



Kelly's Corner

By Jan Kelly

The Fourth of July:—you don't really feel it until you hear the first drum in the distance. If you have some vague reluctance, still you wander in the direction of that beat. By the time you arrive the band is at the peak of the first march, and you are involved for the rest of the day and night. A spin of once-a-year picnics, eating at various open houses, washing it down with brightly-colored drinks of dubious contents, watching various sports events—impressive old boats and the race of the local regatta, tennis, and baseball. The beach and the flats will attract the many once-a-year bathers and explorers. The man who never uses that backyard hammock, but who mows around it for months, will finally claim his reward and stretch out. The grandparents will particularly enjoy keeping an eye on the grandchildren because the middle generation will be present, too.

The Fourth of July is rather like a summertime Christmas or Thanksgiving for families—less clothing, no presents, and no dishes to wash—a much easier holiday to enjoy. Some people spend more time outdoors this one day than they do all the rest of the year. For most people there will be that one moment during the day, whether it is prompted by a patriotic tune, a glimpse of the flag, the parade itself, or the fireworks, when each will say very privately (the sentimental with a welling tear in the eye), "I am proud to be an American." The mock blossoms in the night sky will not seem like war at play but be the most childlike of pleasures, and with the last boom and burst of light a longing for next year's Fourth will happen as quick as your next thought.

Ten days later, on Saturday, July 14, the French celebrate Bastille Day. The word "bastille" is a corruption of "bastide," which means fortification in the general sense and refers particularly to the 12th century fortified towns of southwestern France. To us the Bastille is the prison in Paris—400 years old, 100 feet high, eight towers with connecting walls—the one the French revolutionaries attempted to destroy as a symbol of "down with the old, up with the new." (They really only wanted the arms and ammunition inside.) Only seven prisoners were locked up at the time; in the logical French manner, the Parisian assembly of electors met two days later to destroy systematically what Richelieu had changed from a fortress to a prison and what Louis XIV had maintained as such. When the bids were in, "Patriot" P.J. Palloy had won, and the job of razing the Bastille was done. Well, by 1792 it was.



Etta and Bernie Feinberg
the darling grandparents of Sophie Brickman

"Patriot" P.J. Palloy had been trying to carve a miniature Bastille for each and every municipality from each and every stone. With ideas like that he would fit right in on Commercial Street. The annual *feu d'artifice* (fireworks) on the Seine makes it all worth while. They have no Yankee Doodle Dandy's, or Sousa marches, or Louis Armstrong, but they do wave and wear the red, white, and blue as we do.

And a very Happy Birthday to Louis Armstrong, 84 years old this July Fourth. His gift of music will keep him alive as long as we listen.

Next time Felix, the street maitre d' of the Lobster Pot, coaxes you in with promises of great food, service, and atmosphere, follow his advice. It won't be your only time. Joy McNulty and staff run a business that is in high gear day and night, but they do it so smoothly, make it look all so easy you relax, taste, enjoy, and digest. Besides the traditional lobster clambake, you can enjoy Portuguese and original recipes; they take fresh ingredients, combine them with talent, and deliver to you that dish you "can't fix at home." I had shad and shad roe on my first visit, a difficult item to find. You can order sashimi and tempuras, also. It's a restaurant which takes many trips to enjoy fully—the variety of dishes, as well as the amiable staff—and they love your company.

While strolling through Whaler's Wharf looking for Jan McPherson, creator of the wonderful paintings on wood, I was delighted to see so many interesting shops under one roof. There is a lot of quality there. Provincetowners tend not to visit these shops. They barely notice the changing signs as the years pass. If you are in this group, you can get years caught up by visiting the Whaler's Wharf once. I stopped at one booth surprised to see my plumber Crane Hurst manning the works. Well, it wasn't Crane after all, but it was Edgar Thompson of Santiel Designs and Andes Outfitters, and he is as handsome as Crane. Edgar is from Peru, and South American blood mixtures are very different from North American. Edgar has one Indian grandmother;

the other is Spanish. One grandfather is a Scotsman, the other Chinese. The result is a man looking remarkably like one who is half Portuguese and half German-Irish. If you don't believe me, go and look for yourself. Edgar has a shop in Harvard Square, too. The whole family is involved, and they sell Peruvian products made only of natural materials—leather, cotton, wool, and straw. I especially liked the Indian weaving, ancient designs, and natural dyes. The colors are handsome and soothing. The luggage is beautifully crafted.

Well, I didn't find Jan McPherson, so I'll have to go by her house. Besides the wonderful wall of wood at Whaler's Wharf, Jan paints to order anything you want on a panel: figures, poetry, flowers, and fruits to suit you. I am picking up a newborn's gift for Sophie Brickman, just born to Nina and Marshall Brickman of New York. Big sister Jessica has had her painting over her bed for four years; Sophie will have hers within the week. Jan has a special talent for catching the whimsy of childhood.

The Front Street Record Shop at 212 Commercial Street has more than records (new and used) and tapes. It has a collection of tape and record lore and music-oriented posters. The talents of the Jack Kanis, Ted Strange, and Dylan Stanton trio of owners comes out in their trio-designed gift certificates, bizarre and wonderful Happy Birthday and anniversary cards, and custom-made picture buttons—rock stars if you wish, or choose your own photo. The fellows keep the shop open all year round. From Front Street, it looks like you can get a break-dancing lesson there.

Many of the shopkeepers are anxious about certain "key" days not being "boom" days, but I think they should allay their fears. When I said last week that the sands of Provincetown have shifted again, I not only meant the two species of boats at MacMillan Wharf, I meant all of town. I think you will see a longer season more slowly paced—May to October as a minimum instead of just July and August as in years past. You will still have your heaviest volume in these two months, but you won't have to hinge the other ten months on them. You will put your time in, but the span will be longer. Good luck.

And all the building in town—whether it's private or public, it's all temporal. We have no real choice whether you or it will go first. So, while you are all working so hard, please don't forget to enjoy yourselves, too.

Remember all those wonderful retirement parties of the last two years? I notice the retired volunteers are back on the job. I don't know whether they enjoyed their parties so much they would all try for one more or if they just missed the work and being a helping hand. I really think that sometimes it is a case of a needed rest improving health and stamina. Where would Provincetown be without her volunteers?

Two hummingbirds have been spotted in Provincetown: one on Brewster Street, and one in a box. Catherine Nelson's specimen is stuffed, 80 years old, and from Bogota, Columbia. I remember when I was stuck in Guatemala during a two-week rainstorm up the Rio de Pasion on my way to the ruins of Tikal—No



parader's view of parade watchers

who's watching the parade-watchers?

30-minute \$75 air trip from Guatemala City for me! I wanted to see Tikal the real way, the way the indians arrived to build it. Well, I did, in a grain boat. After it rained enough to cause the river to rise six feet, I was forced to disembark up a steep, muddy, slippery bank to a roof for shelter. Yes, a roof. Ten poles and a straw roof. The indians spoke neither English or Spanish. They fed me and scratched a fire for me each evening while I studied the flora and fauna, sang for them, and fished catfish with them. The fire at night was to dry me; I think it cooked the mildew on my boots. Rain, rain, rain for two weeks. I don't know what animals the fire was meant to drive away, but it drew the local pigs. Their nearness to the fire with me was good at sunset, but they would be stretched across the still-warm rocks at sunrise. The alarm clock combination I would awaken to was the snorting and grunting of my peccary pals and the humming of scores of hummingbirds in the banana fields ten feet from my roof. The combination still makes me laugh, the whirring and the grunting both so insistent, like a barber shop quartet ever warming up. If you think the contrast in sound was humorous, think of the physical contrast—pigs and hummingbirds. Brochures can't tell it all.

I was watching the exhilaration of youth all through the Fourth. I began to wonder as my eyes spanned so many members of all generations together. I began to wonder if the misdemeanors of other people which affect us do not diminish our own exuberance. I wonder if that causes us disease. The immune system: Is it all biological? Or do our feelings "catch" the disease before our bodies do? We should be more considerate of each other. Our health is always involved.