

EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST

Volume VII, No. 4

March/April, 1997

CAR TALK — EDWIN "EDDIE" P. CLARK



My conversation with Edwin "Eddie" Clark began after we ate a delicious dinner and a crackling fire had been made in the living room wood stove of his daughter, Linda Royce. His story unfolds some 82 years ago when he was born the third of four siblings on March 31 in Marshfield, Vermont.

Eddie attended Marshfield, East Montpelier, and Montpelier Seminary schools. Eddie recalls how he would ride in a pony-drawn cart to school during the good weather, switching to a sleigh in the winter time. A favorite story of his young boyhood is that of the substitute teacher named Blanche. He and his cousins were all set to go home after school and were trying to ready Blanche, the pony. After repeatedly hearing the children telling the pony, "Blanche, backup, backup, Blanche," the substitute teacher thought they were making fun of her and became really upset! Eddie remembers her phoning his Uncle Bill LaPoint, with whom he lived, to ask if it was true that the pony's name was Blanche. Of course his uncle verified the fact and that was that! Eddie reiterated that he had lots more stories, but we wouldn't have time to listen to them all.

At the age of 10, when both of his parents died, Eddie came to East Montpelier to live with his grandmother and uncle. It was at this young age that he started working on a farm and he says, "I became an experienced farm hand."

He met Nellie Payette two months before they were mar-

ried on July 22, 1935. In his own words, "I didn't have time to waste." They were together for 58 years before her death in February of 1994.

In 1930 and 1931 Eddie worked in the Buttrick Creamery in downtown East Montpelier, where the local farmers delivered their milk. When he was 17 years old he was employed by McFarlane's garage in the village, and recalls painting it for the first and only time before it burned down in 1934.

Eddie and five men working for him built what is now Senter's garage and the Video Box Office building, formerly the Clark and Perry grocery store. He owned and operated these buildings. As part of Lady Bird Johnson's "Beautification Project" they fenced in the junkyard located on Route 2, also run by Eddie. In January 1933 he started his own garage business, (on the present site of the Washington Electric Coop) which he sold nine years later.

Eddie moved his family to South Portland, Maine, in 1943 so he could work in the shipyard and earn enough money to return to East Montpelier and restart his own car sales and repair business. During his three-year stay, he also owned and operated a repair and car sales garage on busy Route 1 outside Portland. Upon accomplishing what he set out to do, he returned and opened "Eddie Clark's Used Car Exchange," a family business for which his wife kept the books.

In February 1979, tragedy struck their business when fire swept through the garage, completely destroying it. Undaunted, Eddie rebuilt and once more operated his garage until February of 1982 when he sold the building to Peter Hill and it became Hill's Repair. In all, he had sold and repaired cars for a total of 46 years.

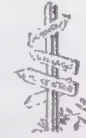
Mr. Clark has a keen memory, and shows great pride in his life's work. He can recall the first car he rode in—a Model T Ford. As a young man of 21, he began flying as a student pilot at the Burlington Airport. In 1947 he received his pilot's license. He told us he thought of becoming a commercial pilot, but was more interested in the automotive industry.

(Continued on page 2)





Top of the Signpost



A letter is a gift from the past. I am finding that out as I immerse myself in some family correspondence dating back more than a century. My project is to make some kind of sense out of a vast archive of family materials. There are letters, photographs, diaries, graduation programs, passports, and some mysterious ephemera which are hard to explain. All have been lovingly saved as a gift from past generations, and indeed, once they are arranged by years, they open a window on the lives of grandfather and grandmother, aunts and uncles, in a way that no narrative could do.

Long lost details—a brief stint teaching in a country school, “camping

out” at Woodbury Pond as a vacation from farm work, and being called upon to “give a recitation” at parties—all these vignettes emerge from the faded elegant script. The very real lives of these long-ago people take on meaning and become believable.

This kind of a search for real history out of these inherited treasures is part jigsaw puzzle and part surmise, since as voluminous as they are, they are but a sampling of all that happened. The letter writers left much unsaid. What did grandfather’s family think about his decision to go to Japan as a missionary? How did grandmother explain to her Vermont relatives that although she had been sud-

denly widowed, she was going back to Japan to teach, leaving the older children to attend Goddard Seminary?

I find it remarkable how vividly the letters and photographs shape in my mind an image of the people they represent. That is the real reason for this exploration. Learning the thread of events is only the skeleton upon which this particular family history hangs. More vivid is the daily revelation of what kind of people these were. Imagine reaching one hundred and twenty years back and meeting your grandparents! That’s what is happening.

Jean Cate

PLEA!

We need a new layout/design person. Loring Starr's newsletter business has increased to the point that she is too busy and can't do ours for free any more. PLEASE call Jean Cate (223-2951) to volunteer yourself or anyone else!

(Continued from page 1)

Eddie became an active member of the Masons in 1943 and the Shrine in 1946. He currently holds a 50-year membership in both those organizations and showed me his cards to prove it.

Among Eddie’s favorite memories are his sojourns to Alaska in 1950 and to the World’s Fairs in Seattle and Montreal. He and Nellie purchased an RV and enjoyed travelling to Florida for two-week vacations every year. They eventually spent six months in Florida and six in East Montpelier. During one of these trips to Florida he had heart bypass surgery at the age of 70. After a brief recovery period, he was “fit as a fiddle” and ready to go again full speed ahead! In the summer months they especially liked water trips aboard their pontoon boat at Marshfield Dam or Joe’s Pond.

Eddie has a rather unusual hobby in that he collects musical decanter bottles which he picks up from tag sales in his travels around the country. It was fascinating to see and hear firsthand some of the 100 or so bottles displayed in his home.

Now in his leisure time he likes to play cards with family and friends, al-

ways eager to learn a new game! In spring and summer he enjoys getting his garage sale items together and selling to customers. Eddie is the father of three children: Linda Royce, Mary Jane Porter and Edwin Arthur, all of whom live in East Montpelier. He also has eight grandchildren and thirteen great grandchildren. He has lived in his present house on Quaker Road for the past 50 years. He has fond memories of his auto financing days and is fiercely proud of helping people to own their own vehicles.

Much later that night I left Eddie in the kitchen of his home, overlooking the site below where for many years he strived to treat everyone fair and square. A good businessman—a good citizen.

Marcia Pauly is the Assistant Secretary at the Elementary School, and lives with her family on Powder Horn Glen Road.

Who’s Missing?

The Top of the Signpost in our last issue explained a bit about the logistics of getting out the paper when one or more of our volunteer staffers is temporarily “out of the loop”. This was the case with both Loring and Margaret in December, but we were in for another surprise when David spent a quite unexpected week at CVH just before Christmas. We recovered, even mailed the paper a bit early, only to learn that 794 copies were sent, instead of the expected 920. Are there 126 of you out there who never received January-February? We’ve traced every way we know and can’t explain what happened.

LET US KNOW IF YOU MISSED AN ISSUE!



THE TOWN WEATHERVANE



SELECTBOARD

Frank Pratt, (Ch.), Tom Brazier, Edie Miller
Nov. 21, 1996

- Willing to split cost of public address system with the Elementary School, with EMES responsible for maintaining system. Would be available for Town Meeting and other events.
- Discussion of Act 250 notice of alleged violation issued to Ellery Packard in the Casavant 'Pines' development. Significant washout of a bank near the new town road cul-de-sac.
- Voted to contract with Burrell Roofing Co. for an insulated membrane roof with drip edge for the Municipal Building entry way.
- Approved the replacement of the roof decking and rafters on the Coburn bridge as proposed by Burrell Roofing.

Dec. 4, 1996

- Agreed to offer Anne Sherman same rate of pay as an Auditor for her assistance in preparing the Town Report.
- Held public hearing on Vermont Land Trust's application for a Town Conservation Fund grant for purchase of development rights on the Jeff and Bonnie Sibley farm. Sibleys reserve right to build a retirement home on seven acres not covered by the conservation easement and retain rights to convert the existing farmhouse into three dwelling units or two dwelling units and a bed and breakfast.
- Approved application for \$10,000 for Sibley Farm project subject to the submission of a letter of intent regarding preservation of access for the existing snowmobile trail.
- Met with Gloria Biron and Maurice LaPerle, owners of property likely to be impacted by proposed improvement of Rts. 2 and 14 intersection.
- Suggested further discussion with Samuel Palmisano regarding appropriate corrective action for drainage problem.
- Set rates of compensation for town employees.

Dec. 19, 1996

- Held hearing on proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments.

Dec. 30, 1996

- Reviewed the four options for regional ambulance service from the steering committee working with Barre Town.
- Discussed City of Montpelier's proposed sludge composting facility planned for the Packard Industrial Park.

Jan. 7, 1997

- Steve Kroll met with Selectboard to discuss his concerns concerning a curve by his property on Haggett Road. Road Foreman Mike Garand will place several chevrons on the curve to guide motorists.
- Mike Garand gave monthly road department report. December weather has been very

hard on the sand pile.

- Discussed Road Department budget and paving needs.
- Selectboard favors proposed plan which moves Rt. 14 away from Quaker Road and toward the LaPerle residence, also creating a commuter parking area and dead end road on the old section of Rt. 14 near the Old Brick Church. Still favors East Montpelier bypass proposal and will express its concerns that the Rt. 14 Winooski Bridge project also move forward at this time.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Stephen Rauh, Chair
Nov. 21, 1996

- Approved permit for Creamery Store to construct cover for gas pumps, to be constructed of wood.
- Approved preliminary plat review of 2-lot subdivision on Rt. 2 presented by Kevin Bailey.
- Approved preliminary plat review for 3-lot subdivision on Towne Hill Road presented by Norm Rice.

Jan. 2, 1996

- Approved final plat review of 3-lot subdivision on Towne Hill Road of Hugh Hawkins.
- Mr. Packard presented proposal concerning storage of fireworks in the Packard Industrial Park and periodic fireworks displays.
- Zoning Administrator discussed complaint regarding placement of Bragg's sign at junction of Rts. 2 and 14. Reviewed correspondence from State directing that sign be placed at its current location. Will write letter to complainant advising that sign is placed in accordance with state directions.

Jan. 16, 1997

- Reviewed further information about proposal to store fireworks at Packard Industrial Park. Approved such storage.
- Approved application to build two 50 by 140 foot buildings in the Park.
- Approved final plat review on Kevin Bailey's 2-lot subdivision on Rt. 2.



BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Jeff Cueto, Chair
Nov. 25, 1996

- Granted permit to Carla and Norman Messier to set up a mobile home as a residence at their property on Rt. 2. All general standards were met.

Dec. 23, 1996

- Granted permit to Todd Audet (DBA T&M Motor Sports) to construct a 30' X 30' addition to his building on Rt. 14 South. All general standards were met.

EAST MONTPELIER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Jan Aldrich (Chair), John Hall, Loring Starr,
Susan Stephen, Nancy Thomas
Nov. 21, 1996

- K through 6 teachers and student support services staff presented their budgets.
- Confirmed commitment to continuous school improvement planning, using model of Vicky Bernhardt, a national consultant.
- Approved two Calais students joining our 6th grade boys' basketball team.

Dec. 4, 1996

- Accepted resignation of Glenn Gannon, physical education teacher. Discussed process for hiring replacement.
- Discussed 97-98 budget.

Dec. 12, 1996

- Laura Johnson will advertise for a new physical education teacher. Person must be certified.
- Toured school building to look at classroom space and repair of floor tiles.
- Town has agreed to pay for half a new sound system for the school with the school to pay for half and maintain the system.

January 8, 1997

- Sue Clayton and Fran Weinbaum gave an update from the Goals Grant Steering Committee. Sue Clayton sent surveys to students, teachers and parents regarding school climate.
- School will receive \$2300 from the Drug Free Schools District grant. \$1500 will go to grades 4 - 6 for wellness activities and a Lotus Lake trip and \$800 for a diversity residency in March.

U-32 BOARD

Peter Bluhm (Chair); Ginny Burley and Tony Klein, East Montpelier members

Dec. 3, 1996

- Approved appointment of Annette Scalzo as Academic Support Coordinator.
- Approved part-time position of Purchase Order Clerk.
- Approved appointment of Nancy Martel to permanent position as tutor/interventionist.

(Continued on page 4)



THE TOWN WEATHERVANE



(Continued from page 3)

➤ Voted to accept Luna Ulanova from Russia as foreign exchange student for spring semester.

Dec. 17, 1996

➤ Accepted resignation of Dave Vallee, plant manager, after eighteen years of service.
➤ Budget discussion.

Jan. 7, 1997

➤ Accepted resignation of Karlene Keyser.
➤ Approved making Milo Moore full-time employee.
➤ Budget discussions.

Jan. 14, 1997

➤ Inga Duktig gave written report on U-32's response to recent bomb threat.
➤ Approved employment of Pamela Krausz as long-term substitute for 3/5's position to replace Ann Wilson.

RECREATION BOARD

Pat Fitzsimmons, Rachel Senechal, Co-Chairs

➤ We want to do you a favor and take your money! Donations to the East Montpelier Recreation Board are tax deductible and will help make the Field of Dreams come true. Your donation will help to build a tennis court, picnic pavilion, equipment shed and many more things. (If you are facing capital gains tax, or if you are planning your will, the Recreation Board is a willing recipient of your generous donation.)

➤ Steve Connor was elected Chairperson of the Field of Dreams Subcommittee which is charged with planning, engineering, budget building, and fundraising for the development

of the thirteen acres of the recreation field. Additional community members are being sought to serve on this committee. Preliminary drawings and information will be on display at Town Meeting in March.

➤ Last year we developed a comprehensive list of summer camps which included sports, academics, music/theater, arts and crafts, and more. If you know of any summer camps to list please call Rachel Senechal at 223-0539 or Jon Dunkling at 223-7493.

➤ We are organizing a swimming program, available to all East Montpelier residents, sometime in February and March. For more information call Robyn Hall at 223-3308.

➤ Dave Burley and Rachel Senechal will ask to meet with the Four Corner School Association to discuss forming a joint committee to coordinate Rally Day in September.

FOUR CORNERS SCHOOLHOUSE

Ruth Frost, Chair

➤ The new shades for the classroom windows are completed, as well as repair of window sash and sash weights.

➤ We now have a vacancy on the Board of Directors. If you would serve on this Board, please contact Ruth Frost or any other board member.

➤ For use of building please call Marion Codling, 223-2058.

EAST MONTPELIER FIRE DEPT.

Chief Jon Winston, President Bill George

➤ The East Montpelier Fire Department ended 1996 with a record 218 emergency calls.

156 were medical related, 36 were actual fires, and another 26 were in response to false alarms, good intent calls, down wires etc.

➤ Nicholas Hawkins has been accepted as a member of the department and will be starting basic firefighters class in February.

➤ Larry Brown will be testing for D level emergency technician. This is the highest level an EMT can be trained to in Vermont and allows an EMT to do manual defibrillation.

Currently there are seven members of the EMFD who are trained to this level. Five members are currently halfway through the basic emergency medical technical class being held at Central Vermont Hospital.

➤ A cardiac defibrillator has been purchased and placed into service. Previously the department had to wait five to twenty minutes for an ambulance to arrive before cardiac monitoring or defibrillation could begin. This unit has been placed in the village station and will be transported on Rescue 1.

CHURCH BELLS

OLD BRICK CHURCH

Rev. Marcheta Townsend, minister

➤ Worship services, as well as Sunday School, are held at 11 a.m. each Sunday. Rev. Marcheta Townsend and the congregation welcome you to our services.

➤ On Dec. 19th we continued the traditional Community Christmas Tree carol singing and placing plastic bells on the tree. Two dollars was donated for each name on a bell and the \$256 raised was given to the Onion River Food Shelf.

➤ A Lenten study/discussion group around issues of aging and death and dying will start Monday, February 24th, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the Sunday School building, and continue for five weeks. Community people are welcome.

OLD MEETING HOUSE

Interim minister, David Connor

Sunday Service and Sunday School:
9:30 a.m. All are welcome.

Rabies Clinic

Saturday, March 8, East Village Fire Station, 9:00 a.m. to noon. Calais and East Montpelier Town Clerks will be available to issue dog licenses.

Tuesday, April 1: Last day to license dogs/wolf hybrids without penalty. Town Office.

THANK YOU...

DOROTHY SPARROW & JOYCE PROSSER
SAMUEL & BARBARA STARR
FRIEDA BATTLES
FRED & JOYCE JACEK
DR. ROBERT & JUDITH NIST
DORIS WASHBURN
H. ROGER & GENEVIEVE CHAPELL
MARION CODLING
JOHN & DONNA HALL
MILDRED HELLER
LILLIAN VECCHIO
ALBAN & MARGARET RICHEY
PHILIP & DONNA LENO
ALBERT & BETTY JEROME
K. PUTNAM & SUSAN CLAYTON
DEBORAH A. PHILLIPS
GEORGE & LEATRICE BROWN

TO OUR SIGNPOST CONTRIBUTORS!



CANDIDATES:

Moderator Martin K. Miller
 Selectman for 3 years Timothy F. Meehan
 Town Clerk for 3 years Sylvia M. Tosi
 Town Treasurer for 3 years Sylvia M. Tosi
 Lister for 3 years - James Goodall
 (vote for not more than one) Earl Montague
 Auditor for 3 years Holly Edwards
 Town Law Agent for 1 year Earl Montague
 Town Grand Juror for 1 year Tim Carver
 First Constable for 1 year Dennis Carver
 Second Constable for 1 year Art Montague
 Cemetery Commission for 5 years Pauline Coburn
 Planning Commission for 3 years Gary W. Bryant
 (vote for not more than three) Peter Hill
 Laura M. Williams
 Elementary Sch. Director for 3 years Richard W. Curtis, Jr.
 Elementary Sch. Director for 2 years Janice Aldrich
 Elementary Sch. Director for 1 year Cheryl Rus
 U-32 District Clerk for 1 year Rebecca S. Reed
 U-32 District Treasurer for 1 year Florence Young
 U-32 District Auditor for 3 years Shirley Adams
 U-32 District Auditor for 2 years Julian Goodrich



1997 Town Meeting Countdown:

Town and School Forums

U-32 District Forum: Tuesday, February 18, plus
 Tuesday, February 25, at 7:30 p.m. U-32 Auditorium.
 Town Meeting/Elementary School Forum: Thursday, February
 27, at 7:30 p.m. Elementary School (EMES).
 Discussion of all articles and the budget will take place at the
 forums. You will be able to meet the candidates for office.

Town Meeting:

Tuesday, March 4, beginning at 9:30 a.m. EMES.

Elementary School Meeting: Tuesday, March 4,
 beginning at 1:00 p.m. EMES.

Items to be voted by Australian Ballot:

Voting booths will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

for items to be voted by Australian Ballot:

- U-32 District - All articles on the Warning. U-32 Ballots will be handed out with Town Ballots on Town Meeting Day.
- Elementary School - Moderator and School Directors only.
- Town - All officers
 - Town Budget - Article 17
 - Bond vote for town highway paving - Article 18
 - Conservation Fund - Article 16

Come and participate in Town Meeting and the School Meeting. There will be a Pot Luck Dinner at noon.

Town Meeting Potluck



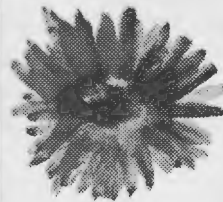
Town Meeting Day for the past two years has included a lunch that is prepared by all of us. This year will be no different. The Town Meeting Potluck is a congenial gathering of friends and neighbors sharing good food. Never mind that the debate may have been pretty lively during the meeting. Food is a great equalizer! Here's how the Potluck works:

1. Bring a hot dish or a salad or breadstuff or dessert. If you are alone your dish should serve four people. If your family of five plans to eat, your food should serve 20, four servings for each person. This rule of thumb assures that there will be plenty of food for all.
2. Bring your food to the cafeteria window where it will be exchanged for a ticket showing the number of people in your family who will eat with us.
3. If it is quite impossible for you to bring food, call 223-2951 and plan to eat with us anyway. Your ticket will cost \$3.00 which helps pay for butter, coffee, milk, etc.



You can request absentee ballots to be mailed by the Town Clerk's Office.

Voters may also come to the Town Clerk's Office to vote. Absentee ballots must be returned by Town Meeting Day — either delivered or by mail (Town Office phone 223-3313).



HEARTS CENTER

BELIEVES

EVERY CHILD IS AN ARTIST

Exploring personal & artistic expression for 6 to 12 year olds

HEARTS CENTER offers drawing, sculpture, & painting for 9 weeks, once weekly from 4:00-5:15 after school. Boys session begins Tuesday, April 1. Girls session begins Thursday, April 3. Price: \$90 plus \$15 materials fee. Call Heidemarie Heiss Holmes at 802/223-1227.



East Montpelier Trails News

Sandy Woodbeck, Chair



Here are a few of our usual seasonal warnings:



When you're skiing or snowmobiling, please don't park too close to the road crossings (where the trail crosses the road). This is a safety issue for snowmobilers: when they're coming down the trail, they can't see around cars that are parked too close.



And, when mud season arrives, please stay off the trails with horses and bikes—they can really tear up a muddy trail. THANKS!



We'll be working on the northern end of the Sparrow Farm Trail, through the wet fields below Hill Road. We are also planning a trailhead off Powder Horn Glen Road; this will be a spur off the snowmobile trail that parallels Barnes Road, and will offer parking. Stay tuned!

MILESTONES

BIRTHS

- ♥ Keely Ann Dames, daughter to Sally Lynn & James A. Dames; November 9, 1996.
- ♥ Hunter Robert Lane, son to Connie Jean & Mark D. Lane; November 27, 1996.
- ♥ Olivia Grace Mekkelsen, daughter to Bruce and Laurie Mekkelsen; November 29, 1996. Granddaughter to John & Grace Mekkelsen and Donald & Sylvia Tosi.
- ♥ Connor James Rice, son to Lisa Jane & Arthur D. Rice; November 30, 1996.
- ♥ Kristin Mae Houle, daughter to Carol L. & Denis N. Houle; December 3, 1996.

DEATHS

- Cyrus Yale Ferris, Jr.; December 14, 1996. Husband of Marguerite H. Ferris.
- Benjamin G. Muennink; December 22, 1996. Husband of Bertha Muennink.
- Marion E. Smith; January 16, 1997. Wife of Albert Smith.

News for Families with Young Children

Playgroup meets Monday and Friday from 9 - 10:30 a.m. at East Montpelier Elementary School and is open to East Montpelier children birth to age five, and their parents/care givers. No pre-registration is required. The program is FREE. Join us! For information, call the school at 223-7936.

The East Montpelier Preschool meets Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at the school. It is open to three and four year olds. If interested, call Beth or Becky at 223-936. These programs are sponsored by the Washington Central Supervisory Union Early Education Program.



PROPERTY TRANSFERS

- ☞ Mary S. Azarian to Daniel A. & Angelina L. Buzzi; dwelling and 3.2 a. on Wheeler Rd.
- ☞ Robert C. Brown to Heather R. Brown; dwelling and 1.37 a. in Pines Development off Paul Square.
- ☞ Ronald E. & Kathleen A. Macie to Cynthia Tomaszewicz; dwelling and 11.29 a. on Gallison Hill Rd.
- ☞ Kenneth & Rose Lane to Brent & Heather Gould; dwelling and 0.41 a. on Dillon Rd.
- ☞ Richard A. Pope, II to Vt. Housing Finance Agency; dwelling and 2.25 a. on Rt. 214 in N. Montpelier.
- ☞ Jean Clark to Robert T. & Nancy L. Brown; dwelling and 2.47 a. Rt. 14 north.
- ☞ Donald G. Cote to Robert John & Earline Louise Miner; mobile home and 10.6 a. on County Rd.
- ☞ George Dimick to George F. , Troy G., & Scott G. Dimick; mobile home in Sandy Pines MHP.
- ☞ Peter V. Foote to Mary M. Foote; dwelling and 7.4 a. on Dillon Rd.
- ☞ David E. Brewster to Sherrie B. Brewster; dwelling and 1.5 a. on Powder Horn Glen Rd.
- ☞ Pamela S. & Mark E. Tucker to Duncan S. & Therese L. Milne; dwelling and 0.29 a. on Rt. 14 south.
- ☞ Salvation Army to Raynald A. & Penelope V. Lessard; dwelling and 0.23 a. on Paul Square.
- ☞ Gerald M. Hawkins estate to Don G. Hawkins, Glenna H. Masure, Diane H. Vieweg & Gary D. Hawkins; dwelling and 99 a. on Rt. 14 north.
- ☞ O. Richard Clark estate to Steven O. Clark, Marcia C. Bowtes, James R. Clark, William A. Clark, Robert D. Clark, Brian B. Clark, & Richard S. Clark; 9 a. on Quaker Hill Rd.
- ☞ Helen Louise Hamilton Allen estate to Albert A. Plant, Jr. & Catherine A. Plant; dwelling and 4.3 a. on Rt. 14 south.
- ☞ Matthew Rubin to Steven & Karlene Keysar; quit-claim interest on Gallison Hill Rd.
- ☞ Frank R. Pratt to Frank R. Pratt & Annette C. Chapman; dwelling and 2.08 a. on Cummings Rd.
- ☞ Don G. Hawkins, Gary D. Hawkins, Diane H. Vieweg, & Glenna H. Masure to Jay L. & Denise M. Graves; 14 a. on Rt. 14 north.
- ☞ Malaga Holdings, Ltd. to Robert C. & Linda Pastore; dwelling and 3.91 a. on Powder Horn Glen Rd.



“TO MAKE A LONG STORY SHORT”: HENRY PARKER

On a cold and blustery December day I traveled down Route 2 to interview longtime resident Henry Parker. That did not keep us from enjoying a few quiet hours prior to the rush of the holidays. As Henry said several times, “to make a long story short,” —and this is his story.

Henry is a native Vermonter, born in Barre. His family moved to North Calais when he was quite young. Henry received his mechanical training early, as his father operated an auto mechanics shop in Barre for many years.

Henry has lived in East Montpelier for 30 years. He purchased 3 acres of land from Dick Davis and subsequently added another 22 acres. The land was part of the old Joyal Farm (Mekkelsen’s Trailer Sales is located at the old farmstead). In 1969, Henry built his house and began to raise a family with his wife Theresa. They have three children: Brian just graduated from Norwich University, Emily is going to Johnson State College, and Brett, the oldest, currently runs Parker Sales and Service.



Henry always enjoyed and kept animals, so it was a natural progression for him to do the same in East Montpelier. He started with beefalo but eventually moved into the registered ‘white-face’ breed. “I realize now that there’s no money in it,” Henry said, “but it keeps the brush down and saves on the mowing.” He now maintains a herd of between 12 - 15 cows and a standard bred horse. Recently he began taking orders for beef instead of selling wholesale to the auction houses. He sells beef by the side, has it custom cut to the clients’ wishes, and can keep the price down to around \$1.25 per pound.

With a growing family to support, another extension of the use of the land was commercial. Back in the 1970’s, people were beginning to “go back to the land” and the demand for small garden equipment was booming. With a knowledge of small engines, Henry hooked up with the Gravely Company. He said with a laugh, “when the first load of tractors came off the truck, there was barely a roof on the barn.” It was a good family business—Henry would put in the time on nights and weekends, while his wife looked after things on the weekdays. When they first started there was little competition,

but that has all changed now. Business has been cut back somewhat, as “people aren’t gardening as much as they used to.” Their son Brett now handles the day-to-day operations. Due to the longevity of Gravely equipment, more business comes from service than from new sales. In fact, Brett has expanded the business to service most small engines.

Henry has a long association with Green Mountain Power, having worked there for 33 years. He is the Superintendent of Transportation and Plant Maintenance, overseeing all vehicles and generator maintenance out of the Montpelier site. He keeps the turbines running at the GMP hydro sites at Joe’s Pond, Peacham Pond, Marshfield Dam, Middlesex, Little River and Bolton.

For those inquiring minds, the wooden aqueduct seen in Marshfield along Route 2 was originally constructed in 1925. A mile in length, it was replaced in 1958 and needs little maintenance. The pipe runs full and powers a turbine down near the village.

There have been a lot of changes at GMP and in the electrical industry in general. When he first started, much of the work was done by hand. Now hydraulics and computers have replaced what hand power did. In fact one person can now operate two hydro sites. He has had to keep up with the times by attending many technical schools, particularly on diesel and turbine engines. What’s his opinion on deregulation? “Well, it’s too early to say, but telephone service ended up costing more!”

Many people are familiar with Henry Parker’s field as the site of Washington County Field Days. On a historical note, Henry thinks that Washington County was the first of the Vermont county field days. Henry was approached in 1990 by the Field Days Board of Directors and gladly donated the use of his land. Since then, Henry has put in power service, added water at the barn, put up permanent fencing and improved access. Henry is happy when Field Days roll around, although he worries about the weather. “They are a good group of people, not demanding, and I always make a few new friends.” As Henry became more involved, he eventually accepted a position on the Field Days Board of Directors. One of Henry’s suggestions led to the purchase of a 40’ X 130’ cattle tent. Held the first weekend in August, Field Days are a family event. Highlights include 4-H horse and cattle shows, arts and crafts, “especially Anne Ormsbee’s quilt exhibit,” and family entertainment and rides.

I finished the interview by asking Henry about the changes he’s seen in town over the past thirty years. He paused for a moment, and said, “For the most part, changes in town have been fairly good. You’ll always run into people who only look at what’s in it for them, but that’s been the exception more than the rule.” Henry—no exception in that sense—is an exceptional person in anyone’s book.

Steve Sinclair is the Urban and Community Forester for the State of Vermont, and is also a Lister for our town. He and his family live on Quaker Road.

COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDAR

Selectboard	2nd & 4th Wednesday	7:15	Town Office
Planning Commission	1st & 3rd Thursday	7:00	Town Office
Zoning Board of Adjustment	2nd & 4th Monday	7:30	Town Office
Conservation Fund Advisory Comm.	2nd Thursday	7:30	Town Office
Volunteer Fire Department	Every Tuesday	7:00	Fire Station, Templeton Rd.
U-32 School Board	2nd & 4th Tuesday	7:30	U-32 High School
Elementary School Board	1st Thursday (Except July)	6:30	Elementary School
Recreation Board	3rd Monday	7:00	Town Office
Town Clerk's Office Hours	Mon. - Thurs. 9 - 5; Friday 9 - 12		Town Office
Zoning Administrator	Tuesday & Thursday	1:00 - 2:30	Town Office
Four Corners Schoolhouse Assn.	3rd Wednesday	7:30	Four Corners Schoolhouse

Meeting times are subject to change

EVENTS CALENDAR

Tuesday, Mar. 4 **TOWN MEETING** **9:30 a.m.** **Elementary School**
 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MEETING **1:00 p.m.**
 Voting by Australian Ballot **7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.**

March 10 - Diversity Residency, EMES
 March 11 - 28 Artist in Residence - Dan Baginski, EMES
 March 7 - 9 Music Exchange Program - Keene, NH at U-32
 March 15 One-Act Play Fest at U-32

EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST

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