

PERSPECTIVE

Outdoor privy was optional in size

The outdoor privy came in optional sizes. The single-holer gave luxurious privacy, an opportunity to pass the time enjoying the music of buzzing bees and to contemplate cosmic mysteries watching spiders catching flies.



However, the basic two-holer cut down on the waiting and allowed the hospitable to entertain company, improving the odd hour (or two minutes) with an exchange of amiable pleasantries.

Institutions might have four or six-holers, but, surely, having more than two was carrying togetherness too far.

A fundamental question is building an outdoor privy was the size and shape of the seat hole. A small hole was likely to pinch or bind, while a large hole kept one fearful of sudden descent and caused diminutive people to engage in a balancing act.

Granted, the large hole was harder to miss. Yet, the younguns weren't likely to be too careful and a certain degree of anointing was inevitable.

The classy hole was a slight oval with a gentle beveled edge. It was cut from wood soft to the touch, resistant to wapping or cracking, light sanded to remove splinters. (This was a rare instance of the woodworker's art in which what wasn't there was more important than what was.)

Too comfortable a hole made too much temptation for those who sought to excuse themselves from duty. In retaliation, a mean man

might cut his holes square or oversized to reduce loitering.

Musn't have the kids or the hired hands lingering too long.

Designed solely for function, the privy had little in the way of adornment, not even so much as a coat of paint. The elegant family might provide a couple of nails for hanging a calendar (though it would have been a wretched man who timed his stay therein with that calendar) or poster of improving moral sayings.

One piece of equipment was essential in the privy, but it might take three forms. Number one was yesterday's newspaper or last year's Sears Roebuck catalog.

Number two was the ragged remnants of clothing or household linens. Number three, and most common, was a pile of corn cobs.

One improvement was seldom included. Few were so clean-minded or fastidious as to provide a wash basin in the privy.

Genteel families observed an etiquette of the privy. A discreet cough would signal an intention of entering, while a melodious hum would signify occupancy.

At times, however, entering the privy was inadvisable. A dark, drafty trudge through rain or snow could be avoided by use of the chamber pot. Even then, however, the household dogsbody had to face the morning joy of emptying the portable mini-privy.

The chamber pot (or slop jar or thunder mug or jordan) did present a certain hazard, though. Sooner or later somebody was bound to step in the thing.

Of course, it was always possible to make do behind a lucky bush.

Farwell to glamour and romance of the outhouse.

(With apologies to Chic "The Specialist" Sales and W. O. Saunders.)



Fear of crime grips American people

There is a fear gripping the soul of America, a fear that is beginning to surface in the actions of many of this country's citizens like never before. Most Americans are afraid of becoming another victim of crime. They should be.

Point of View
by: **BILL NIXON**

Only a few years ago, there was little crime in rural areas. The most minor incident became big news, and murder, rape and other serious crimes were unheard of. People were not afraid to leave their homes at night, doors were not locked, property was safe. This is no longer the case.

It isn't uncommon today to hear of murders, major thefts, violation of individual rights, and just about any type of crime occurring in all parts of the nation.

Those living in rural areas have become a very easy target for criminal activity because of their isolation. There just aren't enough police to cover the areas. And the criminals know this.

America is reacting. People are taking a greater interest in their own protection and the protection of their property. Community Watch and related organizations are banding together to act as ears and eyes.

Many areas have formed citizen groups to patrol high crime areas or areas of sparse population.

Americans are spending millions yearly for home protection devices. One of the fastest growing industries today is in the area of home alarm systems. More effective and stronger locks are being bought and installed. Many are acquiring trained watch dogs.

And thousands are buying guns. Guns they may not know how to operate.

Recent events in Marion, North Carolina indicates the growing determination of Americans to protect themselves when it is believed the legal system will not.

As fugitives from Tennessee used their community as a hiding place,

thousands of residents afraid for their lives, armed themselves.

Escapee Ronald Sotka, before being killed by police, was shot or shot at three times by local residents. Residents, though locking themselves in their homes, remained vigilant, prepared to shoot on sight any person that appeared suspicious.

One downtown merchant, armed with a loaded gun, noted it was "Kill or be killed. That's just the way things are these days."

There is extreme danger in an armed and frightened population. What can be done? When people believe those charged with protecting their lives and property will not do the job, then the natural reaction is to take steps to protect themselves.

The instinct to survive is instilled in all humans and animals, and when endangered, all will react to protect themselves.

While many of the problems facing society today can be blamed on our system of justice, there are other factors involved. A decline in values and a general feeling among many that society owes them a living can be cited.

Drugs and an increase in the availability of mind-altering stimulants are the cause of many crimes.

Is the rearming of America the answer to an every increasing level of crime, or will such action only add to the problems? The answer is hard to determine.

When society fails in its obligation to protect its members, then the individuals will take the necessary action to do so.

When such action is taken, will we, in our efforts to protect ourselves, create a society based on fear? How many innocent lives will be lost as a frightened society reacts?

Every individual has the right to live in peace and without the fear of harm or loss of property. When those charged with the protection of these rights fail in their responsibilities, then it becomes every man for himself.

As a merchant in Marion said, "It's kill or be killed." Perhaps this is the only choice available to Americans. Maybe our system will never be able to protect each of us as individuals. If so, the rearming of the people may be the answer.

Spring fever strikes paper staff

Spring fever has struck at the paper office.

The urge to get outside has been almost more than we can contain on the warmer days that we've been experiencing.



There's something about warm fresh air and sunshine that makes it much more appealing than the smell of ink.

A few months ago everyone in the office dreaded the chore of running down to the post office to get the morning mail, or running around the corner to the store, but now everybody is volunteering for the outside jobs, just to have a chance to enjoy the beautiful weather outside.

Spring is a time of re-birth.

Flowers and trees are beginning to come alive again with buds and blooms, the river, which had begun to look cold and formidable now looks soft and inviting, children are about

spreading cheer and laughter throughout the world, and I'm stuck inside typing a column that no one will read, because everybody else is trying to spend their free time outside enjoying Mother Nature.

It's just not fair.

We have started spending our mornings in the office thinking of ways to spend our lunch hours outside enjoying the weather.

Our afternoons are spent wishing we could find a reason to get outside again.

We've taken picture, after picture, after picture of flowers, birds, trees, and kids. And we've just about exhausted all of our excuses for getting out for a little while.

Last Friday when we closed the office for lunch, we took a stroll down to the park and had a picnic lunch. After lunch we took the long way around, and nearly didn't make it back for our afternoon duties.

The worst part of all, being a working wife and mother, is the week-end.

All week long you sit behind a desk, gazing out the window at the sunshine, dreaming of ways to spend the week-end, and then the week-end rolls along, and you're stuck inside with the cooking, cleaning, laundry

and so forth. By the time Sunday rolls around, you're so tired that even the spring weather isn't appealing enough to drag you away from the couch and a well-deserved nap.

The good part of all of this is knowing that pretty soon there will be all sorts of activities going on outside, and we'll get a legitimate excuse to leave the office to cover these events.

I hope that when the temperatures soar into the upper 90's I can remember how much I wanted to be outside this spring.

Congratulations to our friend and co-worker Pat Mansfield and her husband, Bill, on the birth of their new son, William Oscar.

The Mansfields reside near Center Hill with their daughter, Betsy.

The staff of THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY would like to take this opportunity to inform our readers of the following policies and information:

Letter to the Editor

Editor, THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY
Concerning the March 3 Band Chicken Fry, we would like to sincerely thank all of the people who contributed in any way to make our benefit a success.

We would especially like to thank all parents and others who helped to preapre the dinners. Also, we would like to offer a special thanks to each and every person who purchased a ticket and supported us.

We, as students, are extremely

Although we no longer have a correspondent to handle society new items, we do welcome and publish these notices in our "People briefs" column. If you have an item that you would like to have published please call us at 426-5728

The deadline for all news and advertising material is Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. weekly. In the event of a holiday, special deadline times will be advertised in the paper one week prior.

We welcome and will publish any timely news release that is of interest to the general population of the county. When you submit a news release please include your name, address and telephone number.

Please, whenever possible, give us at least 48 hours notice before a meeting or event is scheduled to take place if you will want a reporter or photographer present to cover the event. We operate with a limited number of people on staff and must provide coverage on a first come, first serve basis.

proud of our band and we hope that you, as members of this community, are equally as proud of us.

If you have not already seen and heard us, we would like to issue a special invitation to you, to attend our Spring concert which will be held in April. An exact date will be given at a later time.

Again, thank you for your continuous support.

Alice White & Eric Skinner
Drum Majors
PCRS Band

Looking back

20 Years Ago
By VIRGINIA WHITE TRANSEAU
MISS SUSAN COX ON TOUR OF UN: Miss Susan Cox will attend a United Nations-Washington study tour and world order during March 14-20.

The study tour is being conducted by the Methodist Youth Fellowship in the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Church. Miss Cox will be one of a group of 36 selected from local Methodist churches throughout the eastern half of North Carolina.

GENE PERRY HURT IN AUTO ACCIDENT: Gene Perry, 16, of Route 1, Hertford, suffered a cut lip and loss of several teeth in an automobile accident which occurred in Elizabeth City on Monday when the car in which he was operating collided with an automobile being driven by Kenneth D. Hewitt of that city.

ENGAGEMENT ANNOUNCED:

Mr. and Mrs. B. McCoy Phthisic of Tyner announce the engagement of their daughter, Miss Mary Magdelene Phthisic, to Paul Hoytt Ward Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hoytt Ward Sr., also of Tyner. A March wedding is planned.

CHESSON-SAWYER WEDDING MARCH 28: Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Sawyer of Hiland Park, Hertford, request your presence at the marriage of their daughter, Miss Katherine Geneva Sawyer, to Luther Gray Chesson.

Mr. Chesson is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jessie P. Chesson of Route 1, Hertford. The wedding will take place March 28 at 4 p.m. in the Hertford Baptist Church.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT: Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Chappell announce the birth of a son, born Saturday at the Albemarle Hospital in Elizabeth City. Mrs. Chappell is the former Miss Jeanette Bunch from Rocky Hook.

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