

Kelly's Corner

By Jan Kelly

The sounds of summer—no moment of the day or night is without them. In winter you may get those long white silent moments when life is suspended in thought, absent of action, moved into the abstract of time. Summer teams with you every moment by the smell of warm earth pushing forth, by the sound of birds and insects which must be heard for the continuation of the species, and by the dazzle of all this before your eyes. Summer is for living, living by all your senses. Winter is for thought, evaluation, and preparation for the future season of activity. We who live in climates of four seasons can be rustic children and sedate adults within the same calendar year.

There's a robin which nests at Watson's—that willow tree is inhabited by robins every year. All through the warm summer nights the robin can be heard chirping in the most earnest manner. The robin is a thrush, a relative of the nightingale, so it is natural for him to sing all night long. Poetry on parchment, vellum, and rice paper has praised these tones through the ages—even into paperbacks. The sound is the same. The human enjoyment and comments may seem to vary, but the poem is also the same—the need to express the enjoyment of beauty. Imagine how weary that robin must be when the first bits of light sneak through the leaves and then through any gaps in the high part of the nest. Weary but ecstatic with the sound of his own voice, he leaves center stage, and the male cardinal enters. From melodious thrush throating, peaceful and easy to rest by, we must go into bright sunlight, action, and the monotone staccato sounds of the red-crested bird. When someone says “the difference is like day and night,” try that one on them.

This extreme heat wave has forced us from energetic action to intellectual endeavors as a matter of survival. I opted for *The Education of Henry Adams*, who has another idea on the winter/summer contrast. He writes “Winter was always an effort to like; summer was tropical license.” That's real 19th century New England thinking. Pointing it to our locale, I thought, summer is the finger tip of sensation, and winter is the whole arm of the Cape. Everybody gets to Provincetown at one time or another in the season.

If you've never read Henry Adams, there are descriptive scenes of his meeting the piratical Garibaldi in Palermo on a hot July day and of meeting Lincoln at his Inaugural Ball, Abe uncomfortable in kid gloves. All is ingeniously written, informative, and thoroughly enjoyable. If you like the writing, you'll move on to *Mont St. Michel and Charles* later—a travel book of the highest order.

The tide really pulled and scraped itself over the sand flats this new moon. Provincetown tides extend farther in and out than most places along the coast. When our tide pulls itself far from the shore, the few veteran

seaclammers anticipate the leisurely walk at dawn out onto the flats, pools, and bars, the promise of delicious bivalves of beautiful proportions. Gulls and terns follow you, noisy company expecting every scrape of your rake to unleash sand eels or sand lances, providing an easy meal for eager flying friends. With a net bag slung at your side you walk along looking for signs of clams: depressions, sometimes like a golf ball dropped there, sometimes a bit of white sand. The tines of the rake hit resistance; a slight dig and up it comes. If you get them on the bars, you will see drop marks on the sand, the result of the clam's squirting. Don't let the longest and strongest squirt fool you. It is usually the smallest clam. We old clamdiggers are wise to that.

Just Taffy Silva and Herman Tasha and I went out the last time. Taffy Silva has enough knowledge of the flats to be able to lecture anywhere. His bright mind is always storing knowledge, never forgetting it. He's a great companion on those flats. Herman Tasha, whom I call Hamantash (a Jewish Purim pastry) still possesses brute strength though his 70th birthday was a long time ago. He plows through deeper water than we, digs more vigorously. His glasses spot with the salt water so looking for clam holes is difficult. He carries off what only a weight lifter could manage comfortably. Friends and neighbors and family share this bounty. The clammer, who actually may only eat a few clams, has the added pleasure of the memories of the early morning search.



the rewards of seaclamming

I have the best of neighbors. Besides being sincere in their friendship they have good senses of humor, or maybe a good sense of balance. One of them, 79 years old, related this tale to me the other day. She was sitting on her stoop; a young man burdened by wet laundry was one of the passing parade. “Excuse me, Madam,” he said. “I see you have a clothesline. I have to be back at work, and all the dryers at the laundromat are taken. Could I hang these clothes up on your line?” “Well,

O.K.," was the reply. He hung them in the style of one totally untutored in domestic skills. My neighbor rehanging them properly. "Will they be dry in an hour?" "Oh, no. At least two hours." Off he went. When he returned to claim his dried T's and J's, he thanked my neighbor. Instead of "You're welcome," she said, "I hope I'm never sitting here again when you need your clothes dried. I've been a widow for two years, and what will people say when they see pants drying on my line?"

The book sale was a great success. It was fun, and we made a record \$315 plus a coming bid on leftover books. One shy fellow held up the *Joys of Jello*. How much did I want for this slim volume, circa 1950? *The Joys of Jello*? I hooted. We all laughed over that so much, we owed him entertainment tax, rather than he, us the price of a book. Great large geography books, complete sets of classic writers, text books, Cape Cod lore, and paperbacks by the score flew by the cigar box stuffed with everybody's walking-around money. Georgia Gypsy Coxe and Pat Hodge were great helps. So check through your shelves constantly and set aside donations for next year's sale. The books sold are not necessarily the books which are on everybody's lips or lists, but they are on everybody's shelves. If you're not using them, move them along so another reader can.

Irving Lefson, photographer, gave a wonderful lecture last night on his Cibachrome color technique entitled "Beyond the Camera's Eye." Irving and Cathy were our "darling couple" two weeks ago. They were celebrating their tenth anniversary, and Irving was celebrating his 85th—yes! 85th—birthday. Hard to believe! Guta Ferdman will give next week's lecture on the works of Sholem Aleichem. That's Wednesday, August 22, at 7:30 in the evening. You'll enjoy it.

The Hiroshima memorial walks were most impressive. Serious-faced, committed adults joined together in front of Town Hall on Sunday and at Johnson Street parking lot Monday evening. Many were members of both gatherings. Placards citing antinuclear messages were held by the same few who have been engaged with peace walks for years: anti Vietnam, anti nuclear warfare, pro human beings, pro human race. As I looked over the faces—concerned, informed and set in their purpose—I realized there was not a passive soul in the group. All were determinedly active people in their private lives, achievers, involved people. People who examine life and ever try to raise its quality for themselves and for others. Brave people who speak well and go public. Watching the less informed who did not walk but watched, I was encouraged to see the questions rise in their thinking, slight facial expressions showing this. You can hope that the uninvolved will question: "What is this force of people in front of me, ordinary like me, real like me, and not so distant as TV news, magazines, and Washington talk? If they know enough to take a forceful opinion, why shouldn't I? Repercussions from these walks are unmeasurable, but they provide an easy way to knowledgeable demonstration, then to inquiry.

this week's darling couple award goes to
Sammy T. Janopolis and Helen Davis, uncle and niece



I enjoyed *Piaf* and don't agree with any of the criticisms I read or heard about the play. All the performers were gifted and committed to their roles. Theater is a bout with fantasy. Suspension of disbelief is needed to engage yourself with the action and story. If you go the theater dragging along the reality of the street like medieval armor on your brain, how will you enjoy the short scenes of life interpretation in front of you? Some critical comments treat performances as interruptions instead of interpretations. The cathartic effect is avoided and lost. I gave in totally to the play *Piaf* to the point that I nearly rose from my nearby seat to massage Piaf's shoulders when she asked for it. Eva Charney has a strong and convincing voice. I really couldn't agree with the idea of using tapes of Piaf when you had so capable a live human voice. The play was in English, anyway; that would have mixed your language vehicle! If you can't suspend in your own language, another won't do it. A good evening of theater.

Next is *Guys and Dolls* through August 18 at Town Hall. It has an all-woman cast, which will give it a twist—or maybe not. We'll have to see how the director treats it. It is one the great musicals, a wonderful combination of a Damon Runyon book and Frank Loesser's music and lyrics. I played in two productions, and they are happy memories. When you have quality to work with, the natural ease is there. Bunny Pearlman will set the tone well. She has never disappointed us, and this piece of direction is, as expected, good. Make sure you see *Guys and Dolls*. You will get back into that genteel habit you dropped and don't know why—a night at the theater.

Christine Graquinto has a complicated schedule. Christine is the talented baker at the Painted Lady. That's a demanding job; things must be perfect. But it's not enough for Christine. She also does the laundry for 30 people. With 60 loads a week to do, Christine spends two mornings at Acme's Shank Painter laundry, two nights at the Hopkins (A&P) laundry, and one afternoon at the laundromat in Hyannis just to have a change of scene, to get out of town, and to shop. All is dried at the Shank Painter establishment.

There has been a ladder on my deck for two days. Did I make a date to elope with someone and forget about it? I love mysteries.