CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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IULY 2002



Cars line all approaches to the Cornwall Green. The crowd—old and young, on canes or on shoulders, on two feet or on four—surges to the War Memorial in front of which stand the dignitaries: Ralph Gold, Earl Brecher, Rev. (Peter) Hammond and Father (Chris) Webber. Here come the veterans, as spiffy as ever in their old uniforms, and here comes the BAND! (more applause), and the scouts, the teams, the fire and ambulance crews, and the equally resplendent vehicles.

The crowd is hushed, waiting for Ralph to announce the VFW Citizenship Award. "There are no hard and fast rules for our choice," says Ralph. "But all our candidates have one overriding strength: they are good neighbors and good people. This year's recipient has spent countless hours tending Cornwall residents and others in their sorrow and their joy. He is known, too, for his legendary Halloween costumes."

A clearly surprised Scott Cady comes forward. "It is my great privilege to live among you in this community. I only wish I had thought to wear a costume today."

"And now," says Ralph, "John Miller will say a few words."

John bursts characteristically into song: "I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy...," and then

speaks movingly of Cornwall, his "Brigadoon." "I consider myself a passionate man and my passionate opinions sometimes cause me to misbehave. I will steer clear of all that...on this day that we set aside to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

"I consider myself an extremely lucky man. Lucky because I am privileged to live in and be part of this wonderful community... this almost magical town. We are blessed in Cornwall. Yes, we are blessed—even when we disagree. Sometimes we don't get our way and it turns out all right. Vince Lombardi may have made Bartlett's when he said 'Winning is everything,' but I say being kind and thoughtful, being a good neighbor is everything. That winning doesn't make for a better community."

The crowd cheers and then we honor the veterans fallen this year—Edward Pelletier, Bruce Ridgway, William Covington, and Myron Piker. Guns salute, dogs bark, babies cry, bugles lower the flag, and the members of this almost magical town disperse to the cakewalk, the Simont portrait queue and the frog-jumping contest. Good neighbors all.

—Ella Clark

Saving the Farms

There is hope that several of Cornwall's surviving old-family farms may be spared from the developer's hammer. At this writing,

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three properties have pending agreements which will ensure their continued non-residential

status. Negotiations have been under way for several years for 96 acres of the Hart family's 135-acre Cherry Hill Farm (which has been in the family since 1759 when George II ruled these parts) to be acquired by the Cornwall Conservation Trust. Margaret Cooley, president of the Trust, said that the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection is considering a grant application for \$377,500, half of the proposed purchase price. The rest would come from funds raised by the Trust, and subsequent use of the property would be in accordance with its goals of maintaining the property as forest and active farmland.

Farther north, the Hautboy Hill Farm is likely to come under the State Department of Agriculture's Farmland Preservation Program later this month. The Hurlburts will still own the 98 acres of pasture where they settled in 1746. Dairy, beef, pork, hay, and vegetable production will continue once the state has bought development rights, to ensure that the property will remain forever farmland.

Straddling the town's southern border, the 76-acre Lorch farm on Route 7 has also been appraised for the Farmland Preservation program. Negotiations began a little

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The a rankee Book			ULY 200	12		(continued on page 2,
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	Park & Rec. 7 P.M. Town Office Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	2 Blue Mt. Satsang Every Tuesday 6:30–8 p.m. St. Peter's Church Inland Wetlands 8 p.m. Town Hall	3	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY	5 Historical Society Reception 5–7 P.M. (p.3) Exhibit: Mechanical Banks	Rotary Meeting: Geer Village 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn July Fest 11:30 A.M. Village Green (p.4)
7	8 Blood Pressure Screening 3–4 P.M. UCC Parish House P&Z 8 P.M. Town Hall	9 Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	Family Mime Show 7 P.M. Town Hall (p.4)	Meditation for Mothers Every Thursday 1:15– 2:15 p.m. St. Peter's Church CCS Bldg. Comm. 7:30 p.m. CCS Library	Story Hour 10 A.M. Cornwall Library	Rotary Meeting: Covenant to Care 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn Rummage Sale 8:30 A.M2:30 P.M. UCC and Mohawk (p.4)
14 Rummage Sale Half Price 1:30–5:30 p.m. UCC and Mohawk (p.4)	Rummage Sale Bag Day 9 A.M.—Noon UCC and Mohawk (p.4)	16 Republican Town Comm. 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	17	Bd. of Selectmen 9 A.M. Town Hall Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library VFW Post 9856 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse CCS Bldg. Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	Circus Minimus 10 a.m. Cornwall Library	20 Rotary Meeting: Club Assembly 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn Cornwall Assoc. 9:30 A.M. Cornwall Library Peter Hammond Farewell Frost Home 4 P.M. (p.4)
21	Democratic Town Comm. 7:30 p.m. Cornwall Library ZBA 8:30 p.m. Town Hall*	23	24 Family Juggling Show 7 P.M. Town Hall (p.4) Green Party 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	CCS Bldg. Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	Story Hour 10 a.m. Cornwall Library	Page 14 P.M. Cornwall Library (p.4)
Book Party for Lorraine Nye Eliot Cornwall Library 2–4 P.M. (p.4)	29	30	Cornwall Fire Dept. 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse			0

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over a year ago and a price for the development rights was finally agreed on. Generally speaking, development rights are purchased for around one-third of the market value of the land. Currently, the state is surveying the boundaries and a closing is expected in October. The Lorches have farmed the property since 1924, but it is currently rented to Ken Gladding for growing corn and haying.

-Matt Collins

Sing HO for the Library



That's the new Library which was officially dedicated on an overcast Saturday in June with the help of kilt-wearing

bagpipers from Litchfield, a five-piece jazz band from HVRHS, and a trio of little girls who cut a blue ribbon. For the record, the girls were Elsie Pryor, 4; Emma Nance, also 4; and Eliana Calhoun, 2.

With Library President Lisa Lansing Simont presiding, we heard from First Selectman Gordon Ridgway, who called it 'a day of triumph' for Cornwall, and from State Senator Andrew Roraback, who said the Library was a "resounding success." Jim Terrall, chairman of the building committee, noted that his group had worked on the project for five and a half years and that it was a "messy process." "But," he added, "that is the way democracy works." Jim called the Library "a timeless design." And, finally, the last words appropriately went to Cornwall's poet laureate, Ken Keskinen:

"To house the books you gave your bucks. You brought in builders with their trucks, and carpenters with posts and beams, 'lectricians with their volts and gleams, and plasterers with level seams, and painters with their smoothy creams. Sing HO for donors with their dough! That's us! Sing HO! Sing HO! Sing HO! Sing HO!"

(After the outdoor ceremony, people went inside the Library where the community room was dedicated in memory of Frank and Polly Calhoun and the children's room to Elizabeth Lansing.)

—John Miller

A Higher Power

Connecticut Light and Power (CL&P) has resumed cutting trees and installing power poles along Great Hollow and Great Hill Roads. Although the project was halted by public and private protest for five months, mammoth machines with their crews have been back at work on the roadsides for the last few weeks. They are tripling the electrical service from Route 4 up to Clark Road, on the flank of Mohawk Mountain, for a single customer, C&D Farms.

As reported earlier, there were complaints that CL&P had started work without the required permission from adjacent landowners to cut and fell trees for this project. On December 13, Gordon Ridgway brought the enter-

prise to a full stop with a letter to the state's Department of Public Utility Control (DPUC). Landowners Amy and Rinker Buck also filed a petition against CL&P to prevent any trimming and felling of their trees. These protests had two results: the DPUC placed a stop order on the work, and a hearing on the dispute was held on March 14 at the Town Hall.

After lengthy negotiations, the Bucks withdrew their petition in May. According to Rinker Buck, they reached an individual settlement with CL&P which does not permit the company to fell any trees on their property, and requires it to replace any small saplings that get cut. Because this is an unusual agreement with a property owner, at CL&P's request the document is maintained in a locked file by order of the DPUC, but the Bucks decline to be silent about it. The stop order was lifted, leaving other adjacent property owners to work out their own agreements with CL&P. The alternative route suggested by Ridgway, to bring the service directly down from Mohawk Mountain to C&D Farms, would have been cheaper to install, but CL&P prefers the route along the road, which will suit their purposes for future power service in this area.

The work is now continuing along two miles of our roads, 3,000 feet at a time. At press time, this reporter had counted more than 70 new poles between Route 4 and Clark Road with crossarms either eight or ten feet long. Asplundh Tree Expert Company is also clearing an extra ten feet into the proper-

ties along the lines, taking down any trees over six inches in diameter that are considered possible threats to the lines in years to come. Roughly 100 trees, mostly hardwoods, will be felled in all, according to Catherine Gibson, CL&P's regional arborist. Only

tall-growing species are targeted in clearing the roadsides. The crews, she reports, have been schooled in low-growing species and are sparing native plants like witchhazel, mountain laurel, shadblow, and wild azalea. Helping these species to thrive may prove to be a benefit of the cutbacks.—Ann Schillinger

Committee to Go Full Monty

Believing that publicizing its work in full view and Technicolor every step of the way is the best method to involve our town citizenry, the School Building Committee has decided to go beyond simply posting future meetings as required by FOI. In addition, they intend to put summaries of their meetings on the Cornwall Website, post weekly meeting notices on public bulletin boards and in the Chronicle, and initiate a word-ofmouth campaign to urge public attendance at their meetings. The idea is to keep everyone in town up to speed on committee developments and to get a feel for public sentiment towards these developments as well. It takes a village to improve a school.

Currently the building committee is in the process of selecting an architectural firm that combines extensive public-school renovation

experience with on-site attention to detail. The committee also favors using a separately contracted project manager to work with the architect in order to keep the project on schedule and under budget. The committee will be interviewing for this position as a second step.

—Scoville D. Soulé

Land Transfers

William F. Andrews to Herbert Johnson, Tr., 6 parcels totaling 40.2 acres on Town Street South, Route 4, Route 125, for \$1,000,000.

William F. Andrews to Herbert M. Johnson, Tr., 15.5 acres and house on Town Street South for \$2,500,000.

Julian Fifer and Nana Watanabe to David Stretell and Anne Christensen, 4.9 acres and house on Route 45 for \$285,000.

Housatonic Valley Association, Inc., to Charles R. Hummel, 4.6 acres on Swifts Bridge Road for \$50,000.

Mr. Madwom to Edward W. and Marilyn A. Olsen, Lot 8 on Kent Road for \$80,000.

Ira Barkoff and Judith Sloat-Barkoff to Clarisse Perette, 10.6 acres on Dibble Hill Road for \$115,000.

Hammond to Leave Cornwall

Having served the United Church of Christ Congregational for two decades, Peter Hammond has accepted a call to be minister of the Bridgewater Congregational Church, with his duties to begin on August 16.

Among Peter's first of many ministerial tasks in Cornwall 20 years ago was to help bring about a merger of the two Congregational churches, separated for more than 200 years. He then guided the united group in longrange planning and in creating a

mission statement. Working with the Board of Deacons, he enriched the worship service. He also initiated Adult Education classes and the Youth Group for middle schoolers. Under his leadership, the church has become an Open and Affirming Church, welcoming gays and lesbians to membership.

In his years here, Peter has married 125 couples, baptized 112 babies, conducted 95 funerals, and delivered more than 900 sermons. He has given many hours to serve his community—as president of the Cornwall Housing Corporation, as a member of the town Board of Finance, the Fire Department, the Community Council of NW Connecticut, the Rotary Club, the Cub Scouts, and other groups.

Pat Blakey, who has served as church secretary to six ministers since 1960, refers to their job as a "ministry of interruptions." Peter is no exception. "He has no hard office hours. He does much of his ministry out in the community—at the dump, in the village, at the post office—wherever he meets people who want to talk, he gives them his time and his patient attention."

Looking back over the past 20 years of his service in Cornwall, Peter feels "blessed and

privileged" to have lived in this town. He feels that the town has grown in terms of the openness of individuals and groups to one another. "The community," Peter concludes, "needs a unifying purpose, a vision for the future, one that brings us all even more closely together."

—Ken Keskinen

Boost to the Play Space

The town has received an anonymous gift of \$12,000 which, together with \$8,000 of the \$15,000 bequest from the late Mary Schieffelin, will make up the needed \$20,000 for construction of the play space. The balance of Mary's generous gift to the town for recreational purposes will be used for improvements to Hammond Beach.

—John Leich

It's the Talk of the Town!

If you are among the many who have visited the newly reopened West Cornwall gallery known as The Cornwall Collection, then you have seen a remarkable project that consists of miniature scenes of Cornwall painted daily from January 1 through December 31, 2001-365 little paintings set in the form of a calendar. It is the work of Barbara Stone, who talked about the origins of the project. Her story begins with a trip to Cape Cod about five years ago with her friends Cheryl Evans, Jane Giddens-Jones, and Connie Steuerwalt. It was there in a gallery that they saw the work of a local artist who had painted a miniature scene every night for an entire year. The paintings were very dark and similar but they sparked an idea. Thus the origin of painting Cornwall day by day for an entire year.

The miniatures are in oil on four-inch masonite squares which are glued to slightly larger squares also of masonite, then wired together in strips of six, creating a picture calendar. It was not an easy project. "I had to get into a routine of doing one a day," she said, "and there were good days and bad days. In fact, I can see the good and the bad moods reflected in the quality of the work."

Barbara describes herself as a "task-oriented" person who was just obsessive enough to get the project completed. The emotional strain of getting it done and getting it right took a temporary toll: Barbara hasn't picked up a paint brush since December 31. If you're thinking she might do it again in another year, that, she says, isn't going to happen. The exhibition ends in July, and many of those 365 scenes of Cornwall will be scattered to the many homes of people who purchased them. —John Miller

Pond Hill Protected

Joy Wyatt, vice president of the Yelping Hill Association, reports that the "Yelpers" have voted to keep the hill (virtually the only land which fronts Cream Hill Lake still potentially

subject to development) forever in a natural state. The resolution permits such logging as is appropriate to maintain the health of the forest. Pond Hill, forming the

northwest shore of the

Letters to the Chronicle

MONTY'S GIFT

In last month's Chronicle mention was made of treasures found by volunteers clearing out the attic of the Library Building, including the Federalist Papers. I don't know what treasures were found, but The Federalist was not among them. This rare volume—a collection of essays by Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison, written in favor of the new Constitution and published in 1788—was a gift to the library by Montgomery Hare, a long-time trustee.

Shortly before his death in March, 1998, Monty invited John Calhoun and me to visit with him and Alida to be brought up to date on the new library plans. At the close of our visit he went to his bookshelves, removed The Federalist, and presented it to us saying he hoped the volume would bring a good price, a boost to our New Library Building capital campaign. He also gave us a set of bound volumes of the works of Tennyson.

The trustees directed me to look for a buyer, which I did, first by contacting the Curator of Rare Books at the New York Public Library, who advised me that our best source would be members of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America and sent me their directory. Interest was expressed by several buyers.

Bidding started at \$18,000 for The Federalist; we sold the Tennyson volumes and The Federalist for \$27,250. A wonderful gift to the library from a very special trustee and friend.

—Audrey Ferman

RAISE THE FLAG A LITTLE HIGHER

Our new 50-foot village green flagpole had yet another volunteer who should be recognized. James LaPorta is responsible for the rather formidable concrete foundation necessary for a pole of that size. Many thanks!

—John Leich

LEAVE IT TO BEAVERS

We walkers are only a few of the many people who enjoy the beauty and tranquility of the now

vast wetland/pond at the corner of Rattlesnake and Cream Hill Roads. Wildlife surprises greeted us each day this spring, from the two sets of merganser ducklings to the great blue heron. All this is due largely to the device installed to control the water flowing through the culvert under the road, permitting those ever busy beavers to do what they do best. Thanks to those responsible and to the property owner,

—Carla Bigelow

THANKS FROM BUDDY

Lawrence Van Valkenburgh.

So many people have come forward with funds to help me with my medical needs. Many have sent me cards and gifts to cheer me up. I am so thankful for all that has been done to make things easier for my family and myself.

It is truly amazing how happy I get to see visitors when they enter my room. It is a great feeling to have a room full of visitors, which I am glad to say has happened more than once.

Thank you, Cornwall, for all your help.

—Buddy Dawson

LIGHT ON DARK ENTRY

At its annual meeting on May 25, Dark Entry Forest, Inc. voted to welcome bona fide hikers to enter, hike, and enjoy the forest during daylight hours. They will be issued passes in response to a written application. Application forms may be obtained by calling DEF at 672-0259 or writing to P.O. Box 259, Cornwall Bridge, and requesting that one be mailed to you. Passes will be limited to those hikers who are not planning to write about and photograph the highly imaginary adventures they probably have not experienced. Passes are for one year and may be renewed.

—John Leich

lake, has been incorporated into the Mohawk Trail, part of the Blue Trail system of the Connecticut Forest and Park Association.

This parcel, as legend has it, was purchased with the proceeds of General Motors stock, fortuitously sold on the eve of the 1929 crash.

—Matt Collins

Events & Announcements

An Exhibit of Cast Iron Mechanical Banks will be on display at the Cornwall Historical Society July 5–20. The opening reception is Friday, July 5, from 5 to 7 P.M. at the Society's building, 7 Pine Street. The

banks, dating from 1870 to 1910, are owned by Dr. William Rashbaum, who will be on hand to discuss his collection and demonstrate the amusing operations of the banks.

Among the classics to be seen at the CHS exhibit are a dog that barks when fed a penny by his mistress, a rooster that raises his head and crows, a Punch and Judy theater, and a coin-swallowing clown. Tuesdays, 1 to 3 P.M., Saturdays, 10 A.M. to 1 P.M., or by appointment (672-6492).

The Democratic Party of Cornwall, CT will hold a caucus on July 22 at 7:30 P.M. at the Cornwall Library to endorse candidates for Judge of Probate and Registrar of Voters.

The Annual July Fest will take place Saturday, July 6, 11:30 A.M. to 2 P.M. on the Town Green. The Fest will include mini road races, tug-o-war, fire tanker, music, kid karaoke, refreshments, and more! Hosted by Park and Rec. Questions, call Bethany Thompson (672-6058).

News from the Town Offices: The assessor's office hours will change from Saturday mornings to all day Wednesdays effective July 3, 2002.

Non-resident swimming at Hammond Beach will be charged \$100 per family for the season or \$20 a day for a family or \$10 per day for an individual. Beach members may bring guests in at \$1 each, 50¢ for children, as always.

The Board of Selectmen has signed the property tax rate for 2002-2003 at 19 mils.

The Annual Woman's Society Rummage Sale will take place on Saturday, July 13, at both the Mohawk Ski Lodge and the UCC Parish House. The Ski Lodge opens at 8:30 A.M. and will house the boutique, books, clothing for all ages, linens, sewing goods,

music, adult puzzles and games, and baby furniture. The area outside the Parish House will have furniture and bargain tables and opens at 9 A.M. The Parish House will open at 10 A.M. and will have jewelry, art, dishes, toys, and the Tiffany table. Duplicate numbers will be issued at both sale sites for the first 200 people. All sites will close at 2:30 P.M. On Sunday there will be a half-price sale from 1:30 to 5:30 P.M. The \$2 bag sale will be

from 9 A.M. to noon, Monday, July 15. Contributions may be brought to Mohawk and/or the Parish House from 9 A.M. until noon up until July 10. Proceeds provide scholarships for Cornwall students. Contact Betty Silbert, 672-6959.

A Potluck Community Farewell Party for Peter Hammond will be held at the Frost home, 62 River Road, Cornwall Bridge (Sharon) at 4 P.M. on July 20. Rain day July 21. All invited.

On Wings of Song

There's plenty of music in these hills in the summertime, beginning with John Miller's tuneful Yankee Doodle Dandy on Memorial Day. The Chronicle's treasurer burst into song the other day, but she was singing the blues because our income is still not keeping up with expenses. Remember that our only revenues come from your response to the appeals in this space, so please keep those donations coming.

All Abooooard!! Robert Lord, author of Country Depots in the Connecticut Hills, will talk about rail stations of the past and the role they played in the community during the era of the steam locomotive. With photographs and railroad memorabilia, including old railroad lanterns from Mr. Lord's extensive collection, the event will be a nostalgic trip through the Northwest Corner by train. Spon-

sored by the Cornwall Historical Society, the event is free: Saturday, July 27, 4 P.M. at the Cornwall Library.

Book Party: to celebrate the new book by Lorraine Nye Eliot, The Real Kate Chopin. July 28, 2 to 4 P.M. at the Cornwall Library. Refreshments. Call Judy Herkimer, 672-6867.

Friday Evening Softball, sponsored by Park and Rec., will be offered for teens and adults at the CCS field during July and August. Games start at 6 P.M. No need to sign up. Just

show up. Any questions? Call Annie Kosciusko at 672-3169.

At the Library: Starting in July, the Friends of the Library will host a coffee bar on Friday mornings in the new Library. Coffee, tea, and baked goods will be served from 9:30 to 11 A.м. You may bring your own mug if you wish. Free; donations are welcome.

"Join the Circus of Reading," this summer's book theme, beckons children to the Library with an exciting lineup of circus events. Check the calendar for special programs featuring clowns, mimes, jugglers, animal trainers, and magicians.

Story hours every Friday after July 5 feature books, crafts, and snacks for ages 3-8, starting at 10 A.M. Space is limited; please call ahead to register for all events: 672-6874. Children can keep track of the time they spend reading (or are read to), and of the books they read, with a circus book log. Earn a raffle ticket for every three hours of reading. An ice-cream sundae party on August 14 will reward all participants and raffle prizes will be drawn.

St. Bridget's Annual Tag Sale will be held on Saturday, August 10, from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. on the church grounds. Donations and furniture are welcome and may be left in the entrance of the church basement starting July 8. Please, no TVs, computers, or large electrical items. For further information, call Walter Kearns (491-3100).



The Cornwall Association will hold its annual meeting at 4 P.M. on Saturday, August 3, at the UCC parish house. Refreshments will be served. There will be brief reports from the Website and Community Center Committees, and from the Association of Businesses in Cornwall and the new Cornwall Foundation. Our first selectman will provide a State of the Community message. Nominations will be made for new Association officers. Everyone is invited.

Renters Who Were 65 or Older by December 31, 2001 or who are receiving social security disability benefits may be eligible for a grant from the state. Some of the requirements are: the applicant must have resided in Connecticut for any one-year period prior to filing; income, including social security, may not exceed \$25,400 single or \$31,100 if married; five percent of qualifying income must not ex-

ceed 35 percent of total rent and utility payment. The application forms and additional information are available at the Assessor's office on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, 9 A.M. to noon and Wednesday af-



ternoon 1 to 4:30 P.M. Application must be made by September 15,

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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