

[Page 33 - Mae Wilcox, 98 - Poet from Big Lorraine](#)ISSUE : [Issue 59](#)

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Mae Wilcox, 98-Poet from Big Lorraine Oh, many, many years I've lived. I've learned a lot of good things, and I forget the bad ones! Try to. (Where were you born?) Oh, Big Lor? raine. We had a nice home in Big Lorraine. But when I was only a tiny child, just as my mother was dying, it caught fire and burned down. They had to carry my mother, on the bed, over across the road into another house. And she only lived a week after that. She died there. (Did your parents have a farm?) No. They were fishermen. Codfish, and haddock --just an ordinary fisherman. I'll tell you. One spring--I remember one spring my husband and I dried 50 quintals. (A quintal is a measure of a quantity of fish--112 pounds.) That's what they used to go by--quintals--50 quintals. Big high round pile, on the shore. Just my husband and I, yeah. He'd bring the fish in, and he would cure them. And then he would put them in puncheon tubs--wash--then wash them out of the pickle--make them up in small (piles), what they call "faggots." And then, after awhile, I would dry them--spread them on planks. So I did the most while he was out fishing. I'm pretty sure I dried the most of that 50 quintals myself. Now, what I would do--would spread them Mae and Fraser Wilcox when the weather was fine. And then-- first, we laid them on small--they call them faggots back in those days. They'd be up on small faggots. But as they dried, they'd go on larger faggots, bigger fag? gots. And at the last they'd be in a great high pile--when they were ready, getting ready for to be shipped away. (And would you pile them head in, head out?) Head and tail. Where the head would be. There was no sign of head because it's gone! Just fins up there--down here the tail. Head and tail. See, that's something to remember for 98 years ago, but I do. (What kind of vessel did your father fish from?) Oh, just from a sailboat. That book (Mae's book of poems. Memoirs) should tell you what my father had: "He didn't have an engine / Only a boat with a large sail / And if the weather was heavy / He often had to bail." It's right in there. "And if the sea was stormy / He couldn't go very far / Because there was a bar across the harbour / And he might get stuck on the bar." A lot of my life is in that (book). That's why I brought it. A lot of helpful things in this. If you go over that book, you might find things in it that I will not have told you, you know.... (So when you write your poetry, you don't make it up.) I was trying to tell my life. I'll tell you how it really started. I was