



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 3: NUMBER 3 MAY 1993



Shrunken Budget, Higher Tax

Board of Finance member Ed Ferman had called it a budget "even Scrooge could love." At its April 22 meeting, the board projected expenditures of \$3,461,809 for 1994 — 2.5% lower than last year — pending a hearing on May 7 and a town vote on May 21.

All the same, taxpayers can expect a rise in rates. A policy of withdrawing less from savings to make ends meet necessitates a general 5% tax revenue increase. To meet this bill — with a mill rate, following revaluation, of 16.6 — individual taxes will vary. Here is the formula you can use to figure your tax: multiply property value (\$200,000, say) by .0166. You tax: \$3,320.

— Charles Osborne

History Written in Stone

It makes one dizzy to imagine what a backbreaking task it was to build Cornwall's stone walls. Our woods and fields are full of them, part of the approximately 20,000 miles of walls found throughout Connecticut in 1871, almost enough to circle the earth at the equator. Preliminary research (that is, guesstimates) suggests

that Cornwall has more than 600 miles of walls wandering through field and forest, enough to stretch from Cornwall to Columbus, Ohio.

Why were they built? One theory is that they were to "bound and enclose land" for agricultural purposes. Another theory is that such walls are merely the "waste piles, the refuse of an agricultural age."

Wall-building came late to the Northwest Corner, the last part of the state to be settled. Cornwall had some of the roughest and rockiest terrain. One landowner wrote, sardonically:

*Nature out of her boundless store
Threw rocks together & did no more.*

In order to keep title to their land, the area's first settlers had to clear and fence six acres and build a house within two years, so clearing and house-building had priority over wall construction. On the other hand, from the very beginning, Cornwall's town meetings appointed both "fence viewers" to check on fence adequacy, and "pound keepers" to maintain the stone enclosures in which wandering farm animals were penned.

We can't assume that early settlers built stone walls because wood was scarce, since

the charcoal production which stripped the hillsides of timber continued until well past 1900. By the mid-19th century, Cornwall's attention was on stone removal or on rebuilding walls, particularly retaining walls or those on front lawns. A master builder of such walls was a Schaghticoke Indian named Nathan Cogswell. His elegant split-stone walls are intact today, one example being the retaining wall in front of John O'Donnell's home on Cogswell Road.

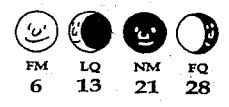
An 1855 Agricultural Society report noted much reconstruction of walls. The irregular walls on Theodore S. Gold's Cream Hill Farm were "re-built in six years, in straight lines," at the rate of half a mile a year. Titus L. Hart blasted rocks and built walls so that "not a stone remained on ground covered with fruit trees and luxuriant crops." And on the Rogers farm near the North Meeting House, crooked walls were "now being rebuilt in the best manner." The best manner apparently meant presenting a neatly-finished side to the road and on top, but leaving the wall rough on the interior or field side.

The use of barbed wire in the 1870s ended most farmers' stone-wall building.

(continued on page 2)

MAY 1993

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 Discussion series 11:30am UCC† (p.4) Arlington Yutzler's painting show opens, Sharon Health Care Center (p.4)	3 Reg. I Annual meeting 7:30pm HVRHS 8pm Town Hall	4 Reg. I referendum 12-8pm Town Hall CCS Spring Concert 1:30pm & 7:30pm Inland Wetlands * 8pm Town Hall Agri. Adv. Comm. 7:30pm CCS	5 W. Cornwall Merchants Ass'n 10am Cadwell's Corner	6 Every Thursday: Sr. Citizen lunch & shopping trip	7 Public meeting on the budget 7:30pm CCS	1 Park & Rec Gymnastics 11am Goshen Center School 8 Gymnastics Poetry reading 8pm Cadwell's Corner
9 MOTHERS DAY Discussion series 11:30am UCC† (p.4)	10 P&Z 8pm Town Hall Corn. Library show, Erica Prud'homme's paintings	11 Elderly Health Screening W. Corn. Firehouse (p.4) Hous. Riv. Comm. 7:30pm CCS Library Dem. Town Comm. 7:30pm Town Hall	12 Rep. Town Comm. 7:30pm Town Hall	13 Cornwall Housing Corp. 7:30pm UCC†	14	15 ARMED FORCES DAY Plant Swap 11am CCS (p.4) Bottle & Can Drive by Girl Scouts 9am-1pm W.C. Firehouse (p.4) Rabies Clinic 1-3pm Kent Town Garage (p.4)
16 Discussion series 11:30am UCC† (p.4)	17 8pm Town Hall HVRHS Bd. of Ed. 7:30pm HS Library	18	19 Kindergarten Registration CCS. Call for appointment (p.4)	20 Board of Ed. 4pm CCS Library Board of Finance 7:30pm CCS Library	21 Town Meeting to vote on budget 8pm CCS (p.1)	22
23	24 Z.B. of Appeals* 8pm Town Hall	25	26	27	28	29 Food sale by Woman's Society 9am Baird's (p.4)
30 Covered Bridge dance 6-11pm W. Cornwall (p.4)	31 MEMORIAL DAY 9:15 Observance at North Cornwall Cemetery (p.4) 10:00 Seamen's Memorial, Covered Bridge, West Cornwall (p.4) 11:00 Parade & Ceremony, Cornwall Village Green (p.4) 12-3 Carnival at UCC† (p.4)					



*Check time and place at Town Office. † United Church of Christ

(continued from page 1)

In recent times, by the use of excavating equipment not even dreamed of in earlier days, walls have literally been buried in order to enlarge fields and get rid of rocks. Yet, because of their rugged beauty, many walls, usually those bordering roads, continue to be painstakingly restored.

— Michael Gannett

Selectmen Challenged

At their April 19 meeting, the selectmen, after some challenges, agreed to consider at a future town meeting the appointment of a committee to study the need for and wisdom of establishing a Historic District Commission. Such a study committee requires the approval of the town.

The selectmen indicated that they are not convinced of the need for a commission, a view supported by a number of Cornwall Village residents. On the other hand, proponents pointed out that all five neighboring towns had commissions in place to protect the character of their towns. Questions about control by outside agencies, subjective judgment, and legal complications were also raised.

It was clear that most of those present favored a study committee. Ultimately the citizens would have the final say in town meeting. More details of this issue will appear in the June *Chronicle*.

— Ken Keskinen



State Reps Rap with Townsfolk

State Representative Mary Ann O'Sullivan and State Senator Dell Eads met with about twenty interested Cornwall citizens on Monday evening, April 19, to discuss issues and hear concerns.

Questions raised by constituents ranged from telephone towers and casino gambling to campaign financing and the income tax. Both representatives favored more controls on campaign financing. As to casinos, O'Sullivan is opposed, but Dell Eads has not yet made up her mind. Eads acknowledged that the income tax is here to stay, but said that it needs to be more equitable. Both agreed that the state's economy is challenged by its debt, problems of conversion, union demands, and the needs of troubled cities like Bridgeport. Aid to towns like Cornwall will be limited as a result.

The hour-long meeting provided a good and much appreciated opportunity for constituents to speak to their reps.

— Ken Keskinen

Cornwall Winter Stats

Inches of snow (Mohawk Ski Area)	120
Number of days of snow	24
CCS Snow Days	5
Sand (in tons) for town roads	2200
Cost of sand	\$16,500
Salt (in tons) for roads	192.5
Cost of salt	\$7300
Hours of overtime for crew (5 men)	1006
Cost of overtime (approximate)	\$14,000
Additional snow-clearing contracts	\$9000
Number of power outages	28
Average number of customers affected	108
Longest outage hours (32 customers)	56
Cars pulled out of mud by David Hall	15

— Spencer Klaw

Fantastic Fingers

Cornubia Hall was the setting for a joyous and exciting concert given by duo-pianists Anne Chamberlain and Kari Miller on Sunday afternoon, March 28.

In a moving tribute to the late Angeline Pool, the players opened with Bach's stately "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring." They then went on to a program which included Bach, Schubert, Busoni, Helps, Poulenc, and Mendelssohn.

Music for four hands approaches orchestral music in its fullness and texture; and watching the players' hands on one piano is a revelation. I arrived early in order to have a seat from which I could see the keyboard. In Bach's "Fantasy and Fugue in G Minor," the players' hands literally flew over the keyboard, sometimes intertwining but always working together perfectly. Especially impressive were the runs started by one player and seamlessly taken up and finished by the other.

Perhaps the high point of the concert was the last number, Mendelssohn's "Allegro Brillant, Opus 92," a piece which seems to define the word "bravura." Anne and Kari seemed to relish its murderous difficulties, and the cheering audience was left with the memory of a concert it would not forget.

— John Zinsser

A Piece of Pie for the Guv

Becky Williams, already famous for her apple pie, having won first place at the Cornwall Agricultural Fair last summer, took her talents, tools, and ingredients to a local bake-off. Success there led to the state competition, where her runner-up pie sent her to the all-New England bake-off on



April 17. Becky reports that on this occasion the juices ran over and glued her pie to the pan — a dilemma most pie-makers are familiar with. She finished ninth.

As a result of her succulent success in the state competition, Becky was invited to share some of her runner-up pie with Governor Weicker. As he put down his fork, the Guv acknowledged that he was not supposed to eat such delights, but said, "I loved it anyway."

Bake-off competitors were given one hour to prepare their pie for baking. Note to apple-pie makers: Becky uses Mutsu and Cortland apples blended with spices (ah — there's the secret!) tucked into crusts made with lard.

Congratulations to Becky — one of the top ten pie-makers of New England.

— Lisa Lansing



Welcome

James Andrew McDonough
to Margaret and Gregory T. McDonough

Congratulations

Steven R. Butler to Janet R. Hanna

Good-bye to Friends

William Field
Elizabeth Thompson
Florence Whitcomb

Land Transfers

Barbara Clark Griffin to Alice Gottesman and Larry Zuckerman, 3.15 acres on Great Hill Road.

Est. of John Hinchman to Joan Hinchman, house and lot on Valley Road.

Rabid Raccoon Report

More encounters with rabid raccoons are being reported in Cornwall. Some citizens have had to deal with such raccoons on their own. Mabel Engisch killed one with a hoe last December after being bitten. Mabel called 911, was taken to the hospital, and is now OK.

Priscilla Mauro found a raccoon approaching her in the paint room of Hart's barn. Realizing that the coon was between her and the door, she kicked it to the side, seized a two-by-four, and clubbed the already-suffering rabid intruder to death.

The preceding weekend a coon bit the Stevens' dog and hung on the dog's neck. Larry Stevens pried the raccoon loose with a pitchfork, then got Bob Beers to come and shoot it. Rose (the dog) is fine.

Rabid animals are dangerous to pets and humans, and sometimes the courageous reactions reported above are unavoidable. But Rick Stone, Animal Control Officer (672-6256), advises against bashing rabid animals, as sprayed blood or frag-

ments of bone and tissue can contaminate animals and humans. Shooting is better. Best just to avoid and report all strangely behaving wild animals.

The Town Office has detailed what-to-do handouts. A Rabies Clinic in Kent May 15 (see Events & Announcements) will help provide more guidance.

— Ken Keskinen

P&Z Hearings to Be Continued

During hearings at its regular meeting on April 12, the Planning and Zoning Commission received two special permit applications: 1) Attorney Peter Ebersol representing Arthur and John Dutton to subdivide 115 acres and construct a private road; and 2) the Cornwall Child Center to establish an educational use at the Gannett Park site of a new building.

Because the proposed Dutton Road is long and crosses wetlands, members will inspect the property with consulting engineer Bob Oley. The Child Center site plan met with no objection but was not complete. Therefore, both hearings have been continued until the P&Z meeting on May 10. In addition, the commission voted to add to the May hearing agenda Rocky River Associates' application to renew a gravel-mining permit. Mr. Oley will also review that operation.

— Ginny Potter

Kugeman Village A-Building

Delayed for five weeks because of weather conditions, construction of Kugeman Village is now under way. The occupancy date is projected for late November, with the application process to begin in July. Community Housing Management of North Haven will provide management services.

Persons who have not yet indicated their interest in applying for units may have their names placed on a list to receive information by writing to either of the following addresses:

Cornwall Housing Corporation
Box 174, Cornwall, CT 06753

or

Community Housing Management, Inc.
Attn: Kugeman Village
165 Clintonville Road
North Haven, CT 06473

Sketches of the buildings, a model, and floor plans may be seen at the Cornwall Free Library.

— Ken Keskinen



Bear Sighting

Lydia Wolf, of Valley Road, reports seeing in early April a bear just beyond her lawn fence, moving from east to west "in a slow hurry," headed for Coltsfoot Mountain.



Letters to the Chronicle



IT'S SAFER WITH YOUR CLOTHES OFF

Lyme disease has become an increasing concern in Cornwall. Fortunately, however, a letter from a Dr. Henry M. Feder, Jr., published in the January 27 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association provides a foolproof tick avoidance strategy:

"Following a case of erythema migrans at a Connecticut nudist camp, a request was made to the UConn Health Center for a physician who [would] come to the camp and discuss Lyme disease. Not one to miss such an opportunity, I [visited at] a time when the camp population swells to over 300 nudists.

"The camp [was] an ideal environment for the deer tick (Ixodes dammini). Tick repellent was not used by the nudists. Over the past year there had been [only] one case of physician-diagnosed erythema migrans acquired at the nudist camp.

"Why are deer tick bites unusual at this camp? One explanation is that although deer are present, deer ticks are not yet established. A second explanation is that deer ticks do not like nudists, as ticks prefer to do their biting under cover. A tick surveillance study is being planned for next year."

Our selectmen must turn their focus away from budgets, roads, and Rumsey Hall and adopt this tick-avoidance strategy by declaring Cornwall a Clothes-free Zone.

— Jim Fishman

TACKY TAX TALK?

Your April Chronicle published the names and assessments of Cornwall's top ten taxpayers. Even though this is public information, I find publishing it distasteful and an invasion of privacy. Printing the taxpayers' names is tacky enough, but including figures is ridiculous.

— Jessica Meyer

ACID DISSENT

I'd like to respond to Janice and Don Bracken's letter in the April Chronicle.

I am behind the Brackens' opposition to late-night-running trains. However, their argument against the railroad's carrying hydrochloric acid, however valid, falls flat when we realize that thousands of gallons of chemicals, gasoline, and hydrochloric acid come rumbling up Route 7 every day in trucks, coming just as close to homes as the trains do. We can't single out one mode of transportation. Complaining about chemicals on the train gives Mr. Hanlon the opportunity to point his finger at the trucking industry, thereby diverting attention from the problem his company is causing.

If we start getting wrapped up in offshoot arguments, we run the risk of undermining the real issue: noisy trains. — Robert Longley

BLAME IT ON THE REPUBLICANS!

After having tried, unsuccessfully, to survive this winter of blizzards blanketing calf hutches, of pipes and me freezing even on

the so-called "warm days," equipment breaking down due to the prolonged cold, or wind blowing me and everything else around like pingpong balls, I've decided I must blame somebody. It's the Republicans' fault. More specifically the Republican Town Committee's fault.

In the twelve years I've been here we've withstood several hurricanes, the tornado, power outages, back surgery, chicken pox, help not showing up, and just plain not feeling like it. Still we never missed a milking before this winter. But the RTC was just too much for us. How did they know I voted for Perot?

Every time the RTC schedules a meeting the area gets clobbered by record snow, ice, or cold. Even their rescheduled days get Dr. Mel to work overtime.

I give up. Uncle! You win! I'm going south. Call me if spring ever gets here or when the Republicans either disband or forgive me.

— Craig Simons, Cream Hill Farm

WHOEVER YOU ARE

CCC says thank you! The Cornwall Child Center is in the process of getting the necessary permits for its new home in Gannett Park. The auction was a \$10,800 success, thanks to everyone who contributed in so many ways. And in mid-April a wonderful matching check for \$11,000 arrived from an anonymous donor. With these additional funds and encouragement, the center now feels confident about undertaking the building project.

— Ginny Potter

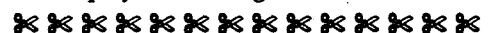
TO THE ROAD CREW

Having just completed our second winter (some winter!) as full-time Cornwall residents, we want to express our appreciation for the prompt, expert job done by the road crew to keep Cornwall roads passable on snowy and icy days. The noise of the snow plough clattering over Cream Hill has reassured us on snowy mornings that you have done battle with the constant drifts out our way and that we will be able to go about our business despite winter's fiercest onslaughts. We appreciate your skill and diligence. Thank you, thank you!

— Spencer and Barbara Klaw

New Fishing Hole

The Chronicle's ol' fishin' hole on page 4 where we cast for contributors each month was a little disappointing last month. This month we've decided to try this new pool. We hope you're biting.



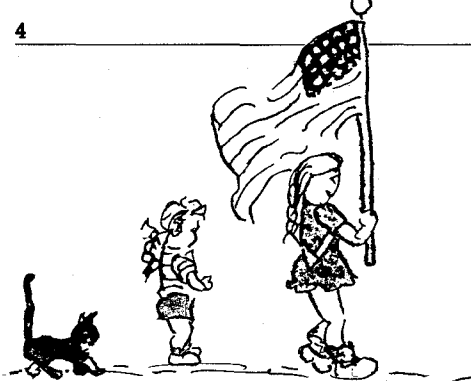
✂ \$10 will get the Chronicle mailed out-of-town.
✂ Contributions, larger or smaller, welcome.

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Memorial Day Schedule

9:15 a.m. Activities begin with an observance led by Charles Gold at the North Cornwall Cemetery. Participants may wish to bring flowers to decorate the graves.

10 a.m. Seamen's Memorial Service at the Covered Bridge.

11 a.m. The annual parade and ceremony at the Cornwall Village green. The parade will form on Hubbard Field at 10:30 a.m. All veterans are invited to march; uniforms are not required. In case of rain, the program will be held in the CCS gym.

12 noon The annual Memorial Day carnival will take place immediately following the program on the green. Hosted by the United Church of Christ and the Cornwall Child Center, the carnival will provide entertainment for all and plentiful food.

Diverse Works of Art

David Bean's exhibition, now at the Cornwall Free Library, offers diverse subjects, in diverse media, conceived from a diverse imagination.

Bean has created some unusual three-dimensional constructions. These pieces are put together in uncommon ways from common hands-on materials — linen, wood, hardware cloth, cotton, bamboo, wire, yarn. "Pick-a-Path" is an intriguing multilevel assemblage of wood toothpicks suspended in linen netting strung within a frame of hardware cloth.

Bean has also included a selection of paintings, drawings, and prints. In the children's room, he presents three woodcuts, fine examples of printmaking. In two pieces he calls "Valley Brook," Bean achieves a stunning effect in bright colors by combining oil pastel with watercolor.

— Alfred Bredenberg



Ol' Fishin' Hole

The new Gannett Park 15-and-under fishing area opened April 17. Big success! Twenty-eight kids caught 21 trout the first day. They had lots of fun, and the good fishing has continued. Sue Williamson, Steve Hedden, and/or George Brown could use more money to stock more fish.

This corner is the *Chronicle's* ol' fishin' hole. We are trying a new spot this month — see page 3.

Events & Announcements

Art Show: Arlington (Dutch) Yutzler's paintings will be on display at the Sharon Health Care Center May 2-16. The opening will be May 2, 2-4 p.m.

Discussion Series: "The Wisdom of Matthew Fox" will be the subject of three classes on Sundays, May 2, 9, and 16 at 11:30 a.m. at the United Church of Christ. Led by Anne Zinsser and Jean Vitalis, discussion on the views of this controversial theologian will be based on videotaped interviews. All welcome. For more information, call 672-6840.

Cornwall Consolidated School Spring Concert: Band and chorus will fill the air with music on Tuesday, May 4, at 1:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at the CCS Gymnasium. Visitors are welcome!

Elderly Health Screening: Cornwall residents 60 and over are offered a wide range of medical tests on Tuesday, May 11, at the West Cornwall Firehouse. The fee is \$18, or \$19 with PAP test. To schedule an appointment or receive further information call Jill Gibbons at 672-2603.

Bottle-and-Can Drive: The last collection date in the Girl Scout bottle-and-can drive will be Saturday, May 15, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at the West Cornwall Firehouse.

Vaccinate Your Best Friends: A Rabies Clinic will be held on Saturday, May 15, 1-3 p.m. at the Town Garage in Kent. Charge: \$8 per animal; dogs must be on leashes, and cats must be in carriers.

Plant Swap: If your malva has multiplied and your dahlias need dividing, bring your extras to a plant swap to be held in the Consolidated School parking lot on Saturday, May 15, at 11 a.m. All perennials — well identified, please — are welcome. Inspect your neighbors' horticultural wares, expound on the delights of your own flowering offspring, and strike a deal. For more information call Cheryl Evans at 672-0094 or Jamie Monagan at 672-4815

Calling All Five-Year-Olds: Kindergarten registration for the 1993-94 school year will be held Wednesday, May 19. Any child turning five on or before December 31, 1993, is eligible. Call the school office at 672-6617 to schedule a time for your child to visit the kindergarten room and meet the teacher, Mrs. Wadhams. Parents need to bring their child's birth certificate and official immunization record.

Volunteers Needed for W. E. S.: Women's Emergency Services is seeking volunteers to provide hotline counseling, do legal advocacy, and provide other needed services for battered women and their children. W. E. S. will sponsor a 22-hour free training session for volunteers beginning Wednesday, May 19. For information, call the W. E. S. office at 824-1080 or 824-1491.

Food Sale: On May 29 at 9:00 a.m. there will be a food sale at Baird's, sponsored by the Woman's Society of the United Church of Christ. Proceeds will benefit World Hunger.

Covered Bridge Dance: On Sunday, May 30, the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department will sponsor the second annual Bridge Dance at the West Cornwall covered bridge — rain or shine. Proceeds will fund equipment and training for the firemen.

The Backwoods Band will play country music for dancing from 6 to 11 p.m. Food will be served beginning at 5 p.m.

Parking on the west (Sharon) side of the river will be at the NU parking lot north of the bridge, and on the east side at CCS and the firehouse area. Shuttle buses will run between the parking areas and the bridge throughout the night.

Advance tickets are \$5 for adults (\$6 at the gate) and \$4 for youths (\$5 at the gate). Children under 10 admitted free, with an adult. For ticket information call 672-4373.

Don't miss it!



New Board of Ed Member: Philip Bishop has been appointed to fill the vacancy left by Albert Clark's resignation.

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY Joan Edler

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Peg & Ken Keskinen

Ella Clark

JUNE EDITORS

Peg & Ken Keskinen

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