

CARLETON-WILLARD

VILLAGER



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I painted this watercolor not long after my husband passed away some years ago, in the fog of loss and memories. Its meaning has shifted over the years. Now it speaks to me of new ideas, new experiences in daily life, of knowing and not knowing, but always with peace of heart, no matter the “weather” inner or outer.

Mary Lou Burke



THE CARLETON-WILLARD

VILLAGER

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The Editors' Corner



There's basically an element of fiction in everything you remember. Imagination and memory are almost the same brain processes. When I write fiction, I know that I'm using a bunch of lies that I've made up to create some form of truth. When I write a memoir, I'm using true elements to create something that will always be somehow fictionalized.

Isabel Allende

We are trying something new! This is the first issue of *The Villager* to publish fiction. Our lead-off piece is by Betsy Campbell. She offers the story and the real-life observation that prompted it.

We invite you to reflect on the quotation above. Memoir always involves a certain degree of fiction. You selectively remember something; sometimes your memory changes slightly and details shift. This may be especially true with family stories that get passed down through the ages as several of this issue's authors have noted. Has the story changed? Have our uses and our desires reshaped it?

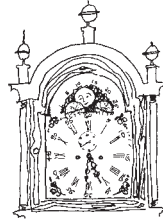
Every memory is already filtered through our consciousness. When it is written it is again shaped, refined, reinterpreted. So, the line between memoir and fiction is always a bit smudged, creation from the actual to the imagined. How often have your memories been challenged by someone who was there and remembers it all differently, or doesn't remember it at all?

This is all to say that our impulse to open *The Villager* to fiction as well as memoir is not quite as much a departure as it may seem!

Marjorie Roemer
Submissions Editor



From the President and CEO



Stories are narratives, spoken or written, that recount events (real or imagined). They come in many forms from short, focused tales to epic novels, that serve to entertain, teach lessons, or share experiences. The stories I personally love to tell are ones that compare how I grew up with how my kids grew up. Growing up in the 70's and 80's was quite different compared to my kids growing up in the 2000's and 2010's, mainly because of changes in technology, family life, and social expectations.

In the 1970s, childhood was generally more hands-on and less structured. My friends and I would spend most of our free time outside, riding bikes, playing neighborhood games, or exploring the neighborhood without constant adult supervision. In contrast, growing up in the 2000's meant growing up alongside rapid technological change and constant supervision. Computers, the internet, smartphones, and social media have become central parts of their daily life.

Back in my time, Apple was still just a fruit that grew on trees, and Vic 20 and Commodore 64 were the popular brands of computers. I can still remember sitting on the floor of my parents' bedroom with my Vic 20 plugged into the television set and programming code for hours just so it would generate a noise that sounded like a missile going through the air. At least it helped me to figure out what I didn't want to do for a living because I was not good at it.

Then came video games, does anyone remember PONG? This was one of the first video games. It resembled a tennis match that featured two bars and a dot that went across the screen. This entertained me for hours and days upon en., unlike today's real life video games with graphics and lifelike experiences. When I try to explain these things to my kids, they just stare at me with a blank look of disbelief.

The cell phone is probably the biggest differentiator. When I try to explain what a bag phone was, I get another blank stare. Additionally, when I talk about the cutting-edge invention of call waiting for a landline and how much of a game changing experience that was, I get another blank stare.

Despite these differences, both generations shared common experiences. Children in both eras dealt with school stress, friendships, family expectations, and the challenge of figuring out who they were. Each generation adapted to the world it was given. To me, growing up in the 1970's emphasized independence and simplicity, while growing up in the 2000's emphasized technology and constant connection. I am sure the next generation will adapt as well.

Christopher J. Golen
President and CEO



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I was standing on the after deck of the car ferry to Martha's Vineyard, watching the last few cars drive up the loading ramp when I saw a man on shore, frantically waving his arms and shouting to someone on board: "Where are the car keys?"

Gone Fiction

They stopped at Dunkin' Donuts on the way to the ferry. Alice had a small latte while Bill had a glazed doughnut and a large coffee with extra cream. She offered to drive the rest of the way while he ate. It was the least she could do under the circumstances. Cars were already driving up the ramp to the ferry when they arrived at the dock.

"They're loading," said Bill. "You better hurry." He wiped a sugary smear from his mouth and took a swig of coffee. She left her unfinished latte in the cup holder and got out to collect her bag from the trunk.

Bill opened the car window. "Got everything?"

"Yes. I'm all set." She hoisted her shoulder bag in place and raised the handle on her roller bag.

"Bye," she said. "Thanks for the ride."

"Have fun," he said and took another bite of doughnut.

Alice hurried up the gangplank and dragged her suitcase up a flight of stairs to the outside deck. She found a seat near the rail on the stern from where she could look down on the parking lot. Bill's car was still there. He was probably still eating. A line of cars moved toward the loading ramp. Alice leaned on the rail watching the activity below, trying to calm the sad nervous feeling in her gut. She had done it. She had left him, and rightly so, for he hadn't even bothered to kiss her good-bye.

Months ago, she had moved into his place dreaming of a perfect romance, and it had seemed a happy choice at first. But, gradually, she realized how fixed he was in his routines. Frozen waffles every morning. Pasta for dinner. Every night. Sports radio and ESPN. He had no taste for granola or salad, no interest in NPR. Even sex had to happen when the Red Sox had a day off, or when there was no football on TV. Alice had made small changes, but clean sheets

and towels didn't matter to him. When she replaced a mildewed shower curtain with a new one, he didn't comment. He didn't notice fresh flowers on the table and never bothered to hang up a coat. He left his clothes on the floor and piled dirty dishes in the sink, and not a word of thanks if she cleaned up after him. Sometimes she thought that if she left, he wouldn't even notice.

"Leave him," her friends advised.

"You have to end it," they said. "He's never going to change." But Alice didn't want to abandon her dream, and she had always hated making scenes. Even now, finally on the way to the boat, she had told him she was going to visit her sister for a few days, never even hinting that she might not be coming back. He had offered to drive her to the ferry, and when she said he needn't bother, he had said, "No problem, I can listen to the game on the way back."

With a blast on its horn, the ferry started to edge away from the dock. Alice looked down at Bill's car and saw him fling open the door, jump out and race toward the departing boat. He was looking up, searching for her among the passengers lining the rail, waving his arms and yelling. Her heart jumped. He needed her. He wanted her back! She leaned over the rail, straining to hear his words.

"Alice! The keys! Where are my keys?"

The ferry slid away from the pier, leaving an ever wider distance between stern and shore. Alice slipped her fingers into her pocket and felt a familiar bunch of keys. She knew without looking that they were attached to a New England Patriots key ring. She pulled them from her pocket, put her hand over the rail, and let go.



Betsy Campbell



My 'Gold' Necklace

My mother loved costume jewelry, could choose well, and looked good. So, one day, many, many years ago when we walked into the Burlington Mall, she noticed that the Cherry & Webb store was closing AND they were having a costume jewelry sale.

In we walked, with me determined to “only look.” We were trying to get a kid through college and jewelry was not on my list of needs.

But, the sale was really a sale with nice pieces at incredible prices. Mother bought something she really liked and for \$2.00 and tax I purchased a “gold” link necklace.

A week or so later I was going to Portsmouth, NH, for a fundraiser luncheon for an organization a friend there supported. I wore the new necklace. As I was crossing the dining room, a couple stopped me at their table and the wife exclaimed, “That is truly a beautiful necklace. We watch ‘Antiques Roadshow’ and we really know fine quality.” For once in my life, I had enough sense to just thank them and continue on without further comment.

But over the years, it stays on the table by my bed, ready to be thrown on for any occasion that needs a bit of “pickup.” And often it gets a nice approving comment. You can’t ask for much more from \$2.00 plus tax!

Peggy McKibben

The Pool

My husband Julius and I were on our honeymoon at the British Colonial Hotel in the Bahamas. On our first day, Julius lay out in the sun for an hour and managed to get a nasty sunburn. A few days later, he complained that the healing sunburn on his back had started to itch unbearably. I ran to ask the hotel nurse for a salve to spread on his back. But, by the time I got back, it was too late. Julius had downed a whole pint of rum. He was lying back on the bed with a foolish grin on his face. “I’m fine,” he said. “It doesn’t itch anymore!”



That evening, the officious hotel social hostess held a rum-swizzle cocktail party at the swimming pool. I begged my husband, “Please don’t drink any more.”

“Don’t nag me,” he answered; “I’ll be OK.” And he proceeded to drink several rum swizzles.

The hostess had the dinner tables set up around the pool. Julius was seated at one end of our table, nearest to the pool. During the meal, the hotel photographer came around to take a picture of each table. He asked my husband to move around to get into the picture. So Julius moved all right – directly into the pool!

There was a collective gasp from the hotel guests. All eyes were riveted on my husband.

Although Julius is a good swimmer, I worried that he might drown in his drunken state. I called his name plaintively – “Julie, Julie!” He ignored me and just continued to float on his back, with a big grin on his face. Finally, our friend Charlie and I used a limbo pole to maneuver Julius to the edge of the pool. Then Charlie grabbed his legs to pull him out.

At that instant, the photographer snapped a picture. My husband is clearly blissful. But the look on my face is the best thing in the picture: I’m thinking, “Oh, my God, what did I do to deserve this?”

It’s my favorite picture.

The social hostess was obviously angry that we had stolen her show. But Julius’s stunt was an inspiration for others to annoy her again. The next night, the white wrought-iron lawn furniture was elegantly set up – at the bottom of the pool!

The story of Julius’s caper, and the photo, became Feinleib family legends.

Mary Ella Feinleib



Haifa, Palestine 1946

Mid-September 1946

U.S. immigration made it quite clear. Father could continue to live in the Levant (Syria/Lebanon) and forfeit his American citizenship, or he could retain his citizenship by showing proof that he intended to return to reside permanently in the U.S. If Father wished to keep his citizenship, he would be required to leave Lebanon with his family no later than September 15, 1946. There was no deadline to arrive in the U.S.

The logical thing would have been to go directly from Beirut to New York. My parents soon discovered the logical route would be much more difficult than they expected. World War II had recently ended, resulting in a general shortage of transportation. Whether by sea or by air, finding space for a family of five seemed impossible.

In order to meet the September 15 deadline, my parents decided to go to the nearest port city outside of Lebanon. Haifa, Palestine, seemed to be their best choice. Haifa was 238 miles south of Beirut. We could simply get there by taxi.

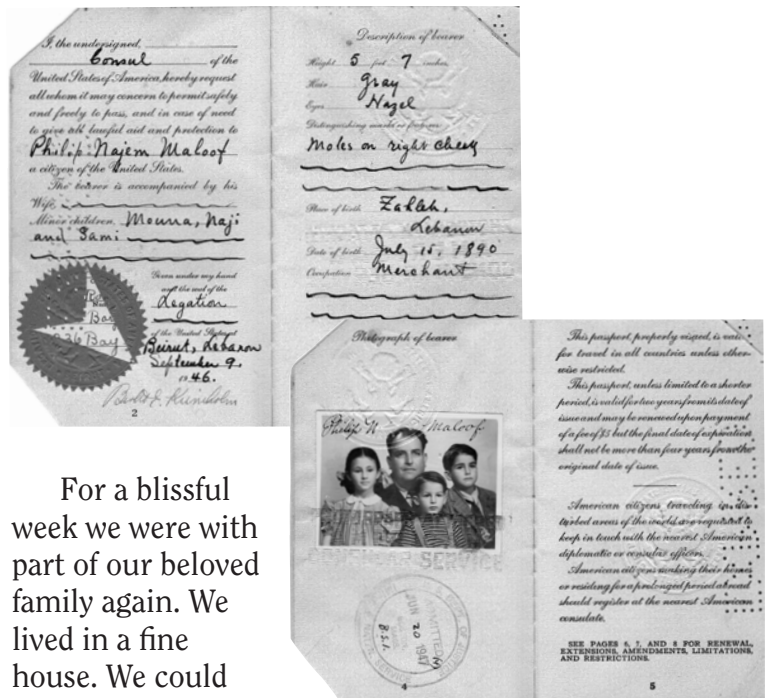
For over a month we lived in a hotel in Haifa, while my parents looked for passage to America. The hotel was a bit tired, but a seven-year-old child like me did not mind its shabbiness. I longed to be back home in Zahle. I missed its familiar spaces and its spacious gardens. I missed my grandmother, uncles, and aunts. The loss of all that was beloved and familiar made me feel sad, unmoored.

We had abandoned all of these beloved things. But we were not abandoned by the Mediterranean sun. Its bright light followed us. Its warm, penetrating rays entered the windows and doorways of the hotel. They landed in wide swaths over the faded furniture and carpets where my brother, Naji, and I played.

In Haifa, our parents endured a repetitious cycle of phone calls and networking that felt like a never-ending effort to find a way to get to America. The sticking point was that there were five of us. An occasional seat or two could be

found, but not five together. My parents did not want to split up the family, so we continued to walk our daily treadmill.

One day a call came from my mother's cousin Lucy and her husband, Shahadi Ghossein. Mother, Lucy, and Shahadi had grown up together in Mother's home village of Ain El Abou. The Ghosseins were family and much loved. Shahadi was now the Lebanese Consul to Palestine in Jerusalem. The invitation to visit them was gratefully accepted. The time we spent with them in Jerusalem was a piece of heaven dropped into our anxious lives.



For a blissful week we were with part of our beloved family again. We lived in a fine house. We could play with our cousins in its lovely courtyard. The meals served us were both familiar and delicious. I could almost feel the tension leave my parents.

A short time after we returned to Haifa, father answered a phone call that ended our search for transport. "Mr. Maloof," the caller said. "We have found accommodations for your family. The U.S. government is sending a ship to the Mediterranean to pick up and transport ex-patriots back to the U.S. Do you wish to book passage on this ship, the Marine Carp?"

Mouna Anderson



Things They Never Taught Us in Bee School

Bears... Black Bears... BIG, BLACK BEARS!!! During, and after attending Bee School, I planned my apiary. Let's see, put the bees on a platform to protect them from skunks and raccoons, face them East/Southeast, early morning sun, late afternoon shade, not at the top of an unprotected hill nor at the bottom of a gully. Bears, marauding elephants, anteaters? Naaah. They live somewhere else. Well, not the bears. He arrived in my yard the weekend of June 28. I have become very familiar with bear scat, huge footprints, mangled birdfeeders, and the mechanics of an electric fence. The latter was hastily erected after he made his second visit within 3 days.

Paddington, the bear (he might just as well have a name, since he seems to have moved in), is gorgeous, and totally unafraid of humans. Yell at him, and he just grumbles; take away the mangled bird feeders, and he's at the sliding doors wondering where you put them. He is currently harvesting the raspberry bushes which border one side of my apiary... 10 feet from the hives. I fear for my hives. The electric fence looks awfully puny, though it has shown signs of having done its job.

Black bears like to feed in the cool of the evening or in the early morning. They will eat almost anything edible, including decaying animal carcasses, fish, ants and other insects, honey, elk and moose calves and a variety of other small mammals; but most of their diet consists of berries, flowers, grasses, herbs, tubers and roots, and nuts of all kinds. So, this is why he loves my yard!

The flowers and bird feeders are now gone, holes have been dug into ant hills and chipmunk holes are mysteriously enlarged. I don't think I have any elk or moose. I do know that there is bear "poop" everywhere!

The range of every adult bear is composed of an individual territory, part of which constitutes its exclusive domain while the rest it co-habits with other bears. A home range generally is composed of several smaller food

source areas connected by travel lanes. Open areas are usually avoided by black bears as they prefer wooded cover. Stream and creek beds are often used as travel lanes because of the thick undergrowth and a barrier-free escape route. The life span of a black bear can be 25 years or more... and they have good memories.

Paddington, as close as I can guess, is about 6 feet long, stands about 2-3 feet tall, and probably weighs between 200 and 300 pounds. I would guess he's a young male just staking out his home range. I don't even dare to think what will happen when he gets a family.

Meanwhile, the bees are producing fantastically with the latest nectar flow ... blissfully unaware(?) of the danger that lurks on the other side of "The Fence."

Emily Pruyn

Mary

There is no story to tell about Mary,
My nana, the one for whom I was named,
She died so young, when my dad was just three.

I do have a photo, quite blurred,
Mary Ingersoll, my Mary.
Who was she... who were you?
What colors did you like, dress, food?
Just to hear her voice once, maybe twice
would help.

But we are quite alone, you and I
In the years of not knowing each other.
I am sorry, Mary, for both me and for you.

Mimi Collins



The Legend of Roger the Snake

After my son, Marc, graduated from college in 1992, he decided to travel around the US with Drew, an Aussie friend he met while studying in Belgium. Marc and Drew did not have much of a plan and had even less money. They decided to head to North Carolina to visit my recently widowed mother. She lived alone in the large Cloninger family farmhouse, so it was an ideal spot to stay for a while and receive free room and board. They brought with them Drew's companion, who was very slender, extremely quiet and ate only gerbils. Meet Roger, the Ball Python.



My Mom was happy to have the three "boys" stay with her. So that they could earn some money, she offered to hire Marc and Drew to rebuild a stone retaining wall along the front of the property. They got into a routine of getting up early, working hard, and then calling it a day. Roger's routine was to spend the work day in the upstairs bathroom where he "could stretch his legs," according to Drew, and not wander too far afield. The bathroom door was always closed. Drew bought one gerbil a week at a local pet store for Roger to eat. On the other hand, Marc and Drew ate all the time, which kept Mom busy and feeling needed.

The stone wall project went along smoothly and even generated work offers from people passing by on the highway, who wanted their walls repaired as well. Marc and Drew declined, because the work they were doing proved to be exhausting in the North Carolina summer heat and humidity. When the wall was completed, Marc and Drew decided it was time to continue their walkabout and made plans to leave.

One thing that they did not plan on was Roger's disappearance. Right around the time they were getting ready to leave the farm, Roger went missing. When they went to fetch him from the bathroom prior to departing, he was not to be found. Drew concluded that Roger must have slithered down the opening next to the drainpipe under the bathroom sink and under the floor.

To extricate Roger from his hiding place, Marc and Drew came up with an ingenious plan. They decided to buy a gerbil, tie a fishing line around its neck, then lower the tantalizing, wiggly rodent down the drainpipe opening in the floor in the hope that Roger would be hungry and swallow this dangling lunch offer. If he did, it would be a simple matter to haul Roger back through the opening. Great idea, but Roger did not take the bait. After many tries, Marc and Drew had to give up hope of retrieving him.

On the day Marc and Drew left the farm, they made the cowardly decision not to tell Mom that Roger was AWOL in her house, ignoring the possibility that she might have a heart attack if she found Roger sleeping in her bed, basking in the sun in the den, or showing up looking for dinner. After all, Ball Pythons can grow up to five feet in length. It could be quite a shock.

It was not until the boys arrived in Chicago that they called me to confess what they had done. I played the tough guy and insisted they call Mom and give her the heads up that there was a snake on the loose in the house. She took the news calmly, and, over the next few days, kept an eye out for Roger and tried not to think of him sneaking up on her.

Being the good sport that she was, Mom told all her friends and relatives about having a serpentine houseguest. As a result, she received phone calls asking for Roger, plus postcards and snake-themed greeting cards from all over the country mailed to Roger c/o Grace Cloninger, Dallas, NC.

Roger never did show up, but there were rumors throughout the county that a snake fitting Roger's description was reported to have robbed a bank, had stolen a motorcycle, been seen hitchhiking on a back road, and had even eloped with a chicken.

John Cloninger



Another George Washington Story

“First in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen!”

Such was the S chant my father led each February 22nd of my childhood, before we got to eat our cherry pie. If he had a hero, it was George Washington.



My grandfather was the ninth generation of family to live in Roxbury. His ancestors’ home on the shore of South Bay was used for target practice by the British trapped in Boston. A few years before that, the Royal Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, William Shirley, had built an elegant ‘country home’ in Roxbury, befitting an English gentleman. That house, now called the Shirley-Eustis House, is preserved and welcomes visitors to this day.

Governor William Shirley had many responsibilities and had been directed by his home government to secure the Ohio Valley against French claims. To this end, in 1755 he sent a General Braddock and troops direct from England, as well as some colonial volunteers, west over the Adirondacks to destroy Fort Duquesne on the Monongahela River. Young George Washington of Virginia impressed General Braddock and was appointed his Aide de Camp. Also with Braddock was young William, son of Governor Shirley.

The failure of the venture was not only a catastrophe, but sadly resulted in the death of young William Shirley. As my father recounted the story told him by his Roxbury forebears, George Washington rode all the way from what is now western Pennsylvania to Roxbury, to deliver the sad news to Governor Shirley. Such a compassionate gesture added to the later luster of Washington’s reputation, and was part of what made his story repeatable yet again to us.

I did a little research into the activities of Governor Shirley at this time. He also had charge of military activities in upper New York and it may be that he was there. If so, poor George

Washington may have galloped up to the house in Roxbury, run up the stairs, and banged on the door, only to find the Governor not at home!

Like all such tales this disappointing detail, if true, did not make it down the years. Just as well.

Anne Schmalz

Home Invasion

It must have happened during that cold snap in mid-May. A surreptitious entry into our dining room took place, unnoticed by the two people in residence or, as far as we could tell, the resident cat and dog. A few weeks later, behind the semitransparent curtain at the patio door, a shadowy presence was perceived. A lifting of the curtain revealed an individual of the species which we have been battling to keep from taking over the entire surface of the patio, namely, English Ivy. This little ivy plant had apparently drilled through the floor and insinuated its tendrils through the fibers of the rug.

At first, immobilized by shock and awe, we did nothing. When we considered our options, we couldn’t decide who to turn to for help. Security? Landscaping? Housekeeping? We continued to do nothing but observed with interest and curiosity.

By the time little Miss Ivy had reached yard-long stature by growing about four inches a week, she had touched our hearts with her valiant journey down “a road less traveled.”



We are impressed by her independence. She doesn’t rely on us for food or water. We do arrange the curtain so that she can bask in the morning sun. We are now considering asking the Woodworking Shop to custom-tailor a little trellis so she can avoid being stepped on by the cat.

Janet Kennedy

This piece was published in The Villager in September 2014. We thought it was amusing enough to be reprinted. The ivy is still exuberant behind 16 Bedford Court.



Cardinal Rules

My mother, who always served as primary training officer and parent on duty for Mom and Dad Incorporated, drilled us on three cardinal rules growing up: 1) don't commit suicide, 2) don't become a monk or a nun and 3) don't elope. Mostly these rules were not an issue in our lives – just mom being mom and trying to look out for her brood of the five of us by anticipating what bad ideas we might come up with down the road. The “don't become a monk or a nun rule” in particular always seemed out of place and irrelevant, since neither I nor my four sisters seemed to have any of what it would take for such a calling. Maybe mom was worried by the fact that dad was a regular churchgoer who once did get a letter misaddressed to “Monsignor Belin.”

The other two rules were more understandable. For me suicide was something I thought about on occasion during my rocky twenties, dropping out of college for a period, in and out of a couple of relationships that didn't last, all while moving from state to state and job to job, trying to find a niche and a purpose in life. Fortunately, I didn't act on my impulses, either because things were never bleak enough for long enough to make me do it, or maybe mom's voice was in me somewhere. I was saved from this aimless unhappiness by meeting my wife Rosanne, which happened on my first day of teaching at Somerville High in 1975. We met because we shared a third period duty monitoring a study hall in the cafeteria. I mention all this here because four months later Rosanne and I eloped, breaking one of my mother's cardinal rules, a fact I much regret to this day (the elopement part, not the marriage part!). As I write this, upcoming January 2 will be our 50th anniversary.

I wanted to elope because I thought mum and dad would be upset by my decision to get married, abrupt as it was, and coming in the midst of a turbulent and unhappy period in my life. Rosanne went along with eloping, until shortly before the elopement date, when

she couldn't resist telling her 22-years-older sister and lifelong confidant, Claire (Rosanne's mother by then having been institutionalized with early-onset dementia), who broke down at the thought of not being at Rosanne's wedding. Rosanne invited Claire and her dad.

Thus, it was that we wound up with a half elopement: Rosanne, me, and her sister and father, at Seabrook, New Hampshire on January 2, 1976, all in the living room of Justice of the Peace Ersel Byrd, but only after Ms. Byrd had finished renewing numerous hunting and fishing licenses of the locals. The New Hampshire civil service was lovely and now Rosanne and I were off and running!

That left the issue of my parents, of course. When I dropped in to see them sometime in February, my mother dispatched one of her frequent bits of relationship advice. “UPG” or unsolicited parental guidance is what one of my friends calls them. It went like this: “Dear, we like Rosanne but we think you ought to go slow.” Oops. It was time, or past time, to tell them. I suggested a dinner for four at mum and dad's house. Mom of course said yes. She must have been expecting us to announce our engagement. Instead, it was our marriage, already a *fait accompli* because of our elopement. Mom got up from the sofa and went down to the basement where the safe was. She returned with a beautiful bracelet dad's father had given her on her engagement, which mom put on Rosanne's wrist with the words: “Welcome to the family!”

Mom went on to a warm and loving relationship with Rosanne and never once, even after she learned that it was a half elopement that excluded her and dad but included Rosanne's father and sister, did mom ever say to me a word about the exclusion and breaking of her cardinal rule. That still amazes me. She was quite a mom.

Dick Belin



Who Done It?

Once upon a time, when we were very young, and well after he lost the tip of his finger in a shop accident, my grandfather Stuart, a retired engineer and tool designer, famous for his skills as a mechanic and carpenter, was repairing an antique fireplace bellows when he discovered a dark secret. Inside was a scrap of paper. On it was written this gruesome message: I HAVE TO TELL SOME ONE. I KILLED HER. Stuart, a man of principle, called the State Police. The police promptly sent a trooper. Stuart told the trooper that the bellows had been bought many years ago by his mother-in-law at a country auction. The trooper told Stuart he would “get right on it” only to call a few months later to say he had come to a “dead end.” Well that was that!

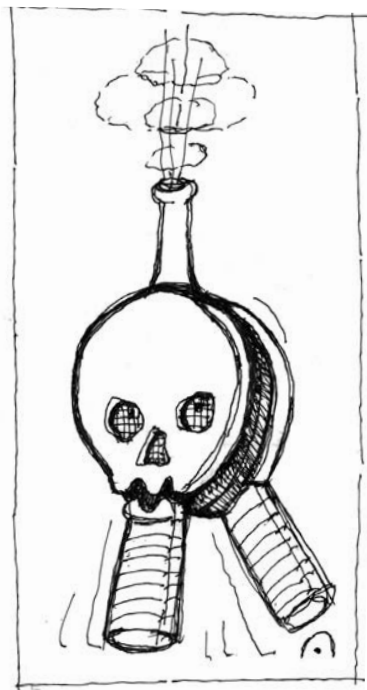
Well no! Some years after Stuart had died, my sister Jean, now fully grown, in a fit of remorse, came clean. She confessed that it was indeed she who had written the note and tucked it into the bellows!

It seems she was playing a game of Mystery with her cousins when she concealed the message in the bellows as a clue!

Her family never tires of telling this story, especially when Jean is present. A fitting punishment don't you think?

And, oh, the bellows is in fine working order.

Tim Martin



Trust

“I’m here about the job,” the young man said. “What job?” my husband Austin asked. The young man introduced himself as Dion, and said that Chris, Austin’s son, had said that there might be an opening for him in Austin’s car rental business.

With that recommendation, Austin began some inquiries. He learned that Dion was a resident at a halfway house for young men who had been remanded by the court. Dion said, “I was in jail for robbery, but I didn’t do it. My cousin did it.” Austin was perturbed, since his employees had to be trusted.

“You’ve been in prison; how can I trust you with money? Do you have a driver’s license?”

The reply to the second question was no. But Austin was a man who believed the best of everyone, and after a conversation with his son, Chris, he offered Dion a job. So began a new career and a new member of our family. Dion was eager and willing to take on all sorts of tasks: cleaning and prepping cars for rental, greeting customers, cleaning the office. Eventually he learned to drive and helped in reclaiming abandoned cars in dangerous parts of the city. He went to Chris’s wedding, joined many other family events, visited us in Maine, became someone we could truly count on.

Of course, his introduction into our life was not without its complications. When invited to Chris’s wedding, Dion, who was Black, had said: “What do I do? I’ve never been to an All White Wedding.” But he did fine, dancing with most of the young women in attendance. When he was alone at our beach house, Dion was instructed to say he was a friend of the family, should anyone ask what he was doing there. Instead he said, “Don’t worry; if anyone comes by boat, I’ll just invite him to come ashore and have a beer.”

One day I was walking to work downtown and I saw that Dion was walking toward me. He came up to me, lifted me off my feet, and said, quite loudly, “Ma,” to which I replied “Son.” That raised a few eyebrows of the passing pedestrians, but he had, indeed, become our adopted son.

Maureen Rounds



Employee Appreciation Party

Residents, guests and employees were present for the annual Employee Appreciation Party. Residents show their appreciation for the work by the staff over the past year by contributing to a special fund. The fund is distributed to employees at the party, with each receiving an amount based on length of service and the number of hours worked. Husbands, wives and children attend, and even Santa Claus and his Elves! All share in the festivities and refreshments. This year's party was special: all Main Street was beautifully decorated with poinsettias, garlands, trees, and lights.



Goats on the Move

The CWV *Garden Club* welcomed Hale Sofia Schatz, who gave an eye-opening presentation. She showed a documentary film about her time with nomads, herding mountain goats in Turkey. Every summer, these people lead their goats from the Mediterranean to the Taurus Mountains, as their forebears have done since the 1500's. They have a basic existence, living in tents. They make cheese and yoghurt from goat's milk. Hale raises her own Nigerian dwarf goats in Lexington and occasionally brings them here to visit us.



Massachusetts State House

Members of the *Off-Site Programs Committee* led a trip to the Massachusetts State House. Although longtime residents of the Commonwealth, many CWV residents had never visited the State House, designed by Charles Bullfinch. The original building was completed in 1798, with many additions since. Our tour visited Doric Hall, with its massive front doors on the Common, that are opened on only two occasions: for a sitting President or a foreign head of state, and on the last day of a Governor's term. We also toured Memorial Hall, aka the Hall of Flags, and the House and Senate chambers. Then it was back to Bedford, for a fun lunch at the recently opened *Not Your Average Joe's*.

A Walk Through Dutch Art of the 17th Century

Residents were treated to a delightful lecture and slide show by Laura Hulzinger Conley, on Dutch art of the 17th century. This was a period when the new Dutch Republic had become Europe's most prosperous nation, with colonies throughout the world. This era is called the Dutch Golden Age of painting. Laura Conley focused on Dutch art as "A Mirror of Daily Life", a change from previous times when art was focused on religion and royalty. Her slides featured scenes of everyday life, such as peasants drinking in taverns. As a native of the Netherlands and a docent at the Metropolitan Museum, Conley was an ideal guide.



Happenings

Sweet Power of Song

We were treated to *Music Through the Ages* by *The Silver-Ebony-Ivory Trio*. Carol Epple was on flute, Elizabeth Connors on clarinet, and Bradford Conner on piano. Baritone Benjamin Sears sang. Their music indeed ranged through the ages, from Handel to Copland. Familiar numbers included *Simple Gifts*, arranged by Aaron Copland, *Goin' Home*, from Antonin Dvorak's *New World Symphony*, and *Solveig's Song* from Edvard Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suite*. The group donned scarlet capes and horns(!) to present *Pack Up Your Sins and Go to the Devil*, from Irving Berlin's *Call Me Madam*. What a lark!

Veterans Day Luncheon

Coordinated by the *Learning in Retirement Office*, CWV provided the veterans at Carleton-Willard with a superb luncheon in the Abbott Dining Room. An empty table honored the POW-MIA veterans, with objects that symbolized their absence. There was assigned seating, and each table included several veterans, as well as members of the staff. The veterans appreciated the expressions of gratitude for their service and shared their memories. In conclusion, the anthems of the various Armed Services were sung. This is an annual event that never fails to attract a crowd.

Music as Beethoven Created It

Chamber Music Boston treated a small but appreciative audience to a masterful performance of Beethoven's Sonata No. 8 in G Major and Sonata no. 9 in A Major, the *Kreutzer*. Our Master of Ceremonies, Jonathan Cohler, related the complex history of the *Kreutzer*, and also told us that Beethoven wrote his sonatas for piano and violin, *not* violin and piano! We were privileged to hear Ilya Kaler, one of the great violinists of his generation, and Rasa Vitkauskaitė, principal pianist of the BSO. Rasa's playing was a tour de force that perfectly balanced the violin.

Bill McKibben's Book Signing

Bill McKibben's mother Peggy was here to witness, with pride, his return to CWV, this time to sign copies of his new book, *Here Comes the Sun*. Bill talked about the future of solar power. The rapid pace of increasing use of solar power is astounding. China leads the world in its use, by a wide margin. Solar and wind are now the cheapest forms of energy. McKibben sees solar power as a game-changer for climate action. In fact, he views it as a "last chance" for civilization. There was not an empty seat in the auditorium and Bill kept the audience spellbound by his expert, accessible talk – without referring to a single note!



Christmas Gala

The word "gala" derives from the Old French, meaning "to rejoice", and there was much rejoicing at the CWV Christmas Gala. The party began with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, amid the garlands and trees and poinsettias that brought cheer to Main Street. Residents then took their seats in The Abbott and the Brass Rail, joined by trustees and staff members. We enjoyed a dinner as delicious as it was elegant. A chorus of four beautiful voices, led by Gail Hatfield, stopped at each table, to sing carols and Christmas songs. Residents had every reason to rejoice at such a festive occasion, under the care of our food-services team.



*Welcome
New Residents*

John Damon
10/22/2025
from Barnstable

Katharine “Kay” Evans
11/11/2025
from Ipswich

Ken and Carolyn Goldner
11/17/2025
from Plymouth

Nancy Patton
11/19/2025
from Waltham

Frederic Drake
12/8/2025
from Naples, Florida

Katharine “Kitty” Armstrong
12/8/2025
from Boston

Gerhart and Rose Lempp
12/10/2025
from Ramsey, New Jersey













In Memory

Samuel "Spike" Thorne	10/19/2025
Myrtle Cox	11/1/2025
Ara Tyler	11/13/2025
Hilary Creighton	11/19/2025
Eleanor "Ellie" Butler	11/21/2025
Harriet Hathaway	11/26/2025
Marion Barney	12/16/2025
Judith Willard	12/19/2025
Ruth Reeves	1/4/2026





“Libraries are the mainstays of democracy...So keep them, find them, embrace and cherish them.” David Baldacci

Family

The theme of this issue evokes many thoughts and feelings. As we now look back on the year that has just ended and look ahead to the new year, we wonder what is in store for us and for our families. Those of us who have family members living nearby are very fortunate and we thoroughly enjoy their company and their support. Those of us who are without close family have a more difficult time, but here is where Carleton-Willard Village comes into the picture.

Residents of Carleton-Willard are part of a warm and caring community, including a thoughtful and proficient administration, and a truly amazing staff. We have our own family setting here and we care about each other. Our independence is cherished, but there is always help available when needed. We are truly lucky.

Life at Carleton-Willard is full of good food and many interesting activities. Many of our residents comment with pleasure on what is offered in the library, including daily newspapers and puzzles and lots of good reading. Here is a summary of the library activity in 2025. As of January 1, 2026 our collection contains 3503 books.

New Books

293 new books were added to the collection in 2025, 167 regular print titles, 85 large print titles and 41 donations. The Library Committee met each month to do regular print book selection and a separate sub-committee chose the large print titles. We averaged between 20 and 30 new books each month, all eagerly awaited.

Book Circulation

Our report for the year shows that a total of 3056 books were signed out in 2025, averaging approximately 255 books each month, 197 regular print titles and 58 large print titles. In addition, the shelf in the hall has offered a constant supply of paperback books that are free for the taking. Our residents love to read.

Weeding the Collection

Over the course of the year, the members of the Library Committee did shelf reading and weeded the collection. A total of 180 books were removed, easing the crowded shelves and making room for new books. The regular print removals were donated to the Carleton-Willard staff and the Bedford Public Library. The large print removals were donated to the Health Center. Every removal found a new home.

Behind the Scenes

There is always work to be done in the library. Shelving of returned books, entering circulation data into the computer, keeping track of overdue books, previewing possible new titles, organizing the shelves in the hall and the daily newspapers and puzzles, processing new books and putting copies of new book covers on the bulletin board in the hall are just a few of the jobs that keep us busy.

The library is a very important part of our family life here at Carleton-Willard, and the committee is always open to suggestions. We look forward to another fantastic year. Happy reading!

*Katherine F. Graff
Chair, Library Committee*



Among the Newest

Somewhere, a Boy and a Bear by Gyles Brandreth
This biography of A.A. Milne and Winnie-the-Pooh focuses on complex family dynamics that led Milne to create the stories of Christopher Robin and Winnie-the-Pooh.

The Tortoise's Tale by Kendra Coulter
A hundred-year-old tortoise living as an exotic pet on a California estate observes how changes in culture and climate affect the estate and its inhabitants.

The Breath of the Gods: The History and Future of the Wind by Simon Winchester
A biography of wind as a meteorological, literary and philosophical phenomenon. Wind has shaped the earth's climate and influenced human history.

The Bone Thief by Vanessa Lillie
A Bureau of Indian Affairs archeologist investigates the theft of newly discovered skeletal remains, and the disappearance of a Native teen girl near an exclusive summer camp.

Replaceable You: Adventures in Human Anatomy by Mary Roach
An exploration of the medical advances in repairing and replacing our human body parts. When is it worth doing, how far do we want to go?

Clear by Carys Davies
In 1840's Scotland, a minister is sent to a remote island to deal with the sole inhabitant, who is to be evicted.

The American Revolution: An Intimate History by Goeffrey Ward and Ken Burns
This over-sized book of essays and illustrations is a companion volume to Ken Burns' PBS documentary.

Venetian Vespers by John Banville
A struggling English writer marries an American heiress and travels with her to Venice in 1899. There he experiences unsettling, possibly supernatural events at the Palazzo Dioscuri.

Writing Creativity and Soul by Sue Monk Kidd
Sue Monk Kidd writes about the mysteries, frustrations, and triumphs of being a writer.

The Hidden City by Charles Finch
Amateur sleuth Charles Lenox must unlock a mystery concealed in the architecture of Victorian London.

The Black Wolf by Louise Penny
Armand Gamache is involved in a covert investigation to arrest the person behind a planned terror attack.

At Midnight Comes the Cry by Julia Spencer-Fleming
Latest in the Clare Fergusson/Russ van Alstyne series. This time their troubles begin when a holiday parade is crashed by white supremacists.

Finding My Way: A Memoir by Malala Yousafzai
Malala traces her path from high school loner to reckless college student to a young woman at peace with her past.

The Heir Apparent by Rebecca Armitage
Lexi Villiers' life in Australia is disrupted when her father and older brother are killed. She is next in line for the English throne—a role she has publicly disavowed.

Evergreen: The Trees That Shaped America by Trent Preszler
A captivating story revealing how evergreens have shaped economies, launched cultural movements, and propelled America's rise to global prominence.

Mona's Eyes by Thomas Schlessler
Ten-year-old Mona and her grandfather have only fifty-two weeks to visit works of art and commit to memory "all that is beautiful in the world" before Mona loses her sight forever.

Frostlines: A Journey Through Entangled Lives and Landscapes in a Warming Arctic by Neil Shea
Neil Shea blends natural history, anthropology, and travel writing to explore how the beauty, chaos, and power of change in the far north are reflected in the lives of people and animals inhabiting the area.

The Murder at World's End by Ross Montgomery
An under-butler and a foul-mouthed octogenarian hunt a killer in a manor sealed against the end of the world.

Nancy Goodwin
Library Committee



Recent Library Acquisitions

(* indicates Large Print)

Autobiography/Memoir

Atwood, Margaret Book of Lives
 Cheever, Susan When All the Men Wore Hats
 Fedarko, Kevin A Walk in the Park (*)
 Grant, Stephen Mailman (*)
 Starring
 Hopkins, Sir Anthony We Did OK, Kid
 Jen, Gish Bad Bad Girl
 Kidd, Sue Monk Writing Creativity and Soul
 Orlean, Susan Joyride
 Orlean, Susan Joyride (*)
 Roy, Arundhati Mother Mary Comes to Me
 Yousafzai, Malala Finding My Way

Biography

Ackmann, Martha Ain't Nobody's Fool (*)
 Brandreth, Gyles Somewhere, a Boy and a Bear
 Chase, Marilyn Everything She Touched
 Higgins, Richard Thoreau's God
 Purdum, Todd S. Desi Arnaz (*)

Environment

Shea, Neil Frostlines

Fiction

Alexander, Tasha The Sisterhood
 Andrews, Brian Tom Clancy Executive Power (*)
 Armitage, Rebecca The Heir Apparent
 Baldacci, David Nash Falls

Banville, John Venetian Vespers
 Child, Lee Exit Strategy
 Coben, Harlan Gone Before Goodbye
 Coles, Rev. Richard A Death in the Parish
 Coles, Rev. Richard Murder at the Monastery
 Connelly, Michael The Proving Ground
 Cornwell, Patricia Sharp Force
 Coulter, Kendra The Tortoise's Tale
 Davies, Carys Clear
 De Rosnay, Tatiana Blonde Dust (*)
 Finch, Charles The Hidden City
 Ford, Jack Beyond This Place of Wrath and Tears (*)
 Grisham, John The Widow
 Hallett, Janice The Killer Question
 Harkaway, Nick Karla's Choice
 Hawkins, Rachel The Storm (*)
 Hawley, Samuel Daikon (*)
 Holsinger, Bruce Culpability (*)
 Horowitz, Anthony Marble Hall Murders (*)
 Huneven, Michelle Bug Hollow (*)
 Levi, Allen Theo of Golden
 Lillie, Vanessa The Bone Thief
 Lupica, Mike Robert B. Parker's Showdown
 McEwan, Ian What We Can Know
 McLain, Paula Skylark (*)
 Mitchard, Jacqueline The Birdwatcher (*)
 Montgomery, Ross The Murder at World's End
 Moro, Javier The Architect of New York
 Nagendra, Harini Into the Leopard's Den (*)
 Patterson, James The Picasso Heist
 Patterson, James Return of the Spider



Recent Library Acquisitions

(* indicates Large Print)

Pearl, Matthew	The Award
Penny, Louise	The Black Wolf
Penny, Louise	The Black Wolf (*)
Ryan, Patrick	Buckeye
Schlessler, Thomas	Mona's Eyes
Silver, Marisa	At Last
Skye, Evelyn	The Incredible Kindness of Paper (*)
Spencer-Fleming, Julia	At Midnight Comes the Cry
Thomas, Sherry	The Librarians (*)
Todd, Charles	A Christmas Witness
Wood, Daisy	The Banned Books of Berlin (*)
Health & Wellness	
Roach, Mary	Replaceable You
History	
Clavin, Tom	Running Deep(*)
Feder, Kenneth L.	Native America
Healey, Jonathan	The Blood in Winter
Kuehn, Christine	Family of Spies
Ward, Geoffrey & Burns, Ken	The American Revolution
Williams, Montel	The Sailing of the Intrepid (*)
Nature	
Preszler, Trent	Evergreen
Schatz, Hale Sofia	The Goats of Goodwin Hill

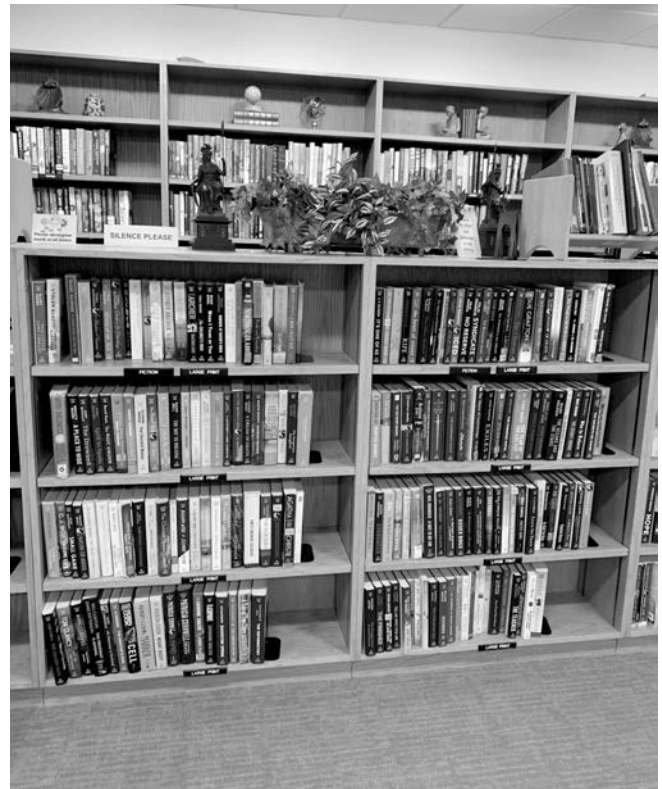
Resident Authors

Andersdon, Cynthia Peabody	My Journey Through Life
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Science

Winchester, Simon	The Breath of the Gods
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*Katherine F. Graff
Chair, Library Committee*





Nature Page: Family Stories

Now Freddie, remember – it was the man with the scar on his left cheek who was mean to Uncle George last summer – before you were born.

I know, Dad. You told me that before. And Uncle George told me himself. And he told his sisters. Then Aunt Millie and Aunt Grace both told me and my brother..

Yes, Aunt Millie told me.

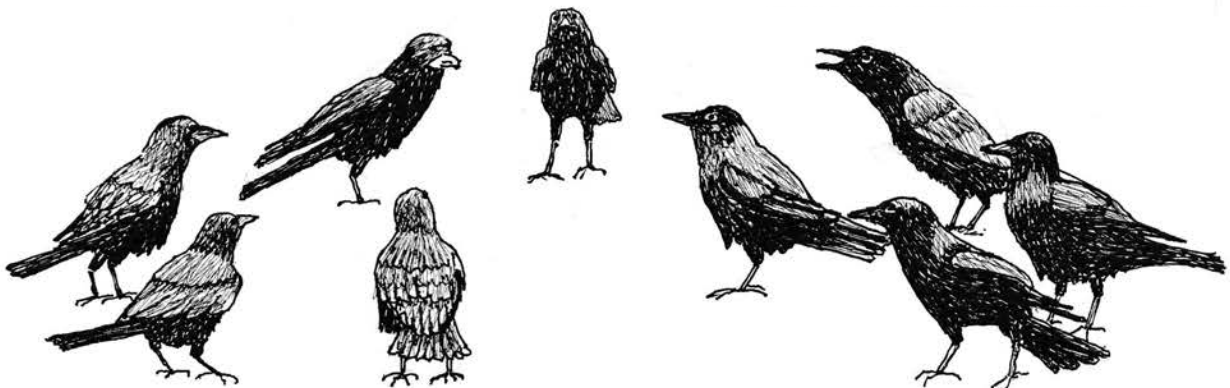
And Aunt Grace told me.

I heard Mom tell Becca.

Sam said Cousin Trevor told him.

I'd better tell Cousin Vera.

When that man came back last week, there were ten of us to mob him.



Crows tell family stories

V. Steel



CARLETON-WILLARD VILLAGE

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