

KELLY'S CORNER

by Jan Kelly

Town was delighted with the visiting swans. "What are they? Are they really swans?" Yes, they are swans and mute swans. There are whooper swans, tundra swans, and trumpeter swans, also. These three species are northwestern birds breeding in the Arctic, Alaska, the Aleutians, Canada, and Northwestern United States. The trumpeter is the largest and black-billed. Its numbers have diminished greatly as both eggs and young were used as food supply and the market for swans' down for insulating clothing made them a constant target. Swans are large, heavy, and are slow to be airborne. They dive under water only when escaping. Their size and white color made them too easy to eliminate.

The mute swan, considered an old-world species, did not migrate to America but was sent as a decorative species for public parks and private estates. What is more peaceful or more graceful than swans floating majestically on calm waters? They look so elegant, they don't need a direction to go in, just that look. Most of these birds were imported at the turn of the century through the early 20's. The stock market crash of 1929 affected the fate of these swans as it did all Americans. The lavish and meticulously-kept estates were neglected and many were abandoned. Upstate New York would have the highest number.

Along with the lawns, the shrubs, and the flowers, the swans went wild. Not hand-fed anymore, they adapted to the wilds and continued to breed. These feral animals are our largest waterfowl. Since they are no longer kept, the birds have minds of their own and so you may find them anywhere along the coast, in fresh or salt water, even at Pucci's. I heard they like the way Joan Boudreau prepares the nachos!

The diagnostic marks of the mute swan are the "S" curve of the neck, orange bill with a black knob in the adult (a more rose-colored in a younger bird), and the fluffing out and curving of the wings is the threat posture. This threat posture is a most copied design for ceramic containers for flowers, party favors, soap, jewelry, and candles. On my last trip to Ireland, I noted the nest of a pair of swans was very high above the water mark. My cousin Honore' told me, "Oh, it will be a wet summer. They're making sure the young will

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Grace Ryder-O'Malley, young explorer extraordinaire

always be above water." If you're lucky enough to see the mute swans take off, you will see how heavy the birds are and what a powerful flight they have. There being only two birds in town, you won't see the "V" formation, and, of course, you won't hear a sound.

Provincetown has a new and instantly successful project this year, *The Kid's Club*, started by Carol D'Amico. Carol says she is "growing up with her child" and has found much of this "growing" goes on up Cape. Orleans and Hyannis for ballet and gymnastics, and Wellfleet for the Audubon, can keep a family on the road in search of constructive play time for children. Carol believes there is not enough in Provincetown for children, but that all the potential is here. The collective knowledge of Provincetown citizens needs a channel and vehicle in order to be shared with the curious minds of the school population. We have the knowledge, we have the environment, and now we have a structure for the dissemination of that knowledge.

Provincetown has had too much negative publicity from magazine articles and from TV coverage. *Boston Magazine* wrote of "Death in the Dunes," and the documentary *The Desperate Beauty*, related the limitations of unemployment and bars. *Good Morning America* concentrated on the fantasy of Provincetown. We who live here see it so differently. We see it as a small area varied enough to keep all ages and types interested. The beaches, the dunes, the woods, the marshes, the galleries, the Art Association and Museum, the theatre groups, the art schools, aerobics, tennis, softball, basketball, dancing, the restaurants, the snack bars, the private caterers, the shops, religions of all sects, healing groups, yoga, the masseurs and masseuses, weightlifting, windsurfing, bike trails, the "meetrack," even the Post Office and the A & P, are



Zeke Reich stretches out to work on his notebook

happenings in Provincetown. There is always something to do and somewhere to go in Provincetown. Anybody who lives here misses it when away. Homesickness is instantaneous and persistent no matter what the view or distraction before your eyes.

The *Kid's Club* is attempting to train the eyes and minds of its members so they can discover all that is available to them, and to eliminate "I'm bored" from their vocabulary. With Castle Hill covering the arts, the Yacht Club covering water sports, karate and little league covering sports, and school covering its curriculum, it leaves the environment, dance, gardening, and video as four aspects to be covered. Learning doesn't stop at 2 pm, nor does it stop in the summer. The mind never stops, and it needs guidance. The *Explorers Club* is filled; I taught the first session, *Plants of the Beech Forest*. Also teaching are: Wendy Willard, *Nesting Birds*; Linnet Hultin, *Making Terrariums*; Carol Carlsen, *Marine Biology*; Chuck Madansky, *Outdoor Survival*; Steve Morello, *Importance of the Wetlands and Salt Water and Fresh Water Marshes*; Barbara Mayo, *Treasures of the Dunes*; and Carol D'Amico will teach *Making and Keeping an Explorer's Journal*.

They will have a picnic the final week. Marie Pace and Donna LaLiberte will teach dance and body workout. The Regreening Committee will teach gardening, and American Cable Systems will teach Video Production. Carol D'Amico plans to expand the classes next year. This year all classes were filled to double capacity, so we are each teaching two sessions.

Next year, the groups will be placed in separate age groups: 5, 6, 7, and 9, 10, 11. The teens of 13 to 15 will have a special group. This "in-between" age can be

neglected and would do well with some outside enrichment beyond school and home. This will begin with a science club this winter. Discovery is part of learning, learning to see and eventually interpret. This is not a school but a discovery environment loosely based on the Summerhill system which allows the students to teach themselves. Coaching and guidance, equipment and setups carefully designed for self instruction is the concept. Remedial and children with learning problems can be taught a full curriculum if you can trigger the learning through a specific interest of the child.

The children fully enjoyed their outing in the Beech Forest. Elizabeth MacAdam was particularly adept in learning the botanical

terms, both in English and Latin. Science is her favorite subject. Grace Ryder-O'Malley had the outfit of the day, but she usually does, living up to the reputation of her namesake, Grace O'Malley, a brilliant and forceful eccentric of Irish history. A shock of colors, jackstone earrings, white-rimmed sunglasses, and flowing hair. Quite the garb for a 6 year old! Sari Fallas had the question of the day. Lunch is an important part of any outing. The group shared it with the resident Canadian geese. Sari wanted to know if the geese eat brisket. This confused several of the group until they realized Sari meant *Triskit*. Though bitten, scratched, sunburned, and weary, all were happy—learning can make you happy. If your interested for your child, call 487-1782, or write: *KIDS CLUB*, Box 699, Provincetown, Massachusetts, 02657.

I saw Norma Holt on her early morning walk and stopped to welcome her back for the summer and inquire what she was up to. Norma Holt was a successful children's photographer for years. Recently she has switched to the other end of life. You remember her successful book on older women, *Provincetown and Truro*, and her book on Provincetown artists.

Now, Norma is travelling and delivering to us the interesting work of the older women of Africa. This show is enjoying a long run at the Yale campus Afro-American Cultural Center. In Provincetown, Norma Holt's photographs will be featured at the Dennis DeBerry Gallery across from the Post Office. The subject is India, and not only women, but the great variety that India has to offer: colors, faces, silent pictorial stories. The show has never been presented before and can be seen July 17 to 30.

During her "vacation" in Provincetown, Norma will be working on two books: one is of the older artists treated in her *Provincetown Artists* collection. This is due to the interest of the National Council on Ageing. *Voice of America* has interviewed Norma on that specific work, too. The other book is on Indian, African, and Provincetown older women. Also, Norma is writing an article for a new magazine based in New York, catering to the audience of older women. The article is entitled: *Why The Older Woman*. Good luck to you, Norma. Every group needs its champion, and you have become the champion of the face of experience and understanding of life.