

kelly's korner

It seems only days ago we were having controversy over the choice of art works displayed in the winter windows for the brightening of an otherwise boarded front. And now all the paintings have been shifted back to the artists. Sweat-shirts, jewelry, and Cape Cod souvenirs claim their seasonal spots again—winter goes so quickly. The quiet season gets shorter every year. Only the weather doesn't know it. Winter had many gains and losses. Dinner parties, clamming season, plays at the High School and Provincetown Theater Company, concerts, aerobics, *trivial pursuit*, volunteer work, and travel filled the months of a milder than usual winter.

Town Meeting was milder than usual. We dearly missed John Snow. Roslyn Garfield did an apt job and we're proud of her. But Ros, along with the rest of us, misses seeing the "Y-38" station wagon driving through town, I'm sure. A plaque was dedicated to John in town hall last Sunday. It was an emotional dedication and a proud, human, gesture. But plaques are not people and we will miss him.

The election was milder than usual, all candidates unopposed in their desired offices. I can't figure out whether we are content or apathetic or are going through such an abrupt change that we are numb.

The clean up, fix-up crews are busy on Commercial, Bradford, and all the side streets. If you leave town, even for a couple of days, you return to heightened activity. For the past two years the new constructions scattered around town have reduced fix-up crews to put-terers. Condominium and guest house additions everywhere. I did make a comment last year that the typical homey and charming window of winter with seated cat, geranium, and hanging piece of crochet work will be replaced by the blank window of an empty condominium. We are trying to adjust to this phenomenon which is changing the roofscape and the population of Provincetown.

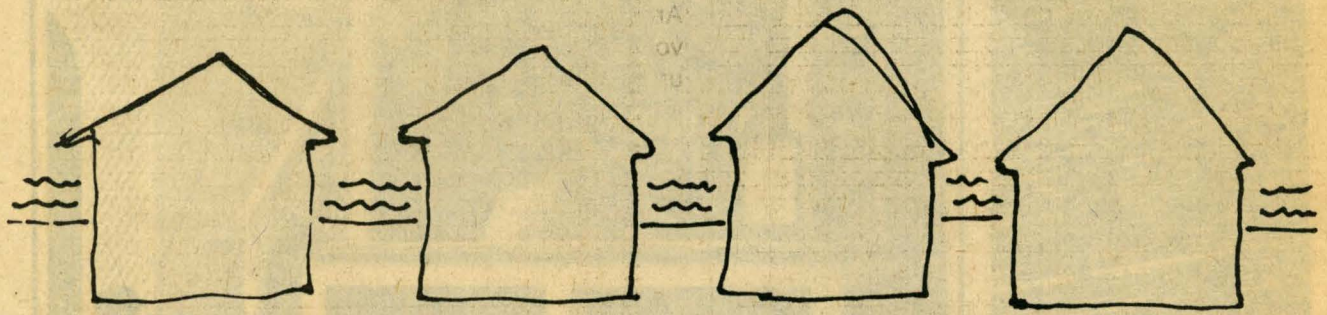
The sale of Days' cottages would have been the bludgeon to force our acceptance—false alarm, it was just a yard sale. Days' cottages have lined the shore of Beach Point like a magnified block set of a child since 1933. How many artists fed themselves and fended off starvation by painting this view? And maybe a few even painted the sides. How many families in 52 years got

their annual sunburn, enjoyed their annual clambake and basked for their brief days of leisure about the sturdy flower-labeled structures?

Joseph A. Days was a man of vision and practicality. In 1933 the Depression gripped so many Americans. I have been told it was more difficult in a small town because there were no *Cadillacs*, *Rolls-Royces*, or well-clad restaurant clientele to view as a symbol, an image of hope. I have also been told that it was easier being in a small town with your own garden, chickens, pigs, and milking cow. Joseph Days seems to have cut it down the middle with his line of 52 year-old cottages. They are no-nonsense beach domiciles—kids welcome, dogs welcome, relations maybe. Sand and salt water dealt with at the end of the season by a diligent maintenance man would not dent the sound structure of a well-built beach cottage. Manuel "Blan" Souza has very competently filled that position for the past seventeen years.

Mr. Days was not the first to build cottages on Beach Point. Fred Fisher had "Bay View," Howard Knowles had "Harbor View," Ernest Knowles had "Knowles' Cottages," and W.D. Preston had cottages where the Tides Motel is now. These groups were built in the 20s. Preston had to move his cottages at least twice as the beach increased. Joseph Days started with nine cottages the first summer and continued construction until he had twenty-two cottages on the shore and nine across the street. Amelia Days, his wife, was the one who thought of naming each cottage after a species of flower. All family members helped in naming them. Joseph Days, grandson of the builder, manages them now. Fifty-two years in one family, that's a Beach Point record.

Oh, those fumes when you're doing over an apartment, spray paint, rust-resistant paint, oil paint, latex paint, oven-cleaners, soaps, waxes, and polishes, they all dive into your nostrils with malicious glee and end up in the lungs, forever they say. I had my worst bout with it this spring while rust-proofing, not painting, a triangular metal shower. One hour of fumes, one hour of tennis, and in between games I was spitting white paint like the dregs of tobacco juice. Everyone insisted I wear a mask over mouth and nose for protection from fumes. So I got a mask at B.H. Dyers and set off for



Beach Point Cottages

Silene

the next lap of my fume work—still spitting the paint from the day before. I went to B.H. Dyers with a Groucho mask, nose, mustache, eye-glasses, and announced, "This mask doesn't work. I'm still spitting paint." Much laughter all around. Then on to the Post Office where Mae Bush and crew had a great laugh. A woman standing next to me at the window told me, in a serious tone, "That's not the kind of mask you wear when you're painting and you only have to wear it when you're painting, not all day long." More laughter all around. The weather was wet and windy outside. I had on a two-piece purple rain suit and all the bills and mail in a large plastic bag. Next stop, the bank. As I entered I saw Helen Rogers crossing the floor. I was sure she would burst out laughing at the first glance. No, she moved her glasses down her nose and looked intently over them toward me. Groucho in a rainsuit carrying a plastic bag. "Ring the police station." What? I whipped my Groucho disguise off. I was just as startled as Helen at that moment. When I got to the window, Cheryl Cohen told me she was still shaking, they thought I was a bank robber, of course.

How did you like that lightning the other night? I thought Captain Marvel and Superman were going to fly in through my bedroom window. And the thunder! I bet Anthony Souza and Woody at Craig Lumber were the only two in town who didn't wake up.

One day when I was over at Craig's, Anthony was buying supplies also. Woody was operating the table saw. Anthony hollered at him "cut that noise out, I can't hear myself think!" Not a snowflake, not a hurricane, not a firecracker, not a siren, has either man heard since before I was born.

Bird watchers are not only busy in the early morning hours these days, but also after sunset. The woodcock

will be performing his mating flight and ritual well into June. Being a crepuscular bird, he puts on his show just after sunset, for about a half-hour. An open field is where it will happen. A woodcock is an odd looking bird, looking as if he'd gotten all his parts at rummage or been assembled from spare parts. Almost no neck, shorter-than-short legs, a stout body, a long bill (which can open on the end when under the ground searching for earthworms), and oversized eyes which take up most of the skull. In fact, because of the evolution of the large eyes that the woodcock is so dependent on, the brain has been pushed so far back at an angle that it is called "the bird with the upside down brain." His camouflage coloring is beautiful though. Pat Hodge and I went to Wellfleet's Audubon last week to view and hear the flight song but got only as far as the "peent" and an escape flight. Wendy Haggerty and I went to the Pamet yesterday evening, armed with champagne and frosted glasses so the trip shouldn't be a total loss. Well, it wasn't. The nasal "peent" was to be heard from all direction. We were close enough to hear the "hic-cough"—"truc" or air going in before the exhale sound of "peent." When the woodcock is really warmed up these sounds are almost simultaneous. The "peents" come more rapidly and closer together. Then he's up, whirling in a circle, up and up, whistling all the while, the distance is about 200 feet. Then the descent. The bird chirping downward until he reaches the same spot he left moments ago, just like a boomerang. Then he starts all over again. This is all in the hopes of attracting a female. He'd better do something special with *those* looks. If you've never seen this display, do try and experience it; I guarantee you satisfaction.

Happy Birthday Que Linda—Cinco de Mayo