. As far as a house, we'll get along somehow."

It was too late now to build a house. But the children had no idea that they'd live in a cave all winter. Houses were scarce in the unsettled country—but they didn't know this yet. All the houses in Bellair were taken.

Now, over 125 years later, one would hardly know the country—the land by fertilization and scientific farming can raise more crops and is much more valuable. The dirt road, that once was a narrow trail, is a macadam one and is negotiable

in the worst kind of weather.

When I lived on the farm near Bellair the roads got so bad from rain and freezing weather that sometimes a horse couldn't even pull a buggy over them. Horses sometimes would mire down in the middle of the road. Then, ruts would form in the roads and tear a vehicle to pieces.

Years and thinking people have made a lot of improvements. But there was one drawback: with the development of means of transportation and better roads, folks began to go other places and leave Bellair alone.

...folks began to go other places and leave Bellair alone.

All business practically ceased, with buildings being torn down one by one, until only one of note stands—the Bellair Store. For years, Bellair was a town without a business center, even though people still lived in the community.

In the height of its prosperity, Bellair had two general stores, two doctors, a post office, two churches, a school, an inn, a bank, a blacksmith shop, etc. . . .

There are a few people who will recall these names: Adkisson, Payne, Nash, Freeland, Randolph, Harris, Edmond, Ferguson, Grant, Yeager, Trigg, Robinson, Kisner, Bell, Bledsoe, Cramer, Shook, Fouty, Goodwin, Livingston, Holly, Knicely, Downey, Lake, Wickle, Hacket, Finney, Kinslow, Straker and others.

There are but a very few of those old enough to remember back to the last of the 1800s and the first years of the 1900s. There may be more, but I know of Homer Adkisson, Ernest Freeland and William Livingston who remember many things from that time.

If you look up a previous copy of this magazine and see the old schoolhouse that many of us attended, you will see William Livingston in the front row and my brother Charley to his left, further in the back.

Far in the back are my sisters and cousins, Ethel, Maude, Minnie and Mertie, all of whom are gone. This old building is a typical one of the day.

I learned my ABCs here at the time when memory was the means by which you learned how to read. Later on, the phonics method was used in which the pupil was taught the basic sounds and he became independent in pronouncing words. From this method I taught pupils who could read difficult books in the first year.

The old school was moved across the road from where it stood and disappeared from my sight by some means or other.

Grandpa Freeland, we know, was looking forward to giving his 10 children an education. So Bellair being but a sort distance away must have encouraged him to plant his roots where he did.

On that late day in 1846, we find him firmly convinced that he would go no further to seek the gold at the end of the rainbow. The community around Bellair met his specifications. He took the money he'd saved from selling his land in Ohio and invested it in a permanent residence, from which his children might find their places in the community and world.

Morea— where three roads meet

by Lola M. Armstrong

A traveller passing through the almost extinct site of Morea today would little dream that it once was a thriving pioneer settlement of homes, businesses and even the home of two professional men.

Now only three roads come together at the intersection. But long ago, there were four roads that centered a busy place. The fourth road was closed years ago and is now so grown up with tall trees and underbrush that even a man would have trouble walking through it.

The old village is six miles south of Palestine on the old Palestine-Lawrenceville Road, on the divide between the Embarras and Wabash tributaries. Since it is one of the high places in the county, it was suitable for early settlement because it was more free of snakeroot than other areas. Also, the Indians kept growth down by firing it at certain times. Early settlers could shoot deer over what we now have as woods. Trees with more than 150 rings are very rare on the site.

In and around Morea was an interesting part of Crawford County. A dwelling was situated on a least every 40 acres. Many residents were squatters or renters on some plan. The land, or at least some of it, was owned by Vincennes people.

One interesting quarter-section was the one on which the store was built. This section had eight dwellings, the store and a distillery. It also contained the Higgins' place that is mentioned in "History of Crawford County Illinois" as the place where a cyclone came through in 1811 or 1812.

The other three corners of the crossroads had more homes, a post office, a copper shop, a blacksmith shop, a cane mill and a horse-grind mill.

Only an old church, three

houses and a trailer or two are now on the site. You can locate former building sites by broken dishes and other trash often plowed up by farmers.

Two doctors, Dr. Laughead and Dr. Ingles, were located in Morea at different times. Skip Daugherty's ancestors had the blacksmith shop; but finally moved to Flat Rock as many businesses did. The district had the usual brawls. One murder was connected with the distillery.

The first schoolhouse was a small log structure located about one mile north of the crossroads. Later, a frame schoolhouse was built one-fourth mile north of the crossroads. When it became too small, a larger building was constructed and an upper story was built by subscription.

The upper story was used by the older boys of the community who went to school during a short time in the winter when farm work was slow. Since there was only one teacher for both floors, the older boys were left pretty much to themselves, and the teacher only made it up to the upper floor when the noise became unbearable to those down below. There was a lot of trouble in collecting the money that had been pledged for the upper story, but it was finally accomplished. The "Hall," as it was called, served as a community center for many years.

About three-fourths of a mile north of the crossroads is a strong spring where the early settlers got their water. One Indian family still lived by this spring in early pioneer days, but the main Indian village was on a ridge north of Flat Rock. The spring was later the location of a tannery. Small portions of a log or gum were still visible in 1960.

Two roads, or early trails, ran near Morea from the northeast to the southwest, going to the water mill. One ran up and down

the ridge and was used until after the Civil War. A very early church was located about three-fourths of a mile north of the crossroads. When the Wesley Chapel Church (now Grace Chapel) was organized, the earlier church was abandoned, and some of the graves in the cemetery near it were moved to the newer church. Not all of them were moved, however. Because of this the highway is not on the section line, so as not to cross the cemetery, long since abandoned.

The Morea Church was first organized in 1850. Since the congregation did not have a building, they held services in

Beckwith Church for a time.

In 1861, when the Reverend Alexander MacHatton came to the community, he gave land for the church and the building was erected. It operated until 1968 when it was dissolved for lack of active members.

When Reverend MacHatton's son, Abe, (one of Crawford County's most respected lawyers of late date) was young, his father ran the store with a man named Duncan. The early store was built by William F. Dunlap, who also owned much of the land nearby.

To get goods for the store, a driver took a four-horse team and rode to Vincennes. They

loaded supplies, and the driver returned the next day with the necessities for pioneer life.

Farmers hauled grain to Vincennes and usually returned the next day. Perhaps it's not best to tell all that happened when they stayed at the Vincennes taverns—the inns of that time. Vincennes in those days was something like one reads about early St. Louis, Cairo, New Orleans or any other port town. One thing they always brought back was the usual jug of "cold cure."

The town was at its peak from about the time of the Civil War to the building of the railroad.

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This church building is one of the last remnants of the early settlement of Morea.

There's more than one way not to catch a cow

by Seth Walker

Right west of the house, about a half a mile, lies the Whisnand Woods. Most of the woods around here are all steep hollows and hogbacks, except for the Whisnand. It's most all flat, water-proof gumbo, with a couple of buffalo wallows in it. It's such a mudhole that nobody's ever put a plow to it.

Early this summer, when I was out getting the cows in for the evening milking, I heard children's voices coming from the locust trees, away south of the barn. I started towards the locusts just in time to see a homely and considerably worked up yearling heifer strike out west across my dad's beans for the edge of the Whisnand Woods. Before I reached the locusts, a man as ruddy as a raw, peeled potato, with an uncomfortable-looking paunch and wearing Bermuda shorts, stumbled into the beans. He was followed by a string of surprisingly small kids.

"Whose cow?" I halloood, as I overtook him.

"It got loose over at da park," the man said.

"Figures!" I said. "Man, I wouldn't have those kids out here!" I broke into a rollicking run, mindful of keeping my knee-high gum boots in rhythm across the rows of beans.

Oh, I've heard my Grandad and others tell it, time and again, about Old Lady Reed. She and her husband and their house full of kids were the first ones to ever own the Whisnand Woods. They came up from Kentucky, like about everyone else around here, and her old man went to cutting timber and putting up the buildings, whilst she ran the cows.

She chewed tobacco and she smoked a pipe. She carried a pistol and rode side-saddle through the timber after the cows. When it was still, they could hear her acussing and ahallooding and acarrying on after the brutes clear over to Janesville. There was a Whisnand who married her oldest girl.

Whisnand's north jut rose to our left as we tore out of the beans abreast; the hellion heifer and I were about fifty yards apart. The red clover that we found ourselves in seemed to give her reason to pause, and I out-flanked her. Just as I turned back east to face her, she broke into a trot continuing straight west. I waved my arms and hallooded, "HEY!" at the top of my lungs.

She tried to cut around me. I ran, ahallooin', to head her off.

She tried it several times, and every time that she did, I'd turn her. And sure as the dickens, she'd come back around west. When I had about decided that I couldn't take anymore, she commenced to slowing down, pausing before trying to get around me. All she had to do was cool off enough to graze a little, and then I could start easing her back east.

She put her nose down a couple of times and then fixed her gaze upon the ranger and his hired man, crashing and wallowin' out of the brush. They came right for us, waving sticks around, yelling "Giddap!"

With a toss of her head, the cow-brute recommenced her business of going west!

Now the summer I was sixteen, when we had a solar eclipse, Ross Harwood's cows got out. Ross lived alone, just south of us. Every spring, he'd try out a new color of paint on his 1938 Cadillac, his piano and his back porch. He used aluminum paint the year that he got down bad enough that he couldn't keep his fences up.

When we figured that his cows had got about all of the corn they needed, we went to see him. He "just couldn't keep up," he said. He'd been having blackouts and problems with his insulin, and if we and the other neighbors would just round up his cows for him, we could have what they brought at the packing plant.

She put her nose down a couple of times and then fixed her gaze upon the ranger and his hired man...

We hired a couple of cowboys from somewhere, and we had quite a time runnin' around after the cows through the brush and the corn rows on our brace of 8N Ford tractors. Every time the cowboys roped a cow that their horses couldn't drag, we'd hook onto it with one of the tractors.

Ross had let things go for quite a spell, because half of the brutes were bulls. They had in-bred for awhile, and about a third or fourth of them were blind. They were so wild that some of them died fightin' us on their way up into the truck.

We rounded up a lot of them, and I suspect Charleston ate blind hamburgers for the rest of the summer, at least!

(Ross died in his house when it burnt down that winter.)

When the park heifer poured on the coal this time, I was just about out of steam. Furthermore, I was too close to her to keep her from getting by me, especially with those two hooting dimwits on her tail. And she was long past being phased by my hallooin' "HEY!" at her, so I pulled out my pistol and shot the ground a couple of times right in front of her.

She planted her feet and snorted, then wheeled around and started around me the other way, so I kicked up the dust just ahead of her with a couple more rounds.

That stymied her, and what's better—it cooled off the two park historians right smart! So there she stood, panting, looking first this way, and then that.

"Why don't you two make a wide circle around this way," I called out, "as easy as you can...and come in on the west of her and stand! Let her graze and cool off or you'll never get anywhere!"

They obliged by making straight for her, whacking their sticks on the ground as they came. Naturally, young boss took off west. To my surprise, I was able to head her off with my pistol once more, ending up with her, the two rangers and me all in the proper positions. I was even able to coax the two city boys to restrain themselves, and directly their errant charge started grazing with halting bites.

She hadn't settled quite enough to suit me, but one of the rangers kept looking at his watch, and it was getting dusk.

"Well, let's ease up on her then!" I said. "Easy. Let's stay abreast. Hey up there, sister..."

"Giddap!" corrected the park historian, and the heifer was off at a trot. Miraculously, though, she went northeast, following the clover's edge along the jut of the woods and back toward our beans.

All the way, I had to keep after the rangers to back off, so that the heifer would slow down. She'd almost slowed to a walk as we rounded the tip of the woods into the beans, only to confront a third ranger who came right for us with his barking bird-dog and, hallooding, "GET UP!"

"You idiot urbanite," I said to myself, quite aloud. I turned back to the brute, who was well west again by now. I didn't pursue. Two more park people had just appeared. I was worn out.

I walked back home.



"Why don't you two make a wide circle around this way," I called out, "as easy as you can...and come in on the west of her and stand! Let her graze and cool off or you'll never get anywhere!"

The hanging of Elizabeth Reed

by Mark Weber

In the summer of 1844, Leonard Reed was feeling poorly. While at one time he may have been a man of some means, he apparently had fallen on hard times for he had borrowed money, securing the loan with a pledge of all of his livestock and his clock. He had sold his land the winter before and needed the loan to pay his creditors.

According to the 1840 Crawford County census, Leonard was between 40 and 50 years of age. He lived with a son between 15 and 20, and his wife, Elizabeth, who was also between 40 and 50. Though Leonard could only sign his name with an "X," his wife always signed her name "Betsey."

Apparently, one day, when Leonard was feeling better than usual, he went out for a short walk. While he was gone, one of his creditors came to collect the money Leonard owed him.

While awaiting Leonard's return, the creditor, Mr. McCarter, watched Betsey prepare some squirrel soup. Just before it was done, he saw her put some white powder in it and noticed that she did not taste it afterwards, as cooks are wont to do when seasoning food.

When Leonard returned from his walk, Betsey served him the soup. Immediately, he became violently ill, and McCarter stayed only so long as to determine he was not going to die.

He saw her put some white powder in it and noticed she did not taste it afterwards...

Under the circumstances, the creditor felt discretion dictated that he not state the purpose of his visit and McCarter left without asking Leonard for the money.

Again, on August 15, 1844, someone witnessed Betsey doing something suspicious. Eveline Deal, while at the Reed home, saw Betsey take a small paper of white powder and put it in a cup of sassafras tea which she gave to Leonard. It made him very sick and caused him to vomit immediately. He continued doing so for the next day and a half with only short intermissions.

Later that same summer, Dr. Josiah R. Wynn treated Leonard, but did not know what was the matter with him.

Betsey intended to throw the paper out of doors, but it fell on the doorstep, where Eveline retrieved it. She also took it upon

herself to look between the two glass tea plates from where she saw Betsey take the paper. There she found a similar piece of paper with powder in it. The first chance she had, Eveline gave both pieces of paper to a man named Harrison Reed.

It is not known who Harrison Reed was, but because of the surname, it is assumed he was a relative of Leonard's.

In any event, Harrison Reed apparently took the papers to Dr. John M. Logan, who came to see Leonard on August 18, 1844. After examining Leonard, Dr. Logan concluded that his "stomache" was in a state of gangrene or "incipient mortification" and that the paper Harrison Reed had turned in contained arsenic.

Ironically, Dr. Logan might have been indirectly linked to the poisoning. It is assumed that Dr. Logan also operated an apothecary, for at the time, he stated that while he had "no personal knowledge of Elizabeth Reed getting said poison at (his) shop... (he) had good reason to believe she did get it there."

Leonard died on August 19, 1844.

Later, in view of the circumstances surrounding his death, Dr. Wynn concluded that his sickness had all along been caused by the use of "arsenick."

An inquest was conducted to inquire into the circumstances of Leonard's death by Justices of the Peace Eli Adams and Hiram Johnson, although there was no coroner present. Constable Stephen Gaines was ordered to summon a twelve-man jury. They met on August 20, heard the testimonies of Eveline Deal, Drs. Wynn and Logan and viewed Leonard's body. They returned the verdict that Leonard had come to his death by poisoning, and that his death was caused by Elizabeth Reed.

The two justices of the peace ordered the keeper of Crawford County's jail to receive Elizabeth Reed into his custody.

Although Crawford County citizens had voted in October 1843 to relocate the county seat from Palestine to Robinson, in the summer of 1844 the Crawford County jail was still in Palestine, where it had been built in 1818. Betsey was confined there.

The Palestine jail was no shabby affair. According to its original specifications, it had a double wall of logs, hewed 12 inches by 12 inches and spaced 12 inches apart. The space between was filled solid with logs hewed 12 by 12 set on end. But the three-foot-thick walls did not deter Betsey from trying to burn the jail down in an escape attempt. Damage to the jail was so extensive that it was not rebuilt.



The new sheriff of Crawford County was Leonard Cullom who had been elected in August of that same year. Apparently having no place else to house what was probably his first

But the three-foot-thick walls did not deter Betsey from trying to burn the jail down...

prisoner, he took her to his home (which was a typical log cabin of the day) and chained her to the bed in the sleeping loft. Presumably, he took away her matches.

September 25, 1844. At that time, the Illinois Supreme Court justices also served as circuit court judges when the Supreme Court was not in session. It was the first term of court ever held in Robinson that met to contend with the Reed case. Justice William Wilson presided (he would remain on the Illinois Supreme Court for 29 years, acting as its chief justice for 23 years).

The first order of the court's business was to impanel a grand jury which returned only one indictment, and that was against Betsey for murder.

According to the grand jurors, "...Elizabeth Reed, a woman, ...not having the fear of God before her eyes, but being moved and seduced by the instigation of the Devil..." put two drachmas (1/4 ounce) of arsenic (1/60 of which is considered a fatal dose) into Leonard's sassafras tea. Unaware, Leonard drank the tea, was poisoned and died.

By this time, Betsey had attorneys, one of whom was Augustus C. French (who later became governor of Illinois). On the same day the indictment

was returned, she and her attorneys appeared in court where she signed an affidavit stating her belief that the inhabitants of Crawford County were prejudiced against her. She requested a change of venue and it was granted. Venue was changed to Lawrence County.

The trial was scheduled for late April 1845. Just before it was to begin, Lawrence County state's attorney Aaron Shaw, stated that he could not proceed to trial without testimony of John Herriman, the nearest neighbor of the Reeds. He requested a delay saying Herriman would need 48 hours to get to the trial in Lawrenceville. Since Herriman only lived about 20 miles from Lawrenceville, the 48 hours of travel time estimated by Mr. Shaw may be indicative of the road conditions in southeastern Illinois in the spring of 1845.

Very few records pertaining to the trial itself were made. Apparently the jury was sworn,

Later, he recalled how the body continually turned around...

heard the evidence and retired to consider their verdict on April 27. On April 28, Betsey was found guilty of murder. Justice Wilson sentenced her the next day "...to be hanged by the neck until (she was) dead..." and concluded with the traditional refrain: "And may the Lord have mercy on your soul."

Before the hanging, Reverend John Seed, a well known Methodist minister and zealous exhorter, baptized Betsey in the Embarras River which borders Lawrenceville. He also preached a long sermon to the huge crowd present and Betsey joined them as they sung hymns just

before the hanging.

It is assumed that no appeal or stay of execution was sought. On May 23, 1845, Betsey was brought to the gallows erected in the northeast part of Lawrenceville. It was estimated 20,000 people were in attendance. Some had camped in town for as much as a week before the hanging. Others spent as much time en route to the hanging by wagons, ox carts, horses and on foot.

One man, who was about 11 years old at the time, remembered being hoisted to his grandfather's shoulders in order to view the hanging. But just before Sheriff Thorne of Lawrence County was to spring the trap door, a limb of a tree some men and boys had climbed upon for a better view broke, and they fell to the ground. By the time the 11-year-old turned his attention back to the gallows, Betsey was already hanging. Later, he recalled how the body continually turned around until it was cut down about a half hour later.

One account of Betsey's burial states that her grave was dug at the gallows. Another claims the village officials of Lawrenceville refused her admittance to the town cemetery, so she was buried outside of it. Yet another version of the story tells that on the night of May 23, 1845, some of her friends and relatives exhumed and reburied her next to her husband, Leonard, in Baker Cemetery near Heathsville. If so, both are now unmarked graves. Wooden headboards allegedly marked their graves for many years.

Elizabeth Reed was the first woman in Illinois to be executed by hanging. The next execution of a woman in Illinois was not until January 28, 1938, when Marie Porter died in the electric chair for the murder of her brother.

Morea

Continued from page 12

Many families came to Morea about the time of the Civil War and began to buy up and consolidate the farms where some of their descendants still live today. The most prominent of these families was the Dunlaps, who built the store and some dwellings for their help to live in. They also had a large cattle yard just south of Morea. They brought the first harvesting equipment to the county. It was a big cumbersome outfit that pushed in front of horses and had a caster wheel that trailed them. Wes Wright, a prominent citizen of his day, brought in another outfit the same time.

Morea was also noted for some of its athletes. Most noted of these boys was Sam Miller, who in the 1880's was pitcher for the team and also a noted skater. Most level spots in town have been used for ball diamonds.

In the 1890's, Morea had a band that had nice uniforms and a huge bandwagon. The band was organized and led by Bill Campbell during its most active years. After his death, the members disbanded but were later reorganized with Frank Armstrong as director. Mr. Armstrong's silver coronet, band uniform and cap are now part of the musical exhibition at the Illinois State Museum at Springfield.

There was a post office in Morea and mail was brought out to it from Flat Rock. When the first building burned, the office was kept in the store for a time, and then in homes. The post office was established in 1873 and discontinued in 1904. During those thirty-one years, fourteen people served as postmaster, and six of them were women.

One postmaster was Dr. J.A. Ingles, the busy doctor for the community. There is an interesting story as to how the doctors of the county obtained a skeleton that they used for medical research. There had been a lynching in the county and no one claimed the body. It was told that Dr. Ingles took care of reducing the body to skeletal form, and the story is that the deed was done in the woods behind the church. Of course this writer is not vouching for the accuracy of this story.

Morea has had its share of joys and sorrows, its tragedies and its scandals. There is much that is pleasant to remember and much that is best forgotten. Perhaps the same could be said about any of our nation's early settlements.

Salt

Continued from page 9

time fulfilling what Wood sees as Salt's roles. One of these roles is not only improving journalistic writing and depth of coverage, but also the ethics of journalism as it relates to the interview.

"Before we take anybody out at all," Wood said, "we emphasize in a very careful workshop and discussions our responsibility as interviewers. In other words, we don't believe in hit-and-run journalism. I'm not saying that we believe in 'gilding the lily,' either. I mean we believe in honesty.

"What I call hit-and-run journalism is where you don't give a damn what you do to somebody because you're never gonna see

them again, so therefore you can rape 'em. If you can get them to say something flamboyant while you're interviewing 'em, that's a plum.

"And no matter whether it's out of context, no matter whether it really is what this fellow or this woman or whatever intends to say, you're going after the juice. Yep, you're going after—I get very angry about that—you're going after the juicy plum that'll make the headline."

Like any good and reputable journalism school, Salt policy is to always reflect the true position of the person being interviewed, even if the quote is out of context.

"Yeah, but I'm not talking about what they teach in college journalism," Wood said. "I'm talking about what exists in the real world of newspapers and what you are expected to do as a reporter and how you are expected to beat everybody else who covers that story. Sure, it isn't necessarily taught, but it's there."

Unlike mainstream journalism, the kind of journalism Salt students are taught necessitates calling on people again and again. There are few "one-shot" stories. People know they will be treated fairly.

"Sometimes," Wood said, "as with the Penobscot Indian story, we do have Bobcat saying, 'I began drinking when I was 10 years old. I thought it was a tradition.' Pulled out by itself, that could be a flamboyant headline. But we put it in context.

"We've been veeery careful to give him the dignity of what he was saying because he had it in context within his own life scheme and what that meant. And so Bobcat doesn't resent that. He doesn't feel that he's been raped. Nor do any of the other Penobscots feel that."

...Salt policy is to always reflect the true position of the person being interviewed...

The other role Wood sees the Salt program fulfilling is in the educational field. Foxfire and Wigginton have demonstrated that the cultural journalism approach works extremely well as a way for high school students to learn. Others have demonstrated that it can also work with junior high and elementary school students.

"But the idea has never really been given any trial at the advanced level of education," Wood said. "Nor has it been given the blessing of the academic world. That's what I think our role is, to push it up in another direction and to higher education advanced level learning."

Finding people like Sims, Kramer and Riley to jump on the Salt bandwagon was relatively easy for Wood, compared to what she endured in the process of getting the program sanctioned and eligible for academic credit. She spent more than a year visiting colleges and universities, talking with people in relevant departments before she received their blessings.

"I went to Cornell first," Wood said. "I decided if I could knock down the walls there, then I could knock them down anywhere because I knew it

would be very hard there. So before a succession of deans, one after the other, I made presentations and I got a lot of patronizing looks.

"One day I'm talking to the dean of graduate studies, with the dean of liberal arts and sciences there as well. After part of the presentation, the undergraduate studies dean looks at me and she says something like, 'Well, of course, here at Cornell, we do believe that it's important for students to have experience. Some experience.

"We think it may be beneficial for someone to go out and work on a farm and pitch hay for a semester or something. Of course, we don't give credit for it, but we do feel that it is, that experience can be beneficial to the student, along with important academic studies."

"And I said, 'I don't think you understand at all the nature of the program I'm talking about. This is not an experience.'" Wood paused and laughed, as she often did while talking about her experiences with the Salt project over the years, before she continued. "We do not have students sharpening our pencils for us while we perform as journalists in the field."

By perseverance and belief in "a valid, rigorous program that is academically sound," Wood finally got what she wanted—academic credit for the Semester-in-Maine program designed by the Salt academic board. She expects to have the University of Maine and Bowdoin College awarding credit to anybody who goes through the program.

"So they'll have two ways of coming," she said. "They can either come and be awarded credit through their own college or university, or they can come as a program that is accredited by the University of Maine and Bowdoin and have transfer credit. I guess I take very seriously the business of legitimizing this on campus."

While there is little doubt that Wood ramrods the program, scheduling regular panels and workshops, holding writing workshops two afternoons a week, taking students on interviews and whatever else needs to be done, she does have some help. But since there are no salaries at Salt, it's on a part-time basis. Wood does some free-lance writing.

Stephen Muskie, who has a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Rochester Institute of Technology, is the magazine's graphic designer and one of its photographers. His time is limited because he also works for another magazine.

A former Salt student, Mark Emerson, is another "Salt" photographer and teaches photography. He also serves as Salt curator and handyman. Shortly after Salt moved to its headquarters three years ago, he built a darkroom in a spare room on the first-floor level.

The 27-year-old Emerson was one of the founding members of "Salt" in 1973. He has stayed with the project and in his home town, doing odd jobs and free-lance photography, because he "decided a long time ago that life was too short not to do what I thought was worthwhile. And I think Salt is a worthwhile endeavor."

Lynn Kippax, a graduate of the film school of New York University, rounds out the core staff. He is the magazine's photographic editor and spends

what time he can with the program. Also a freelancer, Kippax recently completed a 13-part series on the various aspects and influences of television to be aired on Public Broadcasting System.

Like Wood, who is originally from Maud, Oklahoma, Kippax is not a native Mainer. From Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, by way of New York City, the 35-year-old "resident Salt intellectual" met Wood at a local weekly newspaper in Kennebunk where he was working as a photographer and she was working as a reporter for the summer.

The other role Wood sees the Salt program fulfilling is in the educational field.

That was six years ago. He was ready to quit the newspaper and return to New York because the paper was sold to a man who didn't appear to be interested in supporting further development of what Kippax had been doing to turn the paper into something "interesting photographically...or spurring a greater changes." And Kippax is interested in quality and change.

"I'm convinced that cultural journalism projects are going through some sort of evolution," he said, relaxing on the second-floor deck of the old Salt headquarters as the gentle summer evening breeze blew in off of Cape Porpoise Bay.

"I think it is a necessary evolution, not because the form content or base of the idea has changed or it's not worthy of consideration in the 1980s, but I think that the cultural journalism projects around the country emerged during the '60s, and one could infer that after 20 years or so, there needs to be a natural evolution and change in growth."

That's undoubtedly true of most things. Tradition and complacency are difficult to transform. Kippax thinks projects like Bittersweet, a once-successful program in the Ozarks that folded in 1983, have gone under because they haven't changed and developed.

Salt has tried to maintain its appeal by "slicking up the magazine," he said, while trying to keep the content as it was all along. Foxfire has changed its basic approach by diversifying. It now has its own publishing company, cuts records and makes mountain furniture. Wigginton is determined to retain Foxfire's sound financial basis that started off with book royalties.

"We have all sorts of problems," Kippax said. "I mean, how do we get the magazine marketed and distributed? But I think we're at least acknowledging that our project, the result of teaching and learning, has to enlarge and be interesting looking to a wider audience. Perhaps that is one of the goals."

Part of the problem results from what Kippax has referred to as slicking up the magazine. Now that "Salt" has matured and acquired a professional look through better quality paper and better content and design, it is more difficult to sell.

"It was easier to accept 'Salt' when it was simpler looking," Kippax said. "Because it was, people bought it and paid attention to it almost for charitable reasons. And it is important, not only for historical reasons, but also for personal community

reasons, to pay attention to what's going on in your own community."

Despite the problems with marketing, distribution and other difficulties like the lack of grant money which necessitated selling the boatyard and moving into the recently vacated rented building, Kippax likes where he is and what he's doing with Salt.

"It seems to me," he said, "that I've decided that Salt is an enterprise that is worthy for me because it maintains, at least for my aesthetic and my intellect, some notion of quality. And I am firmly convinced that it is very difficult to earn a living and produce something that, at least through my way of thinking, has as much quality as this one does.

"A long time ago, I decided that, at least for me, that I could not make a living at what I wanted to do. I guess the reason I stay here is because I value the educational philosophy and short traditions because of projects like Salt and Foxfire. I see some enjoyment in working with students in that regard. And I also have some friends here and enjoy the product."

Pressed about what he thinks the Salt project is all about, Kippax said it's "conceptual training." What that means to him is that they take students from whatever level and "you put them in a state that seems idyllic. Cape Porpoise is a beautiful part of the country.

"But the point is that one has to learn to separate the content from the beauty," he said. "We had one kid that came here last summer from California. He spent time and we sent him out on some stories. He ended up writing about the island I'm looking at right now.

"We thought he would come back with something, but his perceptions of that island were such that all he saw was the surface of the world. And he was a failure here because that was all he saw.

"Now he had a wonderful time. He looked at seagulls, drank beer, smoked reefer, went out with women and had a helluva time. But we didn't do for us and he didn't do for us what he should have come to do because he didn't see through or past the facade."

Although they articulate their perceptions about Salt and the role of cultural journalism projects in general differently, both Kippax and Wood are sure that good happens to the people involved. They believe it's something "very subtle."

To illustrate as nearly to what he can articulate that he thinks it is that happens, Kippax told about a wedding he had attended in a small mill town last summer. Two former Salt students were married.

"I know that when I hugged those two people," he said, "that the only reason they wanted to hug me is not because I'm Kippax, but because they went through some experience here that really changed their lives.

"And I know that that experience was so delicate and personal that I'm not even sure I want to ask them. I don't think I ever really do because I think if I ask them, it would destroy it."

Benjamin Franklin and other colonial printers may or may not have agreed with that aspect of their role in colonial community life. But they could hardly deny that the Salt program, Pam Wood, Lynn Kippax and the Salt staff want to continue the tradition of the colonial print shop.

Coming next month in

Tales

from the general store

This year marked the 40th anniversary of the allied invasion of Europe during World War II—D-Day. Many local residents were a part of that historical event. "Tales" editor Ray Elliott interviews some of those veterans about their experiences, what it meant to them and how it has affected their perceptions of the world since that time.

We are currently collecting a list of local veterans' names and military units who landed on Normandy or were somehow a part of the Allied Expeditionary Force on D-Day. We would appreciate any help you could provide.



Tales is also collecting the names of local veterans from World War I and II. If you can help, please send us the name(s) and a photograph, if possible.

Plus

—Thornton Stephens' first segment of his short story, "Aunt Melinda"

—Old-time race car driver Bill Richter of Oblong

—Preserving a prairie in upstate Illinois

—The Midway Cafe's favorite Saturday night fiddler, Pappy Taylor

—Great comments and questions from readers in Letters

—Wabash Valley tidbits in Did you know...

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