If someone asked you on the spur of the moment, “What was your best holiday ever?” would you have to sift through your memory bank of thoughts or would you quickly respond with a rich story of family, travel or event?

The theme for this issue is just that question, “What is your best holiday memory ever?” Christmas may be a popular holiday, especially as we’ve just celebrated in 2015, but it may also come down to one’s interpretation of “Holiday”, which could mean an outing or excursion, NOT working, or as in “he is holidaying in Italy.”

Whatever your interpretation, this issue embarks on a journey with you and those who shared their “Best Holiday Memory Ever.”

Cathy Wright
OUR STORIES

CHRISTMAS ON A SLOW BOAT TO CHINA

The year was 1945 and we were living in St. Louis, Missouri awaiting word that foreigners could return to post-war China. We took the train to San Francisco and crossed out fingers until we boarded the army transport ship, the Marine Lynx. These were the days before commercial flights. We had shopped for a few last minute things, then climbed the gangplank to the ship where we found our berths three deep next to the engine room. There were many children aboard and our parents were reunited with old friends from pre-war days. We were in high spirits when we celebrated Christmas Day. There was much singing and storytelling. I found a stuffed monkey hanging from the berth above me. I was ecstatic when I realized that it was the one I saw and coveted in a drugstore in San Francisco and named him Jocko. We crossed the international dateline on my birthday and Daddy told me that I would have to be nine years old for another year. Mother reassured me that it was a joke. I was really ten...an almost teenager!

When we docked in Shanghai there was much excitement. We stuffed ourselves and all our earthly belongings into two pedicabs and marveled at the crowded street scenes as we headed for the apartment house. We would be living on the top in the greenhouse where we could survey all the rooftops of Shanghai. We were home again, and I introduced Jocko the monkey to his new home.

Ann Dwyer

A MEMORABLE CHRISTMAS FROM CHILDHOOD

With apologies to St. Pauli Girl Beer, I will never forget my first full size, two wheeled bicycle. It was black with red, yellow and white pinstriping. It had Bendix coaster brakes, white wall tires, a front headlight, a push button horn in the center console, a front wheel shock absorber, a leather seat and was made by Columbia.

That bicycle was my horse across lonesome prairies, carried me on many calvary charges, let me explore many unchartered areas of ancient cities, and won many tight races. It was Black Beauty, Man O’ War, and My Friend Flicka. It was not just a BICYCLE, but the most beautiful stead in the whole neighborhood.

This wonderful gift was in the living room one Christmas morning when I was about ten years old. It was my best Christmas ever as a child. Regrettfully, I do not have a photograph of that bicycle, but I see it in my mind’s eye today as clearly as I first beheld it on that Christmas morning so long ago.

I am blessed with the memories of many memorable Christmas mornings since that bicycle on Christmas …the first Christmas as newlyweds; the first Christmas with each of my own children; the first Christmas as a Grandfather, and many, many more. That Christmas when I was ten, however, will always have a special corner in my Christmas memory closet.

David

“Cheers to a new year and another chance to get it right.” Oprah Winfrey
OUR STORIES

ATTENDING MY FIRST MIDNIGHT MASS

“I think this year you are old enough to stay up and attend the midnight Christmas Mass.” I had long yearned for my Mother to give this special permission and I felt a very special excitement that year. My parents and many other relatives and friends always attended Midnight Mass. I was left home in the care of grandparents, went to bed at the usual “early” time, and went to Mass on Christmas Day. I longed to be a part of the adult midnight service, but was always told, “Dear, you are too young to stay up so late.” Oh, how I wanted to be older!

Now I was “older” and going to Midnight Mass. I am sure the Mass service was the same as it is today, with very few changes. However, I had reached that special time when I could stay up with grownups and older children. It was a very special Christmas Eve in my childhood.

Life does cycle. Years later, I witnessed the joy in the eyes of my children, each as he or she reached what I thought was an appropriate age, as I said, “I think this year you are old enough to stay up and attend the Christmas Midnight Mass.” Thus, the miracle of the Mass is passed on and continues as Charles Ryder said in the chapel at Brideshead, in “ancient words, newly spoken.”

Joy Richards

BEST “HOLIDAY” EVER

It wasn’t a “holiday” in any sense of the word, but it was the six weeks that changed my life forever. After my first two years at music school – which I originally thought to attend for a year or two to improve my piano technique and arranging ability before becoming a full-time jazz musician – Mr. Vas, my piano teacher, who was waiting for me to start realizing my potential, suggested I attend summer school so that I could get more time with him. Fine. But, I had already passed all the courses offered at summer school in my composition major, so I had to find something else to do. The only “something else” was a choral conducting class with Dr. Genhart, so I signed up.

There I was, with nothing to do but practice the piano for Mr. Vas, and try to accomplish all the intellectually demanding ideas and tasks that Dr. Genhart was laying out for us. There were a few people in the class with whom I discussed some of Dr. Genhart’s questions, such as “Mozart and Haydn – which was the classical romantic, and which the romantic classic?” But, during this sessions, I started to hear music differently, I started to think about what I really wanted to do with my life, and I decided that what I really wanted to do was have a life in the musical stage, as an opera conductor.

Naturally, with a goal before me, everything changed. When I came back to school five weeks later, Mr. Vas said, “My boy, what has happened to you? You’re playing entirely differently!” And I kept on with Dr. Genhart, started memorizing opera scores and attending the Opera Workshop (and let me tell you, walking across the stage in front of a bunch of would-be opera singers can be a most embarrassing experience!) and “all the rest.” I loved it!

Dave Kamien

“Each age has deemed the new-born year the fittest time for festal cheer.” Walter Scott
A CHRISTMAS MEMORY FROM MILITARY DAYS

When serving in the military, it is not always possible to have Christmas with family. One of my shore duty assignments was as Assistant Commissary Officer at the U. S. Naval Air Station in Norfolk, Virginia. This particular assignment did not allow me the opportunity to have Christmas at home with family because I was always on duty for special meals.

The U. S. Naval Air Station in Norfolk is part of the very large naval complex in Norfolk and Portsmouth, Virginia. The enlisted mess hall (dining area) was very large and served hundreds of personnel three meals, seven days a week. Food has always been a major factor in the morale of the troops; Napoleon is reported to have said that an army travels on its stomach. The commissary thus tried to ensure all meals were held to the highest standard, but Thanksgiving and Christmas were especially held to a higher standard since many were away from home, some for the first time.

Families of military personnel were welcome to attend the special meals at Thanksgiving and Christmas, (for a fee.) This was a welcome concession for those that had to be on duty. As one of the commissary officers, I was on duty and could not leave the base. We were renting a small house in Norfolk, not too far from the base, so Joy and our two young sons had dinner on base with me. What a memory!

Occasionally, the ship on which I served had special days in port when dependents were allowed on board to eat in the mess hall or ward room. I think Joy enjoyed the air station more because the deck did not seem to move.

David Richards

CHRISTMAS DINNER 1962
NORFOLK AIR STATION

Commissary Officer — LCDR W. M. Obendorfer SC USN
LTJG D. L. Richards — SC USN Assistant Commissary Officer

O Lord God, Thou hast brought us again to this joyous season of the birth of Thy Son and our Lord Jesus. May we make room for Him in our hearts, as we again hear the message of old, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men.” Amen.

Christmas Dinner 1962
Tomato Juice Cocktail
Roast Young Tom Turkey
Baked Virginia Ham with Pineapple Glaze
Brown Giblet Gravy
Corn Bread Dressing
Creamed Whipped Potatoes
Condensed Yams
Buttered Whole Grain Corn
Seasoned Asparagus Spears
Individual Lettuce and Tomato Salad
with Thousand Island Dressing
Cottage Cheese on Lettuce with Franch Dressing
Individual Fruit Cup
Cheese or Peanut Butter Shredded Celery Heirors
Chilled Jellied Cranberry Sauce
Asorted Pickles and Olive Tray
Hot Parker House Rolls
Assorted Breads
Butter Patties
Dark Fruit Cake
Pumpkin Pie
Assorted Ice Cream Cup
Apples
Oranges
Tangerines
Hard Candies
Mixed Nuts
Hot Coffee and Tea
Fresh Milk

“Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better man.” Benjamin Franklin
OUR STORIES

WHAT MAMMA AND POPPA GAVE TO OUR LIVES

Looking back about seventy years, my memory always goes to the wonderful, loving, happy family Christmas we were fortunate to experience.

Christmas Day was always celebrated at my grandparents home in the West Bronx in New York City where the O’Connor families all lived.

Mamma and Poppa O’Connor were from County Kerry in the western part of Ireland. They had the Irish Brogue and they spoke Gaelic which we all loved. They taught us some Gaelic and we loved it.

My mother was an O’Connor before she married Michael Quinn. Mary Elizabeth O’Connor was her full name and in 1928 when she married my dad Michael, she was then Mary Beth Quinn. What loving parents they were. My brother Lawrence and I absolutely adored them. We were very lucky to have such loving parents.

Christmas was at Mamma and Poppa’s. The entire family was there including my mother’s sister Eileen, who was nicknamed Totsy—we called her Aunt Totsy. My Uncle Jerry and his family were also at the Christmas Dinner. Uncle Jerry was called Uncle Sonny. He worked on Wall Street and always told us not to ever invest in Wall Street when we made money. He told us buying property was the best way to invest.

There were sixteen people at the Christmas Dinner. It was wonderful. We sang Christmas songs and also told all kinds of family happenings. After dinner we would all go into the large living room and perform. My Dad would play his banjo and my aunt would play the piano and all the kids would dance together. I would tap dance to the music and the folks would say, “Great job Robbie—do that tap again.” My cousins would dance and sing together. It was so much fun and so heart warming I will never forget it. Thanks, Mamma and Poppa O’Connor. You were a gift of love and goodness.

The other great holiday was good old St. Patrick’s Day at Mamma and Poppa’s. Mamma would make a very delicious Irish dinner. After dinner we would sing Irish songs and the parents would tell Irish jokes. The kids would dance the Irish Jig and of course, we were dressed in green. We would march around the entire house holding on to each other. The parents loved it.

I will never forget those wonderful times. It was truly a gift from the goodness up in heaven. Thanks, Dear God! Bob Quinn

“Easter spells out beauty, the rare beauty of a new life.” S. D. Gordon
APPLE PICKING, ISLANDS TOUR AND DINNER OUT

On a beautiful fall day, Pat Watson, Jane Lowe, David and Joy Richards and Cathy Wright went apple picking. Although the “picking” consisted of picking favorite varieties from displays brought in from the orchards, it was a wonderful reason to visit the Champlain Islands. A leisurely drive around the back roads provided scenes of serene beauty. It did not hurt that maple creemees were delightful refreshments.

The excursion was purposely scheduled for the afternoon so we could have dinner at the Blue Paddle restaurant in South Hero. Although it was crowded and noisy, we did have a delightful evening. The really fun part was trying to settle a mixed up bill, but that was finally resolved in good humor.

The islands are a very unique section of Vermont and well worth the trip. We plan to keep the apple picking excursion high on the activities list.

Joy Richards

TRIP TO THE UVM MORGAN HORSE FARM IN WEYBRIDGE, VT

On a rather cold and very windy day in October, Cathy drove Joy, David and me to see the Morgan horses in Weybridge (near Middlebury.) There was a method to her madness as there was a foal being raffled off and she wanted to get some tickets (she bought a lot.) It was a rather longer trip than expected as we had to stop for directions a couple of times before we finally arrived, coming in from the left of the buildings. Upon leaving we were told to turn right and, lo and behold, we were in Middlebury very quickly!!!

We saw a film about Morgan Horses, their history and growth, and shown some superb pictures of the horses over the years. Then we were taken outdoors where there was a statue of the original Morgan horse – beautiful animal – but we were rather cold and glad to get back in the stable. We saw several beautiful horses in their stalls as well as the foal that Cathy had her eye on. Down the stairs were more stalls with horses in them. We went outside again and passed by a black horse racing back and forth in the enclosure (I think he was cold too) as we went to the van.

We ate lunch at the Fire and Ice restaurant in Middlebury. This was a very large restaurant with a huge buffet having everything you could think of, not only from soup to nuts, but main courses, salads, cheeses, cold cuts, desserts, etc. In the center was a large elegant wooden boat which looked brand new and ready to go out in the water. We all enjoyed our food.

P.S. We got back to Stowe a lot faster than the trip down!!!

P.P.S. Cathy did not win the foal. Pat Watson

“Awake, thou wintry earth—Fling off they sadness!
Fair vernal flowers laugh forth your ancient gladness!” Thomas Blackburn, “An Easter Hymn”
ACTIVITIES

Halloween Party

Our Halloween Party, which was combined with the Friday night wine party on October 30th, was a great success. Many residents came in costume. Pat Watson wore her beautiful Japanese robe and I came as a friendly dragon. Debbie Lowe won the prize for her stunning costume as a “French lady of the night.” (Debbie Lowe begs to differ as she considers that she came as a beautiful mysterious woman!)

Jane Lowe

“As America celebrates Memorial Day, we pay tribute to those who have given their lives in our nation’s wars.” John M. McHugh
ACTIVITIES

RARE BOOKS ARE COMMON AT UVM

“History has taught you nothing if you think you can kill ideas. Tyrants have tried to do that often before, and the ideas have risen up their might and destroyed them. You can burn my books and the books of the best minds in Europe, but the ideas in them have seeped through a million channels and will continue to quicken other minds.”

Helen Keller, New York Times, May 10, 1933 letter to the student body of Germany expressing her shock and disbelief to the book burning and banning of the works of many authors.

I had just recently finished reading When Books Went to War, by Molly Guptill Manning when I started to write about a Copley Woodlands resident excursion to the Rare Books Collection at the University of Vermont. Remembering the thrill and joy of being able to hold original writings hundreds of years old, the above words of Helen Keller returned to me. They seem so appropriate when describing a visit to a rare books collection, which in turn validates her outrage at the burning of books in Nazi Germany.

Jane Lowe, Pat Watson, Joy and David Richards and Cathy Wright were allowed to examine medieval manuscripts that were hundreds of years old. The colors and gold on some appeared so vibrant and fresh one would think they were written only a few years ago. The curator, Prudence Doherty, was very knowledgeable and informative. We marveled not only at the beauty of the collection but also at the time, labor and patience required to complete such works. The writers would be pleased to know their works have survived the vicissitudes of time and still bring pleasure to the beholder. An antiquarium feast just a few miles away!

The other category we selected to view was Historical, and particularly the writings of Ethan and Ira Allen. This is a very substantial collection and includes books, letters, legal papers and even the letters Ethan wrote from his prison cell in England after being captured by the British and sent to London. Like most leaders of the Colonial period, they were prolific writers on just about any subject and the materials give a new understanding of the influence they had at the time. Any history buff would enjoy looking over and reading from this collection.

One visit is not sufficient to do justice to the collections so we hope to return again. When we do, please join us.

At the end of the visit we were all in a reading frame of mind, so we decided to visit the Chef’s Table in Williston and read the menu. The enjoyable lunch topped off another wonderful activities’ outing at Copley Woodlands, one of many throughout the year. David Richards

COLEPY HI-STAKE POKER CLUB!!!

Wednesdays at 7:30 P.M., Don McCain, Janet Clear, Ralph Perry and I get together for an exciting game of poker. It is dealer’s choice as to which one of the many games we will play. Don has two favorites—"Lowman In The Hole" and "Texas Hold’em.” Ralph and I each deal a variety of games too numerous to write about—but fun. Janet takes suggestions and any help she can get as she is just learning to play. This is a very serious game (ha ha) and we bet, sometimes willy-nilly. Ralph is well known to be a bluffer and Don is willing to bet high and I go with the flow taking chances that my hand is best. We all have won and lost a few times but it is fun. It would be a better game if we had one or two more players. Let Ralph know if you are interested. Hope to see you there—and bring $5.00!

“Patriotism consists not in waving the flag, but in striving that our country shall be righteous as well as strong.” James Bryce
ACTIVITIES

TREE TRIMMING PARTY

On the afternoon of December 4th, a group of us gathered around the Christmas tree in the living room. Cathy had done her usual lovely work decorating the stairs, mantle and halls and Bob had already put the lights on the tree. There was a box of ornaments from other years and we brought some of our own to add to them. The kitchen had made lovely cookies. There was cider and music – everything but snow! We talked about Christmas past and present and hung each ornament carefully so it could be appreciated. When it was finished it looked like an old fashioned family tree. Our dolls and stuffed animals underneath it made it picture perfect.

THE COPLEY WOODLANDS

WASSAIL PARTY

Here we come a-wassailing
Among the leaves so green;
Here we come a-wand’ring
So fair to be seen.

The annual Wassail Party at Christmastime is a traditional event at Copley Woodlands. Ann and I might not be living here today if we had not been invited to the Wassail Party almost ten years ago.

One of our good friends in Montpelier was Betty Fox. We also knew her daughter Priscilla well and were acquainted with her son-in-law, Steve, and her grandchildren. Betty had a beautiful home just down the street from Priscilla’s home in Montpelier. She was about ninety years old when she told us, “I’ve found the place where I want to live for the rest of my life.” She had been looking for a retirement home and decided that Copley Woodlands was the place for her.

Betty knew we were planning to downsize from our home in the woods in Montpelier and had been looking at condos in the area so she invited us to the Copley Woodlands Wassail Party. She told us she was now “Elizabeth” and introduced us to some of her new friends. After tasting all of the chef’s irresistible Christmas goodies and drinking a couple cups of the Wassail punch, Elizabeth took us upstairs to see her condo. She showed us all of its good features, described all of the advantages of living here, and was obviously happy with her choice of where to live for the rest of her life. During our drive home we discussed Copley Woodlands as the place where we could live for the rest of our lives. We had not found any condos or other retirement home we liked and decided

“The United States is the only country with a known birthday.” James G. Blaine
maybe Copley Woodlands was the place for us to live. We continued to discuss it over the coming days and finally agreed that we definitely should move to Copley Woodlands — but first we needed to sell our house in Montpelier.

We put our house on the market in May 2007, probably the worst time to sell a house in many decades. Once Elizabeth knew our house was up for sale, she called us at least once a week to ask if it was sold yet. We eventually did sell and moved into Copley Woodlands soon afterward.

When we received the invitation to the December 2015 Wassail Party, we got a second copy and sent it to a friend in Montpelier with a cover letter inviting her to the party and urging her to bring a friend. Her husband died a few years ago and she had informed Ann that she and a man, whom we also knew, and whose wife had died, were now doing things together — but not living together. So we knew who she would bring—and she did. It was good to see them again and to catch up on what was happening to whom in Montpelier. We showed them around our condo and extolled the many virtues of living at Copley Woodlands. We were very proud of the appearance of Copley Woodlands, with all the Christmas decorations and the added attraction of Dave Kamien playing the piano. Our guests were impressed by it all and we invited them to come visit us again.

The Wassail Party will certainly continue to be an annual tradition here at Copley Woodlands and a popular event to which we will invite family and friends to join us.

Tom McKenna

WASSAIL PARTY

This year’s Wassail Party was particularly noteworthy for the amount of party-goer participation (most welcome for the piano-player, who loves participation).

Having youngsters spontaneously run up to the piano and ask for holiday songs was a great experience, and the later participation by our very own Warblers, visitors and residents was most heart-warming.

Dave Kamien

WOODLAND WARBLERS

The Woodland Warblers sessions continue to provide pleasure to all who participate. We’re starting to work on a few songs — some older, some more recent — which are providing added entertainment. We’ve lost a few regulars recently, and gained a few as well. Our main turnout problem seems to be that most residents are afraid that they don’t sing “beautifully”. The point of this group is to have fun singing, while not under the pressure of meeting the standards of some high school or university chorus.

Dave Kamien

“In childhood the daylight always fails too soon—except when there are going to be fireworks; And then the sun dawdles intolerably on the threshold like a tedious guest.” Jan Struther
ACTIVITIES

QUILLING

One Wednesday in December, I joined Steve Caswell, Cathy and several others for a “quilling” class. Quilling is the art of twirling strips of paper around a stick-like tool to make a design. Back in the 14th and 15th centuries monks made decorations using actual quills. In the 18th and 19th centuries cultured ladies of leisure also did it to decorate all sorts of things such as tea caddies, cribbage boards and trays.

We started the class with long colored strips of paper that looked like they came out of a shredder. We had cards covered with plastic, toothpicks, glue, and quilling tools. The quilling tool is like a little stick with a slot in it. I twirled a long green strip of paper into a coil. Then I stuck a little glue on the end. I did this a couple times. Then I squished them a little to make leaves. I did the same thing with long red strips of paper to make petals. The center of the flower was made with a fringed strip of yellow paper. Steve and his fellow quiller, Earlene Leach, came around and helped with every step along the way. Then I glued everything on the card and made a beautiful picture! This was quite an epiphany since I am not good at doing anything artistic. But the quilling was easy!

We all had a good time and I bought a kit to make a more elaborate quill picture.

Debbie Lowe

A CHILD’S CHRISTMAS IN WALES

In his jaunty tweed hat and expressive delivery, David Richards transported us to the Wales of Dylan Thomas’ childhood…right down to the “two tongued sea.” This was so delightful, it may become a Christmas tradition at Copley Woodlands.

Ann Dwyer

“It’s all flags, fireworks, family food and fun. That’s July Four July Five, the fun is done. The fireworks are no more.” John Walter Bratton
ACTIVITIES

HUNGER MOUNTAIN CO-OP

On December 11, a group of us went to Montpelier to shop at the Hunger Mountain Co-op. The large store has a great number of organic foods and treats. They have special spices and delicacies such as crystallized ginger. At this time the Co-Op offered great choices for Christmas presents such as cocoa stored in a miniature pink milk can, shortbread cookies shaped like Scotties, and torrone, a popular Italian Christmas treat. After buying what we wanted, we went to Sarducci’s for a great lunch.  

Jane Lowe

MUSIC FOR THE SEASON

The Christmas season was especially enjoyable at Copley Woodlands because of the several and varied musical groups that came to sing and encourage sing-alongs. School groups ranging from elementary to high school, and adult groups performed this past season. The choral group “Music for All Seasons” performed just before dinner hour, and a group of ladies from Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Connecticut called “Just For Fun” performed one afternoon.

Thanks in large part to the cheer spread by the groups that came, there were no “Bah, Humbugs” heard in the hallways this past season. May the spirit of good cheer be with us all throughout 2016!  

Joy Richards

SUNDAY NIGHT SOCIAL

On Sunday evening, January 17th, Pat Watson, Joy Richards and Anne Winter hosted a Social from 5:30 – 7:00 PM in the living room. A cheerful fire in the fireplace, a wide range of delicious snacks, lively conversation – it does not get much better on a cold winter evening. Attendance was very successful with most staying the entire time (and more), while others wandered in and out. Whatever the duration, all agreed it should be repeated. Hopefully, others will form a team of two or three and schedule another Sunday Night Social. Please do, the effort is minimal and the benefit to many is very rewarding.

Joy Richards, Pat Watson and Anne Winter

“A grandmother pretends she doesn’t know who you are on Halloween.” Erma Bombeck
ACTIVITIES

TRIVIA IS NOT TRIVIAL
(OR, HOW MUCH DO YOU REALLY KNOW ABOUT CHRISTMAS?)

Category please: Fun and Games

Question: What did a group of Copley Woodlands residents do after Christmas to have some laughs?

Answer: They gathered in the living room to play Christmas Trivia.

Correct: You get one letter!

Yes, the game of Christmas Trivia provided fun and laughs as some residents vied to answer questions from six categories using Christmas as the theme. Questions ranged from the very easy to the difficult and obscure, totally random, so a turn was at the mercy of the draw. The goal of the game was to be the first to spell the word C-H-R-I-S-T-M-A-S by receiving a letter for each correct answer. Continuing the contest, some needing only one or two letters more, Jane Lowe persevered and was the first to spell Christmas. Jane looks forward to defending her crown at the 2016 meet.

Think you can dethrone Jane? Try the following questions, taken at random from each category. Answers will not be given. (Well, maybe for a creemee on a hot summer day.)

History, Facts and Figures: Which Adams was the first President to celebrate Christmas in the White House?

Traditions Around the World: On what date are gifts given in Italy?

Cartoons, Animation, Made for Television Movies, Specials: From what armed service branch did Gary Frank take leave in “The Gift?”

Carols and Songs: What war broke out shortly after “It Came Upon A Midnight Clear” was written?

Movies on the Silver Screen: In what film did Doris Day sing, “Christmas Story?”

Literature and Performing Arts: Who wrote “The Gift of the Magi?”

(Test: How long can you resist going to Google?)

David Richards

“I'll bet living in a nudist colony takes all the fun out of Halloween.” Author Unknown
IN MEMORIUM

MARGE SANDS was “at home” at Copley Woodlands for many years. She lived here with her husband Chester Cuyle until he died on August 31, 2013. Living in Stowe, she could be near her son Homer, or “Larry” as we know him here. Larry often came to visit and share monthly special dinners.

Marge was a great animal lover and her Walker Hound, Shiloh, was her constant companion. Only at meals or at doctor’s visits did you see her without Shiloh.

Marge loved to eat on the porch spring, summer and fall. Her favorite spot was facing the Richard’s beautiful gardens. Often after taking Shiloh for a walk, they would end up on the porch so Marge could see the gardens and Shiloh would check under the tables for scraps of food he hoped were left from the last meal.

Marge and my cat Maddie, had a special fondness for each other. When I went out for an afternoon or away for a week or more, Marge would come visit Maddie. Now when I come home I find Maddie sitting at my door. I know she’s waiting for Marge.

Marge died here at Copley Woodlands on October 22, 2015. She was not only my neighbor, but a very good friend. Larry is fixing up the apartment to sell. It will be hard to replace Marge as far as Maddie and I are concerned.

Anne Winter

AGNES LINTERMANN – Late Life Friend, Long Influence – January 1, 1923 – December 19, 2015. We did not have the pleasure of knowing Agnes for many years as did so many of her other friends. During the few years that we were privileged to know Agnes, however, we quickly came to know her as a caring and supportive person. Agnes befriended us when we first started attending Mass at Blessed Sacrament Church in Stowe. Going out for lunch after Mass with Agnes became a weekly date and we enjoyed the laughs and conversation. Over time, we heard the story of her incredible life, which we encouraged her many times to commit to paper. When we shared with Agnes that it was time for us to “downsize”, she invited us over to Copley Woodlands to see her place and the facility. We did so, many times, including being her guests for dinner. Her encouragement convinced us that the Woodlands would be a good decision for us, so we were able to make the move and have never had regrets. Agnes even visited us at our home during the work of moving and helped wrap and pack boxes. Needless to say, the packed boxes were “organized.” We remember Agnes with fondness and will always be thankful that she became a blessed presence in our lives.

David and Joy Richards

“The willingness of America’s veterans to sacrifice for our country has earned them our lasting gratitude.” Jeff Miller
WE COME AND GO

What does a sixth generation Vermonter, ordained in the United Church of Christ, and the son of Russian immigrants, educated as an engineer at Georgia Tech, have in common?

Meet the new residents of Copley Woodlands: ANNE HANCOCK AND GENE ROTHMAN.

Anne’s dad’s family came to the colony of Massachusetts in 1702. But before the American Revolution, they were putting down roots in Jeffersonville, Vermont. Over the years, various branches of Anne’s family resided throughout the state. Anne was born and grew up in South Burlington. After a couple of mixed up years, Business College and nurse’s training, she married John Hancock. They settled on his family farm between Walden and East Hardwick. The farm had once belonged to Governor Bell and was named, appropriately, The Belfry. Anne had four children: two daughters – Missy and Betsey; and two sons – John and Stephen.

Today, Missy and her husband live in the Washington, DC area; Betsey and her husband live in Derby Line, Vermont; John is nearby in Morrisville, Vermont and Stephen lives in Shelburne, Vermont. Anne also has 14 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. A family tree of great magnitude! Anne is an expert in naming all 24 of the grand and great grandchildren. However, she is not as positive about knowing all 24 birthdays.

After raising four kids, Anne decided, at the age of 45 to go to college. She went to Trinity, a small Catholic college in Burlington. She graduated in one of the first PACE classes in 1980. PACE was the Program for Adult Continuing Education and was intended to assist folks managing various responsibilities while increasing their education.

Anne began to work in food and health with NutriSystems and do private duty nursing. She also continued to study and felt a calling to the ministry. She was invited to serve the church in Johnson, Vermont and then she was called to the Barre Congregational Church for several months. Soon, 18 years had passed and Anne had served 14 churches! As Anne notes, “I was often called where there had been ministerial malfunctions, but some were healthy. All were different with different needs.”

Her longest tenure was five years as called pastor at the Cornwall, Vermont church. During this time she took additional schooling and was ordained into the United Church of Christ...exactly 2 days before her 71st birthday! In 1979, she became a member of the Order of St. Luke the Physician. It is an organization dedicated to the Christian healing ministry. This ministry of healing through prayer, touch and the Sacrament was the foundation for all the best.

Anne also spent many years consulting for churches and schools by administering and interpreting the Meyers Briggs Personality Indicator. The purpose of the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator is to make the theory of psychological types described by Carl Jung understandable and useful in people’s lives. Thus, Anne helped many folks have happier lives and lives that were more productive for their families and co-workers.

Anne says that this plethora of skills and experiences was only possible because of “lots of wonderful people.”

One of the wonderful people in Anne’s life is the son of Russian immigrants who was mentioned at the top of our story. Gene Rothman was born in “The City,” a.k.a., Manhattan, New York. He grew up in Brooklyn, where he says that the best thing was living in the community of Sea Gate out on the tip of Coney Island. It was a beach community that looked like Cape Cod and was a great place for a young boy.

(Continued on page 16)
WE COME AND GO

(Continued from page 15)

How, then, did this specific young man get from Brooklyn to Georgia Tech? During his senior year in high school, Gene’s dad was working a consulting job in Atlanta. This job made Gene eligible for in-state tuition at Georgia Tech. Voila! A good engineering education at a good price and a chance to leave home and be independent.

Gene was a member of the class of 1944, and as World War II was raging, he elected to enlist in the Navy V-7 program. He was permitted to continue his schooling, awaiting call from the Navy to train him as an officer. The call came in 1943 and Gene was sent to Midshipman school for four-months at Columbia University. He was commissioned an Ensign and assigned as the communications officer on an LST.

But before they could even get underway, one of the crew members was transferred, and Gene was tapped to become the first lieutenant. He spent three years surviving typhoons, invasions in the Philippines and Okinawa and general life aboard ship.

At Okinawa, he was transferred to replace an injured officer. Via Hawaii, his new ship began a 60-day return trip to San Francisco. After a 30-day shore leave, Gene’s ship sailed off again to Hawaii to pick up marines for the invasion of Japan. But the war was over, and Gene ended up serving as part of the occupation forces in Okinawa.

Discharged in 1946, Gene took his engineering degree and went to work as an advance man for a civil engineering firm in Harrisburg, PA. By 1950, Gene had determined that Harrisburg was not the job for him. He returned to New York City and in short order met and married his wife, Sally, and got a job doing engineering field work for the U.S. Public Health Service. He was assigned to Kansas City in the Missouri Basin office. Within three years, the Korea War began to take funds away from the Public Health Service and Gene and Sally returned to New York City.

For the next 30 years, Gene worked for a packaging company and then the Grumman Corporation. He and Sally bought the Long Island home they would live in for the next 49 years. They had two sons: Daniel, who currently lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Robert who lives in Waterbury, Vermont and New Zealand and travels a great deal.

In 1983, Gene retired and in 2005, he and Sally moved to The Residence at Shelburne Bay.

And now, we must jump back in our story to find that Anne and John have also moved to The Residence at Shelburne Bay. As time passed, Gene’s wife, Sally, and Anne’s husband, John, both passed. Gene and Anne met over dinner in the dining room. Good friends for many years, the spark between them ignited and they formed a partnership of friendship, love and support.

And so, these two people came together. Gene says, “I was born an introvert and still am one. I have just learned to adapt and enjoy it.” Anne notes that Meyers-Briggs identifies her as an extrovert, although she had to learn to function as an extrovert to perform her ministries. Together, these new partners decided to move away from The Residence at Shelburne Bay.

As they were driving away, Gene said, “We escaped alive. Not too many do.” Welcome to Copley Woodlands!

Margery Adams

“Thanksgiving dinners take eighteen hours to prepare. They are consumed in twelve minutes. Half-times are twelve minutes. This is no coincidence.” Erma Bombeck
WE COME AND GO

Last October we welcomed GAIL AND DON MCCAIN to Copley Woodlands. They moved to Vermont in 1970 from Milford, CT. having become unhappy with their environs. They had visited in Vermont for many years and decided a move was in order. After investigating the possibilities, they sold everything in CT and moved to Waterbury Center. There they purchased a large amount of acreage and moved into the big farmhouse on the east side of Route 100. They built the Garden Center, sold about fifty-five acres to the Green Mt. Club and built and ran The Cabins for many years. They sold The Cabins a few years ago and then built a lovely home further up the cabin’s road deep in the heart of the woods.

They are the parents of three sons, one of whom is deceased, and have grandchildren and great-grandchildren. One of these sons bought their house when they decided it was time to downsize and really retire. Interestingly, his son bought his house, so everything stays in the family!

Gail was a busy lady. As well as a mother, a homemaker and helping out with The Cabins, she ran an Antique & Gift Shop for fifteen years. She also opened and ran a restaurant at the Cider Mill which became very popular, so much so that because there was no room for expansion, they decided to close it, but she continued to work at the Mill.

I had the good fortune to meet Gail at a bridge group about ten years ago and we have frequently been partners ever since. She and Don will be a great asset to our community. Pat Watson

If you wander by the Copley Woodlands living room one Friday evening, you may notice LOUISE AND OAKES AMES among the “Woodland Warblers”. They moved here last fall from New York City. Like most of us, they left their home to be near one of their four children. Steve, their son, and Heidi Ames live in Morrisville and have three children.

After hearing of Oakes’ long academic history, I tried googling him and found the “Oakes and Louise Ames Prize” which is awarded each year to the Connecticut College graduating senior completing the most outstanding honors study. According to the college website the prize was established by the trustees “in recognition of the quality of academic achievement that Oakes and Louise Ames fostered during their 14 years of service to Connecticut College.” I was impressed.

Louise graduated from Bryn Mawr College and got a Master’s Degree at the Harvard School of Education. Oakes was an undergraduate at Harvard and earned his PhD in Physics from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD. They met in Baltimore where Louise was teaching seventh grade at the Bryn Mawr School. Louise and Oakes continued to meet all over: at Lake Como, Siena, Rome and Madison Avenue. They married in 1960 and lived in Princeton, where Oakes worked in nuclear physics and was an Assistant Professor at the University. The first of their four children was born there. Then they spent eight years at SUNY-Stony Brook where Oakes was Chair of the Physics Department. Louise and friends founded an Environmental Center.

Then on to Connecticut College where Oakes was President for 14 years. After a year in Cambridge, MA, they moved to New York City where they lived happily for 19 years. Oakes served on various boards and was Chair of the Board of the New York City Audubon Society. Louise taught English to wives of UN personnel and herded school children on tours of the American Museum of Natural History. Summer months were often spent on Martha’s Vineyard. (Continued on page 18)

“Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas.” Calvin Coolidge
(Continued from page 17)

Besides both being teachers, Louise and Oakes shared a love of music. Both took piano lessons as children and Louise sang in choruses and even had her own singing group in college. When they were at SUNY-Stony Brook the couple hosted monthly musical evenings where everyone was required to play an instrument. Since Oakes played the piano so well, Louise took up the flute. The one totally unmusical guy wrote a poem for each occasion. Here at Copley Woodlands, Oakes plays the piano daily. They both read the New York Times. It is quite a change to move to Stowe from Manhattan, as I can well attest, and they do miss New York City.

Jane Lowe

BILL SMALL – OUR NEW SOUS CHEF

We have a new cook in the kitchen working with Steve. His name is Bill Small and he lives in Hyde Park which is not far from where he was born in Morrisville. But he’s spent many years along the way in different places.

Bill started at age 15 working at the old Station Restaurant in Morrisville as a dishwasher but he ended up cooking breakfasts and dinners before he graduated from Peoples Academy. He earned an Associate’s Degree in Mechanical Drafting. Johnson State College was Bill’s next stop where he earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Business. He supported himself by working at the Whip and Stoweflake. During his last two years at Johnson he was also cooking full-time at Stoweflake. After graduation he worked as a banquet chef and Sous Chef for about five years.

The young cook then had the opportunity to train under the renowned chef Todd English in Boston. On completion of his training, Bill was sent to Greg Norman’s Australian Grill in South Carolina. Here Bill started as Sous Chef for a year and then was the chef in the famous golfer’s restaurant where they served Australian food. Yabbies (similar to crayfish), kangaroo, ostrich and other delicacies were imported straight from Australia. I forgot to ask Bill if they drank a lot of beer too.

After 2 ½ years in South Carolina, Bill moved back to Vermont. In the summer of 2001, he worked for the summer at Blue Moon and was planning to leave there, but then the disasters of 9/11 took place. In the uncertain economic climate which followed Bill stayed with the Blue Moon until 2013, eventually becoming the Chef. He did take time in there to go to Charlestown, MA and help a friend start a Greek restaurant.

In 2013, the Newport Cider House hired Bill as chef and when a new owner took over and he managed the whole restaurant as well as cooking. The Cider House featured local food from the Northeast Kingdom.

It was a long commute to Newport, so in 2015 when Bill heard of the opportunity at Copley Woodlands he applied and was hired! And now we are appreciating his cooking at dinner – people have particularly enjoyed his pie crusts among many other things.

Debbie Lowe

“Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful.” Norman Vincent Peale
NEW WAITSTAFF

ALLISON FITZGERALD is one of the new members of our wait staff. She lives in Morrisville and attends Peoples Academy. She’s a junior and plays softball in the spring. Her favorite subject is science which is great since we need more scientists in the country. She has one brother, Tyler.

Debbie Lowe

JAMES TISDELL is another new member of our wait staff. Don’t call him Jim; he prefers James. He lives in Morrisville and attends Peoples Academy. He’s a junior and his favorite subjects are math and science. James plays soccer but winter is his really busy season. He’s on the Nordic ski team at school, works on the mountain and skis downhill for fun. I asked him if he preferred Facebook or Twitter and he told me “Neither.” He likes Instagram! (I think we’re going to need a class to understand what that is!)

Debbie Lowe

A warm Woodlands welcome to JAMIE BARRETT! Jamie joined the wait staff a few weeks before Christmas and says she loves the work and the people. Jamie is a junior at Peoples Academy. Her favorite subject is math and her favorite sport is Futsol, which she plays in the Capitol League. Jamie loves to bake, go shopping and hang out with friends. Going to college is in the planning stages at present, but no college of choice has been chosen. We hope your work at Copley Woodlands continues to be enjoyable and rewarding. Again, a warm welcome, Jamie, and our very best wishes.

Joy Richards

Futsol: A game with five players on each side which is played on a flat indoor surface with hockey sized goals and a size 4 ball with a reduced bounce. See Jamie for more details.

Residents (some clad in their p.j.’s) watched the ball drop on New Year’s Eve while enjoying snacks and drinks in the living room.

“He who has not Christmas in his heart will never find it under a tree.” Roy L. Smith
THE LIGHTER SIDE
THE $5.37 BURRITO

$5.37! That’s what the kid behind the counter at Taco Bell said to me. I dug into my pocket and pulled out some lint and two dimes and something that used to be a Jolly Rancher. Having already handed the kid a five-spot, I started to head back out to the truck to grab some change when the kid with the Elmo hairdo said the hardest thing anyone has ever said to me. He said, “It’s OK. I’ll just give you the senior citizen discount.”

I turned to see who he was talking to and then heard the sound of change hitting the counter in from of me. “Only $4.68” he said cheerfully. I stood there stupefied. I am 56, not even 60 yet! A mere child! Senior Citizen?

I took my burrito and walked out to the truck wondering what was wrong with Elmo. Was he blind? As I sat in the truck, my blood began to boil. Old? Me? I’ll show him, I thought. I opened the door and headed back inside. I strode to the counter, and there he was waiting with a smile. Before I could say a word, he held up something and jingled it in front of me, like I could be that easily distracted! What am I now? A toddler? “Dude! Can’t get too far without your car keys, eh?” I stared with utter disdain at the keys. I began to rationalize in my mind! “Leaving keys behind hardly makes a man elderly! It could happen to anyone!”

I turned and headed back to the truck. I slipped the key into the ignition, but it wouldn’t turn. What now? I checked my keys and tried another. Still nothing. That’s when I noticed the purple beads hanging from my rear view mirror. I had no purple beads hanging from my rear view mirror. Then, a few other objects came into focus: The car seat in the back seat. Happy Meal toys spread all over the floor board. A partially eaten doughnut on the dashboard.

Faster than you can say Ginko Bilboa, I flew out of the alien vehicle. Moments later I was speeding out of the parking lot, relieved to finally be leaving this nightmarish stop in my life. That is when I felt it, deep in the bowels of my stomach: hunger! My stomach growled and churned, and I reached to grab my burrito, only it was nowhere to be found. I swung back around, gathered my courage, and strode back into the restaurant one final time. There Elmo stood, draped in youth and black nail polish. All I could think was, “What is the world coming to?” All I could say was, “Did I leave my food and drink here?”

At this point I was ready to ask a Boy Scout to help me back to my vehicle, and then go straight home and apply for Social Security benefits. Elmo had no clue. I walked back out to the truck, and suddenly a young lad came up and tugged on my jeans to get my attention. He was holding up a drink and a bag. His mother explained, “I think you left this in my truck by mistake.” I took the food and drink from the little boy and sheepishly apologized. She offered these kind words: “It’s OK. My grandfather does stuff like this all the time.”

All of this to explain how I got a ticket doing 85 in a 40 mph zone. Yes, I was racing some punk kid in a Toyota Prius. And “No,” I told the officer, “I’m not too old to be driving this fast. As I walked in the front door, my wife met me halfway down the hall. I handed her a bag of cold food and a $300 speeding ticket. I promptly sat in my rocking chair and covered up my legs with a blankey.

The good news was that I had successfully found my way home. Submitted by Margery Adams

“Christmas is joy, religious joy, and inner joy of light and peace.” Pope Francis
POETRY CORNER

FUN WITH POETRY ASSIGNMENT

Participants in the poetry group were asked to write about the Christmas/winter season. The muse inspired me to write A Christmas Tale. I hope it brings a smile. (I am still waiting for my grade.)

A CHRISTMAS TALE

It all began at Christmas tide
With what was thought a harmless chide,

If I may say so, Mr. Ives,
Your bland potatoes need more chives.

Well, if I may say so, Mr. Currier,
Your wife’s coat could use a furrier!

Now just a moment, Mr. Ives,
No need to talk about our wives!

Well pardon me now, Mr. Currier,
You’re the one in such hysteria.

Well, I’m really bothered, Mr. Ives
When you get near, I get the hives.

Oh come now, dear Mr. Currier
Why desist from feeling merrier?

Because of rumors, my dear Ives,
THAT YOU’VE BEEN SEEN IN NAUGHTY DIVES!

That’s just talk, my dear Currier,
BUT WHO SENDS POEMS BY SECRET COURIER?

That may well be so, Mr. Ives
But who can count your secret lives.

Are you quite finished, Mr. Currier?
Cause here’s a swift kick in you durea!

But after all I’m glad to say,
They both shook hands on Christmas Day.

David Richards

“I stopped believing in Santa Claus when I was six. Mother took me to see him in a department store and he asked for my autograph.” Shirley Temple
WHY DO WE HAVE LEAP YEARS?

Leap Years are needed to keep our modern day **Gregorian Calendar** in alignment with the Earth’s revolutions around the sun. It takes the Earth approximately 365.242199 days – or 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 46 seconds – to circle once around the Sun. This is called a tropical year. However, the Gregorian calendar has only 365 days in a year, so if we didn't add a day on February 29 nearly every 4 years, we would lose almost six hours off our calendar every year. After only 100 years, our calendar would be off by approximately 24 days! (timeanddate.com)

FUN LEAP YEAR FACTS

According to British tradition, a leap day is the only day of the year a woman can propose marriage to a man. As legend has it, in fifth century Ireland, St. Bridget complained to St. Patrick about the fact that women had to wait for men to propose. So Patrick allowed women one day every four years to take the initiative. The tradition became the basis for Sadie Hawkins Day in the United States, first dreamed up by Al Capp in his cartoon serial “L’il Abner” and celebrated either on February 29 or November 15, the day the first “L’il Abner” comic appeared. (History.com)

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH YOUR EXTRA DAY?

**Editors Note**

*Wow! Our biggest issue ever!* Thanks to everyone who wrote “Best Holiday Ever” stories as well as those who contributed articles about activities, wrote poetry and did interviews with new residents and staff members. You certainly put a lot of time and effort into your articles. Thanks to Cathy for planning such a wide array of activities which enriches the lives of our residents as well as gives us interesting topics to write about! Our newsletter goes well beyond the walls of Copley Woodlands reaching those who visit us on our website and hopefully entices some to move here for the wide array of experiences which we offer.

Gale Martin