

Town of Eddington · February 22, 1811

EDDINGTON

Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2023

APPRECIATION PARTY IN HONOR OF LOU HIGGINS

The Eddington Historical Society had a surprise party January 15, 2023, to honor Alice Lou Higgins for 20 years as Treasurer of the Society. Family and friends gathered to celebrate with her. Thank-you Lou for your dedication to keep all accounts and records accurate and available to members. We appreciate you!



ALICE "LOU" HIGGINS EDDINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

On the fifteenth of January
In two thousand twenty-three
We gather for a meeting
Of the Eddington Historical Society.
The meeting is special
Because we honor today
A lady who has helped us
In her own unique way.
Alice Higgins has been a member
That's loyal as can be.
For twenty plus years
She's helped the community.
She's been our Treasurer.
She's worked on Election Day
Selling calendars and memberships
To those wanting to pay.
She's crafter for fairs
And cooked food for us to sell.
She shares her opinions
And does it so well.
She's the heart of our group,
Follows rules to the letter.
For a friend who will be there,
You couldn't ask for better.
She's small but she's feisty
With a heart that's true.
She's the First Lady of Eddington,
And we call her "Lou."

*Poem written by Pam Dorr
and presented on a plaque,
to Lou, during the celebration.*

IT'S CALLED A JOURNEY

A Series by Nancy A. Nolette



Growing up from the day school closed to the day school opened, our family was at Chemo Pond in Eddington. Our cousin's family was 5 camp properties down the road. They were like us at the lake for the summer months. Their father was an air force pilot and I remember he was away a lot of the time.

Once I was invited to join them on a trip to the air base in Bangor. It was a fun and interesting day even hearing the loud noises and watching the planes taking off and landing. I remember sitting in a large room that was like a cafeteria. I observed lots of guys in similar clothing with colored lines and bars on them. My attention was drawn to the silver and gold ones; some had 1 bar or 2 bars others had lots of squiggly lines. I did not ask any questions just noted what I saw and admired the designs and items on their clothing.

When I was in the 5th grade, my grammar school teacher was explaining how to format a paragraph. As a good teacher, our homework assignment was to

write a paragraph on something we knew, "what do you want to be when you grow up?" Of course, I gave this some thought. I went to the only dictionary at home to find the correct spelling and meaning of the word I wanted to use. Unfortunately, I could not find it so I went with what was there.

I wrote that I wanted to be a WAAC. It was the acronym for Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. I knew the word was WAC, Women's Army Corps, yet it was not there. At this young age, I did not know the difference between these words so I used WAAC. I remember my focus was on the opportunity to travel to new and exciting places.

Then in the 8th grade our superintendent visited our class and encouraged the students to aim for higher goals when selecting our future studies. His next important advice was, "a woman needs a career for the 3 Ds: death, disease and divorce." With this in mind I chose to take the college prep program in high school.

In grade 11, we had an alumna visit our all-girls academy. She addressed the entire student body of teenagers. She was dressed in a military uniform. My, did she look sharp and I was impressed. Of course, she was a Marine Corps Recruiter. She was well versed in the methods and the techniques to address potential recruits. I liked the advantages of travel, living in new and different locations and learning a working skill.

In my senior year of high school, I decided not to apply for college or attend a technical school. I wanted to take a year or two off from studying. My first full time job was in a hospital as an unskilled employee. I worked almost a year then decided to join the military for 2 or 3 years to gain marketable working skills.

My journey continues. . . My father is a WWII veteran who served in the US Navy from May 1943 to May 1946. So off I go to the US Navy recruiter. After all the mental and psychological testing and physical processing, I decided to enlist in the US Navy. However, the earliest opening in women's Navy boot camp was a 9 month wait, PASS, now off to talk with the US Army.

When a recruit enlisted in the army, the choice guarantee was either assignment "location" or "skill" training. I selected skill.

The army recruiter wanted me to enlist for image interpretation. I did not know what that was, but OK. Then the US government closed unexpectedly for several days due to former President Eisenhower's passing. Not wanting to wait the 7 weeks for the next class opening, I selected to train in finance. With that on my plate and a 3-year contract, off I go to WAC basic training at Fort McClellan for 9 weeks.

Basic training was a hodgepodge collection of gals from around the United States. At this time, we were ladies first and soldiers second. No combat training allowed, we wore skirts, lipstick and panty hose. No boots or firing weapons. A lot of the days were spent in a classroom supplemented with physical training exercises and learning to march in formation. The concept was to build up our leadership skills gradually each week during our basic training then onto further skill development during our advanced training and enlistment(s).

We completed the same military training/orientation as our male counterparts yet in a gentler way. We pulled kitchen police (KP), participated in the weekly graduation ceremonies, raised the US Flag at 6 am and lowered it at 5 pm, received vaccinations, learned marching songs, map reading, were fitted for uniforms and how to maintain them, ate in mess halls, had weekly command walk thru inspections of our barracks, charge of quarters (CQ) overnight duty, rotated leadership positions and made new friends we would meet again during our military careers. Not forgetting our monthly pay was in cash.

During week 7 we wore a set of woman's fatigues with helmet liners and our flat soled shoes for a 2-day overnight bivouac in the field. We did a several mile march in the Alabama heat. We ate Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) that, I say, were WWII or Korean War vintage (the crackers were stale, the chocolate tasted old and we tossed the toilet paper sheets and aged 2 pack of cigarettes). We were fitted with masks and went into the gas chamber to test the face seals. Then we had to remove them so we could experience the effects of tear gas burning our exposed skin, tearing our eyes and saturating our clothing.

My advanced training required completion of the clerk-typist course then onto finance school. My class was the first for self-paced training via printed material booklets. Each trainee progressed on their own speed and comprehension. Based on my high school curriculum I was able to complete the course very quickly. I did not go to finance school as I was more skilled as a clerk-typist than a finance clerk. Meanwhile I had a temporary assignment as a typist for the installation's weekly tabloid/newspaper until my station assignment was received.

My first tour of duty was to Fort Lee, Virginia at the US Quartermaster School in the Directorate of Training for resident courses. After six months I was on levy—by name and transferred to the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Powers of Europe (SHAPE), the military headquarters of NATO in Casteau, Belgium. I was assigned as a clerk-typist in the Directorate of Communications and Electronics. I worked with both military and civilian employees from Germany, Great Britain, Denmark, Norway, Italy, Turkey, Netherlands and Canada. With my free time I was able to travel and sightsee Belgium, Holland, France, Luxembourg and Germany.

The Vietnam War was winding down. I had an option to "sign up (for another 3 years) or pack up (and go home)." I was back stateside in less than 30 days just in time for my parents' 25th wedding anniversary celebration.

Now what to do upon my return to Maine(?). I decided to attend the University of Maine in Orono using my GI bill to pay for the tuition. I applied my 3 years of military service to the US Army Reserves. I joined a training brigade in Portsmouth, NH in a legal clerk position yet performed my monthly weekends in Bangor with one of their subordinate basic training companies. The reserves are based on vacant positions. During my 4 years in the reserves, I was assigned as a pharmacy clerk yet served as a recruiter for medical personnel for a hospital in Saco. I recruited 25% of the unit members for a section in Bangor, taught administrative classes for the reserve school in Auburn and returned as a company clerk in Bangor. I completed the nonresident courses for the legal clerk and pharmacy clerk positions. I attended the army reserve accelerated resident training courses for reserve recruiting and the Noncommissioned Officers' (NCO) Academy in Pennsylvania.

Meanwhile I was able to complete my degree requirements for a BS in Business Administration and onto my MBA in Finance and Accounting. Now where do I go from here? I was not thrilled with the prospect of job interviewing around the country. With 7 years of longevity for military retirement as a Staff Sergeant/E-6, I decided to apply for a direct commission as a lieutenant in the active army. My reasoning: after my two-year contract ended, my goal was to have work experience and a reference letter when I went job hunting.

The series continues . . .



DECEMBER 17, 2022

The town of Eddington celebrated Wreaths Across America on December 17, 2022, 12 noon at the town office Veterans Monument. The Marine Corps. League, Greater Bangor Area Detachment 1151 presented the colors, Dave Johnson was MC for the ceremony.

Angie Stearns sang the National Anthem, Pastor Eric Mitchell prayed, Senator Peter Lyford gave a message, and Herb Hopkins played taps.

Thank-you to everyone who participated in the ceremony and placing the wreaths at Eddington's five cemeteries.



The Brewer Boy Scout Troop #1, chartered by the Penobscot County Conservation Association, placed wreaths on stands at Jonathan Eddy and Riverside Cemeteries with guidance of their Scout Master Phil Proctor and Asst. Scout Master Tim Seymour.



Veterans placing wreaths; Donald MacKenzie, Richard Tuck, Ben Birch, Sam Maquillan, Jim Goodness, Scott Newhart, Matt Morneault, Jacob Mabeux, Bill Birch.

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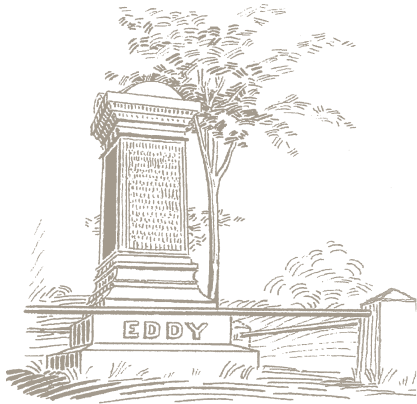
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Switchel

“Switchel” is an old fashion drink, also known as “Haymaker’s Punch” according to “The Old Farmer’s Almanac”, written by Robert B. Thomas in 1832. This is how colonial farmers quenched their thirst out in the hot, sun baked fields. This drink may be chilled but is usually served to the workers on the farm and never colder than the well water it was made from.

Recipe:

1 gallon water

1½ cup molasses (*can be replaced with maple syrup or honey*)

1/3 cup apple cider vinegar

1 tsp. grated ginger

Switchel should taste refreshing and is healthy.

Add fresh lemon or lime juice for a zing!

Contributed by Nancy Nolette

