

RNWALL CHRONIC

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JUNE 2001



When Mary Schieffelin died last year she left behind some 35,000 books, musical scores, tapes and recordings-probably the largest private collection in Northwest Connecticut. Of these, 1,809 books, on art, music, and history, will end up in the Cornwall Library when its new building is completed—of which Mary was at one time a trustee. In addition, the Library will be receiving such practical items as the big Grove's Encyclopedia of Music and a standard-print edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, which can be read without the aid of a magnifying glass. The books come with shelving, as well as a dozen or so carts such as are used in large libraries for replacing books on their shelves. Another 150 books on religious topics, including handsomely illustrated Bible readings, will now grace the library of the United Church of Christ, where Mary was organist for many years.

About half of Mary's books were inherited from other family members; the rest she bought herself. In a sense, Mary's books were an accumulation rather than a conscious collection, the fruit of numberless visits to first- and second-hand bookstores in this country and abroad. In art and music her preference was for the medieval and renaissance periods. She also accumulated a remarkable collection of reference books on American, European, and Middle Eastern history, much of it in the original languages.

For Mary had a general curiosity about languages. She herself was fluent in French, German, Italian, and Spanish, and read Greek and Latin. She left her extensive collection of language tapes and accompanying textbooks to the Taconic Learning Center, in which she was an active participant. These tapes contain advanced conversational lessons based on literature, current events, and radio programs. There is also French and Italian poetry read by famous contemporary actors, as well as plenty of tapes for beginning students. Because the TLC has no building in which to store this material, it, too, will be available in the new Cornwall Library.

Mary Schieffelin and her deep interest in art, music, history, and languages will be with us for many years to come. -John Leich

The Graduates

Twenty students will graduate from Cornwall Consolidated School on June 18. Seventeen will go on to Housatonic Valley Regional High: Alyssa Ackerman, Evan Bardot, Joshua Bate, Elizabeth Bruehl, Kaysa Cruse, Damien Davis, Benjamin Gray, Gregory Guilman, Helen Hare, Ellen Hart, Brian Lacko, Miranda Lobert, Ben Muff, James Pastre, Paige Root, Jessica Savan, and Jason Stevens. Katy Corwin will go to Meeting School, Sven Lindholm to Kent, and Kyle Whitney to Oliver Wolcott.

On June 21 the following Cornwall seniors at HVRHS will receive their diplomas and go on as indicated: Ted Cheney, University of Colorado; Dakota Cruse, University of Connecticut; Colin Gold, Mary Washington College(VA); Tyler Grimes, work; Steven Heany, University of New Haven; Alina Lobert, Naropa University, Colorado, then the Art Institute of Florence; Fred Scoville, UConn, Torrington; Elizabeth Thomson, Long Island University. Of the four private school graduates, Chelsea Bardot (Kent) will enter Tufts after a year abroad, Tim Corwin (Woodhall) goes to Guilford College, Maja Gray (Hotchkiss) to Smith, and Jaime Zuckerman (Kent) unknown at press time.

Congratulations and good luck to all!

-The Editors

The Nine Percent Solution

About 75 residents turned up at the May 18 town meeting and, after two quick questions, overwhelmingly but not unanimously passed a \$4.6 million budget that Finance Chair Ralph Gold described as having, "the highest increase I've been associated with, but few new or expanded programs; the increases are due to increased high school enrollment and the CCS project."

JUNE 2001 (continued on page 2						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY 1	SATURDAY 2 Red Cross Blood Drive
					Preschool–K Story Hour 10 a.m. Library	8 A.M1 P.M. UCC Parish House (p.4)
3	Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 p.m. Town Hall Park and Rec. 7:30 p.m. CCS Lib.	Blue Mt. Satsang 6:30-8:00 P.M. UCC Day Room Inland Wetlands 8 P.M. Town Office	Play Group 10 A.M. Field Trip Call 672-4226	7 School Building Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	8 Preschool–K Music Together 10 A.M. Library	9
10	P&Z 8 p.m. Town Hall	Blue Mt. Satsang 6:30–8:00 P.M. UCC Day Room Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	Play Group 10 A.M. Field Trip Call 672-4226	14 Cornwall Housing Corp. 4:30 р.м. Kugeman Village	15 Deadline: July Chronicle Copy Park and Rec. Beach Party 5:30-8 P.M. Cream Hill Lake Assoc. (p.4)	16
17 FATHER'S DAY	18 CCS Graduation 6:30 P.M. CCS (p.4) Region One Bd. of Ed. 7 P.M. HVRHS Republican Town Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	CCS Early Dismissal Last Day of School Bd. of Selectmen 1 9 A.M. Town Hall Blue Mt. Satsang 6:30– 8:00 P.M. UCC Day Room School Building Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	20	21 Bd. of Ed. 5 P.M. CCS Library HVRHS Graduation 6:30 P.M. HVRHS (p.4) Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library VFW Post 9856 8 P.M. W C Firehouse	22	23 Hammond Beach Opens (p.4) Book Sale 10 A.M.–1 P.M. Hughes Library, West Cownwall
24	ZBA 8 p.m. Town Office*	26 Blue Mt. Satsang 6:30– 8:00 P.M. Town Hall Democratic Town Comm. 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	Green Party 7:30 p.m. Town Hall Cornwall Vol. Fire DEPT. 8 p.m. W. C. Firehouse	28	29	July 1 July Fest 11:30 A.M.–2 P.M. Town Hall Green (p.4)

(continued from page 1)

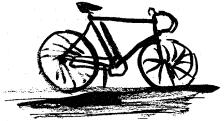
The new mill rate was set immediately after the meeting at 20.75, which will mean a 9 percent hike in your tax bill. This is the largest increase since 1991, but it's tempered by the fact that since 1992 our mill rate went only from 17 to 19.

The meeting was more vocal about and finally approved a proposal to establish a Cornwall Endowment Fund (see May issue). Gordon Ridgway explained that the fund would be managed by the Berkshire Taconic Foundation. "Will it be used to lower the mill rate or provide extras?" asked Anne Baren. "It could do both," Ridgway replied.

The lengthiest discussion centered on a motion to discontinue a portion of Clark Road. After an explanation of various easements, and a description of the development of the Clark property by the project engineer for the new owners (who will operate a 50-stall horse farm), this also passed.

In a separate vote, the high school budget was defeated on May 8, and a new referendum was set for late May. With more No votes than any other town—82 nays to 35 yeas—Cornwall led the vote of no confidence in the Region One budget and its Board, which, in a recent exchange of letters, rejected an offer from Ridgway and Gold to establish a joint planning committee to reduce costs at the high school.

Asked why he felt the negative vote on the high school didn't carry over to the town, Gold said, "We knew what was coming and tried to educate the voters." —Ed Ferman



A Road Runs Through It

With architectural ducks for both the interior and exterior of the new gym building pretty well in a row (see our January story for background), the CCS Building Committee is now focusing on the knotty problem of how to provide adequate parking while permitting easy access for buses, private cars, and pedestrians on a sloped, ledge-filled site with a road running through it.

The Committee has long felt that moving Cream Hill Road eastward would best solve all the problems, and landscape architect Bill Yoakum has wrestled mightily with this "fabulous puzzle," submitting plan after plan, the latest being to move the road as far east as possible. This would provide maximum space for a parking lot where the temporary lot is now-graded according to code, and with the needed new septic system and water tank under it—and a safe bus loop and parent drop-off area on the other side of the present road."It's the best way to go," said Co-chair Anne Kosciusko. "But if we can't afford it, we will just have to do it another way."

With the resignation of Ian Ingersoll (see "Letters"), Kosciusko and Co-chair Phil Hart are concerned that he and others may have rushed to judgment about the project without being adequately informed. They pointed out that in addition to the new gym, the other proposed additions—a music room, an art room, a bigger kindergarten space, a kitchen, and a multi-purpose room (which could be made into two classrooms if needed), and a well-equipped science labare all things an elementary school should have, adding that they are thus needed now, regardless of any future fluctuations in enrollment, up or down. "We're fixing a lot of things that weren't taken care of in 1989," said Kosciusko. "I hope they won't say that about us ten years from now."

The Committee's goal is to complete the plans by June 25, after which they will be submitted to the State Facilities Unit to ensure compliance with regulations.

"We hope to break ground this fall and get the footings and framing in before frost," said Hart. "It would cost more to work in winter, because of heating, but we'd hate to lose that time."

—George Kittle

Census 2000

Preliminary results from the 2000 census show that Cornwall's year-round population barely budged in ten years. Our total is up by only 20 persons from 1,414 in the 1990 census to 1,434 in 2000. Since there has been an annual average of 8.5 new housing permits in recent years, this suggests that our weekend population has probably grown faster than the year-round total.

Early census results also show that the under-18 age group now numbers 350, as compared to 293 in 1990. This substantial gain—nearly 20 percent—in the under-18s contrasts sharply with a decline of 37 persons, or three percent, in the adult population.

Race and ethnic data show that Cornwall is still nearly all White. The 2000 census recorded only three Blacks or African-Americans, ten Asians, 20 persons of "two or more races," and three persons of "some other race." There are also 21 persons listed as Hispanic or Latino (who may be of any race). Many more details of Cornwall in the year 2000 will be revealed as the census data release continues. —David A. Grossman

Cornwall Cleanup, 2001

Some 40 townspeople, about half of them kids, turned out on May 5 to scour the roadsides for cans and bottles and sundry objects tossed from cars or otherwise strewn by the wayside. (Popple Swamp Road was a particularly rich lode.) For safety reasons it was decided to collect only on town roads and to have the collection spot the Town Green rather than the Cornwall Bridge triangle. There were lots of prizes for the kids (donated by The Wish House), and refreshments (Park and Rec.), and noshes (Baird's), and Sandy Lord sang and played guitar. "It was much nicer having it there," said co-coordinator Carla Bigelow (with Debbie Morehouse), "and it

was nearer the dump, too!"

To find out what was collected, read Nina LaPorta's poem ("Letters"), and check out Richard Griggs's trashy photos on the Cornwall web page.

—George Kittle

Good-bye to a Friend

Joy Dawson

Welcome

JUNE 2001

Tessa Hope to Elizabeth Tracy Gold Sobek and Dane Sobek

> Patrick Tyler to Seth and Karen Dutton

Congratulations

Sarah Kochman to Terry Duffy, Jr.

Land Transfers

Gregory D. and Susan J. Kochman to William H. and Kathy A. Lyon, house and land at 120 Dudleytown Road for \$510,000.

Anne Bevans and David A. Silva to Henry G. LaBalme and Jeanne McMullin, house and 16 acres at 290 Cream Hill Road for \$260,000.

William and Elva Rodek to Kurt F. and Jutta B. Leopold, house and 10 acres at 76 Great Hill Road for \$398,000.

Marie J. Kluge to Anton Nelson Kimball, Jr., 6.74 acres on Grange Hall Road for \$70,000.

Donna L. Bishop et al., to Louise Ryan, house and land at 8 Twixt Road for \$450,000.

The State of the Lake

Cream Hill Lake is high on the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) list of healthy bodies of water, but in recent years swimmers have noticed an increase in aquatic weeds. There is no oversight of the lake's aquatic life, and the Torrington Area Health District only monitors water quality at two-week intervals in swimming season. In the past, sand has been spread on the lake bottom at the beaches, and efforts have been made to reduce invasive weeds by dredging. Dredging is a controversial solution: some question the need for it, others fear disturbing the balance of weed growth. The DEP also warns against any use of aquatic herbicides because they can accumulate in the sediment. Last year the Cornwall Farm, Forest, and Open Spaces Committee (an offshoot of the Community Forum) and the Cornwall Association hired Robert Gambino, a licensed aquatic weed control specialist, to check out the lake by boat, take specimens of its plants, and report on its overall condition.

Gambino gives the lake, if not a clean bill of health, then an encouraging diagnosis. It is pristine in many respects and "the clarity of the lake water is excellent." Acid rain is not affecting it. The dominant plant is wild celery, whose ribbon-like leaves often float at the surface and cling to swimmers. Eurasian water milfoil (an extremely aggressive grower that forms a dense canopy on the surface) has actually diminished in the last few

years, but we should keep a vigilant eye for any increase. Fern pondweed common elodea, and cattails are present, but none of them is a threat to the lake. The American pondweed (a nuisance in midsummer when it surfaces and flowers) is much more abundant this year, but it can be safely removed if it is carefully cut and disposed of. That leaves the wild celery as the only real problem right now. Removing it by hand tends to spread it, but it can be killed chemically.

Gambino cautions against attempts to dredge plants, because ripping up their roots leaves a hole where more vigorous invaders like Eurasian water milfoil could rapidly take their place. Such aggressive weeds are introduced by boats that are brought in from other lakes. To prevent this, he recommends thoroughly inspecting boats for weed fragments and washing them down with a chlorine solution. Gambino suggests that the lake's vegetation should be regularly monitored. Lawn fertilizers and manure from animals in the runoff from the land bring in phosphates and nitrates that promote the growth of algae as well as weeds, and leaks from faulty septic pipes do the same thing. But if the runoff around the lake is controlled, and if the bottom and the existing plant life are not disturbed, he believes that our lake will remain in balance and can be kept "a stable and healthy body of water." ---Ann Schillinger



Events & Announcements

Arf! The state requires that dogs six months or older be licensed with the Town Clerk once a year in the month of June. Licenses will be issued only to dogs with a current rabies certificate. Cost is \$6 for a spayed or neutered dog, \$16 if not. Late fees apply after July 1. The Town Clerk's office is open Monday through Thursday from 9 A.M. to 4 P.M., or register by mail by sending a SASE, certificate, and fee to P.O. Box 97, Cornwall, CT 06753.

Auction Results: Although the final figures aren't in, the April 29 Cornwall Child Center auction rang up over \$28,000 from bids and raffle proceeds. A large crowd squeezed into the halls of CCS for the silent auction before Dave Cadwell began the live auction in the gym. Once again the most popular items were a week in a house in Castletown, Ireland, and a week in a house in the south of France. Not to be sneezed at was the interest shown in a Shaker rocking chair, a week in a Colorado condominium, and an 1874 atlas of Litchfield County. Bidders in the silent auction happily went home clutching everything from Phil Hart's maple syrup to Marc Simont's books.

Letters to the Chronicle

NOT JUST A GYM

May I remind Mr. Leichtman (May "Letters") that we live in a democracy and that no one dictated that Cornwall accept the cost of the CCS renovations. The town went to referendum and everyone had the opportunity to vote on this issue. It was not just a handful of parents who made this decision!

Cornwall prides itself on being an informed community; an unsuspecting population was not taken advantage of. Discussion on the school renovations began in November 1999, when the School Building Committee was formed, and there were continual open meetings on the subject until the referendum in December 2000.

Mr. Leichtman should note that the school expansion is not just a gym and lunchroom. Three new spaces are to be built: a gym, an art room, and a music room with storage. In addition one more classroom will be created from the old gym along with a multi-purpose room and a kitchen; there will also be a new science lab. All of the above will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the learning process.

—Geraldine Woodruff

CANS AND CANS AND FRYING PANS Our town has "Cornwall Clean-up Day," It happens every year.

We clean up trash on Cornwall's roads, It makes them look less drear. This year we found all sorts of things,

And most I'll list right here:
A fitted sheet, a push broom, a metal pole, a pot.
Cans and cans and frying pans—oh, this is
quite a lot!

Bits of paper all around,

A heap of rubber in a mound. Though we didn't find a monocle, We found the Cornwall Chronicle.

-Nina H. Laporta, age 12

HOLD THAT SPENDING

My hat is off to Arnold Leichtman for the courage to write his letter. Obviously (from the referendum vote) there are many more who feel what he has expressed. Many in our community, including selectmen and finance board members, are concerned about the costs we will incur in this project. And yet no one has stepped forward to request that the Building Committee hold their spending to a minimum necessary to accomplish their oral.

I believe we do need a new gym, but the redundancy of the all-purpose room (almost the size of the existing gym) should be questioned. We might also take the time to revisit the population projections. Our school population may well be half the size it is now even as the committee plans for one 20 percent greater. Money may be taken from the current school budgets (where it is needed most now) to be spent preparing for future students who might never show up.

I have recently resigned from the school Building Committee because I felt that we were not being responsible to our community by spending the full amount approved at referendum. We had agreed to revisit these issues once we knew that we had a go-ahead for the project. No debate of these issues is taking place however, only a headlong rush for the finish line with no regard for the costs involved. The present thinking in the committee cannot result in a cost-effective completion of this project and seems to be headed for even greater spending than currently approved. A "New Milford" situation awaits us in the near future if no one from Finance or the Board of Selectmen steps forward to offer the committee direction. Anyone interested might take the time now to be involved. —Ian Ingersoll

THANK YOU, JACK

At the selectmen's meeting on May 7, Jack Preston announced to Gordon and me that he would not be running for a fourth term. He had done six years on the Board of Selectmen (BOS), a tour of duty on the Board of Finance and a stint as foreman of the town crew. Enough was enough and the time had come, Jack told us, but I am here to tell you a little more:

After a career as district maintenance manager with the State Department of Transportation, Jack brought that expertise to the BOS at a time when Cornwall badly needed his knowledge. In the mid-1990s the town had just instituted a five-year program to restore roads that were crumbling back to a state of nature. During the next six years Jack engineered the maintenance program for the town's 60-odd miles of roadway, which has meant: rebuilding six bridges, supervising the replacement of guardrails, flushing out or replacing culverts along every road, continual oversight of contracts for paving and oiling, liaison with the state on the rebuilding of railway crossings in West Cornwall, and on matters general. Far from least, Jack has also been the Board of Selectmen's direct liaison with the town crew, in itself not an easy job, but one that he has done with persistence and grace. In fact in his own very quiet way Jack has done a bit of everything, from plowing snow during big storms to removing beaver dams by hand at Cream Hill Pond.

The main point of this letter, however, is this: from putting in countless volunteer hours as chief liaison with the CVFD to doing the routine scrupulous review of the town's bills, to working out specifications for a new town truck, to worrying about kids skateboarding down Route 128, Jack Preston has done well and selflessly whatever has needed doing. In the best tradition of local citizenship, Jack Preston has been of this town. Thank you, Jack. —Wm. Earl Brecher

Wadsworth Atheneum Pass: The Cornwall Library has a general admission pass for the Hartford museum which can be borrowed for a day. It does not include special exhibits, but does allow a discount in the museum shop. Please call the Library (672-6874) for details, or to reserve the pass for a certain date.

Colin Gold will receive a \$1000 scholarship from the Governor's Coalition for Youth with Disabilities. The award is given to two students from each congressional dis-

trict who have "displayed exemplary school and community involvement." Colin, who is paralyzed from the chest down, is a senior at HVRHS and a member of the French Club and tennis team, a sport he picked up at an Ivan Lendl camp and by practicing at Cream Hill Lake. He will continue his education at Mary Washington College in Virginia.

Art at the Dump-37 specimens of same—was displayed at the sand shed on April 21

and was a resounding success with 19 works sold. Tim Prentice exhibited structures composed of pop bottles and toilet plungers. Skip Hunt turned a cot into a shrine. Philip Jones welded rebar to make a unique sculpture. After artists and expenses were paid, \$500 will be donated to the art department at CCS. By popular vote, the prize winners were: first-"Mama Gator," Debby Jones; second—"Mink Flamingos," Mary Gelezunas; third—"Rin Tin Tin and Tim," Don Hain.

July Fest will take place Sunday, July 1, from 11:30 A.M. to 2 P.M. on the Town Green. Get out that red, white, and blue crepe paper and decorate your bike for the annual bike parade, which begins at 11:30 A.M. Games, contests, and prizes. Enjoy your picnic while you listen to a free concert on the green. Beverages and watermelon provided by Park and Rec. For information call 672-4070.

To Out-of-Town Subscribers

If you receive the Chronicle at an address outside of Cornwall, we remind you again that we ask a \$10 per year contribution to help cover our mailing costs. We don't send renewal notices, but the date in front of your name on the mailing label indicates the expiration date of your subscription. Thanks for your help in keeping current.

New Hotline—672-4070—lists upcoming Park and Rec. events and weather cancella-

Village Tennis: Thanks to the joint efforts of Park and Rec., Tom Hubbard, and the Cornwall Community Tennis Association (CCTA) the clay courts in Cornwall Village are now ready for use by Cornwall residents and their guests. Please wear smooth soled sneakers, sweep the court and the lines after use (use the roller if you have the time), and limit play if there are others waiting. During the last week of June and the entire month of July the courts will be used by the Youth Clinic from 8 to 11 A.M., Monday through Thursday. Call Todd Piker at 672-6545 to enroll for this year's clinic. The price is the same as always—\$25 for two one-hour lessons. This year's participants will be eligible for a number of inter-town challenges to be hosted by the Cream Hill Lake Association.

Youth Tennis: Park and Rec. (in partnership with the CCTA) will sponsor an introductory tennis program for 6- through 18-year olds on June 26, 27, 28, and 29. Participants will receive four one-hour lessons for the reduced rate of \$12.50 for all four lessons (normal rate for the four lessons is \$50). The classes will run from 8 A.M. through noon and will be arranged according to age. Call Todd Piker at 672-6545 (or 672-6674) to enroll. Class size is limited to eight and enrollment will be on a first-call basis.

Art in Cornwall: At the Cornwall Library, The Way I See It, an exhibit of photographs by teens participating in the Empowering Young Women Project, will continue through June 9. Beginning June 11 Molly Guerin will exhibit watercolors. Her show will continue through July 21. At the National Iron Bank, Gary Barron will be showing architectural designs and renderings during June. At the Hughes Memorial Library in West Cornwall the Marc Simont retrospective will continue.

A Beach Party at Cream Hill Lake Associa-

tion will be held on Friday, June 15 from 5:30 to 8:30 р.м. Open 😇 to the public FREE! and Games, food, dancing, and fun for the whole family brought to you by Park and Rec. Music by Blue Turtle DJ Entertainment.

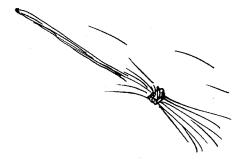
For information call 672-4070.

Seventh Annual Jubilee Visit: Forty Jubilee children, teachers, and parents will arrive in Cornwall from Philadelphia on June 7 to spend four days. Plans for the UCC-sponsored event include overnights in host homes, visits to CCS and Local Farm, and a Community Potluck Picnic on the UCC grounds at 6:30 P.M. on June 9. There will be a talent show at the Parish House at 7 P.M. on June 10, and, of course, swimming at Cream Hill Lake. For information, call the church office, 672-6840 or Peg Keskinen, 672-6486.

Hammond Beach opens on Saturday, June 23. Beach hours will be 11 A.M. to 7 P.M. daily. Swim lesson and swim team sign-ups will be held at the town beach Monday, June 25 through Friday, June 29 from 11 A.M. to 7 P.M. We are still looking for a beach director, water safety instructor, and lifeguards. Please call Polly Tobin at 672-4070 for information. Don't forget to get your 2001 beach pass from the selectmen's office (672-4959): \$10 per individual or \$20 per family.

Red Cross Blood Drive will take place at the UCC Parish House, Saturday, June 2, 8 а.м. to 1 р.м. Blood is urgently needed, and walk-in donors are welcome. Donors must be age 17 or over and weigh at least 110 pounds. There is no upper age limit. Call 672-6840 or 1-800-GIVE LIFE for an appointment.

FISH has a great group of volunteers who are happy to drive people in Cornwall to appointments or to do errands, so give a call if you need a ride. Also, if you feel the urge to help out by volunteering to drive once in a while, please call Marie Prentice, 672-6261.



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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