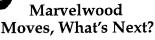
# **CORNWALL CHRONICLE**

**VOLUME 5: NUMBER 8** 

SEPTEMBER 1995



After nearly forty years on its campus overlooking the valley in Cornwall Plains, the Marvelwood School has moved (lock, stock, and staff) to its 73-acre Kent campus which it is leasing with an option to buy in four years.

Now the village will undergo an historical change in character. The Planning and Zoning Commission has revised its Town Plan and its regulations in order to help restore and maintain as much as possible the residential character of the village. How does the Marvelwood property fit into the plan?

Richard Wolkowitz and Ben Gray, of the Cornwall Limited Liability Company, have completed their contractual agreement with Marvelwood School. The selling price—one and a half million. Three of the school buildings were sold by CLLC to the Hubbard family in Cornwall: Ronshaugen House on Pine Street, Miller dormitory on campus, and Locke House on Jewell Street. Locke House will be acquired by the Cornwall Housing Corporation for sale in its affordable housing program. Four other residences are to be sold.

What about the big buildings—Calhoun, the dining hall, and the library-classroom building? Wolkowitz and Gray still want the town to have the first option to purchase the buildings in order to meet present and future town needs. How ready is the town to consider such options?

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway is postponing action on the Board of Selectmen's plan to add to the present town offices while the board studies the Marvelwood options. "After the dust settles," he says, "the town will hold informational meetings before any vote is taken." Moreover, detailed information on possible uses for the buildings and on the kinds and costs of renovations will be prepared and distributed in advance of the meetings, presently scheduled for early October. Architect Alec Frost has already prepared some detailed plans, and more are in the works.

Selectman Ray Augustyn sees opportunities for the town in purchasing all three main school buildings. Furthermore, he indicates that the town has \$500,000 available for the "acquisition of property. That, along with money from the possible sale of Rumsey, makes the purchase feasible." He would like to see the Calhoun building used for town offices, and the dining hall for official meetings and other town activities. The classroom-library building could be leased to other groups (some of which have already indicated an interest) to cover maintenance costs. The tennis courts he wants to keep for town use. In short, Augustyn considers the purchase a "real smart buy."

First Selectman Ridgway indicates that

ultimately, the disposition of town assets is up to the

Board of Finance, which has to keep both current and anticipated needs in mind. In the meantime, tax abatements will be offered to the new owners while the buildings are being appraised. After all the information is in, negotiations can proceed. "It's important," Gordon says, "to do it right, not do it fast."

—Ken Keskinen

#### **New Plains Plans Passed**

The Planning and Zoning Commission voted on August 14 to amend the Town Plan and its zoning regulations to broaden special permit uses for institutional buildings in Cornwall Plains. The vote, which took place after the required public hearing, was unanimous.

The commission has been very careful to preserve the present character of the village center. No construction of new principal buildings is to be permitted, adequate parking is to be provided and appropriately landscaped, and existing building modifications must be consistent with the historic character of the village center.

Allowed uses include libraries, churches, and educational, religious, and non-profit philanthropic institutions. Also permitted are home occupations, affordable housing, bed and breakfast use, and professional and

(continued on page 2)

## SEPTEMBER 1995

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Note: Deadline for October Events & Announcements and Calendar listings is September 15.	2 8 16 24			Art Show to 9/9 at Library, Anne Zinsser, watercolors	Cornwall Child Center registration 10 A.M.—noon at the center (p.4) Sherman Chamber Ensemble 8 P.M. Cornubia Hall (p.4)	2
3	4 LABOR DAY	5 Schools Open Cornwall Child Center opens Agric. Advis. Comm. 7:30 P.M. W.Cornwall Firehouse Bd. of Selectmen B. B. Bd. of Selectmen Inland Wetlands 8 P.M.	6 W. Cornwall Merchants Ass'n 10 A.M. Cadwell's	7	8	9 CVFD 1st Annual Car Show and Ball Car Show 2 P.M. Ball 7 P.M.—midnight Mohawk Ski Area (p.4)
10 Poetry Reading 8 P.M. Cadwell's	Art Show 9/11–10/7 Library, Nick Jacobs photos Park & Rec. 7:30 P.M. Town Office P&Z 8 P.M. Town Hall	Town Office*  12 Dem. Town Comm. 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	CCS PTA, 7 P.M. CCS Library Introduction to the Alternatives to Violence Project, 7–9:30 P.M., UCC Day room (p.4)	14 Region 1 Study Group 8 p.m. CCS Library	15	16
17 Cornwall Golf Open 672-0295 for details	HVRHS Bd of Education 7 p.m. HVRHS Library Bd. of Selectmen 8 p.m. Town Hall	19	20	21 Bd of Education 5 P.M. CCS Library Bd of Tax Review 6–8 P.M. Town Office (p.4) Bd of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	Judy Gafney Preschooler Story Hour 10 A.M. Library	23 Tornado Tour 8:30 A.M. Mohawk Ski Area lodge (p.4) Cornwall Association Annual Meeting 4 P.M. Child Center (p.4)
24	25 Rosh Hashanah Conservation Commission 7:30 p.m. Town Office ZBA 8 p.m. Town Office*	26	27	28	Judy Gafney Preschooler Story Hour 10 A.M. Library	30

(continued from page 1)

business offices and apartments.

All applicants for special permits must submit detailed plans, and public hearings will be held before the commission acts.

—Stephen Senzer

### **Squirrel Wars**

In feeding the birds this year we began by reckoning without the squirrels. It's true this is like saying Napoleon, at Waterloo, reckoned without Wellington. But in previous bird feeding ventures we had only confronted—and been ignominiously defeated by—raccoons. Whatever their conduct toward us, perhaps they kept the squirrels away. Anyhow, the raccoons ended by demolishing our feeder, and added insult to injury by generally evading attempts to lure them into a humane trap and transport them to Sharon.

Chastened, we took a season or two off. We resumed feeding last winter, hanging the feeder from a trellis outside the kitchen window. For a while, we enjoyed the vocal antics of chickadees and other winter birds without interference from aggressors. Then in the spring the chipmunks found the feeder, followed swiftly by red and grey squirrels.

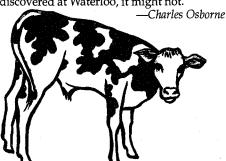
We moved the feeder from the trellis and hung it on a skinny metal pole planted in the lawn. Successive adjustments in the pole's placement cut down the squirrels' ability to fly, like the Wallendas, from the trellis to the feeder. (Sadly, these adjustments also restricted our ability to watch the finches and grosbeaks, et al., the point of it all.)

Still, it seemed we had won! No squirrels seemed able to scale the pole and reach the feeder. In no time, of course, they mocked our wishful denial of their nature, scrambling up the metal pole like the born climbers they are.

We refused to concede. An image floated into my mind of men at country fairs slithering up greased poles to win a prize, a nearly impossible challenge. Snatching a bottle of peanut oil from the kitchen, I applied large quantities to a paper towel and greased the bird feeder pole with a liberal hand.

Ah! The sight of chipmunks and red and gray squirrels slithering and sliding in vain on the pole repaid our own deep frustration a hundred fold. But all too quickly we learned that the oil doesn't last; it must be applied at least once a day.

Our advice: if your household budget runs to a little extra peanut oil, go for it. That, and loads of eternal vigilance, might get you through the winter. Then again, as Napoleon discovered at Waterloo, it might not.



#### Looking Ahead on Mohawk

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway acknowledged the extraordinary regional economic importance of Mohawk Ski Area, Cornwall's leading employer; Ann Peterson praised the area's contribution to local children. These remarks highlighted the August 7 Selectmen's meeting, at which Mohawk updated its five-year management plan.

Background to discussion of the plan was Mohawk's last season, "the worst on record," in the words of Mohawk's after-season report. Financial shortfalls have curtailed tree plantings. Since night skiing began in 1991–92, tree growth has special meaning for residents like Sam Waterston, whose property is exposed to bright lights after dark. Ridgway read into the record a letter from Waterston which pointed to Mohawk plans, in 1997, to expand lighting; he asked the selectmen to urge "the ski area to move its planting plans forward and its lighting plans back," while seeking to control current lighting with "more shades."

Meanwhile, in 1995, Mohawk plans to install a rope tow with handles for children 3–12 near the present beginners' slope.



## Zinsser Watercolors at Library

Anne Zinsser shares her recent watercolors now through the second week of September at the Cornwall Free Library. She has chosen flowers, animals, and landscapes as subjects for this collection of fine, light paintings.

In one clever underwater scene, three fish pass under the feet and bellies of swimming ducks overhead. As usual, I'm drawn to a painting atypical for this exhibition: an especially well-composed Italian landscape, seen through the columns of a portico.

—Alfred Bredenberg

## Winning Swimmers

Cornwall's swim team posted another successful season, finishing the summer with a 3-1 record as runners-up in the Housatonic Valley League championship.

Aside from a winning season, the team was able to raise enough money through a swim-a-thon and donations to buy new team suits. Coaches Nick Kotchoubey and Hector Migliacci offer thanks to both swimmers and parents for their time and effort.

—Nick Kotchoubey

#### Welcome

Nestor Alexander Bramley and Andrea May Bramley to Richard and Patricia Bramley

#### Congratulations

Michael Kirk Osterland to Lisa G. Labalme Kevin Peter Gillette to Marilena Luciana DiLullo

#### **Land Transfers**

Athena Demos to Lennart Ahrstrom, house and .2 acres, 14 Brook Road for \$87,000

Morton Wolkowitz, Peter M. Lehrer and Eugene McGovern to State of Connecticut, 97.97 acres on Route 4 for no consideration

Estate of Sabina Lietzman to Ledlie and Sarah C. Laughlin, house and five acres on Pierce Lane for \$192,500

#### Last But Not Least

The last operator-assisted local telephone call in Connecticut was made in Cornwall—on an instrument still in town, now at the Historical Society. Date of the call is questionable, possibly early '40s.

More certainly, on August 15 Cornwall became the last town in the state to receive cable TV. The latest technological shift was marked in a ribbon-cutting ceremony at

Town Hall—"a brief but momentous occasion," as State Representative Andrew Roraback described it before wielding the scissors. The next moment, a button was pressed that punched up a cable broadcast on a 27-inch television set, gift of Laurel Cablevision to the Cornwall Free Library.

Judging by opinions of some at the ceremony, not all Cornwall will want cable service. For those who do, Pamela Little, a Laurel marketing executive, outlined the process that will bring cable into

the home: a door-to-door canvass, spreading out through the fall from Cornwall Village. Next in line will be West Cornwall and points north, then East Cornwall, and, finally, Cornwall Bridge. —Charles Osborne

#### Back to the Books

Cornwall Consolidated School will open September 5 with an enrollment of 168 students. Additions to the staff include grade one teacher Bonnie Burdick, who is returning to Cornwall after an absence of eight years; computer teacher Dorinda Higgins; transition teacher Joyce Samson; and primary grade assistant Jane Herbst. New faces in Special Education include Elizabeth Hardy, teacher, Joy Viafore, speech therapist; and school psychologist Dayleen Bushnell. Board of Education member David Samson has resigned because of a conflict of interest.

At the regular BOE meeting on September 21, work will begin on developing a five year plan. It will include not only anticipated capital improvements and estimated costs, but will incorporate some of the suggestions offered at the Quality and Diversity meetings which took place a year ago. The QED Plan,

approved in Cornwall but voted down in the Region, was a worthwhile process, according to CCS principal William Oros. Suggestions on how to increase awareness and appreciation of diversity, as well as ways to improve the academic program, student life, and the relationship of the school to the community were considered, and a budget item of \$500 was allocated to use some of QED in the five year plan.

—Patricia Blakey

#### Friends of Rose Algrant

The 36<sup>th</sup> annual art show, presented by the Friends of Rose Algrant, opened to its customary convivial crowd at the Marvelwood Student Center. On view was the work of 56 Cornwall artists: painters, sculptors, needleworkers, weavers, photographers and papermakers—and others not so easily classified.

Rose's original show in 1959 offered the work of only nine artists. Marc Simont and Arlington Yutlzer were among the First Nine; in 1995 Marc's antic interpretations of our eating and artistic pursuits were a delight. We miss Arly's ever-developing sketches and paintings. Eight newcomers had pictures on the walls or crafts on the tables.

This year the show was organized by Bee and Marc Simont, with Joan and Nick Edler, Tim Prentice, Michael Gellatly and Danielle Mailer, most ably assisted by David Bean, Denis Curtiss, Bob and Dean Potter and Earl Brecher.

The show's sales amounted to \$8,500; after the usual expenses and set-asides for next year, the Cornwall Library, in honor of its 125th year, will be the beneficiary.



"And In This Corner..."

Looking towards this year's municipal elections, Cornwall's parties gathered in late July and squared off with slates of hopeful candidates some familiar faces, some not so well known.

Heading the Democratic slate is Gordon Ridgway, First Selectman. Other candidates: Earl Brecher, Selectman; Cheryl Evans, Town Clerk; Todd Aichele, Town Treasurer; Helen Migliacci, Tax Collector; Evie Piker, Board of Finance; Willis E. Ocain, BOF; Celia Senzer, BOF, alternate; Jim Terrall, Board of Education; Phil Hart, BOE; Anne Zinsser, BOE; Phyllis Wojan, Board of Assessment Appeals (see p. 4); Denny Frost, Planning and Zoning; Ella Clark, Zoning Board of Appeals; John Miller, ZBA. Running for Park and Recreation: Joe Gwazdauskas, Mark Pastre, Sharon Sawicki, Deirdre Fischer and Caren Nelson.

## Letters to the Chronicle

AN AQUATIC ALIEN?

Early one July morning I went for my customary swim in Cream Hill lake and had a strange encounter. I was almost halfway across the lake when I looked up and saw a completely unfamiliar shape about 30 feet ahead of me. The first thought that flashed through my mind was that it looked like the headgear of some alien being. As I attempted to calm my incipient panic it moved across my path and I realized it was the head of a deer. Vastly relieved and quite thrilled, I watched as the doe continued quietly and steadily on her way to the shore where she climbed slowly onto the bank and ambled into the woods without a backward glance. -Marie Prentice

#### RECYCLING FOR ART

The New York Times of August 10<sup>th</sup> carried an article about a garbage dump outside Madrid, accompanied by a stunning photograph of a flight of storks. The dump attracts many species of birds (kites, egrets, teals, gulls, ravens, jackdaws and partridges among them). Some are year-rounders, others are migratory. It's a bird's paradise.

A recent plan to use an incinerator and close the dump has caused quite a stir. To ornithologists the dump is a treasure, to environmentalists the incinerator is a menace, polluting the atmosphere and threatening the ozone.

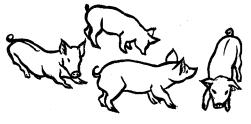
I remember when the Cornwall landfill was called The Dump. It had a mountain of twisted metal that was a wealth of inspiration for local artists. Historians will argue that Tim Prentice sprang into fame out of that dump. I once picked up an intake manifold and, with the help of John Welles, welded it to a kerosene stove, converting it into a candelabra which was sold at the Rose Algrant Show.

The state of the arts in the era of Gingrich & Helms is precarious. Artists may soon become a persecuted minority, like communists and smokers. I was disturbed, therefore, when I heard a rumor our landfill might be closed. We may someday wish we still had that old pile of source material. Where there's junk there's hope.

-Marc Simont

#### MARVELWOOD ADVANTAGES

In the end, economics and office needs will determine decisions about new buildings/revised old buildings/Marvelwood buildings. But it is well worth looking at some of the advantages the Marvelwood main campus could bring to the town. The four main buildings—Miller dormitory, Monroe-Bodkin academic building, the Student Center building and Calhoun House—



are largely up to code, offer access for the handicapped, and are not expensive to heat. These buildings give onto a common athletic field (across School Street from Hubbard Field) and two tennis courts. Field and courts could be recreational assets for townspeople and CCS.

Looking at the individual buildings:

 Miller dormitory offers excellent potential for as many as six conveniently sited, comfortable elderly housing units with parking and a common garden.

 Monroe-Bodkin could be a really fine library, perhaps offering archival or historical storage to the town. The main Bodkin library is handsome, air-conditioned and comfortable inside. It can shelve some 10,000 books. It has lovely acoustics for musical events. The space in Monroe—mainly classrooms now—could also serve library purposes. One classroom could give the librarian office and work space. Another classroom could be a center for children's books and activities. A third classroom, for older children and adults, could offer informational and research resources—including a computer and CD-ROMs. The two remaining classrooms could be meeting places for library events and film viewing.

This building's resources can support the library's recreational and informational future. Simply moving books into the Town Hall offers few advantages for a 21st century library. With their many tiny spaces, the present town offices are ill-suited to contemporary library use.

• The Student Center building (also known as the Dining Hall) would make a practical town hall. Upstairs, eight classrooms, a gallery-style meeting room and a meeting room with a speaker's platform offer excellent office and meeting/exhibit areas. Downstairs, the dining room could accommodate large town meetings with lots of space for special community events. This is the building with the most potential to give Cornwall the town office space and other facilities it needs but does not now have.

• The showplace of the campus, Calhoun House recommends itself in terms of elegance and history. Lacking large meeting rooms, it has excellent office space (with vault), on the first floor. The second floor, or as much as could be easily renovated, offers meeting facilities.

The possibilities offered by what began as a simple need for more office space are numerous; the available choices bear on the town's future in many ways. The town government needs to know our views of these matters and our willingness to consider the economics of what will be important long-term decisions.

-Phyllis Wojan

Nominated by the Republicans were Ray Augustyn, First Selectman; Jack Preston, Selectman; Cheryl Evans, Town Clerk; Steve Hedden, Treasurer; Helen Migliacci, Tax Collector; Donald Hedden, Board of Finance; Bill Hurlburt, BOF; Denton Butler, BOF, alternate; Margaret Bardot, Board of Education; Jim Levy, BOE; Josie Whitney, BOE; Lynn Scoville, Planning and Zoning; Anne Kosciusko, P&Z; Joanne Wojtusiak, Zoning Board of Appeals; Paul Baren, ZBA; Jean Pond, Board of Assessment Appeals. Slated for Park and Recreation were Eric Augustyn, Ira Barkoff, Geoffrey Holmes, and Donna Bishop. -Charles Osborne

#### **Heads or Tails**

The Grumbling Gryphons traveling children's theater concluded its fourth annual theater arts camp with two delightful performances of an original musical, *Heads and Tails*, at the Walker Auditorium of the Hotchkiss School. This play was adapted from an original script written by producer-director and Gryphons founder Leslie Elias.

This week-long camp included 51 children from 12 area towns and six children from inner-city New York. A faculty of 10 theater professionals taught dance, music, theater, and costume design to the children. Masks and props were created under the guidance of Gryphon maskmaker Ellen Moon, assisted by Bianca Lagner.

Stars of *Heads and Tails* included, as Heads: Theo Austin, Ariana Holmes, Elizabeth Bruehl, Sophie Austin; as Tails, Ryan Quinn, Maggie Cady, Sam Jones, Michael Jones, Megan Cadwell, Ellen Hart, Mariah Quinn, Krysia Lenzo, West Cadwell, and...

—Dave Cadwell

#### **Events & Announcements**

Fire Department Show and Dance: The Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department will present its first annual Car Show & Ball on September 9. Autos 25 years or older are welcome for the afternoon show. Parking and admission are free, refreshments will be served.

Tickets for the Ball, the department's main fund-raiser, are \$20 a couple. The program: hors d'oeuvres from 7–8 P.M.; dancing 8 until midnight to the music of Rock & Roll Heaven. This year's theme is the '50s and '60s; dress accordingly and win a prize.

Sherman Chamber Ensemble Concert at Cornubia Hall Friday, September 1, 8 P.M., will include Bach's Goldberg Variations for string trio. Tickets \$12. Call 672-2481 for information.

Cornwallians at Taconic Learning Center: Three Cornwall academics will be teaching their specialties in Taconic Learning Center classes for the fall semester, beginning the week of September 18. Ken Keskinen has two classes: British writers in the 18th and 19th centuries and a writers' seminar. Phyllis Wojan continues her popular series on genetics, and John Leich will offer beginning Russian. For registration forms and other information, call 435-2922.

HVA Seeks Auction Donations: The Housatonic Valley Association is seeking items for its benefit auction to be held in November. Items could include, but are not limited to, stays in exotic places, dinners for two or more at elegant restaurants in the Tri-state area, antiques, handcrafted furniture, gift certificates. For further information or to make a donation, contact HVA at 672-6678.

The Tornado—Six Years On: "Destruction and Regeneration: the Tornadoes of July 10, 1989" is the title of a tour of Cornwall scheduled for September 23. The tour will be guided by Dr. Copeland MacClintock of

Harvard's (CK) Peabody
Museum, who for six
years has studied the

impact of that
terrible storm
and the natural
regrowth since.
The tour will begin at 8:30 A.M. at

The tour will begin at 8:30 A.M. at the Mohawk Ski Area lodge. About three hours long, the tour will include visits to other damage sites in Milton and Bantam. For more information and reservations—which are required—call Ron Hummel at 672-2325.

Veterans' Group Photo: Taken last Memorial Day, the portrait of Cornwall's World War II veterans will be available in early September. Copies may be picked up, for a modest price, at the First Selectman's office, 672-4959.

**Road Resurfacing:** In September, roads to be oiled are: Todd Hill Extension; Town Street South; College Street; a section of Great Hill Road; Clark Road; Baldwin Road.

Alternatives to Violence: A program introducing the Alternatives to Violence Project will be held on Wednesday, September 13, 7:00–9:30 P.M. at the United Church of Christ. The Alternatives to Violence Project is a grassroots, international, volunteer movement (non-sectarian and non-profit) committed to reducing interpersonal violence in our

society. AVP works toward this goal by presenting workshops in prisons, schools, and communities. The program on the 13<sup>th</sup> will be led by John Perry of Sharon. For further information, call the church office, 672-6840, or Peg Keskinen, 672-6486.

Food Pantry Drop-off: In support of the Cornwall town office Food Pantry, the National Iron Bank in Cornwall Bridge will be another drop-off for contributions (non-perishable items only). Office hours: Monday—Thursday, 9–3; Friday, 9–5. For information, call Pat Thibault at the bank, 672-6623.

Cornwall Association Powwow: The tenth annual meeting of the Cornwall Association, open to all, will be held at the Cornwall Child Center on Cream Hill Road at 4 P.M., Saturday, September 23. As usual, a brief business meeting will be followed by refreshments. Polly Calhoun will receive this year's Cornwall Association award.

CCC Pre-registration: Fall registration for the Cornwall Child Center will be September 1, 10 A.M. to noon, at the Center. Children for whom registration is complete may attend on opening morning, September 5. The staff will be available after 1 P.M. for anyone who was unable to pre-register. For information call Pam Brehm, 672-6989.

**Board's New Name:** The name of the Board of Tax Review has been changed to Board of Assessment Appeals. Its function remains the same. It will hear appeals on motor vehicles from 6–8 P.M. at the Town Offices on Thursday, September 21.

Change at Hughes: On a trial basis, Tuesday hours at the Hughes Memorial Library will change to 4–7 P.M. Saturday hours, 9:30 A.M.–12:30 P.M. will stay the same.

Library Friends Book Sale: The Friends of the Cornwall Library welcome the donation of books for its annual Book Sale slated for Saturday and Sunday, October 7 and 8. Chief organizer Ella Clark and the Friends board urge donors to bring their books (in good shape and saleable, please) to the Library. Sorters and other volunteers are needed. Please call Ella at 672-4817.

#### **CORNWALL CHRONICLE**

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