

**AT 89, HERB MOON REMEMBERS ROUGH TIMES OF BYGONE
DAYS
3/18/97**

Last week I wrote about the ice harvests that were an important industry in the area at the turn of the century. My narrative this week is about one of the few living participants of that bygone era. He is Herbert Moon of Bear Creek Road out of Woodgate.

Herb was born not far from his present home on March 1, 1908, one of 12 children. His father and mother worked hard to provide for their large family. Guiding, logging and many of the other endeavors usually associated with the era and locale kept father busy. Mother, in addition to the demands of several children, served as midwife and nurse to other family members so disposed. Herb recalled there still being 14 or more living in their home long after most of the siblings had gone off on their own.

School started for Herb when he was eight and ended at 15. Eighth grade was as far as you could go at Woodgate. Six weeks of deep snow meant the children were unable to walk the two miles and shortened it even more. What plowing was done, his father did with a team of horses and a log. The teacher pushed the boys, giving them all the education possible in a short time.

All of the Moon children were expected to help with the vicissitudes of earning a living. Herb's father worked maintaining the county roads and it was only one of the activities they helped with. The roads were gravel and required constant maintenance. The Hogsback Road to Boonville was a good example of the difficulties. Many stretches were devoid of trees and blowing sand was a major problem.

Wood was the major source of fuel and supplying it was another source of income the children helped with.

Working at the ice house was Herb's first full time job at the age of 15. It continued to be so until it burned in 1928, just a year after Herb and his wife, Alberta, were married.

Reverend Reed married the couple on June 1, 1927 in Old Forge. Like many before him and others to this day, lack of opportunity forced the couple to look for a living elsewhere.

The next 45 years were spent in the Utica and Syracuse areas. In 1973, upon his retirement, they returned to the area and converted an original hunting camp into a home.

Alberta passed away in 1988, leaving Herb to carry on. Church and its social functions keep him occupied and entertained. Serious heart complications last December have compromised his activities, but not his enthusiasm for life.

To make a long story short, it was well worth the time and effort to get to know Herb and his life and times. Please let me know of anyone else that you think we should all get to know.