



Once, for a youngster growing up in Bridgehampton, Long Island, the daily pattern of life included a ride to the beach to "see how the ocean looks today." I didn't realize how ingrained this rite was until I went away to college and experienced pangs of homesickness. It wasn't my family that I missed. I needed to know how the "ocean looked today."

A particular childhood memory comes back quite clearly. It is a day in early May. I am alone on a dune in Sagaponack. Tractors have just turned mahogany soil for planting, and the pungent aroma of newly-turned earth on one side of me mingles with the warm salt air on the other side. As I stand in the wind, between the land and the sea, I know that these two elements are the essence of who I am. Today, my observation as a child remains valid.

In those days, it was reasonable to assume that the way of life and the landscape would remain unaltered, as they had come to us. Potato fields had always abutted ocean dune. Red-winged blackbirds

returned to the same spot on Ocean Road each year. Faces in town were the same. People passed away but a family look remained: Yankee, Irish, Polish, Black – immigrants in that order.

Today I look at the potato fields, the dunes, the faces, with a particular intent. I am trying to store up images that I can live with in the future. For slowly, the landscape changes – and the faces are getting lost in the crowd.

*This **Farmers and Seafarers** Calendar is an effort to record pictorially some truth about our area where people have traditionally earned their livelihood through farming and fishing.*

*In order to obtain a visual record that is authentic and beautiful, I have sought the eye of local photographers, and present here a showcase of their work. It is hoped that a **Farmers and Seafarers** Calendar will be published each year, as a daily reminder to us of what we have and of what we are losing.*

Mary Ellen Rooney, editor

