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They revel in hard work and fun

By Steve Farr
Press-Gazette

SCARBORO — Back-breaking work and roof-raising fun were the law of the land in this once busy community a century ago.

By day, loggers worked to harness the waters of Scarboro Creek, which powered the mighty water wheels of a lumber mill. By night, music filled Frank Novak's Hall, where residents danced and shared in the spirit of a hard day's work.

Things have quieted down in Scarboro. The mill and the dance hall are gone now.

Press-Gazette photos by Sandee Gerbers

But residents of this unincorporated community about 20 miles east of Green Baystill find pleasure — even hobbies — in the same sort of hard work that almost made Scarboro a boomtown a century ago.

Herman Heurkens' farm, E2370 Luxemburg Road, sits across the road from Scarboro Creek and the spot where the lumber mill used to be.

In the months he spent away from the fields undergoing chemotherapy last year, Heurkens, 49, began collecting toy tractors. Some of his favorites are replicas of those he has on the farm. He paid $150 for a replica of a Farmall 806 parked outside.

"Some friend of mine took me to a toy show once. I said, 'Are you crazy?' But that's all it took," he said.

Nick and Agnes Salentine, N5404 Hawthorne Road, live in the former Hawthorne School.

"But I'm still not getting any smarter," Nick said, laughing.

Agnes, 65, keeps a loom in a small room where schoolchildren used to hang their winter coats and hats. She takes great pride in the colorful, sturdy rugs she weaves for her customers.

"It can be hard work. But I guess if I wasn't enjoying it, I wouldn't be doing it," she said.

The Salentines bought the old schoolhouse in 1975. Children in Scarboro now attend Luxemburg-Casco schools.

On the Lee Treml farm, E2395 County A, Travis, 4, and Trevor, 1, are too young for school, but are getting an education of a different sort.

Lee, 33, has 40 milking cows that make for a long work day. But he tends to 65 newly hatched chickens and turkeys that are a hobby and a learning tool for his children.

"It's just nice to have something for them to do here — something they can help care for, and watch grow," he said.

Life in Scarboro is a family reunion waiting to happen for Treml. He has a sister and cousins nearby, and his mother lives up the road. When there's hard work to be done, though, he suddenly finds himself alone.

"You can't find 'em then," he said, laughing.

Scarboro residents come together once a year on the third Sunday in August for a kermis parade. What it lacks in size, it more than makes up for in spirit, said Irma Drews, 78, owner of Drews Hide-a-Way tavern, E2436 County A.

"Well, it never lasts more than 10 or 15 minutes, but everybody turns out for it," she said.

Drews calls the tavern she operates with her son, Robert, "the downtown business district." Once a cheese factory, the tavern gives Drews a chance to see the unique sense of humor some Scarboro residents have about their tiny community.

A few years back, the tavern served as a polling place for a mock Scarboro election, Drews said. Patrons stood behind a curtain on a window near the pool table, discreetly penciling on the wall their choices for mayor, sheriff, and dog catcher.

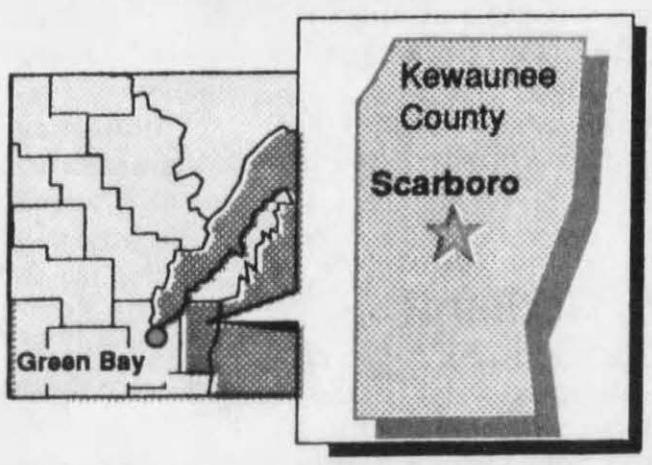
"I don't remember who won, but the sheriff got a tin foil badge, and the dog catcher got one of those teeny little nets they get goldfish with," she said.

Even folks just passing through seem to revel in the humor of it all, Drews said.

"I think it's impossible to be a stranger in Scarboro for too long," she said.

"And if you are, well, it's more or less your own fault."

Tractor trivia: Herman Heurkens, Scarboro, talks about his community and the 50 toy tractors he has collected.



The Scarboro file

- **Population**: About 30, according to residents' estimates.
- **Oil fever:** In 1907 Henry Veeser discovered drops of oil on land in Scarboro. He turned down a $10,000 offer from representatives of John D. Rockefeller for a better deal that never came.
- **Post time:** At the turn of the century, Scarboro was a horse racing center.. Spectators paid 25 cents to watch the horses race on ice in winter.

■ **Next week:** Lark in Brown County

Day in the life: In photo at left, Agnes and Nick Salentine work at the weaving loom in their home, which used to house a school. In above photo, left to right, Travis, Trevor, Lee and Rachel Treml play with some newly hatched chicks at their farm.