

Kelly's Corner

this week's darling couple, Adrian Leslie and Marion Williams



By Jan Kelly

The Blessing of the Fleet. . . . Where do all the people come from to see our fishermen only one day a year? They come to join in an ancient rite, a hope to spare our fishermen from the unpredictable perils of the sea. Whether their journey and presence has any influence on the power of the sea is unknown, but everybody tries, for one day at least, to understand what the man/sea relationship is. The work is labor, difficult and honorable, and it's natural to us from ancient times. To farm, to fish—it's so basic, but, as we move more deeply into a video world, the basics shift and change.

As I left the pier I noted that part of the wood and rust of our fleet was covered with flags and balloons, part was tied up sullenly at the pier. I left behind me the good Bishop Cronin and the plumed Knights of Columbus, handsome in the southwest breeze, a platform of pageantry giving pleasure to themselves and to all those around them. My eyes scanned a row of impressive, newly painted steel hulls on the left of the pier. They were not named for offspring; there was no Saint Peter, no bishop, no bilingual fishermen praying to a Christian God to help against the unbeatable odds of the ocean. The new god is an old god, the other ever-present god, Mammon. The work is talk from the shore out and back again. Provincetown's sands have shifted once more.

But the people still arrive and celebrate. They all join in the festival. Reality is at bay today. The most brightly colored outfits are sported on Commercial Street—new clothes, new season, new festival. Only the one-toned motorcyclists keep to their black; they are sure of it. I wonder why they try to look so fierce. Maybe to displace an inner fear. Wear it outside and maybe it will go away. Despite the black, the leather, the noise, the tattoos, the unkempt hair, and the perpetual cigarette and beer, to me they have an air of innocence, an unschooled, untapped quality. They would rather flirt with death than explore it. Martydom is so powerful.

While I was moving down Commercial Street, I saw

such amounts of pizza, hot dogs, and drinks being devoured by smiling laughing people; they testified it was a festival. The Taleb Aleppo Band played their very enjoyable well-practiced, well-executed music most of the afternoon at the Bas Relief. I'm not sure who enjoys the music more, the audience or these men so delighted with their avocation. Lillian Howard wheeled 82-year-old Frank Bent to the concert. Frank used to play drums. He clapped along with familiar favorites. I told him they needed him on the drums for the next number. He was delighted. Beta Cook and Florence left the Town House to sit on the green and hear the live music. Back at the Town House Anne Kane was tending bar for a raucous room at the Galleria during her 30th Blessing. A real trooper. Eileen and Dotty, "Monihan" Dotty is called, were sitting right up at the bar celebrating along with their old pal Anne. They've been coming to Provincetown for more years than I've been alive. Dottie wanted to get up and dance and sing at the piano with the Wispers so up we went. Ta Da Da Boom Di Ay! Dottie would hold on to the piano between choruses, hanging on, she'd give a small kick with her Enna Jetticks. Then her request was Irish songs; would I sing with her? Like a professional troubadour she moved through the crowd doing the two-step, singing two lines at each table. She stopped at the end of the bar and asked for water. "I'm 83. I have a heart condition and I'm on medication, so I'll need a sip of water before the next tune." Oh, the Blessing of the Fleet. Everybody joins in. Does it make our fleet safer, all this good feeling?

Across the room Beta's cousin Ruth is holding her two-year-old granddaughter who thinks "Blessings are fun. The grownups act like me." And here is another type of motorcyclist baby-sitting her. Steven Fahey is from Hudson, where he sells Yamaha motorcycles, mostly to professional people as alternative transportation. He's clean-cut, handsome, reserved and an excellent baby sitter. Last week he won the Laudon Race in New Hampshire with the Yamaha he built from

scratch for \$7,000. His toughest competition was a Yamaha worth \$70,000. The *Globe* did a write-up. The \$70,000 machine had too much power for its size, and the unfortunate driver had an accident. Steven had an easy win over all the others. The two sides of biking.

John Garran has spent all this spring on the crest of a wave—graduation, scholarships, college in the near future. Saturday night he received his award to join the ranks of Eagle Scouts. Johnny is the third generation Eagle Scout in the family, and you could scarcely be unmoved by emotion as grandfather and father flanked Johnny and made their serious and loving speeches. Besides doing his regular school and home chores and karate, Johnny is also a member of the Truro Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad—the youngest of course. Ambition and dedication result in jobs well done. Besides being such a competent and honorable young man, Johnny Garran is so well liked by all of us. The families are proud of him, but they expected nothing less. I teased Johnny about his mustache. To me he looked more like a latin lover than a boy scout. He always enjoys a joke, too. Good luck to this young man.

If you've never studied the wonderful history, natural history, or geology of the Cape, there is an easy way for you start now. There is information on Cape Cod that spans 380 years, written from as many angles as there are authors. Its fish, the wars, trade, the immigrations and emigrations, its botany, commerce, the people, their cooking, their religion, and the land itself. You could do as so many of us have, visit the Library at regular intervals until you've exhausted the shelf of Cape Cod lore. Then you visit the bookshops and the Visitors Centers to start your own library. But if you want to catch up quickly and then concentrate on the subjects of your choice, try reading *Sand in their Shoes: A Cape Cod Reader*, edited by Edith Shay and Frank Shay and printed by Parnassus Imprints in Orleans. It will supply you with plenty of information, and I'm sure anyone could gain from this book: excerpts from Thoreau, Melville, Nancy Paine Smith, Woolcott, James and Mary Heaton Vorse—all contribute to the literary content. Joseph Lincoln covers the food. Katie Dos Passos, Beston and Oliver Austin, Jr., contribute to the natural history, and, of course, Shebnah Rich catalogued much of the history. The book is both a good introduction and a good standby, and a book is always a good gift.

Did you know you could pay your light bill at the Cape End Pharmacy on Shank Painter Road? Not only can you save a check and a stamp, but you can meet the handsome pharmacist, Allan Robinson, and the very smily Carolyn Pereira. They are always ready for banter, for jokes, or for any fun to push their cloud up one more notch. The variety of merchandise has to be seen. You could buy a present for anybody—even an enemy—from the collection of saleables. They also have the most complete selection of sun tan oils and skin care products in town.

How wonderful it is having Lembas Health Food Store open every day for long hours and year-round.

Barbara is such a capable manager. Besides having a variety of juices, oriental fixings, yogurt products, cereals, pastas, teas, and cosmetics, Lembas also has a fine selection of books available. You can purchase your vitamins and very good and inexpensive honeys and maple syrup there, and you can also buy freshly ground peanut butter. But if you are weary of the lowly legume [peanuts are not a nut but a legume], you may treat yourself to a new taste—nut butters. You could experiment with sesame butter. That's good with a little honey added since it is bitter, a tasty bitter, not a nasty bitter. Or you could try cashew butter, or almond butter, or date and cashew butter—this can turn simple toast into an experience. I bet you've stopped reading this column, dropped the paper, and are standing on Standish Street at Lembas right now. The friendly clerks will wait on you; those, that is, who aren't at Marianne Maloney's Provincetown Pulsations areobics course. Exercise addicts, all of them.

What a shock I had the other day. While cycling past the Pilgrim Club, I saw a real girl handing out flyers. Confusing.

Nicholas Skinner did get one sighting of a piping plover, but long after the survey. A lone specimen feeding. One alone won't make three, so we can presume it is only passing through, but four turkey vultures and several butterflying Wilson's petrels were spotted, and that's what makes the exercise and the watching all the more rewarding. The family of Canada geese in the Beech Forest are now looking like gangly adolescents, and their facial markings are becoming defined.

Travel is good for the soul. It brings new views, new experiences, a small bout with fantasy. Most of us are too busy in the summer to travel, so we must be tourists in our own town because there are always new views, new experiences. Remember, these visitors all come here for a reason, and there's no reason you shouldn't enjoy your town in as many ways as possible. One bout with fantasy can be your dining experience at Front Street. After Bonnie Smith explains the menu of great variety, you are sure you want it all, so Matty Capano, Wendy Haggerty and I proceeded to do just that—ordered as many dishes as we felt we had capacity. All fresh ingredients, pampered to compatibility and washed down with a sparkling white wine from the Loire Valley from Chef Howard Gruber. Chateaux, trout and wine, views of the Loire. The service was gracious—friendly yet formal. When good friends get together, there's never a lack of talk or fun. Imagine good company before the backdrop of such imaginative and delicious food. We, of course, sealed a pact once again to choose a menu from *Gourmet Magazine*, each of us selecting and preparing one course, and joining it all together with selected wines. After Labor Day—that's when fantasy becomes reality. Front Street sponsors Cafe Society Saturday evenings on WOMR. The program projects Front Street's sophisticated tastes into the world of music. Enjoy your town's restaurants; enjoy your town's radio station. Quality and variety can describe both enterprises.