

Weekly Perspective

Bicentennial is still continuing

All America celebrated the bicentennial of the Declaration of Independence in 1976. Much of America in 1981 noted the 200th anniversary of the colonials' victory at Yorktown. Hardly anyone has in 1983 remembered that our national bicentennial still continues.

The year 1783 was a crucial one in the search for American independence. Although fighting had been rare since Yorktown, it was by no means certain that British forces would not recommence efforts to force the rebelling colonies back into King George's fold.



Only a treaty of peace recognizing American independence would end the war. Drafting such a treaty was the first of four major tasks facing America in 1783, the other three being the formal ending of hostilities, the evacuating of British forces, and the disbanding of the Continental Army.

The treaty required the whole year. On January 20 the preliminary peace articles were signed by Britain, France, and Spain. These articles were ratified by the American Congress on April 15. It was not until September 3 that the final treaty of peace was signed at Paris, to receive Congressional ratification the following January 14.

An end to hostilities was proclaimed in Britain on February 4, 1783. The good news was formally announced to the American army of citizen soldiers on April 19, the eighth anniversary of the war's beginning at Lexington.

The removal of British troops was preceded by an exodus of 7,000 Loyalists from New York. The American Revolution had been opposed by a substantial number of colonists, some of whom chose not to remain in the thirteen victorious states.

King George's armed forces withdrew from New York on November 25. The only army left in America was America's own.

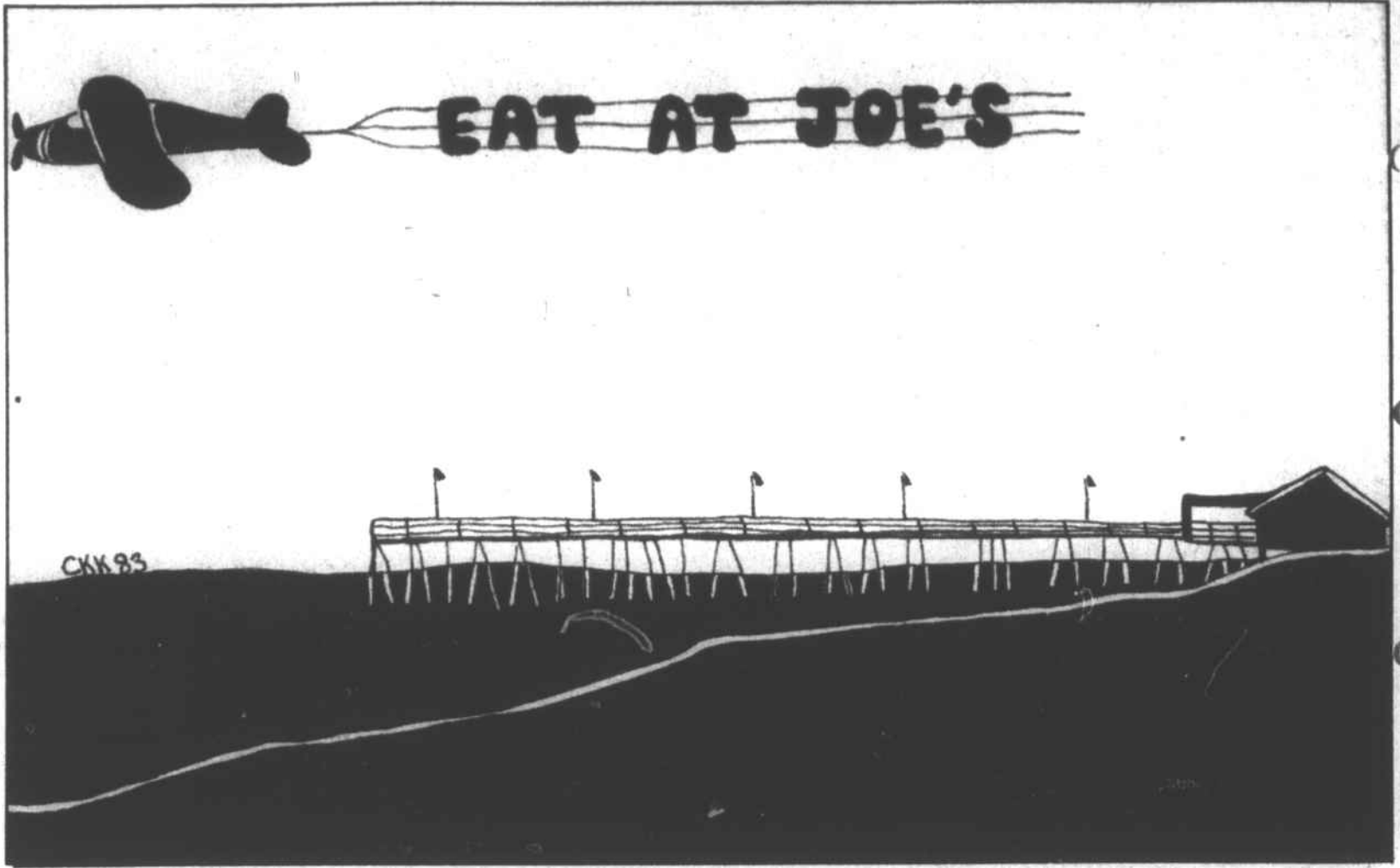
The American army grew restless as the war ended. With no fighting to be done, the Continentals were eager to collect their pay and go home. There was dissatisfaction about Congress's bungling in regard to pay, officers' accounts, and pensions. Grumbling surfaced in March with the Newburgh Addresses threatening Congress; General Washington calmed the discontented.

On June 13, the army of the thirteen states officially disbanded (except for a small force) and the patriots went home. A few rowdies marched on Philadelphia, causing Congress to flee, but most soldiers followed the example of their commander-in-chief in returning quietly to civilian life.

George Washington led the few troops kept under arms into New York as the British embarked. On December 4 he said farewell to his officers: "With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you. I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable."

At Annapolis just before Christmas, Washington submitted his resignation to Congress. He there commended "the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God and those who have the superintendence of them to his holy keeping." Independence became a fact in 1783, but the thirteen states still had to become a single nation.

SKY MESSAGES



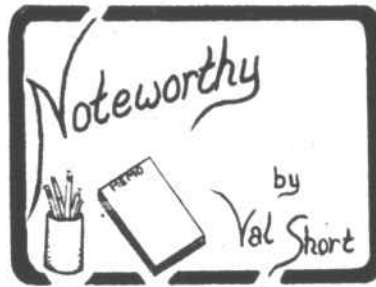
'Fourth' inspires patriotic thoughts

The Fourth of July...

Another one has come and gone. After seeing 30 or so of the fiery holidays pass me by, I can now say that I know what a real Fourth of July celebration is supposed to be!

The Fourth of July celebration at Missing Mill Park Monday, sponsored by the Perquimans County Jaycees and Jayettes, had it all!

Lots of people, homemade ice cream, hot dogs, snow cones, children laughing, folks seated under the shade trees, flags and bubbles, country music, jazz, square dancing and singing, more people, hamburgers, pony rides, bingo, hot weather, flushed faces and more laughter.



All of that and more could be found at Missing Mill Park on July 4.

It sounds like a description of a Norman Rockwell print. The picture in my memory of the 1983 Fourth of July could indeed resemble an impressionistic painting of America.

The heat, children, crops and a

threatening thunderstorm were popular topics of conversation throughout the day — certainly not the events of 207 years ago which provided our reason for celebrating.

Although patriotism may not have been the foremost thought in most minds — it was still there — in between the drifts of conversation about corn and soybeans; in between the squeals of laughter, coming from the direction of the swings; in between the smiles of older citizens as they watched the younger generations' enjoyment; and in the soulful sounds of the country music. It was still there.

While there, I felt as though I was in the very cradle of Americanism,

and what I was witnessing could probably be seen any where in America — from Alaska to New York, from Texas to Florida — with only a difference in climate and scenery.

Our little scene could probably not only span the country, but also time. I could almost imagine myself suspended in time, watching the same scene 100 years ago and witnessing all of those things which make America what it is.

As the sky burst with color and flame during the grand finale of the fireworks show, I couldn't help but pray silently that there would always be a place, a reason, and some people to celebrate the Fourth of July.

Looking back

20 Years Ago

By VIRGINIA WHITE TRANSEAU
PLANS SUBMITTED FOR CONSTRUCTING NEW BRIDGE OVER PERQUIMANS RIVER: The N. C. Highway Commission, Raleigh, has made application for approval of plans to construct a bridge across the Perquimans River, Hertford, approximately 0.8 miles downstream of the existing drawbridge.

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ADOPT BUDGET CALLING FOR NEW \$1.63 TAX RATE: The Perquimans County Board of Commissioners meeting here Monday adopted the budget and tax rate for the fiscal year 1963-64 that was tentatively approved by the Board.

The Board adopted the tentative budget as presented by D. F. Reed, Jr., County Accountant, for the fiscal year 1963-64, and set the tentative tax rate at \$1.63 per \$100 property

valuation and ordered same to be published in the paper.

Last year's tax rate was \$1.47 per \$100 property valuation, thus the new rate is a 16-cents increase in taxes for Perquimans County. The Board voted to discontinue the Defense Program, of which R. Marion Riddick is Civil Defense director, effective July 31, 1963.

FARMERS OF ALBEMARLE SECTION RECEIVE OVER \$632,000 FROM FHA: During the 1963 fiscal year a total of \$632,120 in loans to farmers and other rural families of this area were made by Farmers Home Administration, Donald W. Norman, county supervisor of the agency has announced from his office in Hertford.

Of the \$632,120 loaned by the Farmers Home Administration in the area during the past fiscal year, \$223,600 went to 57 farmers to buy equipment, livestock, fertilizer.

Letters to the editor

Volunteers

Dear Editor,

Perquimans County Volunteer Appreciation Day was held Sunday, June 26 at Missing Mill Park to honor all county volunteers and many were shocked when the Perquimans Rescue Squad and Firemen were not even recognized.

Who do the residents of any county need more than these volunteers when they are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The life of these volunteers save may be yours.

Bobby Winslow
Hertford, N.C.

(Editor's note: Those volunteers who were recognized June 26 were nominated in advance by

their supporters and peers. Nominations were open to anyone in the county. This was announced in at least three issues of THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY, April 21, May 12 and June 2.

Nomination forms were available for at least two months in advance of the recognition day and could be found at several locations, including the Town Office in Hertford.

The deadline for nominations was also extended from May 13 to May 20 in hopes of getting greater participation — this, also announced in THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY.

Winners were selected from the list of nominations by a committee which included Bill Cox, Jane Williams, Juanita Bailey and Lib Thach.)

Infant safety

Editor, THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY:

On Monday, June 27, a meeting was scheduled at the Perquimans County Health Department concerning infant car safety. The purpose of this meeting was to inform the public of the special type of protective restraint that infants need when traveling in automobiles.

Unfortunately, only the nursing supervisor of Perquimans county, Ms. Jodi Brantham, one of the District Health Educators, Ms. Jill Jordan, and myself were able to attend. Other organizations were meeting that same evening, but I was dismayed that no one from the

county (other than Ms. Brantham) could be there.

So, the purpose of this letter is to reach out to you and emphasize the need for infant safety seats. The cost is \$25 per seat. One of the pluses of the program is that the Governor's Highway Safety Program will match up to 25 seats with however many we raise money for — if we raise enough money for 25 seats, they will supply the county with 25 more seats. We need your donations in order to make this program a success. Please contact the District Health Department if you wish to make a contribution, 338-2167.

Sincerely,
Adrienne Saunders
Health Ed. Intern
District Health Dept.
Elizabeth City, NC

Facing South

a syndicated column
voices of tradition
in a changing region

PALATKA, Fla. — I grew up in Palatka — a small, north Florida town — with a feeling for the mystery of fishing that comes not so much from doing it as hearing about it. The state's largest river — the St. John's

— bordered our town, which a billboard at the city limits declared was "The Bass Capital of the World."

My family and I actually lived a few miles outside Palatka on a dark-blue road running through a tunnel of

live oaks.

Our area was rural and isolated and except for my brother and his friend Jack Jr., I had no friends to play with. Perhaps that's why my imagination was thrilled so by my father's stories of his adventures on the St. John's. He was a fisherman — not by profession, but by calling.

He stalked the large-mouth bass — "tailwalkers," he called them because, once hooked, the fish would leap out of the river, arching their bodies so that for a second it appeared they walked on their tails across the water.

Sometimes my father would bring home stunning strings of these bass. Other times he'd return empty-handed. Ah, the fickleness of bass; I could just see them there, lurking beneath the water hyacinths, snickering to themselves as my poor patient father cast here and there. Who could ever understand a fish, I wondered — an animal whose appetite is mysteriously connected to the moon? Days the bass did decide to bite,

my father came home a conqueror. My brother and I and occasionally Jack Jr., would crowd and watch him scale and filet the catch. My father would cut off the head of an extra-large fish and stuff our softball in its mouth.

When the head was dry, we'd rescue the ball and marvel over the magnificent gaping mouth.

The sight inspired us to speculate if somewhere there swam a bass so large its mouth could hold a basketball. In those days, we were very much impressed with size — whether it was the world's longest freight train or the biggest watermelon ever grown. For years we shined for my father to stop at a highway bar that advertised "On Display HERE The Largest Living RAT in the U.S." He never would.

But he made up for the rat with stories of the gargantuan creatures he saw or heard of while fishing. Besides giant fish that got away, there were tales of alligators whose tails outstretched his boat, and a man who swore he sighted a whale in the

main channel (the freshwater river did open into the Atlantic).

He told us of sightings of odd, unexplainable beasts whose heads stuck eyebrow high above the water and resembled dragons, or serpents, or those strange monsters padding around the icy lakes in Scotland.

"Do you know what they are?" he whispered, leading into our favorite story.

Of course he had told us many times, but we wanted to hear again.

So he recounted how years before a circus train from Sarasota had derailed, toppling over three livestock cars. In the confusion many of the animals escaped — exotic birds, monkeys, even a baby giraffe. Most of them were recaptured, but one whole cage was never accounted for: a cage of giant anacondas.

"They got away," he said, "just crawled silently away into the river."

"How big were they?" my brother asked. "Some as long as twenty feet," my

father answered, and added as a final touch, "There's no reason those big snakes couldn't live here. The climate's about the same as in the tropics where they come from."

"They probably like it here fine. Eating 'possum and maybe a small dog now and then."

We all turned and peered at bullet, Jack Jr.'s small black dog, as if waiting for his reply to this information.

But what could he say? What could anyone say? You couldn't prove — or disprove — that giant snakes lived in the St. John's. The uncertainty made the river larger, deeper, more sinister.

Each time we crossed Palatka's one long, low-slung bridge, I looked one way and my brother the other, searching the banks where water lilies edged the cypress for eyebrows above the water.

All we ever saw were white egrets and people fishing with cane poles. But from the bridge, the water seemed to shine like scales flickering.

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

Published Every Thursday
By Advance Publ., Elizabeth City

Val T. Short
Editor

Jane B. Williams
Advertising Manager

Pat Mansfield
Circulation Manager

NEWS AND ADVERTISING DEADLINE
5:00 P.M. MONDAY

Subscription Rates:
One Year - \$7.50 in county - \$8.50 out of county

P.O. Box 277
Hertford, N.C. 27944