



# CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 3: NUMBER 9 OCTOBER 1993



## New Rumsey Proposal

An ambitious proposal for the Rumsey buildings has been developed by Richard Wolkowitz with Ben Gray. Gray, a realtor, and Wolkowitz, an architect, are both veterans of the former Municipal Building Committee and see their private venture as a solution to many of the problems facing the town and Marvelwood School.

They propose to buy Rumsey Hall, gym, and land from the town for a nominal amount and renovate both buildings, taking advantage of savings offered by a Historic Preservation Tax Credit (which is not available to the town or school, as non-tax-paying entities).

The main building would be leased to Marvelwood as a new dorm, housing 28 students and four faculty members. Use of the gym would be shared by the town and Marvelwood.

Wolkowitz and Gray see their project as a "win-win situation." The school must expand to survive. Moving is an option that is still being considered, but the two developers are apprehensive about what might replace Marvelwood and feel the town would be wise to encourage the school to stay.

The town would gain the following,

according to the proposal: 1) tax revenues, estimated at \$20,000 annually; 2) shared use of the gym without bearing any cost of renovation; 3) relief of liability for maintenance, asbestos removal, etc.; and 4) a preserved Rumsey Hall that would satisfy the historic preservation agencies.

The total budget for the development is \$1,841,000; Wolkowitz said he and Gray had talked with local banks and investors and felt they would have no difficulty raising the funds if all the pieces fall into place.

Wolkowitz and Gray made a presentation to the Marvelwood trustees in June, and headmaster Mark Johnson said that the trustees will meet in October, which would be the earliest possible date for a decision. "Most of the trustees would like to stay in Cornwall," he said, "but they're faced with the problem of expanding in a town that doesn't want expansion."

This might be an attractive way to remain, but will the trustees be willing to commit themselves to an expensive long-term lease?

If the school does decide to proceed, then a final design and a lease can be completed, followed by a formal proposal to the town.

Gordon Ridgway said that the idea "makes sense in that it provides for multi-use of the property and adds revenues for the town."

However, he indicated at a Board of Finance meeting that the selectmen were interested in soliciting other proposals or putting Rumsey Hall on the market. The subject will be on the agenda of the annual town meeting on Oct. 22.

At this time no other ideas for Rumsey have emerged, and the question to be answered in the coming month is: Does this idea go far enough to meet the needs of Cornwall and Marvelwood to overcome the problems and complications of putting the deal together?  
— Ed Ferman

## The Treasures of Harriet Clark

Harriet Clark, one of Cornwall's most senior citizens (almost 99 years old), has decided to auction off some of her family's prized collection of farm and household equipment. The auction will be held at 10 a.m. on the morning of Oct. 16 (rain or shine) at her house on Clark Road in East Cornwall, and Miss Clark will be on hand to inform prospective buyers about the uses and provenance of the vast array of items for sale.

(continued on page 2)

# OCTOBER 1993

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
The U.S. EPA will hold a meeting in our Town Hall at 7 p.m. on Oct. 19 to review the status of Housatonic pollution by GE plant in Pittsfield.				 8 15 22 30		1	2
3 Chamberlain Concert 4pm Cornubia Hall (p.4)	4 Bd. of Selectmen 8pm Town Hall*	5 Agr. Adv. Comm. 7:30pm W. Corn. Firehouse Park & Rec 7:30pm Town Off. Inland Wetlands 8pm Town Hall*	6 W. Cornwall Merchants Assn. 10am Cadwell's  Housing Forum 7-9pm Town Hall (p.4)	7	8	9 Book Sale 10-4 Cornwall Lib. (p.4)  Poetry Reading 8pm Cadwell's	
10	11 COLUMBUS DAY	12 Dem. Town Comm. 7:30pm Town Hall P&Z 7:30pm Town Hall Hous. River Comm. 7:30pm CCS Lib.	13 Rep. Comm. 7:30pm Town Hall  Cornwall Lib. art show, Barbara Wolff, paintings Ethics Discussion 7:30pm UCC* (p.4)	14 Cornwall Housing Corp. 7:30pm UCC*	15	16 Voter Registration 9am-5pm Town Office  Harriet Clark auction 10am (p.1)	
17 Spencer Klaw talk Cornwall Library 4pm (p.4)	18 Bd. of Selectmen 8pm Town Hall*	19 Voter Registration 9am-8pm Town Hall  U.S. EPA meeting 7pm Town Hall*	20 Ethics Discussion 7:30pm UCC* (p.4)	21 Bd. of Ed. 5pm CCS Library  Bd. of Finance 7:30pm CCS Library	22 Annual Town Meeting 8pm CCS (See "Selectman Misc." p.3)	23	
24 Meet Dem. Candidates 4:30pm W. Corn. Fireh. (p.4)	25 ZBA 8:00pm Town Hall*	26	27 Ethics Discussion 7:30pm UCC* (p.4)	28	29 Meet Republican Candidates 7-9pm Cadwell's (p.4)	30	
31 HALLOWEEN 	31 Bd. of Selectmen 8pm Town Office*						

\*Check time and place at Town Office. † United Church of Christ

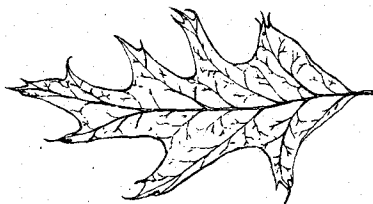
(continued from page 1)

These include 19th century farm implements such as ox yokes and buckwheat separators, and modern farm items such as an almost-new tractor. Household treasures include antique furniture, such as chests and spinning wheels, Shaker-style boxes, flatirons, and antique women's clothing and quilts. Some of the Clark family's famous butter-making equipment is being donated to the Connecticut Antique Machinery Museum in Kent, but other items in this collection will be auctioned off. Cornwall's local auctioneer, Phil Jacquier, will officiate.

After graduation from high school, Harriet Clark started her career as a teacher in one-room schoolhouses in Cornwall, Goshen, and Warren. She went on to teach high school English in Danbury for 29 years and then "retired" back to Cornwall in 1953, where she claimed she was going to occupy herself being a character. As it turned out, being a character included representing our district for ten years in the state legislature, and later helping to establish the Cornwall Historical Society. She then served as the society's first president.

Miss Clark will continue to live, with friends, in her family home. She says that she looks forward to seeing again many of her rare items which have been stored for years in the woodshed attic, and she hopes that Cornwall folks will buy some of her treasured collection so the items will stay in town.

— Carol Goodfriend



### Cable in Cornwall

Laurel Cablevision, serving Torrington, Warren, and Litchfield, has applied to the Department of Public Utility Control to add Cornwall and Goshen to its franchise area. Laurel would agree to this change provided that its franchise is renewed for 15 years, a longer period than is customary. The state's Office of Consumer Council apparently has recommended this change. A decision was expected by the end of September. If the application is approved, Laurel would expect to wire all of Goshen in 1994 and Cornwall in 1995. Laurel's cable extends into Warren at present and there is a possibility that adjacent parts of Cornwall may be wired sooner.

— Paul Baren

### Where's Our Ag School?

A Cornwall landmark for nearly 150 years has left town.

The long-unused building of the Cream Hill Agricultural School, which adjoined the home of Ralph and Ann Gold, has taken up residence in Kent. There, it

will be the centerpiece of the fledgling museum operated by the Connecticut Antique Machinery Association on a 12-acre site adjacent to the Sloan Stanley Museum (old hand tools and implements). Eventually, the transplanted Agricultural School will house, among other things, the Association's library and exhibits that will include butter-making machinery donated by Cornwall's Harriet Clark (see story p. 1). The old schoolroom, with its glass-front cabinets containing books, shells, rocks, and — mysteriously — a cannonball, will be used as a meeting room.

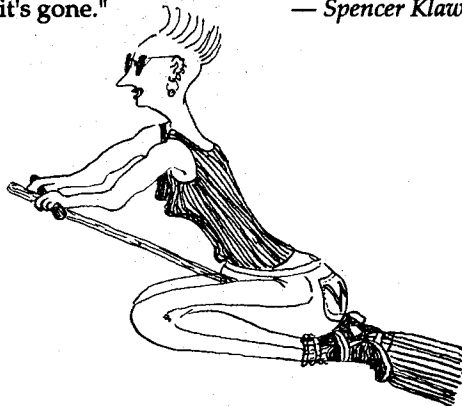
In preparation for its journey to Kent, the building was taken apart, board by board and beam by beam, and each component numbered and color-coded to facilitate reassembly. The only element spared this deconstruction was the school's crowning glory, its 14-foot-high cupola, which was lifted off its base by a crane and gently laid down on a flatbed truck for the trip to Kent.

Robert Hungerford, president of the Antique Machinery Association, said the cost of the move — including the cost of a new foundation and new paint on the weather-beaten exterior — will come to around \$260,000. Of this total, the State of Connecticut contributed \$225,000; the rest was in the form of "sweat equity" — volunteer labor and contributed materials. Hungerford said this phase of the transplantation should be completed by Thanksgiving. Heating, plumbing, wiring, and insulation will be installed — much of it by volunteer labor — as additional funds become available. The Association is working to organize Friends of the Cream Hill Agricultural School to defray the costs of maintenance and the installation of rotating exhibits.

The school was founded in 1845 by Dr. Samuel Wadsworth Gold, great-great-grandfather of Ralph and Charles Gold, the present owners of Cream Hill Farm, and by his son, Theodore Sedgwick Gold. It was in existence until 1869, and in some years had more than 20 students. Although it stressed scientific agriculture, more of its graduates ended up as ministers or businessmen than as farmers.

"I'm happy that the building has found a home where it will be put to good use," Ralph Gold said. "But at the same time, it's always been part of my life, and suddenly it's gone."

— Spencer Klaw



### Building Boom

At its Sept. 13 meeting, the Planning and Zoning Commission approved permits for three new houses — one on Town Street (Henry Russ) and two on Kent Road (Robert Re and Roger Jackson). The commission also granted permits for additions to three existing houses — on Town Street (Peter Russ), Pierce Lane (Edward Baumgarten), and Rexford Road (Charles Gold). Permits for swimming pools were granted to Brian and Wynne Kavanagh of River Road, and George and Lillian Romano of Kent Road.

At its August meeting P&Z also granted a permit to Davis Stearns for a new house on Town Street. — Ginny Potter



### Welcome

John DeVecman Ott to  
Sally Lilly and David DeVecman Ott

### Congratulations

Diana Elyse Carlson to Thomas J. Hine

### Fun at the Fair

Cornwall Plain was hotter than Brian Lorch's candle wax, and a mid-afternoon thunderstorm scattered people, prize ribbons, and paper plates. Even so, the Cornwall Agricultural Fair, held on Aug. 28, was a remarkably interesting celebration of Cornwall's agricultural heritage and present skills. Some 95 exhibitors filled a tent with garden, dairy, baked goods, and flower exhibits. By one count, 100 blue, 60 red, and 49 white ribbons graced the outpouring.

The Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department once again sponsored cow chip bingo. Gordon and Jayne Ridgway's Vanna showed her instinctive talents when she walked onto the field and made Robert Steward of Bridgewater \$500 richer. There were also several \$25 prizes. In all, 500 \$5 tickets were sold, with net proceeds going to the ambulance fund. — Philip W. Hart

### Historic District Voted Down

At a town meeting on Sept. 10, the appointment of a committee to study the viability of a historic district in Cornwall Village was rejected by a count of 64 to 43.

Those in favor of the idea stressed the importance of preserving the beauty and historic value of Cornwall Village for future generations and the need for more information to make a rational decision, while those opposed listed a number of reasons: the subjective and arbitrary application of the term "appropriate" in judging architecture, the dangers of getting enmeshed with State red tape, letting P & Z take care of the problem of saving our heritage, spending the \$2,000 needed when money is so tight.

Though many people felt strongly about the matter, the meeting was marked by an atmosphere of respect for each point of view and the absence of jarring exchanges.  
— John Zinsser

### Selectmanic Miscellany

Meeting every Monday last month, the Board of Selectmen dealt with a melange of issues from road maintenance (ahead of schedule and within budget) to complaints about the Porsche-o-rama that roared through town on Labor Day weekend (the selectmen were agin it). Ray Augustyn, Republican candidate for First Selectman, and Selectman Hurlburt disputed the majority's acceptance of the second lowest bid for a new town truck, but Selectmen Ridgway and Williamson judged the closer availability of repair parts and adherence to bid specifications justified the extra \$4,200. The Five Year Capital Plan was blocked out, the proposals for use of Rumsey Hall buildings aired (see p.1) These items will be on the Oct. 22 annual town meeting agenda.  
— Scoville Soule

### Bracken Oil Paintings

At the Cornwall Library, Don Bracken presents his oil paintings in several intriguing formats: small works in muted, soft coloring on wood panels; close-in views of baseball players; animal faces, some with hauntingly human expressions; exquisite, deeply-felt three-panel paintings.

Bracken's larger works hang in the children's room, where he displays some outstanding city scenes. My favorite, "Escape," is an odd view of a section of building, a towering stack of fire escapes, columns, arches, and balconies. It's a great show.  
— Alfred Bredenberg

### Ahead of Schedule

Most of the underground work at Kugeman Village has been completed, and site landscaping is under way. Framing crews, plumbers, and electricians are at work, with the expectation that the project will be completed well before the contracted date of Dec. 30.

Brochures with information about the Village have been prepared and are now available at the Town Office or the Cornwall Free Library. Those who have already indicated their interest in the project will be receiving brochures and application forms in the mail. The Cornwall Housing Corporation board is reviewing details of Kugeman Village community policy, including such matters as resident-selection criteria, interview procedures, and management policies that cover everything from rent subsidies to garden space and pets.  
— Ken Keskinen



### OUR THANKS

To all the people who have been so incredibly supportive in the past several weeks — though the words seem insignificant relative to the feelings in our hearts — thank you.

Cards, letters, flowers, errands run, phone calls, meals provided, rooms cleaned, ironing, hugs, unspoken thoughts, prayers, and silent comforting presences have all had an impact on our ability to face this new challenge in our lives.

Cancer is never again to be something that happens only to other people — it is ours now — for better or for worse. We are learning daily about the world of chemotherapy and blood counts and the cycle of ups and downs in body and in mind.

Along with the medical mysteries has come an awesome awareness of the inherent goodness, kindness, and selfless generosity of family, friends, neighbors, and even strangers around us.

Whatever the coming months have in store for us, all will have been made easier by your outpouring of care, love, and help. Again, those feeble but heartfelt words, thank you.

— Hunt and Becky Williams,  
Phill and Charlie West, and Phil Williams

### TOO POLITE

In two spots the September issue seems excessively polite to the point of being secretive. The Freshfields story doesn't identify the major investors or the West Coast mystery-restaurateur who were disclosed at the public meeting. May we know who these brave people are?

And you must stop teasing us by printing the land transfers without telling us what we all want to know: how much? — Ed Ferman

Editors' note: We agree completely — and not simply because Ed Ferman is on the Chronicle's board of directors. The potential "major investors" in Freshfields are Nick Daifotis of Pople Swamp Road and Dan Cain of Cream Hill Road; the West Coast mystery restaurateur — who has since indicated he would rather provide advice than money — is Charles Ciona, of Los Angeles, who owns a house at the Sharon end of the covered bridge. Land transfer reports will include prices from now on.

### WAIT A YEAR

A recent issue of the Chronicle offered a proposal to bring about additional scholarship support to further the education of Cornwall's high school graduates. All such endeavors are laudable and are a credit to the high character of Cornwallians.

In my proposal I suggest no locally originated financial contributions be disbursed for the first year of higher education. Instead, the handouts would be made only for second-year-and-beyond students. Exceptions should be made for training in trades requiring only

## Letters to the Chronicle

one year to complete.

The obvious reason for this proposal is that the students themselves and perhaps their parents have saved up for the starter year. After successful completion of one year of post-high school education, motivation and talent are more clearly manifest. Most of us can think of high school grads who decided to depart into the general work force during or following one year of college. In such cases the hard-to-come-by funds could have escaped down the mouse hole.

Respondents to this idea have told me this proposal doesn't make sense: "How can various fund-raising groups re-synchronize the annual income flow in order to grant funds beginning with the sophomore year," they ask. Come on, now; just give the problem to the sixth grade class at Cornwall Consolidated School and I'll wager you will receive viable solutions within a week.

How often have you and I heard the response, "Well, we've always done it this way"? There used to be an advertising slogan, "Eventually, why not now?" — David Griggs

### JUST SAY NO TO THE DEER

Recently when we were complaining about the deer, Tom Hubbard told us about Milorganite, which is made from beer sludge. It has been sold as a fertilizer since 1926, is a natural by-product, and contains no chemicals. It can be bought at Agway.

We used this product around our flowers this summer with complete success. Even the hostas survived past Labor Day.

We make no guarantees, but could this be the answer? If not, we'll follow Fred Bronner's advice, "Eat venison."

— Patsy and George LaBalme

### DOGGED THOUGHTS

The Little Guild has been in Cornwall a lot longer than those who complain, and if it were not for its existence, where would the animals go?

Strangely enough, the town clerk's records show that there are 201 dogs registered in Cornwall, and I would be willing to bet that the number of pupils at CCS does not even come close. This would indicate that Cornwall is not what one would call a growing community, which brings up the question of preserving the character of the town.

In the last 30 years Cornwall has lost its rural character. It is sad to say that most of the folks who gave Cornwall its true rural character are now either dead or retired. Most of the people who live in town today don't have the vaguest idea of what Cornwall was like 30 years ago. Unless there is a drastic change in attitude, and those wonderful townspeople decide to open up and attract new blood and business, Cornwall will either go to the dogs, or eventually rigor mortis will set in. Who will take care of the dogs then?  
— J. Victorien

### Back to School

Cornwall Consolidated School opened its doors on schedule on Sept. 1 with an overall enrollment of 143, nine fewer than last year. Twelve new kindergartners joined the school population. The largest classes this year are the third and eighth grades, with 21 and 19 children respectively, and the smallest class is the seventh grade, with nine pupils.

Of last year's 19 graduates, 17 are at HVRHS, one is at Oliver Wolcott Technical School in Torrington, and one is at Kent School. May they all have a great year!

— Barbara Klaw

### Events & Announcements

**Concert:** Pianist Anne Chamberlain and soprano Lee Dougherty will perform at Cornubia Hall on Sunday, Oct. 3, at 4 p.m. \$10 donation benefits OWL's Kitchen.

**Housing Forum:** Mary Ann O'Sullivan, our state representative, will hold a housing forum in the Town Hall on Oct. 6 from 7 to 9 p.m. There will be representatives from the State Housing Finance Authority, the Farmers Home Administration, the State Dept. of Housing, and local banks.

Each panelist will speak for about ten minutes, followed by a general question-and-answer session and then a coffee hour. This will give those residents who are sensitive about personal financial issues an opportunity to speak with the panelists on a one-to-one basis.

**Sex and Religion at the Library:** On Oct. 17, Cornwall resident Spencer Klaw will discuss his new book, *Without Sin*, an account of a 19th century utopian community (at Oneida, N.Y.) based on Christian Perfectionism. On the theory that every woman was married to every man, its members constantly changed sexual partners. Klaw will be interviewed by John Zinsser, who was the Library's August speaker. Their dialogue will be the third of the Cornwall Library Association's series of Sunday afternoon talks. It will take place at 4 p.m., and will be followed by refreshments. Everyone is welcome.



### Is it Your Turn?

... to send us a contribution? Lots of folks responded to last month's appeal, and we're thankful. If you weren't one of them, please clip the coupon and dash to your checkbook.

A \$10 contribution will get the Chronicle mailed to an out-of-town address. Other contributions welcome.

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**Notes from our Registrars of Voters:** (1) The registrars will meet on Friday, Oct. 18, in the Town Office at 9:30 a.m. to revise and correct the preliminary Registry List for the Nov. 2 municipal election. Electors are welcome to observe and supervise.

(2) Town residents who want to vote on Nov. 2 will find both registrars on hand:

- On Saturday, Oct. 16, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Town Office.

- On Tuesday, Oct. 19, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., in the Town Hall. (N.B.: Oct. 19 is the "cut-off" date, after which only applicants who have become eligible to vote — because of age (18 years), residence (in Cornwall) or citizenship (naturalization) — between Oct. 20 and Nov. 2 inclusive may register to vote on Nov. 2.)

(3) The registrars are now required by law to request voters to bring an I.D. showing their address when they come to vote on Nov. 2. Voters who forget their I.D.? Not to worry, say registrars Judy Gates and Maureen Prentice.

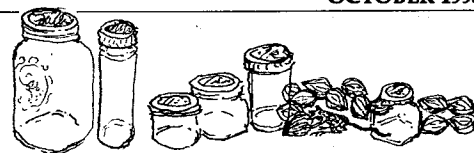
**Books-A-Plenty:** The Cornwall Free Library is holding a book sale not to be believed. If you thought our sale in July was a biggie, wait till you see this one. Lots of good stuff from our upstairs book vaults, plus nifty stuff contributed by our many friends. The sale takes place at the Rumsey Gym on Saturday, Oct. 9, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. and we may reopen on Monday, Oct. 11, for a few hours with what's left.



**Meet the Candidates:** On Sunday, Oct. 24, the Democratic Town Committee is throwing a party at the West Cornwall Firehouse to introduce the party's candidates for municipal offices. Drinks will be served at 4:30 and supper at 5:30, followed by introduction of the candidates. Babysitting and entertainment will be provided for kids.

The Republicans will introduce their candidates on Friday, Oct. 29, at Cadwell's Corner from 7 to 9 p.m. Dessert and coffee will be served and everyone is welcome.

**Discussions on Ethics:** All are welcome at a series of discussions on ethics in America to take place on five consecutive Wednesday evenings at 7:30 in the Day Room of the United Church of Christ, beginning on Oct. 13 and continuing through Nov. 10. The series, based on the video course "Eth-



ics in America" produced by Columbia University Seminars on Media and Society, will pick up where we left off last fall, with new topics and panels of experts. Discussions will be led by Anne Baren and Mary Schieffelin. Topics will include ethics in the courtroom, in press/politician relations, in medical research, and in the military. For further information, call the church office, 672-6840.

**Help with Prescription Costs:** Are you aware that there is a program which helps certain seniors (65 and over) and disabled persons pay for prescription drugs? If you want more information on this program, please contact Jill Gibbons, Agent for the Elderly, at the Town Office (672-2603) or at home during the day (672-0033).

**Brrrr . . . :** Applications for winter heating fuel assistance will begin in October. The Connecticut Energy Assistance Program is intended to help offset winter heating costs of Connecticut's lower-income households. If you think you may be eligible, or want more information, contact Jill Gibbons at the Town Office (672-2603).

**Hospital Equipment for Loan:** The UCC has wheelchairs, hospital beds, walkers, crutches, shower seats, commodes, bedpans, and a hospital-bed table for loan. Anyone in Cornwall needing to borrow such equipment may call the church office at 672-6840.

**Health Screening:** On Friday, Nov. 12, Cornwall will once again offer an Elderly Health Screening. Please note our new location at CCS, which will be more comfortable and more accessible.

EHS has ten appointments available and offers a wide range of tests important in early detection of diseases. Flu and pneumonia shots will also be available. The fee is \$18 (or \$19 with PAP test). If you are 60 or older and have not been screened by EHS this year, you may call Jill Gibbons for an appointment (672-2603).

### CORNWALL CHRONICLE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY Jane Duber

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