

- September 9, 1965 -

CAPE COD STANDARD-TIMES, TUESDAY, MAY 18, 1965

Cape-tip Town Crier Displays Many Talents

PROVINCETOWN — Probably the most photographed man in the world — at least in America — is Arthur Paul Snader, Provincetown's town crier, and possibly the only official town crier in this country today.

Mr. Snader, who will be 81 in September, was first named to the post in 1952, and served until 1956 when he found he couldn't make ends meet on the salary he was getting. However, he was back again at the job a year later.

He has a background which is more than adequate for the post. He entered show business seriously at 20, back in 1904, but spent only about 10 years in the theater, playing in about everything of the period, even "East Lynne."

He has been a pilot since 1907, first flying a blimp, and during World War II flew with the Civil Air Patrol at Annapolis, Md. He also is an etcher. For many years he was a printer for etchers and at one time taught Grand Duchess Marie of Russia how to etch.

Mr. Snader also has written poetry, and with Ralph Travers of Boston, collaborated on a book "How to Make Professional Molds and Castings."

He works as Town Crier from May 30 to mid-September; starting the season on Memorial Day, and then daily about mid-June until after Labor Day. During off-season times he also dons his uniform for special occasions,

often adding color to ceremonies off-Cape involving people and towns from all parts of Cape Cod.

His itinerary includes meeting the "boat crowd" from the Boston - Provincetown excursion vessel; he makes his rounds with items of note, including the number of passengers on the ship; annually opens up the Provincetown Playhouse, where he has taken part in several plays, and is a familiar figure throughout the center of town, during the height of the Summer season.

Mr. Snader was born in Baltimore Sept. 9, 1884, son of William Henry Harrison Snader and Florenza Victoria (Marsh) Snader. His father, an officer with the Union forces, worked most of his life for the Post Office Department.

He received his education in Philadelphia public schools, at Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania. When he was 5 or 6, his family moved to Greenwich Village, N.Y., where they remained a couple of years, and then moved to Philadelphia.

An older brother, Edward F. Snader, who was advance man for William A. Brady, theatrical producer, was instrumental in Mr. Snader's stage debut at 6, when he would carry a 50-pound dumbbell onstage and hand it to the strongman.

His first serious stage bit was at the age of 20 with a small part in Victor Herbert operetta "It Happened in Nordland."



Art Snader, Provincetown's Town Crier since 1952, is celebrating his 81 birthday today, September 9. Art vows this is his final appearance as the most photographed Town Crier, and wants time to do some writing. Steve Barrie in his column, Steve's Own Corner, pays tribute to Town Crier Snader.

the arrival of an itinerant "cutter," who cut the cloth into suitable patterns for them to sew.

The knee-length pants, with button shoes and stovepipe hat he wore were authentic, too. "Long pants weren't worn before 1812," says Art. "And that felt hat was the easiest thing to make in those early days. The felt for hats came in cone shape and all the hatter had to do was push down the top of it to make a crown and roll up the other end of it to make a brim." The hat was warm, too, Art adds.

His Pilgrim costume was important because it is believed to be the most photographed costume in the world. Art, who kept track of the clicking cameras of visiting vacationists, says he has been photographed on an average of 416 times a day — or 40 to 50 thousand times during his annual tour of duty from May 30 to Labor Day. Once outside Town Hall, he counted 19 cameras clicking at him — and off to one side a professional cameraman making a picture of the 19 others.

Art hasn't kept as careful count of the questions asked him but they add up, too. Rarely has he been impatient, he says, at the kind of questions asked him but when a man queried him on how to "get to Cape Cod," he admits he was irritated.

"Where do you think you are now?" I asked him," Art recalls.

"I dunno," the man answered, "but I want to get to Provincetown." Art says the visitor was sober and had driven a long way to find Cape Cod.

And there was a woman motorist who was determined to drive to Nantucket and wanted the Town Crier to tell her how to do it. He finally took her over to a map on the wall of the Chamber of Commerce and pointed out to her that Nantucket was an island, that she couldn't "drive" there, and recommended she drive to Hyannis and take the boat there to Nantucket.

The stubborn woman sat down on a chair in the Chamber and presently asked Art: "If I go up over the Cape Cod Canal can I drive to Nantucket that way?"

Once Art had a scoop over radio, TV and the daily newspapers. He happened to be talking with a friend, a nurse at the Polyclinic Hospital in New York, who interrupted her conversation to tell him Senator Robert A. Taft, a patient at the hospital, was dead. "It was hard news," the Town Crier admits, "but I reported it here ahead of anyone else."

An encounter with a little girl visitor once left him shaken with sympathy and emotion. The little girl was being introduced to the Town Crier by her mother. "She was an extraordinarily beautiful little girl," he reports. "I noticed she wanted to touch me, to run her hands over my suit. I hadn't noticed before but when she turned up her beautiful little face, I saw that she was blind. I stood there in the street, the tears running down my face at what I saw."

The Town Crier, a native of Baltimore, came here on a visit in 1935 from New York City, after his son Arthur P., Jr., known as Jere Snader, had already discovered Provincetown. Art Snader, now 81, had spent 10 in show business in his youth, acting in many familiar plays of the time. He has annually participated in the opening of the Provincetown Playhouse and taken part in a number of plays there.

Art Snader was flying as early as 1907. He first flew in a blimp and during World War II flew with the Civil Air Patrol at Annapolis, Md. For many years he was an etcher for printers and reportedly taught Grand Duchess Marie of Russia how to etch. He has also written poetry

and collaborated on a trade book, "How to Make Professional Molds and Castings."

The Town Crier says he feels "tired out." He lives at 7 Freeman Street where he is resting a little and working on what he considers a "serious" book. When he has had the title for it copyrighted, he says, he'll say what the book is about.

"Is it about Provincetown?" The Advocate asked him. "Oh, no," said the Town Crier. "It's a serious book!"

Provincetown Advocate - - October 14, 1965

Town Crier Turns In Bell After 13 Years Of Service

Art Snader, Provincetown Town Crier, has handed in his brass bell to Town Manager Robert A. Hancock and next Summer Provincetown will be looking for a new Town Crier.

Since 1952 Art Snader has been walking the streets here in Summer, ringing his bell and crying out the news — just as the Town Crier of Colonial days made known to local inhabitants what news he had of the rest of the world, or called out "All's well!" when the day was over.

The news Art Snader dispensed

was different, of course — how many visitors were on the excursion boat from Boston (an important item to restaurant proprietors and shopkeepers) or other bits of like information. (Art reported no arrivals on the excursion boat this past Summer because there weren't any. The boat didn't run).

Sometimes Art dropped into The Advocate office with stray bits of scuttlebutt he'd picked up here and there, sending a busy staff to checking out reports that might or might not be facts. His black cape topped with felt stovepipe hat over his suit,

looked warm and sometimes someone at The Advocate had to say so.

"Warm!" Art would declare, mopping his face. "It's hot!" Art's suit was the nearest he could get to the dress outfit of the Pilgrims. It was a basket weave. This was the pattern woven by early Colonial housewives from sheared and dyed wool grown on their own sheep or

brought or bartered from others who had them. The Town Crier, who has done considerable research of his own into Colonial attire, says those early housewives, after weaving their cloth, then awaited