

Articles by Joe Keating

2005

► Waterford Barracks ◄

December 28

All of us who have ever lived in a barracks at this time of the year are familiar with the fellow barracks dweller who glories in getting drunk and comes back into the bays late shouting and singing so all will know how he spent his pay. Now barracks dwellers know that when someone wants the light out he usually just unscrew the light nearest his bunk so that a barracks in full winter slumber has all the light bulbs unscrewed and it remains so even if some drunk wants to turn on all the lights. Flash lights are important for anyone who has to get someone up early. At the first bellow of a returning drunk the experienced hands who are awakened respond by reaching down and flipping their foot locker out into the darkened isle. This is followed by a few more bellows and then a crash preceded by a string of profanities, then another and then only the sound of someone crawling on their hands and knees feeling their way toward their bunk. They had better guess right because any attempt to get in the wrong one is met by immediate drastic homophobic repercussions.

Locker Cockers: This whole traffic calming process is known as "cocking the lockers". By now you should have guessed that Waterford has always had dwellers who are expert at cocking the lockers. As with all things Waterford this is historic. For historic example, recent news has indicated that there are those who feel that Quaker Meetings in Lake Worth Florida are seditious now just as there were those who felt that the Quaker Meetings in Waterford were seditious in the early 1860s'.

Loaded Lockers: At this ending of 2005 we Waterfordians find ourselves being defined as elitists who are resistant to such changes such as the abolishment as illegal the Waterford Historic Landmark status, the razing of our Waterford Elementary School to permit the rising of an 825 student Phoenix, and the razing of the historic 1500 square foot Lizzie Simms House to allow the rising of a 4500 square foot McMullet.

Happy New Year: Needless to say 2006 finds the lockers fully cocked.

► Scrooge ◄

December 21

Wreaths: The greenery of choice for Waterfords' wreaths has been boxwood since Ruth Bentley began pruning the boxwood bushes that flank Loudoun Ranger Frys' grave in the Union Cemetery.

This reminder of a wartime tragedy is apt for a Quaker Village that only chose peace. Boxwood is something that is most appreciated by Virginians who hark back to the earliest colonists. Over the years it is believed that genetically they have been selected as the only ones who can smell the heady aroma of box wood and appreciate its growing habit as a

mature plant to surround and protect those who stand in its sheltering globe.

Trooper Fry lived between Waterford and Taylorstown and had come across the Potomac to spend Christmas Eve with his friends, mother and fiancée at his mother's house.

Confederates burst in and Trooper Fry tried to dive out the door but the hooks of his sword belt caught in the splats of the Waterford chair he was sitting in which jammed him in the door. As he turned to fight he was shot through the head and died in the arms of his loved ones.

Barcelona: Waterfordians have been visiting loved ones just before Christmas in places far and wide. Just back from visiting daughter Robin in Barcelona is Robby Smith. Robin is also playing host to friend Molly Keating who left for Barcelona on Thursday and will return on Christmas Eve.

Sikkim: The farthest afield in pre Christmas visits has been logged by Green Mountain Nick and Cathy Ratcliffe who just returned from visiting son Himalaya Jim in Sikkim. Jim spent last Christmas as the honored guest of the villagers in Sikkim who advertised a Christmas festival to attract tourists. Jim and a girl friend were the only ones that showed up. But that is his story to tell.

Merry Christmas to all.

► **New officers and a school update** ◄

December 14

New Officers: Officers for the Waterford Citizens' Association for 2006 elected Tuesday Night at the regular meeting of the WCA at the Old School are; President is Tom Edmonds, Vice-president is Ken Dunne, continuing as Treasurer is Brian Hardy and outgoing President Ed Lehmann will be Secretary.

Current concerns: The meeting started with Beth Erickson giving a status report on the Waterford Elementary School and the factors influencing the destiny of the School. After this discussion there were comments made about another aspect of Waterford's educational history, the decision of the Board of Supervisors that morning to heroically uphold the decision of their Historic District Review Committee to deny a permit to raze the home of teacher Elizabeth Simms.

Simms' School: In attempting to place the possible plan to raze Waterford Elementary School and replace it with a much larger facility and the threat to raze the Elizabeth Simms' House and replace it with a much larger facility in the proper perspective, it may be wise to rename the Waterford Elementary School the Elizabeth Simms Elementary School in order to show the community concerns and emotions for education, both current and historic.

Dude do the Dew: The outgoing WCA president announced that five cases of Mountain Dew were being offered as unsold surplus from the WCA Barbecue stand during the Fair. A suggestion that it be saved for sale next year was dismissed as no cans were sold this year and it was obvious that even one can might be an infinite supply. Other thoughts were that it be sold to commuters waiting at the new stop light on Route 9 and Clarke's Gap road as it is rumored that the Dew is popular in the mountain mother to the west or that the labels

be changed and it be marketed someplace else, like Ashburn. Given the apparent popularity it is obviously a future collectable that can be eventually sold at great profit on E-bay. To invest, contact Ed Lehmann at 540 882-3801.

► Argentine Butterfly ▲

December 7

The butterfly wing beat in the Argentines hit Waterford Tuesday evening bringing back the best rain torrents since The Fair. Once again the Main Street storm drainage skipped the Tannery Branch bridge and went on to the road washout that flows to the south side of The Mill. Water also overwhelmed the pipe by the Vine-covered Cottage and swirled down the driveway. Behind Neil Keller's Waterford Inn, a sodden tree fell conveniently across the wood pile after grazing the privy next door. The privy was not occupied at the time. Along Clarkes' Gap Road Wednesday a VDOT contractor was promptly patching the usual washouts along the Schooley Mill Branch.

Act of 1932: Governor-Elect Tim Kaines' local transportation meetings have been of great interest, especially as the Town of Waterford gave up the town status in the wake of the Byrd Road Act of 1932. Those bearing the brunt of 21st Century traffic on our 18th Century streets should see "Beyond the Byrd Road Act " By A.A. O'Leary, available on the Internet.

Ashburn Butterfly: Just as the butterfly wing beat in the Argentines effects our weather, the new student stepping through the schoolhouse door in Ashburn effects the destiny of The New School in Waterford. Activist parents became concerned and are questioning the necessity of closing the school and transporting the students away for two years. This, like an amplified wing beat raises questions about not only the tennis court but the PTOs' food stands at The Fair, the endowments funds, extra field trips, the poetry chair, the art chair and all the other little details that make the Waterford Elementary School a beacon of educational excellence lighting an island halfway between West Virginia and Ashburn in a storm tossed sea.

Last week Waterford had a visitor from Ashburn, an event that may be a historic landmark occurrence. Ashburner Lynn McKnight was attending a bridal shower held for our niece, Mary Trask who will be marrying Lynns' brother Mark McKnight in Charlotte NC on 10 December. She said that some Ashburners read about Waterford sometimes.

► Waterford School Doomed ▲

November 23

With the news this week that the New School may be demolished in order to build a The Newer School to replace the Old New School, those who are concerned with preserving the integrity of Waterford felt a crises coming and were girding their loins to do battle.

Court concern: Calm assurances of Loudouns' Superintendent of Schools Ed Hatrick have defused somewhat the concerns for preserving a key element Waterfords' premier education facility, the tennis court. He said he is aware of the emphasis placed on the athletic education of Waterfords' children where it has been observed that Waterford is a place that half the population only plays tennis during the Waterford tennis tournament

and the other half only plays tennis. It is hoped that the student to tennis court ratio will remain constant.

Intelligent design: The following is an intelligently designed method of coping with our Thanksgiving energy uncertainties. Rub a frozen turkey with Kosher salt and sugar and then throw it in a pot and cover with water. Use enough salt and sugar so that one cup of each is used per gallon of water. As the turkey thaws add other spices. Use some cider instead of some water. Keep the temperature below forty degrees. Slop it around once in awhile.

Thanksgiving morning: If stuffing, stuff turkey and a place in a pan.

This is the critical point. Turn the oven all the way up and when it gets to 450 shove everything in. When the turkey looks nice, cover it with aluminum foil to keep it from getting too dark. If the power fails then go to the fire place with a reflector or the covered grill or the Girl Scout type wine box oven. When the thick thigh temperature reaches 180 take it out. You can turn the oven lower to adjust the time the thigh reaches 180 but not below 250. Keeping the oven up can do a 22 pounder inside 4 hours with crisp skin and moist meat.

Happy Thanksgiving.

► **The Historic Lizzie Simms's House Was Oozed Closer to its Ultimate Death** 🏠

November 16

Simms' House: The historic Lizzie Simms's House was oozed closer to its ultimate death Wednesday night as the Historic District Review Committees' disapproval of a permit to demolish was appealed. This enabled the owners Paul and Malarie Madison to slide the unfortunate house one slippery step closer to its inevitable destruction by proceeding with this appeal to the Loudoun Board of Supervisors. Now you may wonder why are the Madisons persisting in their efforts to disregard the supposed protection of historic properties, the overwhelming wishes of the community and the recommendations of the counties professional staff. It is because they are assured that their wishes will prevail because of a decision made by those foreign to historic districts, the Loudoun BOS Finance/Government Services Committee members.

Rules that govern: The Madisons are acutely aware of the rules that govern events in Loudoun. They know the deductive logic shown by dripping slime. If a blob of slime falls to the to the ground and so does the second, third, etc. you can be reasonably assured that the next blob of slime will fall to the ground. In the case of the Simms's House, if a new housing development project can jump from 162 houses to 500 houses, if a public facility can be named after President Reagan then the destruction of a historic building that is part of fabric of the Waterford Historic District is a piece of cake.

Naiveté: If you have enough naiveté to believe that you could deter this slimy glide to destruction to your Catocin BOS supervisor Sally Kurtz or any Supervisors who have historic districts, Jim Burton or Jim Clem or the Chairman Scott York, forget it. They are not members of the Loudoun BOS Finance/Government Services Committee.

Opportunity: It is seldom that we have an opportunity to see something that is to be ripped from our midst. It is like the difference between talking to a person who dies suddenly the next day and talking the condemned person who we know is about to die the day. First the black citizens of Waterford and now even their homes that were uniquely black historic homes are being banished to be fading images in all our hearts and minds.

Gus Hewlett: Gus Hewlett is a fading image also, but his spirit lives on in his drawings. His drawings can be enjoyed at the Waterford Old School Sunday Nov. 20 at 2:00 P.M. At 4:00 P.M. the Washington Symphonic Brass performs.

► **The Simms House - A Waterford Small House** ▲

November 9

Tonight at 6:30 at the Board of Supervisors Room at Loudoun County Government Center in Leesburg the owners the historic Simms house, home of one of the Second Street School teachers in the first part of the 20th century, are appealing the decision of the Loudoun County Historic District Review Committee not to permit the house to be destroyed. The appeal is to the Board of Supervisors, that has the authority to ignore the decisions made by those whom they appoint. The basis of the appeal to permit the house to be destroyed with out offering the house for sale is because of the great cost to restore this historic house and that it is not historic anyway.

Small is good: Waterfords' old small houses are in vogue again as high fuel costs and the prospects of a cold winter are once more emphasizing the reason for small house survival. If you had ever listened to the village residents who lived here before and during the great depression you would appreciate the durability of our 1200 to 1400 square foot houses and how successful they are in performing their basic function as a home. Many of our houses have been expanded to accommodate the advantages of central heating and air conditioning as well as the use of indoor plumbing that has become the norm for our current standard of living. Yet in almost all cases the essential core of a living area that can shelter a family that in the past included extended families and boarders.

The Simms house is such a house and still has this quality that is enjoyed by about half of the other houses in the village. The Simms house is threatened not by decay or neglect but by ignorance of the use of a small house.

Small is valuable: To appreciate this you only have to examine the prices asked in the past five years. In July of 2000 the house was sold for \$65,000. In July of 2003 the house was sold for \$185,000. In September the house is listed at \$395,000. In December an offer of \$265,000 is made and the price asked dropped to \$292,000.

Other uses perilous: Our small historic houses are much more useful as dwellings then as vehicles in which to take ego trips. If they are used that way they are in peril of being demolished.

► **Fall colors** ▲

November 2

A Blaze of red and gold Wednesday at sunset heralded the arrival of fall at last as furnaces

and wood stoves all over Waterford started up. Red and gold seem to dominate this week as the Waterford Goose on Factory Street suited up in Redskin red and gold to help bring about the teams victory on Sunday.

Post Office Under Ground: A new sign, Hallowed Ground, appeared this week before Halloween on the door leading up to the offices of Journey Through Hallowed Ground. The Executive Director Cate Magennis Wyatt had a busy week as members of the International Association of National Trusts for Historic Preservation were visiting sites along the 175 mile historic corridor stretching north and south from Waterford.

► **Fall tardy** ▲

October 26

It is strange fall we are having observed Charlie Brock and with the drought ending a summer that began with copious rain it certainly is. The fears of no fall display of the usual red and yellow leaves were allayed when the rains last week brought on a growth spurt just in time to prevent the leaves from just turning brown and falling off. The tree planted by the Cutters on the banks of the Tannery Branch was perfectly timed to enable it to join the chorus of color. The new tree and the planting of grasses, lawn pampas and bank holding, have assured the rapid recovery of the Vine-covered Cottage from the effects of tree removal and patio construction.

Halloween: The tomatoes are still ripening and the pumpkins still frost less a week before Halloween. With a hurricane stirring up more rain and no cold fronts in sight we may have a record setting late frost arrival the fall. Ghost and gillies will arrive next week, frost or no, and so don't forget about the Waterford Market supply of Waterford Citizens' Association subsidized goblin fodder. Be warned that the trick or treater with two bags and a "sick sibling" often turns out to be an only child.

Browns' hip: Brown Morton and family thanks all who asked after Brown in the wake of his dis-hipment. He is currently scheduled for a replacement Friday. The old hip is being submitted to Guinness World Records as the most widely traveled (several times around the world and from the Dead Sea to the Himalayas) and longest lasting (26 years) hip replacement in a man, over age 41 category.

Lost and found: The Fair lost and found this year found a large number of lost umbrellas. We wonder why? The other items included a non functioning wrist watch and a 3-inch high cinnamon dog. You may claim these at the Foundation office if you identify them. You must know what time the watch says.

► **Waterford Fair without crowds** ▲

October 19

As predicted, if you don't like crowds, can't stand lines, like to park close, like a good selection from which to buy, like to see and hear everything and like talk to the craftspeople, demonstrators and entertainers without interruption, this was the Fair for you. We had much needed rain that enabled an authentic reenactment of the great Civil War event immortalized by the revised prayer of the "Mud March." by Josh Billings.

Now I lay me down to sleep
In mud that's many fathoms deep;
If I'm not here when you awake,
Just hunt me up with an oyster rake.

The Fair parking lots are plowed in parts as for spring planting and those who grumbled about the weather should remember how happy it made the Riedel's pig and all the other discerning connoisseurs of Waterford Fairs. It was absolutely wonderful.

On Sunday the sun shines again and the hay bales are spread over the mud, making quaking mats for the few adventuring fair-goers who ignore the news predictions of even more rain. They are gone in a flurry of last minute bargains from many food stands. The sun sets on another Fair and we see a...

Long green preying mantis girl,
perched atop a blade of hay.
Bugs, they fear your massive jaws.
Yes, you ate your mate today.

► Center a cynosure for artists ▲

October 12

The center of the universe, a point equidistant from the Waterford Post Office, the Pink House and the Corner Store, was strongly apparent in the art exhibited at the Red Barn as part of the sixty second annual Waterford Fair. The art, exhibited upstairs at the Red Barn, not fifty yards from the center, was such a high quality that evolve in a show of such long standing and widening reputation, each year seemingly exceeding those before. In the category of Waterrford scenes the center of the universe was portrayed in a serendipitous frequency that was surreal as were some of the paintings. For example the were two paintings by Mary Alice Cousoulas a Waterford artist of long, possibly the longest standing, whos' two paintings were from apoint of view of one standing close to "The Center". One looked up Second Street and captured the dawn of a new day as the sun strikes the far end houses beginning its sequential illumination toward the center. The second, larger and more Ryderesque painting, looked in the opposite direction down Main Street. It was a moment in time when the moon was setting below dark clouds of early morning when the first early commuters start a stream of light that lingers. One car in shown, lit by its own lights as it passes the closed post office that will open four hours later. Mary Alice has a thing about The Center and has created paintings over the years that range the jubilation of a pulsing garden party at the Pink House to this loneliness of the predawn in the street before. These ethereal qualities of The Center were shown in other paintings by other artists such as a scene of the front of the Corner Store that portrayed a grand array of Victorian ladies and gentleman, all in high fashion clothes with high fashion carriages. It was a delightful scene of a Waterrford we wish for but never was or will be. Kitty Rose did

not have a painting at this years exhibit. We know that this prolific Waterford artist had devoted the time required to produce many paintings to the highly successful auction earlier this year. But what won the best of show and best Waterford scene was still a reflection of her artists eye. The winner was a water color of the door over the Post Office. The painting was by another artist but the arrangement over the door was by A. Rose.

► Fair to have record low crowd ▲

October 5

A record low turnout is expected for the Waterford Foundations' Annual Homes Tour and Crafts Festival so this weekend is the time to come if you want to avoid the crowds of years past. The selections of crafts available will be greater than ever before due to the lack of the usual shoulder to shoulder crowds and the entertainment will be much better appreciated with a more discerning and intimate audience. A wider selection of items from the food stands, especially the Waterford Citizens Associations BBQ stand, will be available as no one is expected to run out of anything. The Waterford Elementary Schools' PTO stand is even going to have enough cinnamon buns for everyone. This years Fair will also give you the opportunity to visit more of and spend more time in the Tour Houses as there will be no long lines to wait in or crowds urging you to move on. With no traffic back up and closer parking you will have a much better opportunity to enjoy the village as it used to be on a busy shopping day when the Leesburg Outlets and Dulles Town center were still cornfields. We are even hoping that shoppers from Ashburn will come this year to help make up for the Federal Grant loss.

We were saddened to hear of the death of Vivian Wallace Stinger last week, The daughter of our neighbor Mary Elizabeth Wallace, she was born grew up in the village before traveling the world as a military wife. As a frequent visitor over the years she remained an affable and witty friend; a master of banter and good cheer in spite of the difficulties and debilitating conditions that would have dimmed a weaker spirit. The physical strength that departed in her later years of life was given over to her children and grandchildren who grew much stronger than most others as her good wishes and desires are amplified by them. Our sadness in losing her company is only lifted by the joy of remembering her cheerful nature.

► Waterford Schools hold reunion ▲

September 14

If you attended the Waterford School, Old, or the Waterford School, 2nd. Street, be aware that another *Growing Up in Waterford* reunion is occurring on October 22nd at the Old School at 6:30 pm. As in the past, this reunion is organized by Terry McCracken, Marilyn Gentry and a host of others with pre and post events still in the planning stage. To help, to register, or to be included no matter where you may be, call Terry at 540 338-6486 or

Marilyn Gentry at 540 882-9691. If you are aware of anyone who grew up in Waterford that is away anywhere in the world, be sure to give him or her a heads up.

As another season of digging around our yards closes with efforts to coax glorious blooms from the flowers for the Fair, almost all of Waterfords' gardeners will have encountered oyster shells in the dirt. Most think that our Quaker farmers were great soil scientists, having the forethought to sweeten the soil with these shells. Those of us who are privy to the mysteries of the oyster know differently. With the availability of oysters, live and by the bushel from barges on the old C & O canal, Waterfordians had a ready access to the oyster beds of the Chesapeake Bay throughout most of the 19th and very early 20th century. Anyone who has ever thrust the tip of an oyster knife into the sweet spot where it glances off the upper shell and wedges into the lower shell of a firmly held inverted bivalve knows the reason we have the shells in the yard. A following sweep of the blade to cut the connection to the lower shell followed by a gentle lifting reveals one of nature's gastronomic delights. Being careful not to spill the precious liquid held in the inverted upper shell you next sweep the knife under the cream colored flesh and free it into the pool of juice. All that remains is to place the oyster shell to your lips and with a backward tilt of the head and a quick bite down into the burst of cold salty flavor and marvel at the fact that there are not too many oyster shells around Waterford, but too few.

► **New is never new in Waterford** ▲

September 6

Margaret Larson, the new kindergarten assistant at Waterford Elementary School is not so new to Waterford as she is a former student from the Old School across the street, narrowly missing being a student at the "new" school when the new school opened. Margaret, the daughter of Bill and Shirley Nickels, attended Waterford School, daily trudging the many miles from her girlhood home at the corner of High and Church Streets. The proximity of the Nickels' home is important in the historical record of Waterfords' community school lore.

One day while school was in session, Margarets' baby sister was seen safely playing in the Nickels' yard. A moment later she was nowhere to be found by her worried mother. As soon as this was made known to the Waterford School principal, all the students were released from classes to search and the missing child was soon reunited with her mother.

The "new" Waterford Elementary School fired up for another year this week starting off with 201 regular students in the K-5 plus three additional preschool readers all fitting into the 237 student capacity school. The number of students arriving during the school year who can be accommodated depends on their grade distribution. The third graders who were in overflows away from Waterford last year are now all back where they belong, now in the 4th grade.

There are still two cottages guarding the south side of this weeks' Waterford Tennis

Tournament courts, one holding the arts and music classroom and the other holding one of the two 5th-grade classrooms. There are two of every class above kindergarten allowing for one and a half 1st and 2nd grade with Patsy McClintock moving up from kindergarten to be with some of her last years students in the one combined 1st and 2nd grade class. A new teacher to the school, Cory Joseph is now teaching kindergarten along with "new" Margaret Larson. Also, new to Waterford are Information Technology Specialist Lori Mullany, Guidance Counselor Erin Peoples, and Foreign Language Specialist Vivana Serna.

► 704 will be well worth the wait ▲

August 30

By now almost everyone in the Village who has headed out to any where in the southeast quadrant of the United States has been caught in the Route 704 (Hamilton Station Road) detour trap. Why VDOT is taking so long to install two culverts to tame the mighty Reeds' Mill Branch of the Catocin Creek may seem to be a mystery that can be contemplate as one backtracks to Clarkes' Gap Road intersection after failing to heed the sign that has been there long enough to be forgotten. An expedition to the work site revealed the reason. It is a nice cool shady place to spend the summer. Huge mounds of dirt covered in black plastic flank the valley of the branch as two culverts six feet in diameter are installed. Diverter pipes skirt the forms built to serve as a foundation for the culverts and pumps run twenty four hours a day to keep the water away from the forms until the cement has hardened. This of course requires that workman be on the job 24/7 to see that the pumps keep running.

Reeds' Mill Branch, named after the mill that was once at the intersection with Catocin Creek is very pleasant as it crosses 704. A gentle shady stream, it does drain a considerable area all the way back to Clarkes' Gap. This causes it to carry a large amount of water in a short time when downpours occur and this has caused the road to wash away when the old drains were overwhelmed. Also, the material carried by the stream has scoured away the bottoms of the old culverts. When the culverts are in place, the combination of the running water in the shady dell as the Branch runs under the road should be quite pleasant. In some parts of the country these six foot culverts are the preferred location to drink wine on a hot summers' afternoon. Be sure to thank the VDOT people when you see them.

► The fires that make us value ▲

August 24

As the naked ladies raise their pink heads to the breeze after the hot August rain last week the dissimilarity of Waterford to the Phoenix rising from the ashes of its fiery destruction comes to mind. Waterford rises from the ashes of its creation. Waterfords' fiery beginnings are present in the taste of the well water in some parts of the village. It is thought that this

is the taste of water that percolated through the ashes left by the slash and burn done to clear the land around Waterford for its agricultural origin.

This taste of far distant fires is more pleasant than the taste of fires brought about by "children playing with matches" that was a common happenstance. This was brought to mind by the 25th anniversary last week of the destruction by fire of Exeter. Exeter was the manor house that was the namesake of the Exeter development in Leesburg that is located on the old estate grounds. Old houses around Waterford sometimes vanish in carefully orchestrated fires. For example the houses that occupied the site of Waterford View on the outskirts of Lovettsville vanished in flames during the Oatlands' Point-to-point in 2002.

More recently the manor house at Ganata vanished after pains were taken to structure a subdivision by the same name so that the house could be saved. Ironically the street known as Granata Preserve now has no Granata preserved as the house was destroyed in order to free up one more building lot. Both were done in the wake of permits to raze being issued by the County.

The refusal to issue a permit to raze the Simms' House may be the only refusal to raze by Loudoun in recent history. By recent history we mean since the Comprehensive Plan was no longer a consideration because of the Virginia Supreme Court decision. This old plan provided some procedural protection to houses that were an obstruction to the interest of a landowner. The vacating of this protection is something that has not been lost to developers. One is hard pressed to find an old house in the eastern part of the county now. But for Waterford we may be just as hard pressed to soon find an old house in the west in the future.

► Heirloom tomato invented here 🍅

August 10

As Waterford withers under the hot blanket of summer that comes with the light in August this year we have begun to revel in the bounty of heirloom tomatoes once again. These tomatoes, whose cultivation has been encouraged by gourmet mavens in recent years, are infinite in their variety and hark back to those planted in bygone days when every yard in America had its own patch. These advocates in the gourmet gardening and gastronomic literature have never mentioned Waterford's roll in the invention of the term "Heirloom Tomato".

Recently the heavy-duty septic tank pump trucks spawned by the doubtful technology foisted off on those who sought to build houses in areas of doubtful percolation abilities are servicing the surrounding countryside. This brings to mind the BTS (Before The Sewer) days of Waterford that fostered the invention of the now historic heirloom tomato term. Every wet summer the yards of Waterford were just as likely to begin bubbling crude (and not the Jed Clampett type) as the contemporary McMansions and McMullets in the same soil type do today. A jolly Mr. Conover of Conovers' Septic Service temporarily remedied this though his pump truck was modest compared to the monsters that now slosh through

the village. Along Main St. the septic tanks from the uphill houses were juxtaposed with the wells in the downhill houses. This led to the wry remark that the neighbors had to flush when the well ran dry. When the LCSA plant opened for business, fortunately, the village lost a lot of its cache since absorbed by modern houses using septic tanks.

The septic tank sites flourish with tomato plants whose seeds and nourishment are constantly renewed by the actions of failing septic systems. They furnish an abundance of tomatoes of infinite variety. Waterfordians have historically shared this bounty with friends and coworkers in the more urban areas of Washington D.C. When asked what kind of tomatoes were being proffered the reply was always, "These are heirloom tomatoes from seeds given to us by our neighbor."

► **She sold Shiso by the seashore** ▲

August 3

JoEllen Keating returned from Japan last week with a new culinary discovery, the Japanese Shiso, previously identified in this column as copper basil is highly prized in Japan for its color, flavor and preservative qualities. The Waterford crop spread from Joan Thomass' doormat so that now a fortune in this gourmet plant grows all down Main St. A green version of the same plant, called aijiso, was obtained in Japan and next growing season will be used along side the red-purple version for salads and pickled condiments. Shiso is in there with hosta as the ideal plant and goes one better. Besides not requiring care, crowding out weeds and being edible by us, deer will not eat it.

Arriving as a stranger in our midst, weighing in at 5 pounds in blue trunks in the northwest corner of Loudoun Hospital Center on Tuesday at 3 in the morning is Henry Corbett Mercker, Waterfords' newest resident. H. C. arrives as a third generation Waterfordian having grandparents, Albert and Maureen Mercker, now of North Fork, and Joe and JoEllen Keating of Hollingsworth-Lee House on Main St. from Waterford. He accompanied his parents Christian and Jan Mercker home to Sappington House, also on Main Street. Henry was welcomed home by cats Early and Pumpkin who took a rather dim view of the entire procedure. He is the Merckers' first grandchild and the Keatings' fourth, evening up the score now at two boys and two girls. Brian and Kristen Pochnik's Lucy was born in February and Ron and Jessie Edwards' Scarlett in March. H. C.'s cousin Colin Pochnik is 5 years old on 14 August.

The hot weather this week has afforded the opportunity for the yogurt brewers of Waterford to utilize the natural gifts to make yogurt. The technique is to place the sterilized milk and a starter culture of yogurt in sterilized containers at a temperature of 110-120 degrees Fahrenheit in your car parked in the sun with the windows up. Don't move the car since it is too hot to go anywhere anyhow. Seven hours later refrigerate the finished yogurt.

► **Simms' House faces new threat** ▲

June 27

The historic Simms' House, part of the historic fabric of the Waterford Historic District is again threatened as the owners file a new application to demolish. This historic relic of the struggle for equality in education testifies to the part played by Waterfordians in this heroic effort. In the period from 1865 to 1965 Virginias' education system ran the full gauntlet from the illegality of imparting knowledge, through patronage, through segregation and finally through massive resistance until equality was achieved in our schools. To demolish one of the few remaining identifiable reminders of Elizabeth Simms who was part of that struggle would be unthinkable to many.\ If you are among those who have an opinion your chance to speak will be at the meeting of the Historic District review Committee on Monday, 1 August at 6:00 pm in the Lovettsville Room of the Loudoun government center. You should arrive prior to 6:00 to sign up.

The last little triangle of dirt at the intersection of Clarkes' Gap Road and Route 9 was paved over this week in preparation for the installation of the traffic light to be completed in two weeks. Before we found out that this work was being done for the traffic light we visualized a maneuver that would involve five or six cars lining up door to door and darting across the west bound lane in unison and then executing a sharp left flank placing all cars simultaneously in the east bound lane. Gone will be the camaraderie shared by morning commuters who waited in line for a chance to dart past a gap and into an opening and then accelerating to 50 miles an hour as ancient station wagons full of shovels blared their horns in anger. The Waterford to Clarkes' Gap crowd has suggested the light stay green to Clarkes' Gap Road from 4:30 am to 10:00 am and green to Route 9 from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm. This is not going to happen though because, as happens when Route 9 is blocked, a sizable percentage of West Virginia, the employed part, would detour through the village. Across Route 9 a sizable rectangle has been excavated into the hillside. We are not quite sure if this has something to do with the light. Several suggestions have been made. Perhaps it is for a customs booth.

► No Post Office portal parking ▲

June 20

A parking ban went into effect at the front of the Waterford Post office last week evidently out of fear that the big white truck delivering and removing the mail will obstruct the new stop sign. Now a dolly must be used to bring in and take away all the mail that passes through the Post Office. It is an ill wind that blows no good as the foot and dolly traffic at the corner will more than double because of the increase in the distance traveled by the workers transporting the mail and the patrons visiting the Post Office. The traffic calming that was wished for putting up the stop sign is enhanced. Most of the patrons will now have cross one or more streets and the people who park have the dubious advantage of getting in and out of their car into traffic coming around a blind curve. Once again the scientists who engineer traffic studies have made a dangerous intersection even more treacherous so that creeping traffic is brought to a stop.

A hearing for the proposed 77 houses on Old Wheatland Road is up coming. The additional traffic caused by the future inhabitants coming the long way through the village to avoid the intersection of Route 9 at Old Wheatland Road will make it impossible to cross the road during rush hour if not for traffic stopping long enough for the villagers to dart back and forth. Perhaps it is time for the replacement of the stone post evident in the 1938 HABS photos right in the middle of this center intersection. It could hold the four way stop sign that could be seen no matter where any one parked.

Living in the country generates household hints of a type never seen in the more urban publications. Roy Chaudet, in his campaign to rid his foundations of ground hogs has discovered that a ground hole burrow is just the place to empty the cats' litter box. Not only does the hole safely dispose of the kitty litter but also the ground hogs don't re-dig and leave for other locations. A solution to the counties development problem should be somewhere in this reasoning.

► Fireworks climax a July Fourth 🏠

June 13

The Grand Finally of Waterfords' fireworks cascaded booming from six hundred feet, a throbbing and pulsing multicolored shower of fire. The display received a barely standing ovation from the surrounding throng of pot-luckers and partygoers who had feasted until they could barely stand. The festivities started with the live brass band parade and the inhalation of a hundred and sixty pounds of watermelon and five hundred hot dogs with all the trimmings. The Greystone Pool was jumping all afternoon with a record crowd. After softball a series of live music festive potlucks and parties everyone poured forth to semi-surround the fireworks field behind the Schooley Mill Barn.

Come Fair time all should remember to support the Waterford Citizens' Associations' Barbecue Stand that makes all this possible.

Celebrations did not end with the Fourth as the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NCRS) presented the Preserving Phillips Farm Forever Easement Closing Celebration hosted by the Waterford Foundation on the patio behind the Old Mill. Representatives of the Federal, State and local government who played a key roll in bringing about the guarantee of the continued historic use of the Phillips Farm spoke. Congressman Frank Wolf paid tribute to the roll played by Cate Magennis Wyatt, now on the Journey Through Hallowed Ground, in bringing together all the agencies and all the donors who made this possible. Other speakers included; Bruce Knight, Chief, and M. Denise Doetzer, State Conservationist, USDA NRCS, Sally Kurtz, Catocin District member of the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, James Behan, President of the Waterford Foundation and Leslie Grayson, Deputy Director of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

Later that night many Waterfordians attended the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors public hearing at Loudoun Valley High School to speak in support of Option One, a proposed land use option calling for fewer houses than Option Two. At the hearing Sherry

Satin who had attended the Celebration at the Old Mill earlier in the day quoted the answer of Leslie Graysons' young daughter to the question posed by her mother earlier that morning about what to say about the Phillips' Farm. "Thank them for not building houses."

► Historically loaded for Fourth ▲

June 6

Waterford this week before the Fourth is poised for the exuberant celebration of our independence from Great Britain brought about by force of arms. The grills are going full blast and mesquite scented smoke wafts out over the sidewalks like wisps from distant battles. As you walk around the village knots of parents are beginning to form in the twilights' last gleaming as their charges are away. This seasonal phenomenon is caused by that peculiar American institution, other than slavery, summer camps.

Further south in Virginia a politically dubious slavery camp was proposed but fell short of reality. No doubt a virtual reality version exists somewhere in the ether of the Internet. What does exist right here in the Quaker village of Waterford and several other locations in the county, judging from the signs, is Civil War camp. One wonders about the applicable life skills that can be taught given the entrenched nature of summer camps. Latrine digging comes to mind right away. Other things become obvious if you are familiar with the genre of both camps. Wallet making becomes boot and saddle repair, hiking becomes close order drill and of course the former camp cafeteria that was traditionally the wellspring of complaints penned in letters home is no more. That dining experience has been replaced by the irregular arrival of rations drawn by a selected member of ones "mess" who returns from the commissary area with a steer's head and two pounds of desiccated vegetables. Some traditional practices cannot survive the transition from summer camp to Civil War camp. What is going to replace the plaiting of bracelets and dog leashes from that plastic string known as gimp? Will the sutlers shelves sag and collapse under the weight of all those unsold multicolored spools as the Civil War campers while away their leisure time, crushing lice?

There is no answer to these questions yet as Civil War camp is new to Waterford. Perhaps this is just a passing fad as the traditional summer camp wends upward through military history. Given our Presidents' message this week, in the future we may be sending our children to Iraq camp.

► Fixed fence fit for the Fourth ▲

June 23

The historic fence at Marilyn Gentrys' Boxwood Walk House at the corner of Clarkes' Gap Road and Factory Street is back up just in time to face the Fourth of July parade as it assembles there at 10 am for registration. Dave Wilts Custom Iron Work of Knoxville MD has restored the fence to its original straightness. For years it has suffered the effects of

being by the side of Clarkes' Gap Road just at the point where it changes directions and dips enough to cause speeders to leave the road. Lewis Cole built the main part of the house guarded by the fence between 1818 and 1826. The fence did not go up until about 1880 and is the work of father-son blacksmiths Silas and Tom Corbin. Silas died at 75 in 1907 and Tom who was born just before Loudouns' last boundary dispute in the 1860s' died in 1947. Their shop and forge was right next-door at Pat Shoafs' house, Corbin Forge.

After the parade registration in front of the Factory Street side of the fence the parade will start at 11:00 and end with the traditional songs, awards, hot dogs, drinks and watermelons at the Tannery Field next to the Bond Street Barn. The Greystone pool will be open to all for the remainder of the day with a guest fee expected from non-members. At 5:00 pm at the Waterford Elementary School the Softball Game will get under way, continuing until the 6:30 Potluck Dinner with music, kids' games, volleyball and Barry Charlton, live on the Old Schools outdoors stage. You should bring a main dish or salad or desert in proportion to the number you usually fill up. The guy who brought 8 kids, a large dog, no bottle, 1 small can of onion rings and did not pay WCA dues is going to Ashburn this year.

Don't forget the Waterford Citizens' Association provides the Fourth of July and if you have not paid yet they are \$10 for one and \$20 for a family. And at The Schooley Mill field, at dark, FIREWORKS !!!

► **Twilight tempest topples trees** ▲

June 16

The brief storm that swept through Waterford Tuesday at twilight toppled at least two trees and left the historic village in the restored state of electricity free. The most obvious tree downing was on Factory Street where a small yard tree eased to earth leaving the root ball intact. A less obvious but more ponderous victim was an old disintegrating maple that bit the dirt behind the Sappington House on Main Street. This tree blocked the driveway leading to the parking spaces of its uphill neighbors.

The accompanying torrential downpour swept the streets clean but left terminal moraines of gravel from a few driveways sprawled across the road. A winters worth of dirt washed down the west side of Main and stopped in front of the Wisteria Covered Cottage. There the water laked up and leapt the curb arcing into the tannery branch about where the alligator lives. A bent and partially clogged culvert was the culprit. This type of storm at this time of year does not bode well for many nesting birds. We have been watching two barn swallows that are in our face every time we approach their nest located above the back porch light. There must be a desperate lack of housing for them to nest in such a precarious spot. The lack of barns is impacting on them, as is the lack of apartments for purple martins has banished them from the village.

The weather turned to too warm Sunday afternoon last week. We could tell because the cats shifted from their sunspot on the floor in tea cozy mode to their place in front of the fan in spread eagle mode. This brings us to a warning for motorists coming through the

village. Just as we warned about the bluebird crossing near the nesting boxes on Clarkes Gap Road we must now warn about cats in the road in the village. It seems that the climate changes last winter coupled with the importing and distribution of newer plants has made the catnip crop much more plentiful and potent than ever before noticed.

► **Cleaning up for the Yard Sale** ◄

June 9

Spring cleaning reached frenzied proportions this week as rooting out the superfluous has been motivated by Saturdays' village wide yard sale. An observation of the trash piled up ready for pickup early Friday showed the winnowing process was in full swing and only the finest objet d'art were being retained for sale. Most houses in the village are of a size requiring the arrival of any objet dictates the departure of another. The cleanup inside our historic homes has been matched by the clean up outside as well. With the roar of the weed whackers and lawn mowers reaching deafening decibels every day it seems that Waterford is employing every landscaping firm in Loudoun. Gone are the days when Waterford was deserted during the weekdays and only populated by citizens seen on weekends. That has been reversed lately, as the streets are crowded with vehicles parked by those who are commuting into the village for all of the maintenance necessary to keep up old houses and the ongoing restoration projects.

Soon the building industry is going to find out what a drain Waterford is on the labor pool available and that the best workers are being diverted from building new houses into the pointless endeavor of maintaining the old. This is disastrous for the national economy and wastes all that open space that should be covered by new housing. Furthermore the heathenish inhabitants of old houses are always trying to preserve open space and this further prevents houses being built for bedrooms full of children thus limiting the crowding and subsequent expansion of the school system, roads and other county services. The construction of new churches is also restricted. The Dillon Rule prevents local government from preventing this so the only recourse is to appeal to the State legislature to take steps preventing the maintenance and preservation of old houses.

14 June is a primary election for both the Democratic and Republican Parties. The Polls will be open from 6 am to 7 pm at the Waterford Elementary School. As the last day for students is not until 17 June this will be a rare opportunity for the juxtaposition of voting and learning. You will be able to vote in either primary but not in both. You must choose to accept either a Democratic or a Republican ballot.

A representative from Citizens for Catocin County will be speaking at the next meeting of the Waterford Citizens' Association at the Old School on 14 June at 7 am.

► **Running and spending weekend** ◄

June 2

Waterford's last weekend before Memorial Day was a triumph for the fleet o'foot, and the thick o'wallet. In the foot department with the initial running of the Waterford 10 K it was Paul Okerberg, first place overall, who established the course record of 38:17. Sharon

Felzer established the womens' record with 48:15. Winner of the mens' over 55 was C. Bowman and the winner of the womens' of a certain age was Pam Diamond. John white is congratulated for organizing a now eagerly anticipated annual event.

In the wallet department two events provided an opportunity for Waterfordians who established a double-ended record for generosity in both donating and buying. The Loudoun Mutual Insurance Companies' Saturday morning yard sale raised \$480 for the American Cancer Society and that does not count the donations made in addition to the yard sale.

The Waterford Foundation Country Auction started with a reception organized by Kim Reulein featuring Mary Beth Keen on Saturday evening at the Old School and ended with a post-auction-mortem impromptu calibration for key organizer Susan Sutters' birthday late Sunday. Records were established for prices paid for Waterford Fair crafters' and artists' items and Loudoun antique furniture. This was due to the generosity of the donors of the auction items, the quality and provenance of the items and the generosity of the bidders. The Auction, thanks to efforts of overall organizer Evelyn Godfrey and many helpers, exceeded all expectations. In spite of the financial success there were still great bargains available to the discerning and knowledgeable bidder.

A historic landmark has occurred in the Historic Landmark with the repaving of the Big Hill. For the first time since the forsaking of the town charter in 1932 the maintenance of the streets of Waterford has occurred in a manner that was totally sensitive to and knowledgeable of the special needs of the village. The surface of upper Main Street was milled down and then a new surface was installed that improved the roadway and began the reversal of the past destructive practice of piling layer after layer on the roadbed submerging the existing curbs and building fronts. This was done with obviously expert planning on the part of VDOT and considerate execution on the part of the contractor, Virginia Paving. Not only was the result aesthetically pleasing but also it was accomplished with no unpleasant inconvenience or damage to the houses just inches away.

► **The joy of easement processes** ▲

May 24

The easement process as practiced in Waterford is a lot like sex in that it is something we do because it feels good and you hope that whoever is adjacent to you at the time is doing the same thing at the same time and you both find it a satisfying and rewarding experience. The process goes further in its similarity in that in the best of all circumstances the effects that continue long after the initial gratification, such as tax credits, produce a sense of commitment and accomplishment along with necessary benefits to all of mankind

When our Board of Supervisor start using words like "opting in" for open space easements, an individual process is implied that ignores the consideration of whoever is adjacent to those "opting" in or out and has no short or long term benefits for anyone. Somehow there is a feeling among many Waterfordians who enjoy the afterglow of the easement process that the evolving zoning that is currently being formulated is similar to a reproduction

scheme being designed by a group of isolated monks or nuns who have never been exposed to one another or the mainstream population.

The County Antique Auction that was held this weekend was to retire the vestigial debt left in the wake of the purchase of the Phillips Farm. This farm is the setting for the western quarter of the Waterford Historic Landmark recognized by Loudoun and that part of the in the State Historic Land mark as well as most of the setting that is in the National Historic Landmark The adjacent owners on the village side of the Phillips Farm have placed easements on their land in anticipation of an eventual owner succumbing to the tended proposition. It is hoped that the Waterford Foundation will be that owner, for the usual reasons.

Saturday 4 June is the Waterford Wide Yard Sale. You should start marking your prices on your yard sale items now and don't forget to let Ed Lehmann know you are in on the sale. Maps showing participants will be available. If you are going to use space outside the Old School, get you space reserved now.

► **Preservation mourns Liz Smith** ▲

May 18

Services were held Tuesday in Purcellville at the King of Kings Worship Center for Liz Smith, our fellow villager and friend, who died peacefully at Sunrise Assisted Living Center in Leesburg on 6 May. Graveside services were held in Charlottesville on Thursday. For those who wish to contribute to a memorial the Waterford Foundation has set up fund in her name.

Liz was an active member of many preservation organizations and served for years as a board member of both the Waterford Foundation and the Preservation Society of Loudoun County. She served as president of the LCPS in 1998. As board member of local preservation organizations she was a touchstone between the board and other preservation organizations throughout Virginia. She would always attend meetings of state and national preservation groups and was punctilious in reporting on those meetings. Her willingness and reliability in performing all the minute functions necessary for the success of an organization had no equal. She took minutes when no one else came forth. For any task that was met by a long silence from most she would volunteer and was completely reliable in performing that task with style and grace. We seldom saw her laugh but when even the most distant witticism or cornball attempt at humor was attempted you could look at her and see by the twinkle in her eye and a faint smile that the effort was understood and appreciated.

Saturday morning starting at 8 the Loudoun Mutual Insurance Company is holding a yard sale at their Waterford Office on High Street. The sale is to benefit the American Cancer Society-Relay for Life. And just up the street at the Old School there is a reception and previewing at 6:30 pm for the Waterford Foundation Country Auction on Sunday. Also on Saturday at 10 in the morning the Foundation is sponsoring a 10 K run or walk (or stroll or in our case creep) in and around the village. This is rain or shine but with spectacular

scenery in any case. This is because the funds raised from these events are to retire the debt incurred in the purchase of the Phillips farm.

► **Spring Plant Exchange Saturday** ▲

May 11

Elaine Head says don't forget to label the plants that you are bringing to swap at the Waterford Spring Plant Exchange on Saturday morning, 14 May, from 10am to 1pm on the village green just below the jail. Several gardens in Waterford have been cultivating and dividing hosta for many years. The surplus is expected to be one of the items offered. In some cases leaving well enough alone, now known as benign neglect, has led to a "hosta takeover" of some yards. As part of the plant exchange, trailer "Mulch and Manure Runs" can be arranged for a 50/50 labor swap. The exchange includes gardening supplies and tools as well.

For those Waterfordians who are of the hunter-gatherer persuasion and eschew gardening for gathering, the gathering season has arrived with the first crop of watercress now ready for gathering. To calm the fears of the feint-of-raw that worry about Waterfords' stream quality, the following is the recipe for cooked "Waterfordcress soup." Cook 2 large cubed potatoes in oil and butter until barely soft. Add 1 quart of stock and simmer 10-15 minutes. Add two big handfuls of watercress and simmer 7 minutes stirring thrice. Add a cup of cream, salt and freshly ground pepper and liquefy in a blender. Waterfordians know where the watercress is, so mentioning it here would be superfluous.

Poke has begun to poke above ground and now is the time for poke salad. By next week it will become bitter and you will have to change the water a lot even to cook it. And alas, the season for fiddlehead ferns is over, but they were abundant and delicious. Waterford is truly the land of nectar and ambrosia where there is not better spring fare than fiddleheads with Healy egg hollandaise. You are encouraged to use chicken eggs as birding has become politically incorrect.

Speaking of birds we have noticed parts of Clarkes' Gap And Loyalty Roads are lined with bluebird nesting boxes that are occupied but facing out across the road. In about three weeks we will have to be vigilant. Perhaps bluebird-crossing signs should be added to the deer crossing signs.

► **No stopping the four way stop** ▲

May 4

Thursday morning saw the fourth stop sign up at the Post Office utility pole with a bright orange flag to draw attention to its presence. All day Post Office patrons marveled at the indifference of drivers coming up Main Street as they blithely sailed through the now four way stop. The Sheriffs department was allowing 24 hours for the community to get used to the new stop and it is expected that the first tickets were written early Saturday morning.

The photos taken of the Corner Store as part of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) in 1932 clearly show the post that was in the center of Waterfords' main intersection. It originally held the signpost indicating the direction to the surrounding

locations such as Stumptown, Black Swamp, Irene, Milltown (of series fame) and Clarkes Gap. Perhaps the time has come to replace this post and all the signs before the locations become forgotten and replaced by the burgeoning villages that are coming to surround us on every side. At the top could be a four way stop sign saving VDOT the cost of four separate signs.

Thursday afternoon at rush hour the east Waterford deer came through the tannery lot en masse. The construction to the east of Waterford had evidently forced the herd that used to cross Loyalty Road by the Wimerts' bend into a migration over into the territory occupied by the Waterford west herd. For a few moments the ground shuddered with the pounding of hoofs as a river of running gray-brown fur and flashing white tails flowed over Main Street by Richards' Bridge. Not since the Fair has the green grass meadow at the site of the old tannery tennis court looked like the Serengeti. Fortunately a break in the traffic allowed the deer to cross without being hurt. All but one. An old doe, much more gray than brown came over the hill about three minutes after the rest had passed. Several cars were coming down the hill and one was tempted to run out yelling stop, stop. The doe slowed instead looking the lost look of a mother whose children cannot be found. She crossed into the Wisteria Cottage yard and stopped at the fence, still searching. She jumped the fence and melted away, the way only deer can do.

► **Gun fire lights Sam Means nest** ▲

April 27

Sirens screamed through the village just after noon on Thursday after a heat gun ignited a hornet's nest behind some boards at the historic Samuel Means House. Workers were able to throw out the unoccupied nest and put out the fire but the Hamilton Fire and Rescue responded with a fire engine and a ladder truck just in case. A heat gun is not the best thing to use for paint removal in a standing house if you want it to remain standing. The house was the home through the mid 19th century of Captain Samuel Means who recruited and led the Loudoun Rangers, the only organized body of troops from the entire South to fight for the North. It consisted of two troops of cavalry and served as an independent command under the direction of the Secretary of War. They served as guides and generally operated in the area now known as Catocin County. The advocates of this county have noted that it has no military defensible borders. If it did it would now be part of West Virginia.

The membership of the Waterford Foundation met at the Old School on Tuesday night. The speaker was Kathleen Kilpatrick, Director of the Virginia Department of Historic Preservation, who addressed the roll of easements in Historic Preservation. She also said that even though the State of Virginia was better prepared than most to resist the impact of possible Federal legislation not conducive to preservation ideals it was important for us as individuals to constantly remind our elected officials of the benefits of preservation.

MaryAnn Naber was reelected to a second consecutive three-year term and Mark Beisler,

Rich Biby, Marilyn Gentry and Kathleen Hughes were newly elected to three-year terms as Directors of the Foundation. The Board of Directors then met and elected Jim Behan as President, Nancy Doane as Vice-president, out going President Bruce Cleveland as Treasurer and Susan Sutton as Secretary.

Sherry Satin asked for the donation of more antiques for the Foundations auction. She used an 1828 spinning wheel as an example of how an object was beneficial to clothing its owners in its original function. Now it is giving us an additional benefit as it is sold to raise funds to retire the debt on the Phillips Farm, the reason for the auction.

► **Mother of all yard sales pends** ▲

April 20

The Waterford Village-Wide Yard Sale will take place on Saturday 4 June from 9:00am to 2:00 pm. Before 1 May contact Mary Kenesson at 882-4431 and after that contact Ed Lehmann until 15 May to have your location put on the map. There is a \$10 fee to be used for advertising and related expenses. For those not using their own yards the Waterford Foundation will allow the area in front of the Old School to be used. Space there must be reserved in advance and you will be expected to bring all of your own tables, covers, shade etc. All participants should advise Mary and Ed what they are selling besides the usual yard sale items so that the unusual, crafts and antiques can be highlighted in the advertising. Volunteers are needed to help posting fliers in local stores and to post directions to the sale.

The meeting of the Waterford Lyceum at the Samuel Means house Thursday was a packed house and an outstanding success. The work being done is an outstanding example of how the aspects of an old house can be revealed and brought to life again with diligence, planning and careful work. All those who lived in this house in the past, for over 252 years, had things that compensated for the lack of amenities afforded us today and enabled them have a higher quality of life. When these amenities are rediscovered and enjoyed, we who now visit and dwell in and around old houses live lives that were never better in spite of the vicissitudes that threaten.

We have all been saddened by the death of Pope John Paul II and aware of the confusion of the 13th of this month. Seldom has there been such turmoil where even holy sites of crucifixion become confused with branches of service. We should all examine our soles and try to forgive even the laborer in the local vineyards of media who cannot distinguish her nates from a void in terra firma.

► **Historic anniversary to Edwards** ▲

April 13

A Historic wedding anniversary sixty-five years in the making is wished to Tots and Weedie Edwards. The Edwards are now at their second home in Morrisonville assumed to be less vertically challenged stair wise than the Waterford home. Tots was a former employee of this paper and came as a stranger to our midst when born in Waterford over 86 years ago. We look forward to seeing Tots and Weedie holding court as Waterfords' senior couple on

their front porch as the weather warms. Cards congratulating them can be sent to Waterford PO Box 176, 20197.

As the weather warms the Waterford Gardener's Club is blooming again. A spring plant exchange the morning of Saturday May 14 (the weekend between Mothers' Day and the Antique Auction) is planned. Elaine Head has volunteered to coordinate the exchange.

The Country Auction of antiques, arts and crafts will be held at The Old School in Waterford on Sunday, 22 May starting at noon for the silent and 2 pm for the live auction. The Waterford Foundation is accepting donations before 30 April to be cataloged. This weekend event has in the past attracted a generous selection of Waterford and Loudoun furniture of the type that has begun to set records in bidding at other local auctions.

On Saturday morning before the Sunday auction there will be a 10 K run (or walk, or in our case creep) expected to be heavily attended by Waterfords' women, all of whom are athletic. This run is also expected to attract a good number of other regional runners who often run on the Waterford Historic Districts', renowned for their beauty, roads and byways.

Donors, event participants and helpers will be treated to a Preview Party at 6:30 pm featuring Marybeth Keene, Appraiser on PBSs' Antique Roadshow, as guest speaker.

And speaking of roads, the steady streams of trucks attendant to the construction of the new homes, now in the hundreds, being constructed next to Waterford Historic District and in the Waterford School District are taking a toll on the roads through Waterford. Eliminating the bone jarring potholes has taken heroic efforts on the part of VDOT and we hope the contractors will alert their drivers to alternate though longer routes.

► **Wimert passed by on Waterford** ▲

April 5

Paul Wimert was everything a cavalry officer ever was, could have been and should have been.

D'ye ken John Peel with his coat so
gay,
D'ye ken John Peel at the break of
day,

In the early 1970's, after talking to Sherman Hutchison, I went down to the Horseshoe on Catoctin Creek the day before deer season to look for tracks. Sherman had only said, "Don't shoot the foxes." Along the trail came Paul Wimert in his pink coat, mounted on a bay. He had a Colt Woodsman strapped to his saddle and a hound loped along beside him. He said hello and forded Catoctin at the toe of the horseshoe. Never there was such a pretty sight on such a pretty autumn day. Other places have paid tribute to Paul Wimert but none noted a singular ability he brought to the riding community wherever he went. That was his knowledge of the relationship between a particular rider and a particular horse. He knew better than most how the relationship between rider and horse could make for a better rider and a better horse.

The converse is also true. A good rider can be made bad by an unsuitable horse and an

unsuitable rider can make a good horse bad. He had a talent for seeing the best fit and since horses seldom chose riders he was always working to see that the riders he knew found the horse that best fit them. There is a long list of riders who, over the years, were grateful for these matches and perhaps even more horses who were even more grateful. His career led him to places where great games of paper, scissors and rock were occurring but with blood, money and ideals and the rules were always changing. Does money cut blood, does blood cover ideals and ideals cover money?

Paul Wimert was the last talented horseman in the twilight's last glimmer of the U. S. Cavalry. The world's finest cavalry had been an unsuited weapon system when the panzers rolled through Poland. The 6th Cavalry had been mechanized and the 7th only rode on rotary wings. The words of Fiddlers' Green to the tune of Gary Owen were only remembered by a few who always knew "For none but the shades of Cavalrymen dismount at Fiddlers' Green." [More on Paul Wimert by searching the internet]

► **Brock's old elm hid gnome home** ▲

March 30

When Walker Brock looked at the stump of the old elm in the side yard of the Marshall Clagett House last week he discovered a hollow underground room just the right size for a family of gnomes. A statue of the common garden gnome is nearby but this is the red-capped red buskined variety. In keeping with Waterford's Irish roots it is thought that the revealed abode belonged to the green-capped green buskined variety seen in Waterford the week before on March 17th, Saint Patrick's Day. There is an old Catocin County adage that says when a tree has more wood hanging over the roof of a log house then is in the log house it is time for one or the other to be moved. The log house was moved once to its present location about 1872 so it was the trees turn. A large limb from the tree just missed the house last year and all winter long sizable branches fell on and about the house. Virginia Dominion Power was willing to remove upper branches that kept dropping on the power line and then Tuesday Peter Hart Tree Preservation removed the lower three stories. When the boll fell it split asunder and all agreed the tree was not cut before its time.

Peter Hart estimated the tree was about 100 years old and had grown quickly in the damp soil next to the millpond filled by the Waterford Foundation in the 1940's. The age of the tree was confirmed by looking at the photos taken during the Historic American Building Survey in 1932. Then the tree was over thirty feet high, about the same height as the massive radio mast on the roof of the Waterford Inn three houses up Main Street. Knowing gnomes are extremely fond of dancing, especially in the light of the moon, the site seems ideal as it is within easy earshot of the great megaphone that played "Big Band" music from as far away as Chicago. The presence mushroom rings in the yards adjacent to the gnome home further indicate gnome presence.

► **A farewell to Francis Peacock** ▲

March 23

With the death of Francis Peacock last Saturday one of the last few threads that connect

Waterford to its raison d'être parted. Though he always steadfastly claimed to be from Paeonian Springs to the point of even denying being from Waterford, Waterfordians could never disassociate from the Peacock family farm. This is because for so many years we saw in coming and going the ebb and flow of the seasons reflected in the surface of the fields and the size of the animals and envied a man who lived in and ran this amazing food growing machine five generations long. He was visual proof of the link that Waterford had with its mill town beginning through the end of the horse powered farm.

Today most of us think of the golden age of the horse is somewhere around the middle of the 19th century not realizing that the conversion of farming from a source of energy that was renewable and home grown did not completely take place until the end of WWII. Francis, being born before the peak of horsepower in America in 1918 was our resident expert on all things farm in and around Waterford.

When Gene Scheel was trying to determine what the evenly spaced white dots were on a 1930s aerial photo, Francis was able to confirm that they were shocks of winter wheat because he had helped put them there. When Dick Newman was trying to nose ring his pigs to keep them from rooting out of their pen, Francis not only had the pipe loop needed to hold the pigs but also provided the instructions on how to hold a pig. Any one who has seen a greased pig contest or knows the dislike prey animals have of being held would be grateful for this advice.

We remember Francis standing and stirring the apple butter kettle for the Catocin Presbyterian Church at the Waterford Fair and we admire a life so complete as to be able to plant the seed that grew the tree that produced the apples that made the apple butter while never leaving home. Francis was born when Waterford was a seed town that furnished services for farms powered by the horse and finished his life when Waterford has no seeds but political discontent and farming is now agribusiness powered by oil from the ends of the earth. He kept his saddle, carefully cleaned and protected under a fleece, just in case.

► **Naked ladies clothes showing** 🏔️

March 16

In spite of the wintry blasts sweeping out of Canada the naked ladies of Waterford shoved their clothes above ground last week so we will know just where to look. The cold winter has been very good to them and they will be appearing in beves where just a solitary blossom had bloomed last summer. Mark the spot of all those green shoots so that the effects of warm rain at the end of July can be fully appreciated. Waterford has long been a place where all the men are caring and nurturing.

This Tuesday at the Board of Supervisors room a speaker from South Riding mentioned that a man from Waterford was handing out flyers expressing concern about the effects of the Virginia Supreme Court's decision to invalidate Loudoun's growth management regulations. The community of South Riding is about as far from Waterford as you can get and still be in Loudoun County. The fact that a Waterford man was so far from home

demonstrates the concern for those who will be terribly affected by the traffic and increased pressure on schools and other infrastructure cost. It is heartening to know that we have our men who show those in the parts of the county that are so desperate that we feel your pain and that we are there for you in your hour of need.

The difference between Western Loudoun and the rest of Loudoun has become again as much of a factor as it was in the 1861-1865 War of North Loudoun. Loudoun County felt isolated from the interests of Fairfax County in 1754 and separated and Loudoun Valley felt isolated from Virginia's interests in 1861 they raised the Loudoun Rangers to fight. Now Western Loudouners feel so isolated from the interests of the elected Supervisors from the Eastern Districts of Loudoun that separation is being discussed as an option. There is a feeling in that the surplus in taxes generated by the open areas of the west have long supported the needs of the rest of the County and since no good deed goes unpunished they now may drag us down with them by causing us to be just like them, only worse.

📌 **Waterford's view of the collapse** 📌

March 9

The decision of the Virginia Supreme Court on Thursday elevated Waterford a few hundred feet into the air as a vantage point to view our part in the collapse of society. Those of us who bother to read a lot and gather useless information, that only serves the purpose of making us an irritant in the lives of our family and friends, feel that we Waterfordians are in an excellent position to see that the information of historical and archeological studies as presented by authors such as Jared Diamond in "Guns, Germs and Steel " and more recently in "Collapse" applies to Loudoun County and to Waterford as a microcosm.

The format that most likely will be followed for the end of mankind is fairly obvious if you accept the validity of deductive logic. The democracy that we live in is a triumph of human genius that has served us well for a few hundred years but that is just a fraction of the time that other societies such as the Mayan, the Anasazi or even the small and isolated Easter Islanders existed before vanishing from the effects of their own success. We are better off than most of these however because the genius of Democracy is that it allow large groups of fairly unintelligent people to prosper. That is its secret and that seems be the "Ballad of Reading Goal" for a downfall that can be observed from the vantage point of Waterford.

Over 20 years ago Jake and Susanne Page arranged for a Hopi Indian as speaker for our 4th of July. He spoke of his village, high on the yellow sandstone mesas of northeastern Arizona. He told us that it was about the same size as Waterford but it was there a thousand years before Waterford and was there today still functioning as his and his peoples home.

Waterford is high on the yellow sandstone mesa of North Loudoun. Will we see the pinion and ponderosa forests of open space vanish? We only have to deal with the rain as the flood waters of traffic smash the interceptors and turn the flood plane gardens of Eastern Loudoun into deep arroyos clogged with the starving deer who escaped being traffic fatalities. Eventually will the only trace of Waterford's historic existence be found in the

debris of packrat middens preserved by crystallized urine?

► Defence missing from Factory ◄

March 2

Given the long fence association with controversy in Waterford we were horrified to find not a new fence was being put up but an old fence was gone missing at the corner of Clarkes Gap Road and Factory Street last week. The loop-de-loop top iron fence has long defended the corner property from incursions of automobiles that leave Clarkes Gap on the slight rise that can make them air born or the slight bend in the road that makes them road less. Cars both coming and going for many years have struck the fence and have cumulatively mangled it into a multi-dimensional mobile. The total effect resulted in not only a three-dimensional fence but also a three-dimensional fence line. Fear not, the fence will return. It is being straightened and is scheduled to be reinstalled in an orderly manner. The corner of Clarkes Gap and Factory will not have its defences down and be left defenceless for long.

The snowstorm that swept in Thursday caught the bluebird pairs scouting for a home by surprise. One pair was out in our yard and took up residence under the hemlock bushes. We worried about them enough to lock the cat door to keep our cats in. This was probably a wasted effort though because they are getting so old they don't like to get their leathers wet just like the bluebirds don't like getting their feathers wet.

I know all about defences and defenses.
I know all about the blue bird and the bluebird.
The only way this column ever makes sense is,
leave the former alone and the latter one word.

Friday morning the snow lay evenly on the ground all around the village. Now is the time to sow the grass seed forgotten last fall. You can walk across the yard and see where you have been and see that the seeds are sown in an even manner, more densely where the grass was thin and sparsely where the grass was thick. You can spread fertilizer in the same manner.

Homeowners in Waterford became wealthier this week as the 25% plus increase Tax assessment notice came in. Don't worry about the taxes increasing as many supervisors ran with a promise to reduce your property taxes. Now is the time to start holding your breath until the rate is reduced enough so you pay less than last year.

► Cold winters end point of veiw ◄

February 16

The way Waterford curves around one side of the Catoctin Creek valley focuses on a nadir point hovering above the dam for the Waterford mill. Anyone looking out a back window of any house on the creek side of Second or Main Street is looking at this point. Many have never seen the dam though all of us who have sensed the quit after a Fair weekend realize a constant sound easily lost behind closer commotions is emanating from this source. When you look among the treetops that form a frieze around the village you can see a

change in their color has started after last weeks respite from winter. Now a chill wind has pushed us back inside. Now more than any other time of the year it is more rewarding to look out our back windows. The chill wipes away the guilt of not being out actually accomplishing something. The bare trees, though just beginning to change color allow us to see into the fields further than any other time. The time is now to look for the dam without having to take the two-furlong hike best done in warm weather.

As you look back into the valley search for the darting specks of blue among the trees that screen the view of the dam. This week the blue bird scouts are locating their nesting sites. A hundred nesting boxes put around the valley 25 years ago pushed the bluebird population to the flock size that was their habit before the house sparrows and starlings successfully competed for their territory.

The long bare Christmas ham bone lurks buried amidst the frosted and clotted packages in the freezer. It has been waiting for the pot so its long dormant hamel essence can infuse into the peppery lacy Creesy green leaves, an essential spring tonic that enables us to do those things best done when the cold goes. If in your searching the fields for these spring delights you see a bluebird-nesting box, now is the time to clean it out. And if you don't find a bluebird-nesting box, now is the time to put one up.

► **We have a new grandchild, Lucy** ▲

February 9

Lucy Clair Pauchnik joined Colin, her brother, on Thursday. She is the daughter of Brian and Kristen Keating Pauchnik of Pittsburgh PA. More grandchildren from other sources are expected to follow shortly.

In case you missed last week's column, you know by the falling snow that we are continuing winter as predicted by Whuchak the Waterford woodchuck. Those anticipating a spring that is not far behind are urged to sign up for the Loudoun Parks and Rec's trip to the Philadelphia Flower show as the Waterford Gardeners Club will not be arranging a flower trip this year. For further information and advance registration, contact the Douglass Community Center at 703-771-5913.

Wednesday evening the Waterford Citizen's Association met Wednesday at the Old School. Ed Lehmann was elected to continue as President for this year but thankfully made no state of the village address, yet. You are reminded that dues are due for 2005. Plans are underway for a Waterford wide yard sale in June and the traditional 4th in July. Discussions where most vehement about the continued onslaught of heavy trucks speeding through the village. A delegate was selected to call on the site managers at the construction sites surrounding the village to appeal that trucks be directed around the village. Skeptics noted that since the drivers pay is a factor of the number of deliveries made that nothing will deter the through truck traffic short of a "No Through Trucks" posting enforced by fines well in excess of \$200.

A report was made on the agenda of the Loudoun Historic District review Committee and it was noted that six out of seven items of business on the 7 February meeting deal with

Waterford. Another item of note in the village is that an application for a change in use from residential back to commercial has been made for the Sappington House on Main Street. For many years the Sappington House was the Offices of the Waterford Foundation. No changes will be made in the building itself for this change of use just as no changes were made when the use went from Waterford Foundation office to residential use.

► **Waterford's Whuchak says winter** ▲

February 2

Today the Waterford Groundhog, Whuchak the woodchuck, saw his shadow and so we will have six more weeks of winter here in Waterford. Other places such as Gobblers Knob with Punxatawny Phil have not yet confirmed this but they are Johnny come lately in the winter prediction business as our historic old Whuchak was growing old as he sipped his first secret groundhog punch when the earliest buildings were going up in Waterford around 1733. The punch is said to increase his life seven years for each sip. The recipe for the punch, though secret, is known to have been duplicated by the German settlers in nearby Lovettsville by mixing equal parts of kirshwasser made from the blackheart cherries they planted and carefully aged cider made from apples left over after the apple sauce was made. The Lovettsville Germans were the ones who drew Waterford's attention to Whuchak the groundhog.

A group of Germans were hanging around the old Waterford Mill that was closer to Catoctin than the present mill on Candelmas Day in 1733. They became excited at the appearance of a groundhog on the banks of the Catoctin out in the pasture now known as the Phillips Farm. They kept saying something about an Ergle. One of the Waterford area Indians, a group always ready to argue semantics, jumped into the conversation and explained that the furry chap they were so excited about was not called Ergle, which was an European hedgehog but Whuchak who had an uncanny ability to predict the weather. With this the Germans became even more excited and shouting "Ja, ja, das ist richtig." In the excitement one left his stein sitting on the ground and when all had left Whuchak came over and took a sip. The miller took all of this in and the next year he saw Whuchak out behind the mill looking for another sip. Being a Quaker of considerable business acumen he realized the value of Whuchak's prediction and made sure that he always had a stein of what came to be known as Groundhog Punch on which to sip every Candelmas day from then on.

► **Architectural Lyceum tonight** ▲

January 26

You have already been warned last week about the meeting of the Waterford Lyceum at the Old School tonight at 7 but lookout for the Waterford Citizen's Association Meeting at the Old School on Tuesday, 1 February. As usual there will be the social gathering at 7 with refreshments before the actual meeting begins at 7:30. This is the first meeting of the year and sets the tone of what will be accomplished in 2005. This is reflected in the agenda items: July 4th issues, Budget discussion, traffic calming, Light Shield status and the

question of a Waterford yard sale in May.

If you are new to the Community you should know that the WCA concerns itself with the health safety and welfare of the community. To be a member you do not have to own property or even actually be a resident of Waterford usually defined as the 20197 postal area. You do have to have an interest in the community at large. WCA is the closest thing to a Home Owners Association (HOA) we have but differs mainly in what we do not do that it done by some HOAs. For example, the WCA is not concerned with fulfilling the obligation made as proffers by developers, enforcing architectural, gardening, laundry, home recreational or parking guidelines or practices. The WCA has no political or religious orientation at all. The Funds that are budgeted come from dues paid by the members, the proceeds of a barbeque stand run by WCA during the fair, donations, grants and small amounts generated by the sale T-shirts or hats and funds surplus from community projects such as a yard sale or trips. All funds spent are on Community activities, mainly the 4th of July celebration or community improvements such as trees, lights, and signs.

Those of us who are trying to recover from a bountiful holiday should be warned about the next seasonal caloric temptation about to strike, Girl Scout Cookies.

► Pigs are back in historic home ▲

January 19

Last week we were on our way to the Post Office and a pig trotting along on one end of a leash and Kathy Riedel on the other end passed us. Kathy said the pig arrived Christmas morning with a big red bow, a surprise to the rest of the Riedle family from son Joseph. The Vietnamese Potbelly pig is smaller than our historic pigs, only weighing about 125 pounds when five years old. The Riedel's pig, a gilt, is called Piggy so far. Its sidekick the rat is called Ratty. Piggy is surprisingly agile as it must be to deal with the stairs in what is one of Waterford's taller houses. As the Riedel's do not have a dog there is no answer to the question as to which is smarter, a dog or a pig. Ratty and Piggy have a symbiotic relationship though it is suspected that the pig is smarter than the rat. When it comes to eating cheerios Piggy's eating habits produce greater dining opportunities for Ratty.

Waterford has been pig less for far to many years since a herd of nine departed suddenly at hog butchering time about ten years ago. Judging by old photos of fences and the minutes of the village council in the 19th century, pigs have been an important part of Waterford's thought and culture for most of its history.

This may be shown as MaryAnn Naber, a local historic preservationist, will be giving a slide presentation on Waterford's architecture at the Lyceum's next meeting. The meeting will begin with an informal social at 7pm on next Wednesday, 26 Jan, at the Old School and the program will begin at 7:30pm. This interesting presentation will review the village's early buildings to its more recent. Waterford's two hundred year building span reflects not only the change in American architectural taste but also the change in the wealth of the village. MaryAnn is the Federal Preservation Officer for the Federal Highway Administration. She is actively involved in Loudoun preservation and co-authored the publication, [*Linking the*](#)

► Dreaming of a Wyatt Christmas ▲

January 12

In Waterford, where everything is historic, The Wyatt family traveled far a-field to Hebronville Texas last week in search of a historic event, a South Texas White Christmas. The last white Christmas in Hebronville occurred about a hundred and fifteen years ago. Ford and Catherine missed a great business opportunity as they frolicked in five inches of snow. At this writing a historic South Texas snowball has reached \$2,000,100 on E-bay.

The Waterford eggs continue to arrive, as the days grow longer. We must place a correction for the last time we mentioned the Waterford flock. The daily production was about 60 eggs for 62 chickens, not 16 eggs as mentioned previously and that is not counting the production of the two roosters. This was brought to light when the owners of a Purcellville flock mentioned that they were out producing the Waterford layers. We know that claims of 365 eggs a year have been made for Chinese chickens.

Everyone is invited to visit the front of 15570 2nd Street to see the streetlight shade that has been installed as a sample. You should notice there is little glare as you approach the light.

15 of the 19 lights in the village are eligible to have these shades installed. Four may be left bare for greater area viability. Three of these four are the lights closest to the center of the village between the Pink House, Corner Store and Post Office and one is the light across from the Old Mill. The cost of these shades, if viewed favorably by the majority of the citizens present at the next Waterford Citizen's Association meeting in two weeks, would be about \$6 per house.

The town charter was given up by Waterford when the County agreed to take over the cost of maintaining the streets in 1932. Since the streetlights are part of the street cost you would expect that Loudoun County would pay for them as they do in the rest of the county.

► Lights shine on through night ▲

January 5

Holiday decorations have always been somewhat constrained in Waterford and this tends to give the impression that we are suffering from an overdose of conservatism inherent to being the stewards of a National Historic Landmark. Actually there are other reasons for this constraint. One of which has always been a reluctance to test the limits of house wiring that was installed in the early part of the last century. This wiring itself is now beginning to be recognized as something that should be preserved as evidenced by the feeling preservation aficionados had when we noticed the cloth wrapped wiring in the Waterford hardware store was missing and the Edison #2 light bulb in the garage of the Captains House had been replaced.

Richard Newman was a pioneer in seasonal use of electricity in the log house next to the Tannery Branch for many years. He made innovative use of transparent tape for electrical

connections and constructed extension cords that had plugs at both ends to hook up lights strung up so that two receptacle ends faced each other. These factors and the large volume of decorations from non OSHA approved sources always made flipping on a switch for the lights an exciting event that made the lighting of the National Christmas tree 50 miles to the east rather sedate.

The restraint in Waterford became evident to us this week as we returned from Pittsburgh where any given neighborhood makes a significant drawdown in the power net. This is not to say that Waterford is totally devoid of seasonal displays. The concern for the limitations of wiring is counteracted by the obligation that many of us feel to use electric lights rather than real candles on the Christmas trees and to keep a light in the windows to aid travelers carrying gold, frankincense and myrrh. Also a few of us seize the opportunity to pour artistic talents into the senses of travelers in the night.

This year, as in many since the passing of Richard Newman, the prize goes to Mary Dudley for her efforts beside and in front of her house on Second Street. Like crop circles, we don't know what it is but it sure does look nice.