

Pete Broughton

In life's races she often finishes first

by NOEL TODD McLAUGHLIN

Pete Broughton's life has been one of a series of firsts.

She was the first "Miss Perquimans County" to make it to the "Miss North Carolina Pageant."

While in her forties, she was the first, and perhaps the only, "grey-haired grandmother" who water-skied the Perquimans River, a claim she held until her 50th birthday when she shelved her slats for good.

And, she was the first and so far the only woman who has been elected to the Hertford Town Council.

Although she wasn't the first born, Pete, 61, said that she had always envied her older sister for that claim until her sister confided that she had always wished she had been the second.

Pete, christened "Mattie" after her father's sister, came from a family of all girls. Her father was the last of the old English line of Relifes, a direct descendant of Pocahantas, and wanted a son to carry on the family name.

One day Mr. Relfe came home to find his wife crying. Mattie had been sick with small pox and because the sores had spread to the baby's scalp, Mrs. Relfe had been forced to cut her hair. And finally, the last of Mattie's curls had been shorn.

"Why cry?" said Mr. Relfe in response to his wife's tears over the lockless baby girl. "I always wanted a son. I think I'll call her Pete."

The name, as they say, stuck, and perhaps contributed to the tomboy character Pete had as a child.

Hertford Mayor Bill Cox said he remembers her as a

little girl in white duck pants that persistently took away his marbles in competition.

Pete said she wore out two pair of roller skates a year as she skated to school from age five on up to graduation from high school at age 16.

"I have always liked action," said Pete. "I never liked to play with dolls. I preferred to be out swimming, riding my bicycle, or roller skating."

Although Pete's grandmother was adamantly opposed to dancing, Mrs. Relfe told the grandmother that they were just going to have to succumb to the dancing Pete. "That child is a born dancer," she said.

And probably the biggest thrill of Pete's childhood was winning a local Charleston contest when she was about 12. Although Thelma Nixon, then a Divers, was considered the "Charleston Expert" about town, Pete managed to out-dance her and win a pass to see "Ben Hur" at the local movie theater.

But in those days, nobody could spare the 15 or 25 cents to accompany Pete to the movie and she had to go alone.

"I was scared to death," she said. "I bet if the theater was still standing, I could in there and pick my seat out today."

The theater, called the "Rex," was over what is now the 79 Cent Store in Hertford and just happened to belong to her future husband's father, although Pete said the two didn't even know the other existed at that time.

Pete netted the "Miss Perquimans" honor when she was 16. And because contestants were judged on who received the biggest applause, Pete said a lot of people attributed her win to the fact that her mother's third grade

class out-clapped everybody else.

Although Pete didn't win anything at the pageant in Winston-Salem she said, "I had a ball because I got to dance."

She liked to dance so much that upon graduation from high school with the "Best All Around" distinction, Pete's ambition was to become a Ziegfeld Follies girl. But the strict family regime would have none of that, and Mattie Pete Relfe was sent to college instead.

At Greensboro College for Women, Pete said the only 'A' she received was in swimming. But because she was a depression child, Pete had to come home after only one year.

Once back in Hertford, Pete began going to "every dance within a 100-mile radius" accompanied by a young man named John Broughton, Jr. They fell in love, married and had two children.

Her children grew up. Her husband died. And Pete Broughton was alone in the big house on Church Street

She still lives in that house today. As we talked, Pete got up to straighten the pictures handed down through the generations, mumbling about the trucks that rumble by, keeping them constantly askew.

She spoke of running for the Hertford town council as a move she made "at the spur of the moment." Pete had worked for the town in several capacities, including assistant city clerk and secretary for three mayors for 14½ years. When she ran for office in 1975, she had been out of the town's business for two years and worked at Hertford Savings



Hertford's first lady

Pete Broughton, a spunky 61-year old, was the first woman ever elected to the Hertford Town Council, in addition to many other "firsts."

and Loan as assistant secretary and treasurer, where she is still employed.

Once elected, Pete said she thoroughly enjoyed the work.

"I enjoyed the challenge and I enjoy being a part of things," said Pete.

"I never realized that a woman could work with four men and still receive respect as a woman," she added. "I was as much a part of the action as the men on that board."

Although Pete was not re-elected to serve another term on the council, she said she might consider running again.

"I miss it," she said.

Although Pete has some empty hours to fill that were previously devoted to working for the town of Hertford, she doesn't seem to have any trouble keeping busy.

Pete plays bridge and reads constantly. When she's feeling low, she likes to turn to Elbert Hubbard's Scrapbook, a collection of "other men's genius, written for his own relief of workaday sameness."

An accomplished seamstress, she sews, knits and does alterations for herself and her daughter.

"Thank God I have enough intelligence to read directions," said Pete who con-

siders cooking her special talent.

"I've been cooking since I had to stand up on a stool to reach the stove. I don't even use a recipe for most things," said Pete.

One taste of her cheese cookies was proof enough. She must have found some time for the kitchen between her dancing and roller skating hours as a youth.

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STATEMENT OF CONDITION	
Hertford Savings & Loan Association of Hertford, N.C., as of December 31st, 1979	
(COPY OF BODILY STATEMENT TO THE ADMINISTRATOR AS REQUIRED BY LAW)	
ASSETS	
1. First Mortgage Loans	3,134,593
2. Other Loans	95,302
3. Real Estate Owned	0
4. Real Estate Sold Under Contract	0
5. Stock in Federal Home Loan Bank of N.C. Savings Guaranty Deposit	28,000
6. Cash and Investments	1,032,385
7. Investment in Service Corp./Subsidiary	0
8. Plant Assets (net)	16,138
9. Other Assets	10,916
TOTAL ASSETS	5,287,198
LIABILITIES AND NET WORTH	
10. Savings Deposits	3,238,452
11. Federal Home Loan Bank Advances	0
12. Other Borrowed Money	0
13. Loans in Process	8,810
14. Specific Reserves	8,189
15. Other Liabilities	1,185
16. Capital Stock	0
17. Additional Paid-in Capital	0
18. Permanent Capital Reserve	0
19. General Reserves for Losses	256,201
20. Undivided Profits	113,901
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET WORTH	5,287,198

State of North Carolina
County of Perquimans

N. CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
Secretary-Treasurer of the above-named Association personally appeared before me this day, and being duly sworn, says that the foregoing statement is true to the best of his knowledge and belief.

Witness my hand and the seal of my office this 10th day of JANUARY, 1980.

[Signature]
Notary Public

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78 For Landau, 4-dr. VB, AC, AT, PS. \$4,800.00	75 Chev. Malibu, 2-dr. R, AC, PS, AT, VT. \$2,250.00
78 Chrysler cordoba 2-dr., VB, AT, AC, PS, R. \$4,500.00	74 Chev. Camaro, 2-dr. VB, AT, PS, AC, R. \$2,000.00
78 Thunderbird, 2-dr. VB, AT, PS, AC, R. \$5,000.00	74 Olds Cutlass, 2-dr. VB, AT, PS, AC, R. \$1,595.00
77 Ford LTD, 4-dr. VB, AT, AC, PS, R. \$4,000.00	74 Maverick, 4-dr. 6-cyl., AT. \$1,500.00
	72 LTD Squire Wagon VB, AT, PS, R. \$1,200.00

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78 Chev. C10 Silverado 4 x 4, VB, AT, PS, PB, AC, R. \$6,000.00	74 Chev. C10 VB, AT, PS, R, LB. \$2,050.00
76 Ford F100 Custom 4 x 4, VB, AT, AC. \$4,000.00	73 Chev. C10 VB, ST, LB. \$1,600.00
76 Chev. C10 VB, AT, LB. \$3,500.00	72 Ford F100 VB, AT, PS, LB. \$1,200.00
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