

Work of art Ellison uses painting skills to turn yard into showplace

By GARY STEWART
Editor of The Herald

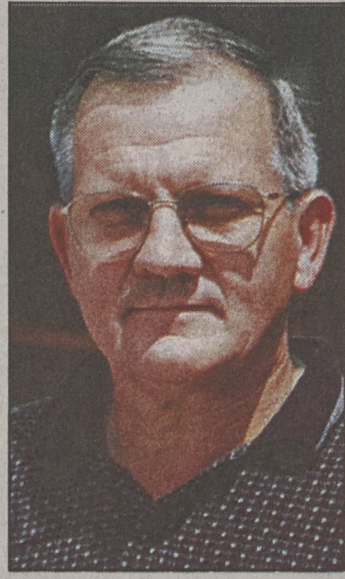
Doyle Ellison has never seen but one lighthouse in his life. That one is Cape Lookout on the North Carolina outer banks.

But visitors to the backyard of his home at 206 North Dilling Street in Kings Mountain can relive trips they've made to lighthouses all over the United States can.

By trade, Ellison is head custodian at North Elementary School in Kings Mountain. But his hobby is painting and he's painted everything from historical landmarks around town and scenes he's dreamed up in his head, to scenes on old farm implements such as crosscut and hand saws.

His current fascination is lighthouses painted on stepping stones that lead across a stone path from his carport to an 12 x 16 feet gazebo at the back of his property.

People who have seen them are fascinated. They include all seven of the lighthouses in North Carolina, and others from all over the U.S.



DOYLE ELLISON

"The few people who have seen them love them," he said. "Only two or three have seen all 60 of them, though. But I hear all kind of stories about their vacations and lighthouses they went to."

Ellison plans an "Open Gazebo," Saturday, August 24 from 11 a.m.- 3p.m. The public is invited to see the gazebo, stepping stones and other artwork he's done over the years. Rain date is August 31.

Looking from the street,

one cannot fully appreciate the paintings or the amount of time Ellison has put into the project.

The gazebo, which he and his wife Ann have had for years, is impressive enough from the outside. But one must step inside to realize the full beauty of it.

On the roof are 16 paintings of butterflies, turtles, squirrels, flowers, etc. Ellison has been working on the project since 1998.

"I'm always trying to find something different to paint," he said. "It took about four years to do the project but my wife, Ann, said we needed a walkway out to the gazebo and suggested the decorator rock and stepping stones."

Ellison's next project will be a 100-foot wooden fence along the upper side of his yard, and on that he will paint 80 lighthouses from around the world.

He paints the lighthouses from pictures he finds in books and on computers. Each one takes about an hour to paint, and he prepares the stones well so they will withstand the weather.

See Ellison, 2B



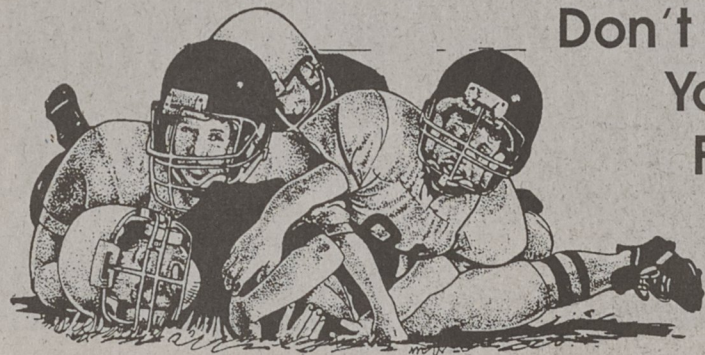
GARY STEWART / THE HERALD
Doyle Ellison's backyard project took lot of hours and lot of talent. The painted stepping stones to the gazebo are pictures of 60 lighthouses in the United States, and each of the 16 sections of the interior roof is a nature scene painted by Ellison.

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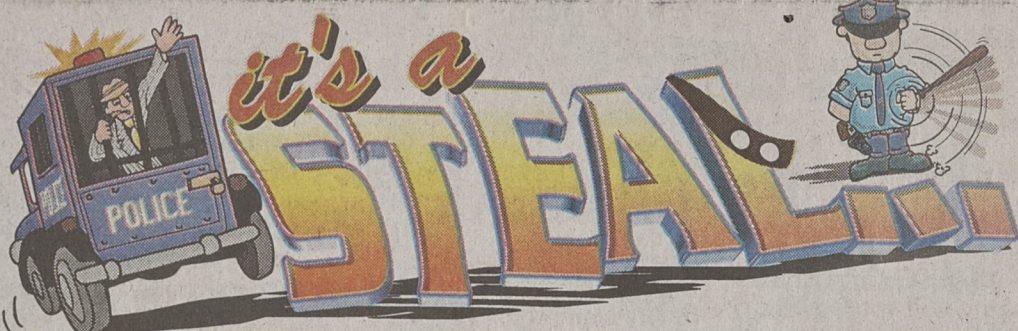
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