

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 13 : NUMBER 7 AUGUST 2003



River Resources

So here we are in the midst of another beautiful Cornwall summer. Canoes, kayaks, and rafts animate the river. West Cornwall bustles with motorcyclists, lively families, and blissful couples enjoying the scenery. Thru-hikers sit drinking their Gatorade on the steps of Baird's.

Fisher people, like neoprene astronauts, walk awkwardly against the current, and then plant themselves among the cobbles for the afternoon. What better time could there be than now to take a moment to thank the Housatonic River? Go boating or fishing, take a hike, or have a picnic near the river. The next time you're stuck behind a slow car on Route 7, don't tailgate viciously; relax and take time to enjoy the view.

Or take a moment to stop by the nation's oldest watershed protection group, the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA), located near the junction of Routes 7 and 45. This summer, Cornwallians Mary Greene and Chelsea Bardot, and Sharon resident Franny Clow have joined the HVA staff to conduct water quality studies on the Tenmile River, an important tributary of the Housatonic. Over the last month the interns' office has been filled with various samples of benthic macroinvertebrates (bugs that live on the bottom of the river). Now that these creatures have been identified, the team will use

each species' pollution tolerance value to determine the health of the river at several test sites. Their next project is to plan public outreach activities concerning the Tenmile River Watershed.

Also located in the HVA office is the Environmental Resources Center, run by Ruth Malins. Ruth's office is lined from floor to ceiling with books, reports, pamphlets, and maps about everything from land use to wildlife to invasive species to PCBs. If you have a question concerning the Housatonic Valley, you'll find the answer there.

So, the next time you're on your way to Kent, stop by the Housatonic Valley Association and see what's going on. Whether you're looking for a volunteer opportunity, a chance to get out on the river for a good cause, or just want to know more about the Housy, a stop at the HVA will be worth your time. It's another fine way to say thank-you to Cornwall's greatest resource.

—Chelsea Bardot

Festival for the Fourth

Fireworks weren't the only thing in the air on this Fourth of July weekend. Accompanying them were Jane Prentice and many of the children of Cornwall at this year's July Fest on the Town Green. Unlike past cel-

ebrations, this year's Cornwall Park and Rec. event featured a huge air-filled obstacle course and a trampoline with high-tension bungee cords attached to a harness which catapulted and thrilled people above the crowds.

Down below there were free hot dogs, hamburgers, and watermelon, and an unexpectedly short supply of lemonade. The scorching heat threatened to melt the enthusiasm of the celebrants until the pumper truck from the CVFD, driven by Ron Laigle, Sr., showed up. Standing in for Skip Kosciusko (who was attending Phill West's wedding), Ron, Jr., doused children and adults and sent tee-shirts flying.

The day began with the annual bicycle parade as children from all over dressed up themselves and bikes in a rainbow of colors. The colors blurred as the bikes (and trikes) zoomed down Pine Street: Alex North's red, white, and blue ribbons and matching crown; Aidan Perret's flags and peace signs leading the way.

As the road cleared, Johan Winsser assembled participants for the races. Elijah (the littlest Donal) led the under-fives around the Green, followed closely by Cameron Scott. In the six-and-older race, Philip Geyselaers and R. J. Thompson ran a dead heat with Olivia Scott just behind. The mile run around the

(continued on page 2)

AUGUST 2003

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 Story Hour and Crafts 10-11 A.M. Cornwall Library Rose Algrant Show 5-8 P.M. Mohawk Ski Lodge	2 Rose Algrant Show 10 A.M.-5 P.M. Mohawk Ski Lodge Chamber Music Concert 7:30 P.M., CHLA (p.4)
3 Rose Algrant Show 10 A.M.-5 P.M. Mohawk Ski Lodge	4  Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	5  Blue Mt. Satsang Every Tuesday 6:30-8 P.M. UCC Day Room Inland Wetlands* 8 P.M. Town Hall	6 Reading Safari Program 7-8 P.M. Cornwall Library	7 Meditation for Mothers Every Thursday 1:15-2:15 P.M. UCC Day Room	8 Story Hour and Crafts 10-11 A.M. Cornwall Library	9 Annual Tag Sale 9 A.M.-2 P.M. St. Bridget's (p.4) Annual Meeting Cornwall Association 4-6 P.M. UCC Parish House (p.4)
10	11 Blood Pressure Screening 3-4 P.M. UCC Parish House P&Z 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	12  Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	13 Reading Safari Program 7-8 P.M. Cornwall Library	14	15 Deadline: September Chronicle Copy Story Hour and Crafts 10-11 A.M. Cornwall Library	16
17	18	19 "Cornwall Day" at Lake Compounce 11 A.M.-8 P.M. (p.4) Cupcake Party 2:30-4 P.M. Hughes Library (p.4)	20  Bd. of Selectmen 9 A.M. Town Hall Bd. of Fin. 7:30 P.M. CCS Lib. VFW Post 9856 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	21  Bd. of Selectmen 9 A.M. Town Hall Bd. of Fin. 7:30 P.M. CCS Lib. VFW Post 9856 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	22 Cornwall Child Center Fall Registration 9 A.M.-noon (p.4) Drive-in Movie, 8:30 P.M. Town Green (p.4)	23
24	25 ZBA 7:30 P.M. Town Hall*	26	27  Green Party 7:30 P.M. Town Hall Cornwall Vol. Fire Dept. 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	28	29 	30
31						

* Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

(continued from page 1)

village was won by eight-year-old Wilson Terrall, who finished in 6:32. The first girl to finish was Jeanne Theleen, who came all the way from Southbury (by car). But perhaps most astonishing was Jessica Hurlburt, who not only finished as the third girl, but also ran barefoot and stopped altogether at one point to help another child who was having difficulty running in the heat.

After a string of victories, the town Democrats decided to give the Republicans the year off from the tug-of-war and volleyball competitions. Actually, the heat prevented the crowd from coming out from the shade of the trees. As everyone headed home some parents were trying to prove to their children that old age couldn't stop them from doing one last flip on the trampoline.

—Josh Perlstein and Maisie Dolan

The Smallpox Cemetery

Residents driving by the North Cornwall Church might wish to pause to view one somber reminder of our past. Just beyond the church lies the smallpox cemetery—three listing slate headstones and an unmarked fieldstone grave, now almost hidden by the grass. Two little flags also mark the site. (It is most easily reached from Cogswell Road, about 300 yards west of the church. Walk in about 100 yards and look for the board fence that surrounds the graveyard.)

Around the time of the Revolution, smallpox was a scourge, claiming 30 Sharon residents in two months, for example. Cornwall's volunteers to the Continental Army were particularly devastated by the dread contagion, especially when rotting in the filthy, frigid holds of British prisoner-of-war ships in Long Island Sound immediately after the loss of Fort Washington in New York in 1776. Phineas and Captain Elias Hart (of Major John Sedgwick's company), Daniel Allen (relative of Ethan), Oliver "Judge" Burnham who enlisted at age 15 (the foundation of whose house can be found directly across Town Street from the Barretts)—these were but a few of our pox-wracked soldiers early on in the war.

In early 1777, a Lieutenant Parmalee returned to give the pox to his entire family, who lived 1,500 feet or so south of the Burnham's residence, in a moody hollow on a still existing lane near the current Geisser home. Their dwelling (the foundation still visible) was turned into the town's "pest house," and the untouchables confined there were said to languish on not much more than maple syrup during the depths of the Revolution. Their dirt track was called Pest House Road.

At the end of it waited even a death apart; so entrenched was the fear of contagion that the pox's victims were not judged to be safe for burial with their brethren. So Nathaniel Sanders, Hannah Butler, and a

young boy named David Johnson were shoved into the smallpox cemetery in the late spring of 1777—the former with a grave inscription reading: "The living man, That views my tomb shall see, That here's that room, Where he must Shortly Be."

Ebenezer Jackson joined them in 1801, following the town's second epidemic and while serving with Judge Burnham as a selectman. It's unclear from Starr's *A Typical New England Town* who is buried in the fifth grave, now totally unmarked. In a poem about the melancholy of old graveyards, Carl Sandburg wrote, "I am the grass, and let me weep."

—David Monagan

The Library Wants You!

Come and be trained to assist the librarians with checking books in and out at the front desk, learn about the circulation and shelving of books and how to use the newly air-conditioned library's computer system. If you're a teenage student, this kind of work looks terrific on your college and/or job applications.

Amy Cady is looking for committed volunteers who will work two- to three-hour shifts on a regular basis. She's ready for immediate help from men or women eager to find the team spirit that the new library wants and needs. Call Amy Cady at 672-6874.

—Becky Hurlburt

Election 2003

The Democratic caucus to endorse candidates for the upcoming municipal election was held July 15. The following people were nominated to fill the slate: Selectman, Neal "Skip" Kosciusko; Board of Finance, six-year term, Celia Senzer and Earl Brecher; Board of Finance, two-year term, Paul Baren; Board of Finance, Alternate, David Grossman; Board of Education, Catherine Tatge and James Terrall; Board of Assessment Appeals, Richard Bramley; Planning and Zoning, Doc Simont; Zoning Board of Appeals, Anne Chamberlain and Hanna Grossman; Park and Rec., Margaret Haske, Don Clark, and Phill West.

At the Republican caucus held on July 22, the following were nominated: Selectman, K. C. Baird; Board of Finance, six-year term, Peter Kalmes, Jack Preston; Board of Finance, two-year term, Roger Kane; Board of Finance, Alternate, Anne Kosciusko; Board of Education, Wynne Kavanagh; Board of Assessment Appeals, Roger Kane; Planning and Zoning, Anne Kosciusko; Zoning Board of Appeals, Heidi Kearns; Park and Rec., Brian Kavanagh, Tom Brown.

Both parties endorsed the following: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway; Town Clerk, Cheryl Evans; Treasurer, John Green; and Tax Collector, Helen Migliacci.

—Becky Hurlburt

Welcome

Cole Hays Zabriskie to Christopher and Catherine Zabriskie

Amberly Rose Palmer to Allison Dyer and Michael Palmer, Jr.

Congratulations

Peter Bernard to Tamsen Russell

Carl Wilson III to Amy Brightman

Ben Gray to Marian McClelland

Kurt Sternlof to Keryn Elizabeth O'Donnell

Russell Bartlett to Marisa Dolinsky

Phillip West to Katherine Martin

John Nestler to Jennifer Van Asch Van Wyck

Land Transfers

Stephen M. Smith to Raymond W. Olsen, house and 1.1 acres at 303 Kent Road for \$159,000.

Franz M. and Margaret F. Oppenheimer to Jeffrey E. and Carolyn C. Tillou, Cornwall portion of land sold in Cornwall and Goshen for \$430,000.

B. David and Ann S. Gilland to John C. L. and Sally V. C. Van Doren, 87.3 acres at Bradford Road and Route 43 for \$750,000.

Robert S. and Constance P. Hare, gift to Cornwall Conservation Trust, Inc., 9.738 acres on Popple Swamp Road.

John A. and Carolee Scowcroft to Emily Buchanan, house and 34.5 acres at 133 Great Hollow Road for \$850,000.

Pamela Thompson to Richard K. and Richard H. Dolan, house and 7.48 acres at 90 Cornwall Hollow Road for \$269,000.

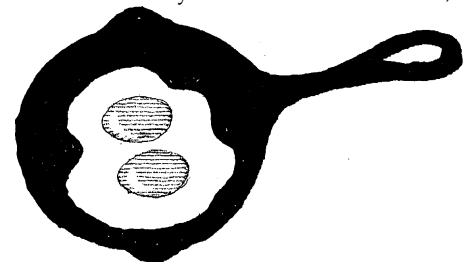
Adolph Sky, Tr. and Eric Sky, Tr. to Cornwall Housing Corporation, house and lot at 34 Mansonville Road, for \$130,000.

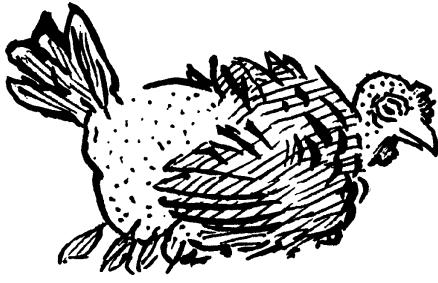
Edward H. Dodd, III and Elena Dodd to Peter B. Caruso, 6.084 acres on Lake Road for \$60,000.

The Lure of Local Produce

Fresh local produce and eggs are available in a growing number of outdoor locations this summer. Gordon Ridgway, who has run the grandfather of Cornwall farm stands for 20 years on Town Street, says that despite the spring rains, "it looks good for a bad year." Ridgway's freshly picked organic produce is displayed for shoppers who serve themselves and leave payment in the containers Ridgway provides. Among his offerings: tomatoes, lettuces, salad greens, root vegetables, beans, peas, leeks, onions, melons, and watermelons. The sign says "Open 24 hours," but Ridgway recommends getting there in the morning for the best selection.

From Wednesday through Sunday, 2 P.M. until dusk, Greg Robinson's produce is sold at the farm stand he operates outside Baird's General Store in Cornwall Bridge. Robinson says his crop, grown at Arthur Lorch's farm on Route 7 with the help of Ken Gladding, "looks lush this year because of all the rain,"





and that plants had been "starving for water the last two years." Robinson carries a wide selection of summer staples and has more than 800 tomato plants, including heirloom varieties from Europe, stuffing tomatoes and cherry tomatoes. Robinson, who uses fertilizers and cow manure, does not spray for bugs, but does spray in the fall for weeds. Baird's West Cornwall store offers Robinson's and other locally grown produce.

A newcomer to the farm stand business is Buddy Hurlburt, of the long-established dairy farm on Hautboy Hill Road in Cornwall Hollow. Last summer, Hurlburt placed a table at the end of his driveway to sell corn and pumpkins. This August he is expanding to a full-fledged farm stand, open daily, which offers sweet corn, tomatoes, peppers, ornamental gourds, eggs, honey, and maple syrup. Hurlburt does not use fertilizers or pesticides.

Larry Stevens' farm stand at 178 Cream Hill Road is open daily beginning early August until frost. His biggest crop is sweet corn, of which he farms several acres. He sells a variety of summer vegetables and in the fall has pumpkins, gourds, and Indian corn. Next door to Stevens, Allyson Kennedy sells eggs. For several years, Jeff and Mary Ann Fox have been selling eggs from a cooler on a chair near Four Corners. Says Mary Ann, "a fox sometimes interferes with egg production, but we normally have a couple of dozen every few days."

Weasels have killed some of the chickens at the Morehouse farm on Route 63, but eggs are for sale there along with lemonade, which the three Morehouse children occasionally sell from a brightly painted red and yellow stand they built.

The Prentice children have temporarily suspended their egg vending on Todd Hill Road, but Jane Prentice remembers when Ryan Quinn sold his home-grown vegetables door-to-door in West Cornwall quite successfully.

The best part of running a farm stand is that its owner does not have to leave Cornwall to do business. The upside for Cornwall residents seeking fresh locally grown vegetables and eggs is that neither do they. As Alice Waters, the pioneering chef of the organic food movement says, "the sensual pleasure of eating beautiful food from the garden brings with it the moral satisfaction of doing the right thing for the planet and yourself."

—Sally Van Doren

Letters to the Chronicle

ANOTHER DAY?

A pair of summer residents contrasts the chronic drought in their Caribbean winter home with Cornwall's torrential spring rains. "We have heard a lot of comment on the constant precipitation since getting here," they remark. These verses further refine their comments:

*It rained and rained and rained,
The average fall was well maintained,
And when the roads were just like bogs,
It started raining cats and dogs!*

*Then after a lull of half an hour,
There came a most refreshing shower,
And then, most refreshing of all,
A gentle rain began to fall.*

*The next day too was almost dry,
Except for a deluge from the sky,
Which wet the party to the skin,
And after that, the rain set in.*

*Thanks for publishing the Chronicle. It
keeps us in touch with Cornwall when we are far
away across the sea.*

—Lisa and Desmond Nicholson

WANTED: A CORNWALL STUDIO

*As the operator of the Cornwall Exchange I
recently got the following e-mail:*

"I am setting up a small/medium-sized com-

*munity-based recording studio in Cornwall. I
am looking for a suitable barn to rent preferably
in the Bodmin Moor area, into which I will in-
stall the studio. This is an exciting project with a
long-term view of promoting the region's music,
local economy, and renewable energy. If you can
help, please e-mail me." It was signed Ant W.
Jackson. His return address was yahoo.co.uk.*

*I replied, "The only help I can think of to
offer is to list your search on the Cornwall Ex-
change page on the cornwallct website. But the
Cornwall that our website is concerned with is a
small town in the state of Connecticut, USA. I
don't think we have a Bodmon Moor area here
(at least, I have never heard of one). We do have
a Yelping Hill and a Dark Entry forest, though,
as well as many barns. From your e-mail ad-
dress, I would venture a guess that you're look-
ing for a barn in Cornwall, England, not here.
Good luck in your search!" Mr. Jackson re-
sponded: "Oooops!!! My mistake. I didn't know
there was a Cornwall in the U.S. Cheers any-
way, mate."*

*Since then, I have also gotten an e-mail from
a nice lady in Uxbridge who wants to exchange
her house for one in Cornwall, preferably on the
Cornish coast. When I asked how she learned
about the Cornwall Exchange, she told me that
it's the first site that's listed when one enters the
words "Cornwall Exchange" on Google.*

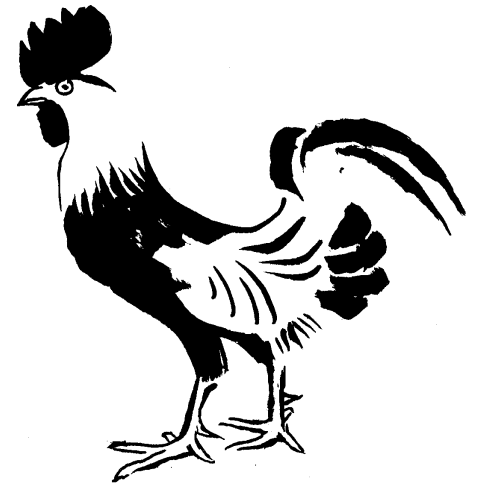
—David Grossman

Protecting Cream Hill Lake

Cream Hill Lake boaters and swimmers venturing beyond the sandy beaches may have encountered patches of the invasive aquatic plant, Eurasian watermilfoil. Sadly, the appearance of milfoil in a lake or pond often heralds dramatic and unfortunate changes in aquatic ecology. Milfoil's rapidly growing dense canopies, reaching to the surface of the water, shade out native vegetation. This shade damages waterfowl, fish, and wildlife habitats and interferes with recreational activities. According to a recent study by Robert Gambino of the Northeast Tree, Pond & Tree Service, Inc., milfoil has been present in the lake for a number of years. However, its notable increase this summer is cause for concern.

A submersed perennial, milfoil can be identified by its delicate featherlike leaves radiating from a long flexible stem. It is an extremely adaptable plant that thrives in a variety of conditions. Reports of complete infestation over the course of a few growing seasons are common. One needs only travel to nearby Lakeville Lake, Mudge or Long Ponds to view the devastating results of rampant milfoil growth. Although the plant produces large numbers of seeds, colonization of new plants occurs primarily through the growth of vegetative fragments.

Boaters and fishermen often unwittingly



spread these plant fragments and other invasive pests from lake to lake in their boats. The zebra mussel, although not yet found in Cream Hill, remains a constant threat. The importance of washing boats with a bleach solution and checking fishing equipment before entering or leaving any lake cannot be overemphasized. Users of Cream Hill must be vigilant in their efforts to prevent future introductions of invasive species to the lake and must also make every effort not to carry milfoil to clean bodies of water.

—Laurie Bianchi and Mike Root

A Storm's Glancing Blow

It was a long way from the tornado season of 1989, but the storm that hit West Cornwall on July 21 stirred up enough excitement to attract state television—notably Channels 8 and 30—with their bright lights and satellite trucks.

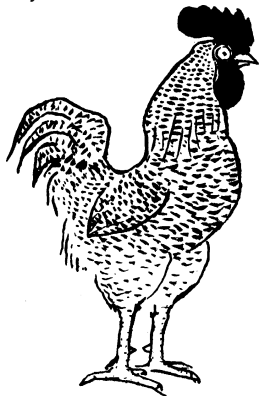
Skip Kosciusko, a Cornwall fire fighter, was at home when he heard the "storm rumbling in about 9 P.M.," and almost immediately experienced the crash generated when a tree fell on the adjacent house of Carla and Eddie Bigelow. "We heard a loud sound of timbers cracking," Kosciusko said. The impact of the falling tree started a small fire that was short-lived. Kosciusko and other fire fighters entered the house, but, as Kosciusko remembered, "it was all over by the time we got inside."

In the living room, Carla Bigelow was watching a TV documentary. She describes the sound of the Norway spruce limbs hitting the house as "an enormous thump." The fire fighters who entered the house searched it for small fires—there were none—and urged Carla to leave. She refused—but to eliminate danger, the fire crew severed all the electric wires to the building.

Otherwise, damage was restricted to the mess made by numerous fallen trees on Routes 7 and 128. One of these descended on a primary power line for West Cornwall. Power was also cut for the railroad track, where all the warning bars were shut down.

A fire alarm went in for a house on Lower River Road. "We couldn't get to it and were concerned with electrical fires," said First Selectman Gordon Ridgway, "so we called in Falls Village fire fighters and they came down."

The weather outburst in Cornwall hurt no one. The experts say the disturbance was the product of a squall line of locally powerful storms that swept the state—except around Danbury, where the influence of the waters of Long Island Sound softened the impact significantly.



"We saw very gusty winds," commented Connecticut Weather Center Meteorologist Mike Thomas. It's the temperature differentials between fronts that prompt the worst storms. In order to get tornado activity, you need really hot temperatures. So far this year we haven't seen much severe weather, but that will all change." —Charles Osborne

Events & Announcements

A Cupcake Party at Hughes Library in West Cornwall for children ages three to eight will be held on Tuesday, August 19 from 2:30 to 4 P.M. Come hear and see a story, join a musical parade, and borrow one of the many wonderful books from the children's corner. Call 672-0283 for more information and to register.

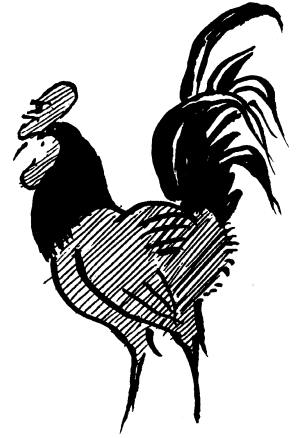
Drive-in Movie Night: Park and Rec. is sponsoring a drive-in movie night at 8:30 P.M., Friday, August 22, on the Town Green. Features will be Academy Award-winner *Spirited Away*, and to honor Connecticut actress Katherine Hepburn, *Look Who's Coming to Dinner*. Bring your chairs and blankets and enjoy free movies and popcorn and soda!

Chamber Music Concert: Musicorda will be performing again at the Cream Hill Lake Association on Saturday, August 2, at 7:30 P.M. Please come and enjoy an evening of beautiful music in a beautiful setting.

Registration Day at the Cornwall Child Center is Friday, August 22, from 9 A.M. to noon at the Center, 8 Cream Hill Road, across from the Cornwall Consolidated School. If this date is not convenient, please telephone the director, Pam Brehm at 824-1289.

Lake Compounce Trip: Join the fun and excitement of Cornwall Day at Lake Compounce in Bristol, on Tuesday, August 19, 11 A.M. to 8 P.M. Cost of \$15.95 per person includes water park, rides, and roller coasters. A 10 percent discount is available on all food and souvenirs. Free soda all day! Please call David Samson at 672-0616 for more information and to make reservations.

The Cornwall Association's annual meeting will feature the Second Annual State-of-Cornwall message from our first selectman, Gordon Ridgway. Updates on business in Cornwall, the web site, invasive plant species, and other activities will also be offered. After the election of officers and the board, refreshments will be served. All are welcome. Saturday, August 9, 4 to 6 P.M., at the U.C.C. Parish House.



The Annual Tag Sale organized by St. Bridget's Church will take place this year on August 9, from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. on the church grounds at the junction of Routes 4 and 7 in Cornwall Bridge. Peg's Kitchen will be open again, along with baked goods, clothing, and lots of attic treasures. To rent a space, please call 672-6716.

Art in Cornwall: At the Cornwall Arts Collection, the show featuring the paintings of Shaun MacDavid and the photographs of Catherine Noren continues through the end of August.

At the Cornwall Library, the exhibit of the paintings of James Henry Moser, an artist active in Cornwall at the end of the 19th century, will continue through August. A companion show, *Cornwall Landscapes Today*, small works of a few of Cornwall's painters of the current scene, will be on view in the glass case at the Library through August. Robert Andrew Parker's large wooden model of an Avro Bison MK1 airplane is now flying in the Library clerestory, where it will remain for some months.

At the Wish House, the show of mixed media sculptures and futuristic drawings by Bob Keating will continue through August.

At the National Iron Bank, Treasa Pattison will be exhibiting nature paintings during the month of August.

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