

The NEW BERN

## MIRROR

PUBLISHED WEEKLY  
IN THE HEART OF  
EASTERN NORTH  
CAROLINARegional Library  
400 Johnson St.  
New Bern, NC 28560Through  
THE  
Looking  
Glass

VOLUME 16

NEW BERN, N. C. 28560, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1973

NUMBER 26

After all these years we've finally figured why those iron bears on New Bern's City Hall have their heads poked out of the structure, and their mouths wide open.

Disgusted with some of the things that occur inside, too often behind closed doors, they're simply gasping for a breath of fresh air. Outside humidity and pollution notwithstanding, it's better for their lungs.

Incidentally, our town's "clean city" trophies, awarded on the basis of well prepared scrapbooks, appear less meaningful than ever when you tour North Carolina's remarkable Outer Banks.

It is possible to cruise mile after mile without seeing so much as a single trace of litter. Ocracoke, Hatteras, Nags Head and Manteo put us to shame with their astounding tidiness.

Down Easters, most of them, have from earliest times wielded brooms and scrub rags incessantly to make their usually modest homes respectable. Newcomers catch the spirit, and even tourists are considerate for a change.

Portsmouth Island, deserted through it is by those who stubbornly fought a losing battle against an Atlantic that devoured its shoreline, clings to its traditional penchant for neatness.

This editor's mother, and his maternal ancestors, grew up on Portsmouth. They didn't have much of this world's goods, but like all Islanders their pride knew no bounds. Hard work was their heritage.

All told, the schooling she got over a period of a few years amounted to several months instruction. Despite early marriage, and the raising of ten children, she read book after book in the lonely watches of the night.

It was never trashy stuff. From her, no doubt, we got an inexhaustible desire for reading, and from a poet's heart she never really knew she had come whatever talent for writing we can claim.

Of the inhabited islands on the Outer Banks, Ocracoke holds the most appeal for this writer. It is one of those rare places that looks like a picture postcard.

Others prefer Hatteras, and with good reason, but the charm of the region isn't lacking at Buxton, Avon, Rodanthe and other villages. Nags Head, ideally located, has been overly commercialized.

Roanoke Island isn't exposed to the Atlantic. It nestles in the protective waters of Roanoke Sound, a fact noted by Sir Walter Raleigh when he established what would become Manteo's Lost Colony.

Sunday following Saturday night's final performance of Paul Green's historic drama, we roamed through the emptiness of the Waterside Theatre. Unbelievably, it was immaculate.

Not so much as a scrap of paper remained to indicate that a standing-room-only audience



September Solitude.