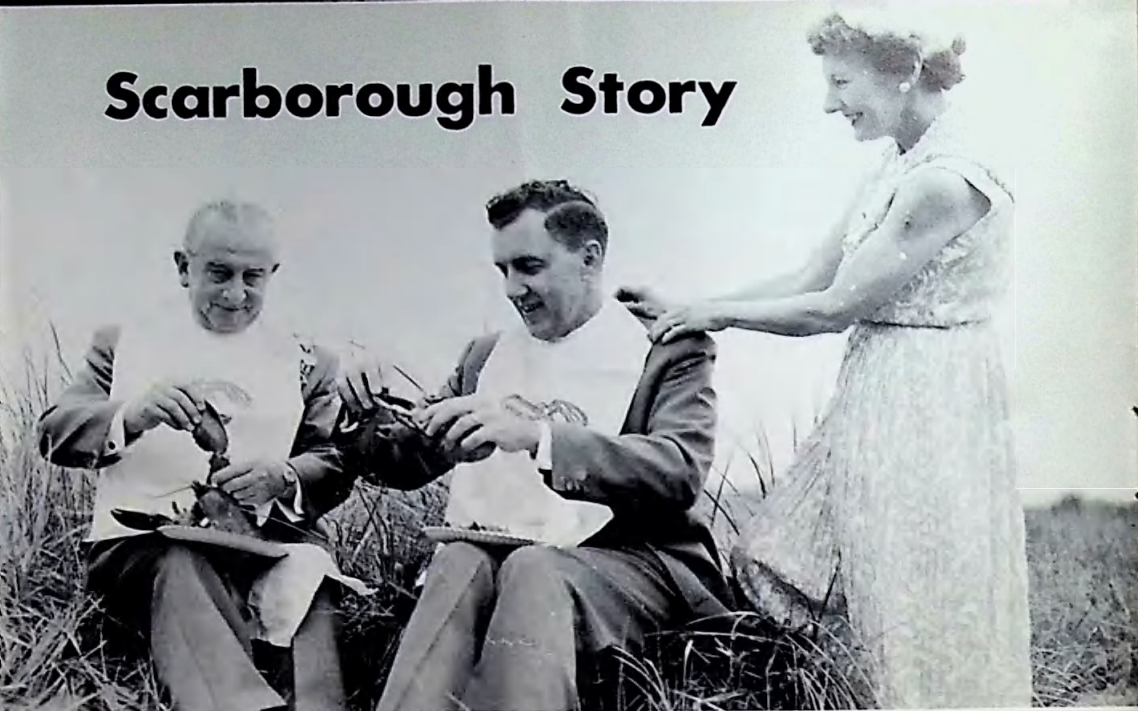


REPORTING ON THE CELEBRATION



Louise Wood

Scarborough Story



How can you say it?

How can you relate in printed words the feeling of people having fun? How can you capture the enthusiasm of grammar school youngsters going door to door selling bumper strips to do their share? How can you explain in words how proud we really are that our 360th Anniversary Celebration was a tremendous success?

Yes, it was a success . . . and in more ways than one. Not only did everyone pitch in and do their share of work to reach the goal that was set, but it was also a success financially. Did you realize that we spent about \$30,000 for the 10-day festival? You're probably wondering where the money came from. Some of it was from Town appropriations, raised over a period of several years. The rest came from the sale of advertisements in the souvenir program and the sale of many souvenirs and tickets to events. In fact, there was even some money left for the Town. All in all, it was something that no one in the Town of Scarborough will ever forget.

In case you might be one of the very few who weren't there, or would just like to reminisce, here are the highlights:

Surrounding communities and people passing through Scarborough first got the idea that something was going on as early as January, 1958, when the male population started sprouting beards. Joe Paul and his "Brothers of the Brush" were everywhere. Few

people escaped the wrath of the "Brothers." They either bought a shaving permit or spent time in the stocks wishing they had.

By June things were really beginning to shape up. Large banners across the road and gay bunting on buildings, plus the strains of "We Go For Scarborough," gave the people of Scarborough the enthusiasm for the job ahead.



John Redmond, a yearly visitor to our area—and a famous song writer—graciously wrote the words and music to “our” song. All of the local radio stations played the Scarborough song several times a day and followed with a list of events. Things were building toward the climax.

An example of the “community” spirit occurred a few weeks before the Celebration when nearly 100 men and women turned out to decorate the old Hunnewell House, Scarborough’s oldest home. A coat of paint, shingles for the roof and even curtains for the windows made the house, which was built around 1670, look very attractive.

Probably the nicest thing that happened to us was the visit of the Lord Mayor and Mayoress of Scarborough, England. The good will brought about by their voyage gave us a commendation from Washington and certainly strengthened the ties between the United States and England.

Arrangements were made with the Air Force to fly the Mayor and his wife to America. They landed in New Jersey and were flown to Maine in Governor Muskie’s own airplane. From the minute Councillor Reginald P. Robinson stepped off the plane at Portland and said to the large crowd awaiting him, “Just call me Percy,” we knew things were getting off to a great start.

Pages and pages could be written about Percy, his wife Marjorie, and

their sergeant-at-arms John Robson. During their three-week stay the newspapers, radio and television covered their every move. The Mayor’s picture was in the paper nearly two dozen times. That alone speaks for the tremendous impression he made.

As expected, the Fourth of July was on us before we knew it. But we were ready. Two days earlier Nancy June Silveira was named Queen of the Tricentennial, after a month-long popularity contest, and prepared to reign over the coming ten days.

At exactly noon on the 4th every church bell in Greater Portland pealed out in harmony to open the Celebration. By this time all roads leading to Pine Point Beach were jammed with automobiles filled with people. And these people were not disappointed!



A continuous Downeast Bake featured the Seaside Festival from noon ’til nine on the 4th, 5th and 6th. And remember the demonstrations and displays. There was a mock invasion by the Marines amidst a barrage of sea and land mines; Army and Navy helicopters went through the paces of an aerial show and an air-sea rescue. There were over 100 motorboats, skin divers, water skiers, stunt drivers, drum and bugle corps and jets zooming overhead.

The Children’s Theatre gave performances while dozens of static dis-



plays were inspected by young and old alike.

During the afternoon Governor Edmund Muskie paid a visit and enjoyed a lobster dinner with the rest of the crowd. The day was climaxed with a brilliant display of aerial fireworks. These fireworks were repeated each night during the Seaside Festival and again at the Pageant, as well as at one unscheduled display.

On Saturday practically everything was repeated, the evening being capped by the Coronation Ball at the high school gym. Queen Nancy was crowned with her princesses representing the ten high schools in the Greater Portland area. The highlight of the ceremony, if you remember, was the number of times the Lord Mayor kissed our Queen for the benefit of the numerous photographers on hand. Nearly a thousand people danced to the music of a top band.

On Sunday morning sunrise religious services were held at Prouts Neck.

Sunday afternoon was dedicated to the Air Force. Thousands watched spellbound as the famous Minutemen Jet Acrobatic Team screeched by, thrilling throngs with an almost unbelievable show of aerial skill. The five-man team made a special trip

from Colorado to be on hand as Air Force personnel from privates to generals watched the proceedings.

Talk about Church Fairs, and people certainly did talk about ours — there were 43 separate churches represented at the largest Church Fair ever held in Maine. From the time the doors opened, shortly after noon, until late into the evening thousands of visitors came and were awed at the varied display of merchandise.

Practically the same thing happened the following day at the huge antique auction held at the Drive-in Theatre. It was the largest auction ever held in these parts. Antique collectors really had a field day as the items auctioned off were collected from all over Maine for this event.

The scene shifted from antique beauties to modern beauties the next evening at the high school gym as a packed house saw the finals of the Miss Maine Scholarship Pageant. Nine of Maine's loveliest girls competed in four different categories; beauty in a swim suit, beauty in an evening gown, talent and personality. After three tension-filled hours in an elaborately decorated gymnasium, pretty Terry Tripp of Lewiston was crowned Miss Maine of 1958 as the audience cheered wildly. Every seat was filled and several dozen people stood through the entire performance.

The scene in the gym changed again in less than twenty-four hours as the teen-age event of the year rocked the entire school. It was the Teen-agers Ball with four of Greater Portland's top disc jockeys spinning the records and "live" rock 'n roll groups from New York providing color.

By now the Scarborough Celebration was drawing to a close and, like all good productions, the best was saved for last. But, to be perfectly honest, it didn't happen exactly that way.

A combination of heavy rains which caused considerable damage to electrical installations, and faulty equipment provided for by the professional group which was hired to stage the event, put a crimp in our final production. Even with these drawbacks, nearly 350 people performed courageously in the Pageant, wearing the costumes of the era they portrayed. Entitled "The Defenders," the show provided the highlights of the 300 years of Scarborough History. Opening each evening's performance were the Cadets from the Maine Maritime Academy at Castine. The Castine Drill Team and Band thrilled the spectators.

On next to the last day of the Celebration a "Thank You" Dinner was held at the Clubhouse at Scarborough Downs. We'd like to say right here and now that the management at the Downs certainly gave much more than we asked for during the Celebration and that without their splendid cooperation things probably would have been different.

Attending our Dinner were the people who had done so much to make

things a success. And we were "loaded" with personalities. The Mayor of Scarborough, Ontario, Canada, and his wife made a special trip for the occasion. The Ontario mayor is titled "Reeve" A. M. Campbell. Special gifts were exchanged by the three Scarboroughs represented here. Some of the other guests included officials of the Greater Portland cities and towns, armed forces personnel, newspaper, television and radio representatives and many others.

There were numerous other events that went into the make-up of the ten-day celebration. There was the N. E. Invitational Model Airplane Meet, a Ham Radio Contest with Scarborough, England, as the target, special races at Beech Ridge and Open House at the old homes, as well as the Winslow Homer house, in Scarborough. In all, twelve homes dating back to times when 95 percent of the United States hadn't even been discovered, were open to the public. From the comments heard, this was most enjoyable.

There were church breakfasts, dinners and suppers; beano games; dis-



plays that featured the latest in boats and airplanes and several sporting events.

A sunrise religious service was held at Pine Point on the last Sunday morning of the celebration.

Who can forget the many souvenir remembrances such as plates, glasses, coins, the wonderful souvenir program book and, perhaps most important of all, our memories.

Yes, it certainly was worth it. And many, many people helped make it so. It's hard to single out a few when so many were involved, but the names of Donald and Izzy Clark, Harold Snow, Tom Burns, Earle Stevens, Ralph Price and Mrs. Clark Libbey seemed to crop up all the time . . . and the name of the man who had the task of coordinating the entire event, Norton Payson.

There it is — the story of your 300th Anniversary Celebration. Maybe we said it, maybe we didn't. The Portland Sunday Telegram summed up more than a year's planning and working in an editorial titled "Congratulations to Scarborough."

"It is no easy task to celebrate a municipal birthday with more than a bit of flag waving and a couple of wearying band concerts. But the Town of Scarborough has done it — and with rare distinction.

"Governor Muskie's presence was only part of the successful festivities of Scarborough's Tercentenary Shindig. The beard-raising contest with 200 bewhiskered entrants wasn't the entire show. The presence of the Mayor of Scarborough, England, while a feature attraction, did not make the difference between success and failure.

"But all these events, plus a lot more, added up to a Birthday Party worth remembering and of which Scarboroughites can be proud. Other towns please take note."

300TH ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION COMMITTEE

March 2, 1959





