



KELLY'S CORNER

by Jan Kelly

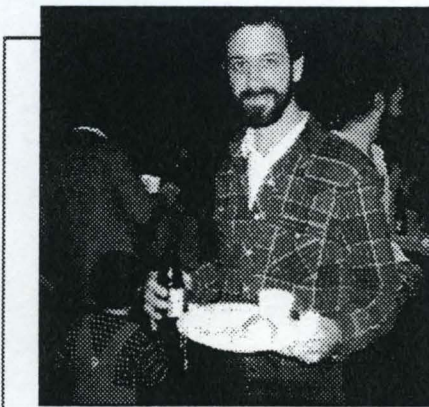
First Yearrounder's **PARTY** at Town Hall

In the "Our Town Hall" column, I wrote about so many of the activities that have taken place there. The one dearest to me is the Yearrounder's Festival.

In the fall of 1985 Howie Schneider called me. "Kelly, I have an idea." Howie talked of a festival for the people who live here year round, or "year around" as George Bryant says. Howie felt that over-development and vigorous summers were threatening the community and its diversity. A great big party would remind all of us how much we love to live here, how beautiful it is here, and how much fun we have with our many close and lasting relationships. He asked me what I thought of the idea and asked me for my help. Oh yes! I would and did.

So Howie and I had meetings and long talks about steamer

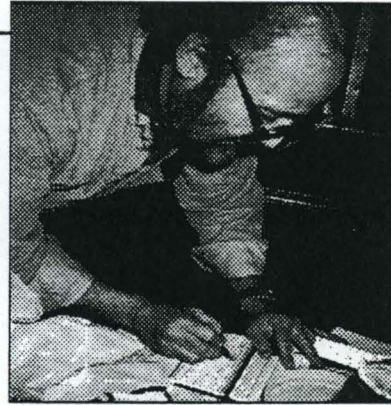
plates and custodians and a police officer and more music and more fun. We loved talking about it. On November 13, 1985 Howie sent out a drafted letter on OCEA (Outer Cape Environmental Association) stationery, as he was then presi-



The bearded Jay Critchley

Rachel Giese and Munro Moore joined us to help plan and execute the big town party we wanted. Our three local banks, Seaman's, Cape Cod Bank & Trust, and Shawmut, Roslyn Garfield, Napi Van Dereck, Evan Evans, Nancy and Fred Ambrose, and Suzanne Sinaiko donated the funds to get us going and keep us going. We drafted a form for all non-profits asking how much space they needed. We asked them to set up

dent, to all the churches, schools, non-profits, and similar groups, and then we settled down to enjoy Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's. January was committee time. And so Jay Critchley, Peggy Christian,



Howie wrote the checks

roasts being carved by someone coiffed in a mushroom chef's hat with music and dancing. There would be talent shows and children and old folks and all the non-profit organizations and more food and more music and

bumper stickers and pins and Channel 8 videoing and all the schools and all the churches and the town characters and the stay-at-homes and the decorations and WOMR and paper

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by noon and break down by five, using no nails, having no sales, and no structures over eight feet. We asked who needed electricity for their display and then scrambled for proximity to outlets. Forty-one groups would be represented at the expo of non-profits and they would run from noon to four. During the expo we had a film of the Fine Arts Work Center, Freehand's student readings, a Provincetown Playhouse film, and a performance by the high school's cheerleaders.

At four o'clock, all tents were folded and removed. By six o'clock long tables were set from stage to entrance. Tablecloths dressed the waiting groaning boards, and boom! Before you knew it happened, the hall was filled. The stairways were filled. Everybody was talking, everybody. The line went down the stairs, out the building, and around the block, thanks to the mild weather. We fed over 600 people, nearer to 700, running out of paper plates and using pot lids, cups, and anything to feed the wonderful humans who came to celebrate with us. It was said that it was the most people congregated in Town Hall in anybody's memory or recorded history.

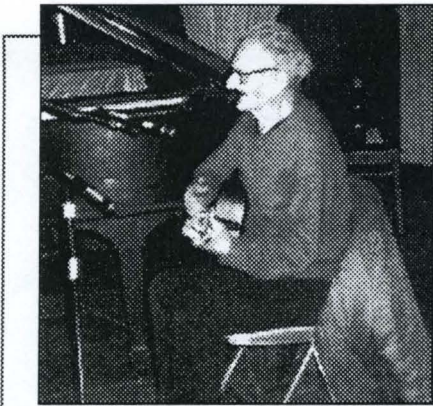
I remember how relaxed and happy everybody was. Nobody minded the wait, the lines, the squeezed seating. They were all happy, all visiting new friends, old friends, and re-connecting with neighbors. A few amazed out-of-towners were swallowed up in it all. I remember the phrase that came to my mind as I milled about. After the 200 pounds of meat, all donated and cooked by Howie Schneider and Frank Milby at the

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Beachcombers, the successive cauldrons of kale soup and chowder donated and cooked by thirteen restaurants and delivered in tandem by Anne McCord and Sally Citgo, the gardens of salad donated by A&P, L&A, J&E, and Bryant's Market, chopped and slawed by Gene Greene and Napi and another line of volunteers, after every roll, bit of butter and slurp of coffee, the citizens got into action. Those tables were cleaned off, wiped down, and occupied quickly again for the talent show. No child slept or whined. No elderly person dozed. It was as if we were all at the first day of school. As coordinator of this part of the event and M.C., which is what I really love to do, I spoke to the audience of about "how helpful all this day and night have been to our spiritual complexion, the spiritual complexion of Provincetown." We were touching eternity, each in our own way, with all of us together. This is what you want from life. All day and all night, 9 am to 1:30 am, and no yelling, no anger, no boredom, no gossip, and amazingly, no fatigue! I would never have dinner on Yearrounder's night. I would rush home and change and trot back down, hair long, dress long, but the lovely time was all too short - only one day.

Sky Power volunteered to tune the piano for us. Heaton Vorse, at age 84, sang original songs ("Chestnuts") and of course the song he brought back to fame in the film "Reds". He accompanied himself on the one thousand dollar guitar that Warren Beatty gave him.



Heaton Vorse crooned to us

Heaton was not ASCAP, not union, and so Beatty couldn't pay him for his role in "Reds". The guitar was payment. I remember the day Heaton received the guitar. Over to the Flagship (now

Lorraine's)

Heaton went to "break it in", and he plucked and sang to all of us. The Flagship was always a good clubhouse. The Dory Bar has curved us all at one time or another.

It was on that first Yearrounder's talent night that I christened "West End Wendy Wendell". Alliteration is an easy trap when you are ad libbing in front of a large audience. Wendy wore a 25 cent "twirly" skirt that I found at Ruthie's, red and small patterned. She wore it for years on stage and still retains the title "West End Wendy Wendell" fifteen years later.

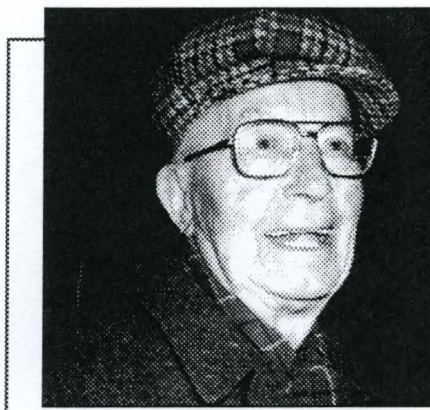
Sandy Nesbit of the Post Office charmed the crowd with his gentle singing, and all joined in. The recorder group, the choral society, and Lee Robinson did all the sound and did a remarkable job with such tricky equipment.

Jay Critchley created and orchestrated a spectacular number. He gathered together every segment of our populace, gave

them loose directions on how he wanted them to costume themselves, and so developed a great piece of theater. He went "Sou'wester" in a cardboard dory, which was surrounded by babies in prams, cheerleaders, aerobic dancers, Sandy Hrico and Simie Maryles and Pat Bruno in extra slinky fun outfits, and they all sang Jay's words to "(S)old Cape Cod":

*"If you're fond of shopping without a care,
Quaint condominiums everywhere,
You're sure to fall in love with Sold Cape Cod.
If you like the taste of an oyster stew
Served by a waiter with an attitude
You're sure to fall in love with Sold Cape Cod."*

Every inch of the stage was covered with performers on bicycles or skates, in baby carriages or A&P carts: somersaulting, cart wheeling and rowing the cardboard dory/hot dog. The audience caught on to the words quickly. Some cried at yet another reminder of over-construction and over-tourism. The entire show was a great success, and the cheerleaders led us from audience into performers. Then all the tables were folded and stacked, chairs too. And no mishaps again! John Kelly warmed the crowd up with dance steps and stretching as the band set up. Then everybody's favorite for years and years, Magic and the Reggae All-Stars, played non-stop, with individ-



Sammy "T" Janopolis

ual players taking breaks until 1:30 am. Everybody danced, everybody, even the self-conscious. Children were on par with adults. They needed no watching. We were all safe in the steamy, noisy crowded

room. We were in our own world within a world. Eva Alexander twirled around. "I feel sweet sixteen!" - though her first birthday was at the start of the 20th century.

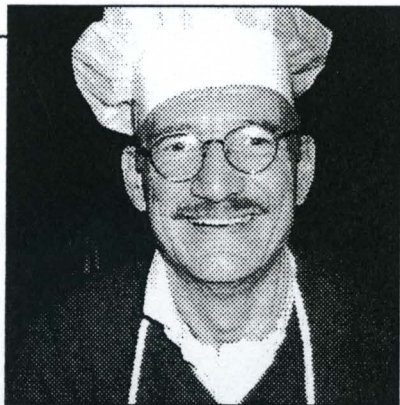
There was beer and wine, soda and water, all kept cold on the fire escape. Peter Swain tended the bar set up right by the door. Want two beers? Reach out in the cold and there you are. There were no excesses. No one needed the attention of the lone policeman, Paul Mendes, who was so happy to be there even if he was missing the Annual Police Banquet.

Howie and I had settled on the first week in February, the dearth of the winter, as the date for the Yearrounder's event. First we thought closer to Valentine's Day would be good but then we didn't want to compete with the restaurants, so we

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backed up to the quietest weekend of the year. That's why the police banquet was scheduled then, we found out. So one man had his banquet with all of town instead of his police comrades. Mendes had one detail. We had a man in the lock-up. The jail was still in the basement. He had stolen a trailer trash - the fish truck. He was picked up in Chicago and sent back here. He was hollering from the cell, "I'm a year rounder. I'm entitled!" So Mendes spoke with Howie. "That's the deal," Howie said. "Every year rounder gets a free meal." Officer Mendes delivered the meal to the cell.

We must give special thanks to Gene Greene who owned the Terrace Restaurant, now called L'Uva. When we asked him to advise us about the dinner, we started excitedly babbling



Gene Greene

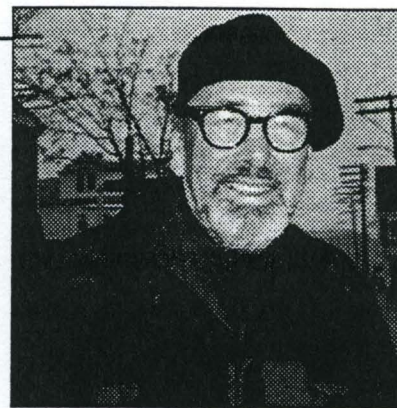
about standing rib roasts, suckling pigs and tossed salad. "Forget it! Six hundred or so people in Town Hall! Turkey breasts, hams, cole slaw, macaroni and potato salad. It's easy to store, easy to move, easy to serve, and bound to

please." We were a bit dejected, but Gene Greene was experienced, savvy and a lot of fun. He said, "You want to enjoy yourselves, too, don't you? Take my advice!" We did. He was right, and Gene's way of making it up to us was to go to J&E and to ask Bobby "Blue" Enos for cases of fresh fruit. He found beautiful large baskets somewhere and filled them so they overflowed all over the stage. We got to toss apples, oranges, tangerines, and even pineapples, twirling grenade-like to the audience. Again, there were no mishaps.

Custodian Dickie Rowe, Howie, and I locked up at 2:00 am or so and made a date for 9:30 the next morning for clean up. As I walked to Town Hall in the quiet and still atmosphere of small town Sunday morning, a gentle snow began to fall. We three started clean up. Sydney Bamford joined us as he did each year after. Jon Watson showed up, too. Jon coordinated all those tables, color coded with tape, from the UU Meeting House, VFW, and St. Mary's of the Harbor. It was a tough job. Returning them was even worse, when the fun was over.

On the wall was the poster - 1st Annual Yearrounder's Festival - with postage sized photographs of so many town groups, committees, families, pets, all in the shape of Cape Cod. Jay Critchley coordinated the poster. Seventeen of us were given film and told to "go out and photograph everybody, all of town!" Cape Cod Photo, Ewa Nogiec, the Advocate, and Peggy Christian worked so hard on that poster too. Carole Carlson of the Center for Coastal Studies processed and Ruth Bardsley did

the logistics. Jackson Lambert designed our yearrounder buttons and bumper sticker, a lone, knobby-kneed, screeching seagull - the bumper sticker, not Jackson!



Bruce McKain

We were all happy for a long time after this

event. But, of course you get going right away on the next one. Howie and myself and others organized the second and third. Elsie Bowen helped me on the fourth. I continued through to the seventh, but you know that magic number 7. Time to change. Gillian Drake had helped me for two years and then, a mistress of organization and a woman who loves a good party, did it on her own with her chosen helpers.

The first year that I didn't do it was a cold and snowy winter. After snowstorm number five backed and packed onto the already fallen, shoveled and piled snow, I just threw the shovel into a snow bank, went upstairs and booked a ticket to Puerto Rico. I went onto Vieques. The day that would be the Yearrounder's Festival in Provincetown, who should come into Dottie's bar "Bananas" in Esperanza? Howie Schneider! "You know where we would be this night?" We both laughed and clicked bottles.

The Provincetown Yearrounder's Festival will have its 15th anniversary this coming winter. The organizers and the planning have changed somewhat. Howie and I wish you all the best and we love that you continue the tradition.



As I cracked the whip

We still chuckle about the year the power went out and Ronnie White came to our rescue with generators. We had extra people for dinner that year - anybody who had an electric stove. What about the Flying Neutrinos who performed

when another storm emptied the Hall to go and right side their craft, Son of Town Hall? So many memories.