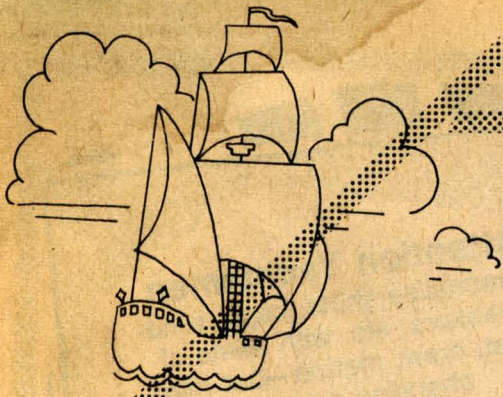


Kelly's Corner



By Jan Kelly

August first—Lammas Day—is almost here. Summer is clocking into its second half. In centuries past in the British Isles it was harvest time, in particular for grains. The length of daylight there causes an earlier crop than in the continental United States. In the British Isles it is very light until 10 in the evening from the Nordic sun. The latest we can manage is 8:30, and daylight savings time at that. So, with the harvest in, bread was baked with the new wheat for Lammas or “Loaf Mass.” The second half of summer was passed tending a second batch of wheat and the root crops.

Shakespeare honors the day in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*. Theseus and Hippolyta chose Lammas as their wedding night. The Lammas Day solemnity of the Cape is the merchant's facing what he hopes will be the most profitable part of his season. As July was named for Julius Caesar, August was named for Augustus Caesar. For some, August first is just rent day; others notice it not at all. Leo the Lion will reign in the sky until the Virgin edges him out.

Divil the Parrot has had as much company as any other Provincetowner this year. Besides the fledglings of sparrow, robin, blue jay, and starling (brought here until they can return to the wild), he has had an exotic visitor, too, with yet another possibility on the way. The police called asking if I would care for a parakeet rescued from a cat. Audubon's Wildlife Sanctuary had said, “Call Jan Kelly. Divil could use some company.”

The frightened little creature arrived in a milk carton and was moved to Divil's travel cage immediately. Endive, sunflower seeds, cherries, and orange bits were put in to tempt the darling chipper, which I called Bluebeard because of his feather pattern. The cats were more than curious, full-stomached or not, so Bluebeard acquired his own room as well as his own cage. Ten minutes later the police called again to say the owners were here. Wonderful! The noise of people hurrying up the steps (only devoted pet owners or someone in love could make that noise), the couple entering, looking at Bluebeard, and saying as the bones left their bodies, “That's not the bird. . . .” Oh, disappointment. A struggle without champions. Theirs was



Cathy and Irving Lefson
this week's darling couple

a blue noble macaw. They were due to go out on a four-day sail; would I keep the macaw should it be found? Of course. Divil in the background was mumbling to himself, “Oh, these relations. Hear nothing from them ten months a year. Summer comes and they're all on your doorstep. Can't get a hot cup of coffee or a cold beer when you want it until they've all gone home.” So look for the macaw and look for the owners of Bluebeard.

The Blessing of the Fleet has many poignant moments—in the church, on the pier, during the parade of bands and fishermen, who march bearing the statue of their patron saint, St. Peter. Of course, the Bishop visits. Well, within his visit to the town at large Bishop Cronin made a special visit. As his car rounded Johnson Street, he noticed an old friend waiting for his usual wave in passing, but this year was different. Not content with a parade wave, the bishop ordered the car to stop and asked to be let out so he could talk properly with Nellie Tarvers and she with him. Nellie Tarvers is 98 years old. She and her daughter Dot Tarvers wait on the white-painted porch every year to watch the Bishop go by. This year Daniel Cronin went up on Nellie's porch to shake her hand and have a chat. It was a reminder that we are all made of finer stuff than dreams.

“How are you, Nellie?”

“Fine, Bishop. How are you?”

“I'm fine, too, but I wish I could live as long as you, Nellie.”

“I hope you do, Bishop, and I wish you to have the good health I do. I'll say a prayer for you.”



what's wrong with this picture?



Nellie Tarvers and Bishop Daniel Cronin

"You pray for me, Nellie, and I will pray for you. Take good care of yourself, Nellie. I'll see you next year."

"Yes, see you next year, Bishop Cronin."

Then the Bishop blessed Nellie. He may have got the better blessing. Dot was shaking so much we're lucky to have the picture at all. She felt as a little child again, watching and listening to this scene. The clasp of hands, the serene look of two human beings was not merely a view of someone who had claimed the purple and someone who had lived nearly a century. It was of two equals enjoying the presence of each other. The human is wise who sees broadest and beyond self. Each of us is special but, like the old song says, "Who's going to know 100 hundred years from today?" Each of us to ourselves will know, so live each day as if you were to die on the morrow or live to be 100. Watching these two, you could see that dignity is inherent to human beings. It isn't just by outward praise but by inward posture. The deliberateness of a well-lived life will express itself easily. Maybe some cults call it aura, others a glow. Whatever you choose to call it, whenever you see it you receive it without effort, and it makes sense of all the world's workings even if only for an intangible moment—a bit of cerebral adrenalin.

Oh, those wet summer days. Without a hint of drying, the day progresses. Not a hint that the wind will shift. The outward is uncomfortable, so everything shifts inward. One reflecting day in a week of sunshiney fun.

If you've never been waxed, watch it. Mary Bono is in town for the rest of the summer. She may have it in mind to create another wax figure to go along with her so-lifelike specimens at the Heritage Museum. If you haven't ever seen them, do visit. Mary's professional results are startling.

After a minor bike accident, I had to get my right sandal put back together. (No real damage; a bit of a skinned knee, but the other fellow!) Ben Kettlewell and

Michael Levine at Sunburst Leather, 194 Commercial Street, are always so congenial about fixing up my damaged sandals. It gives me a chance to check on their leaping leather progress, too. They have same-day service for custom-made sandals at \$50 for all styles. Even Bigfoot could get a pair for that price. There are pocketed vests of distressed leather. The bags and belts are designed in the shop. There are knit shirts from Turkey, Panama hats, and leather business suits. I was particularly eyeing a chic black beret. Everything in the shop is tasteful. Years of experience have made fine products a natural outcome.

There are so many mosquitos this year the cats are wrestling with them. Divil asked for a fishing pole to hook a few because his neck got so tired. Believe it or not, there is one person who can find something good to say about mosquitos. John Portnoy, the Seashore biologist, will be giving a talk at the Audubon Society's Wellfleet Sanctuary and Nature Center Tuesday, July 31, on just that topic. The series will run Tuesday evenings at 8:30 through August 28. After Labor Day the lectures will run through Columbus Day on Saturday evenings. The speaker and topic are different each week; you can call 349-2625 for details.

Most people forget phone numbers or lose the matchbooks and slips of paper they've written them on, so information must be the most-called number in existence. Everything is so computerized now that you no longer get Lily Tomlin snuffing on the other end of the line; instead you get a tape that is so polite you hesitate to hang up. When you begin to hear the message for the third time, you feel like your brain has been Cloroxed. So you hang up on Mr. Clean, dial again, and get a real human being.

Enjoy the great August. It's the only one we're going to get this year.