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Contents

FALL 2006

Earth, Sea & Sky

3 **The Beginning of Wisdom.** By Randall Tremba

15 **ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL: The Greatest Story Never Told.** By Mark Madison

16 **Berries.** By Virginia (Provenzano) Winston

17 **Notes From the Wilderness.** By Marge Dower

18 **Reflections of Autumn.** By Natasha Baihly

Friends & Neighbors

4 **The Accidental Mayor.** By Peter Wilson

5 **KIDS PAGE: Shepherdstown: A Memorial.** Edited by Hunter Barrat

6 **Meeting Nancy Craun.** By Thomas Harding

7 **Deep Roots.** By Betty Lou Bryant

8-9 **Robert Park.** By Malcolm Ater, Jr.

10 **A Satisfied Man.** By Claire Stuart

11 **Growing Up at "Toidy-foist and Toid."** By Al Henderson

Story, Art & Poetry

12-13 **ARTWORKS: Rhonda Smith.** By Nan Broadhurst

14 **Flash Fiction.** Edited by Ed Zahniser

19 **Poetry.** Edited by Ed Zahniser

Faith, Hope & Charity

20 **St. James Lutheran Church.** By Karen Fitzpatrick

21 **Religious Communities**

22 **Donors**

23 **Business & Service Directory**

Cover Artist

Our cover artist for this year is Joan Keith. When painting on location she responds to the landscape with vibrant color to convey the way she feels about it. Quoting Robert Henri: "Don't try to paint 'good landscapes.' Try to paint canvases that will show how interesting the landscape looks to you — your pleasure in the thing." She likes to spot abstractions in the landscape and experiment with color, form, and shape.

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The Beginning of Wisdom

(IN REMEMBRANCE OF MY MOTHER)

Randall Tremba

A merry heart does good, like medicine, But a broken spirit dries the bones.

(Proverbs 17:22)

I once let loose of my mother's hand in the basement of a bustling department store in Youngstown, Ohio. Her face vanished into a sea of strangers. I held my breath. I spun round and round, searching and searching, sinking into primal darkness. Just before my heart stopped, she found me and grabbed my hand. I was three years old and that was my first experience of salvation.

This past spring my mother let loose of my hand for good. But she left plenty for me to hold on to.

At age seven, alone in the basement on a rainy day, I was wondering what those new-fangled electric washer ringers might do to my soaking wet Roy Rogers cowboy gloves. I found out. The grinders easily accepted the wet glove (and my hand, which I had left in the glove), slowly rolled over my wrist, and began crawling toward my elbow, which (as anyone knows) leads to the shoulder, which leads to the neck, which leads to . . . THE HEAD! I screamed and, just like that, mom leapt down 12 steps and pulled my arm and hand free from the clutches of death. Again.

Six years later, I became a teenager and wanted nothing to do with my mother. I was thoroughly ashamed of her and my father. *How in the world did I end up with the worst parents on earth? Why me, Lord?!*

Case in point: While I ate breakfast before going to school *every morning* she would read a Bible verse to me and expound its relevance to life, specifically *my* life. Her favorite by far was the Book of Proverbs. *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.* I heard *that* a thousand times. And this one almost as much: *You don't prove your love to a woman by going to bed with her; you prove your love to her by getting out of bed and going to work.* I'm pretty sure she made that one up.

When I began seventh grade she took a job as a women's shoe clerk in a department store to earn money for my college education. For her, college was the Promised Land. But as much as she respected education she was wary of it, too. *Education is a good thing,* she once told me, *as long as you don't let it go to your head.* That, as you might guess, is a little tricky.

During my college sophomore year (the year we finally surpass our parents in knowledge!) I discovered Sigmund Freud. (I had read one part of one chapter from one book, at least!) I couldn't wait to tell my mother how parents mess up their children *badly*. She listened intently with utter, jaw-dropped amazement. *Brilliant*, she exclaimed, obviously pleased how much college had done for me so far. *Your generation is simply brilliant,* she said again. *My generation was simply too ignorant to know we could blame our parents. Brilliant, just brilliant*, she muttered as she left me sitting at the kitchen table alone with all my knowledge.

My mother grew up in Alabama. Her father was often absent, which made her mother's and siblings' lives extremely hard. She quit school after the eighth grade to work for pennies in a textile mill. *If life gives you lemons, make lemonade.* That was one of her favorite expressions. And this: *Don't curse the darkness; light a candle.* And this: *Keep looking up. Grief, resentment, and bitterness will kill your spirit if you let them,* she said over and over again. *Don't wallow in the past. Be open to the future.*

Shortly after my father died, I asked my mother how she was coping (not one of her favorite words or concepts). *Good enough,* she replied. *He's dead. There's nothing I can do about it. I miss him. But there's no use moping the rest of my life. I got things to do.* And she did them all with gusto until her body gave out on May 31.

My mother died at my sister's home in Florida at age 92, three days before my son's wedding in Albuquerque. I told my son and daughter-in-law that my mom once told me the first five years of marriage were the toughest, and when I reminded her of that a few years ago, she said: *Did I say that? I meant 50!* She and my father were married 60 years before he died nine years ago.

My father was a patient man, up to a point. His scoldings were few but harsh. Hardly ever did my mother contradict my father, or he her, in front of their children, with one exception. When my father scolded me about botching something, she'd say quietly, *Mike, don't scold. Teach. Don't scold. Show him how to do it right.*

Once during my senior college year, I returned home with a full beard and shoulder-length hair. It was "the Sixties," remember, and it's what all us white boys did to prove we were individuals. My mother opened the door, screeched, and ran to the back of the house. She spent the next three days pleading, scolding, or bribing me to shave. But I had too much pride and integrity to give in. (Not to mention a girlfriend who really dug my long hair!)

To console my mother I invited her into the living room to inspect the one and only picture allowed to hang in our house. It was the "classic" picture of Jesus knocking on a door. He was wearing a flowing robe and sandals and sporting a beard and beautiful shoulder-length hair. Mom, I said. Look! Jesus has a beard and long hair. My mother studied the picture for a few minutes then looked at me and said: *It's easy to look like Jesus.*

On the first day of my second grade, she had planned to walk with me and sit through opening exercises as she had done when I began first grade. But this is *second* grade, I told her. And I am perfectly capable of walking two blocks and finding my desk *all by myself.*

She let me go alone.

I walked into my new homeroom and slowly noticed that *all the other children* had a mother with them. I was the only orphan. I bolted out the door and ran home as fast as I could fly. My mother got herself ready without a word, took my hand, and walked with me back to the school.

It would take many, many years for me to appreciate that little mustard seed of love: the grace of mere presence, the deep solace of a fellow human being sitting with another when we are afraid to be alone. And when you think about it, our only hope of loving someone else is not because we have read a book or heard a lecture or a sermon. We love others because we have been loved first. We love others because someone once held our hand when we were lost.

The Accidental Mayor

Peter Wilson

Photograph supplied by author

My name is Peter Wilson and I am a recovering mayor. As part of my rehabilitation, my occupational therapist recommended writing out my confession. I've changed the names to protect the innocent. But buy me a beer and I'll make your hair curl.

So what's a mayor do?

A good place to start is by describing the job. The mayor has bottom-line responsibility for many things: managing the town; representing the town's interests with the county, the state, the university, and all the other big bears in the woods; supporting and encouraging all the wonderful volunteer-powered events that happen here; communicating what is going on to the citizens; and doing it all in a way that helps people feel good about where they live.

Do all these things well and you're a good mayor. But to be a great mayor you have to do more: to force the town to face the issues it must. Prudent politicians generally avoid too much leadership; this is why we are always wishing something had been done 20 years ago. From residential parking to repaving the streets, as a politician your safest bet is to leave it for the next guy.

The people who end up being mayor may have different notions of the job, different interests and abilities, different amounts of time and energy. What they have in common is the willingness to take on the job. It's an important job and somebody's got to do it. Most of us, most of the time, have more sense than to become mayor; we have other things to do.

To begin my confession, I am one of those people. Once, about 30 years ago, the idea of elective office crossed my mind. I lay down for 10 minutes and it left. I came to Town with no interest in local government. My notion of retirement living is to live in a small, pleasant town located near the towpath. My goal was good relations with my neighbors while pursuing the dozen or so items on my personal "to-do list" that I had deferred too long.

How did this happen?

So I'm the accidental mayor. How did this happen? Like all things, a matter of fate — the intersection of my nature and my circumstance. I blame it on that old bumper sticker: Think Globally, Act Locally. I've always taken that as a personal rebuke. Not the global part but engagement in my own neighborhood. I find it too easy to escape into theory.

I began adult life as an academic in that most abstract field — philosophy — where you get to spend pleasant evenings discussing Plato's metaphysical commitments. After a few years of hungering for more relevance, I prepared myself to recycle as a hospital administrator. But again, I faded away into the abstractions of health system organization and financing, working about 50,000 miles above where patients were in pain and suffering.

So, with the sun in the afternoon sky, when Lynn and I were looking for a place to go to pasture, we remembered a nice little town where we could immerse ourselves in life with local — neighbors, gardens and libraries, book clubs, and covered dish events — volunteering to impact our community.

Then, one night in the fall of 2003, I went to a town meeting. Remember the Van Tol Incident? I came away shocked. It seemed the whole town was there, recounting bizarre incidents with police officers. The mayor and the town council sat uncomfortably and remained silent, apparently on advice of the town attorney. The meeting ended, promises were made, time passed, and nothing happened.

The more time passed, the more I talked with my neighbors, the clearer it became that something had to be done to re-establish the town's equilibrium. But town government seemed unable to engage the issue. By training and experience I knew what needed to be done. I wanted to, but couldn't, forget about it and not get involved without calling into question the whole reason why we had moved here. So I felt I had no choice but to jump into politics and postpone my retirement.

Now what?

So the man and the hour came down to one day when I woke up as mayor. I don't have space for a systematic look at my two years as mayor so here are a few highlights. For starters, I was elected in a landslide where the defining issue was the performance of the police department. This is a mandate: a clear signal from the voters that you haven't been elected because of your charm but to solve a particular problem. So solving it was the priority, and we did.

Now for a second bit of confession. I am too driven to be mayor for the long haul. I spent most of my professional life in and around managers, so I can hardly look at town government without seeing something that can be improved. Whether it's the planning for the sewer plant replacement or organizing Christmas in Shepherdstown or the way in which the Town makes donations, I see change waiting to be made. This makes me too goal oriented for a lot of people. Life is short; I am willing to drive fast to get to where I think we need to be.

So it's been a busy two years, mostly taken up with laying foundations for the future. To mention but six, the town has significant work to do: pursue sensible annexation; implement residential parking; renew the streetscape; renovate the tobacco warehouse; bring planning and zoning in sync with our comprehensive plan; and build a new sewer plant. My fate was to march these and other issues down the field; the next mayor's challenge is to carry the ball over the goal line.

Nothing here earns me the equestrian statue I secretly desire — just building nests for eggs that may hatch later. There are, however, three small accomplishments in which I take large pride. The first is the "View From Town Hall" in the *Shepherdstown Chronicle*. A good test for any government is to try to explain itself regularly in a few hundred simple words. This helps the citizens and it gets the mayor up early when it is quiet and easier to think things through.

The other two accomplishments both involve making crossings: first, German Street at King, where the yield signs have tipped the balance in favor of walkers; second, crossing the Potomac River at Packhorse Ford, a chance to channel thousands of years of travelers while celebrating this community we live in. The first year we did it, 50 people joined Jay Hurley and me for the crossing and a picnic. Last year we were 150. Who knows what this September will bring? Come on down.

What's the bottom line?

Let's stay with "crossing" as a metaphor. If the chance presents itself, always take it. You definitely should see things from the other side. Finally, after 60 years of shirking my civic responsibilities, I crossed to the land of the engaged citizen.

Being mayor is, at bottom, a spiritual exercise. All such are crossings, usually shrouded in a fog, which only clears later. On occasion I have been yelled at, insulted, and most recently, threatened with physical destruction. On other occasions, I have been praised to excess. Such passionate intensity as this I last experienced in P.S. 45's playground 50 years ago, over girls or cars or baseball, not skateboards or residential parking. I guess this is growing up.

The best I can do at extracting meaning from the experience is this: in town council meetings, as at the playground, try not to rise to the bait. Breathe in, breathe out. Keep perspective. Smile and nod. What a species we are. You gotta love us, because if you don't, there's little hope, only the whirlwind.

Kids Page

Lindsey Long wrote the revamped Kids Page first article and has contributed several thoughtful and thought-provoking pieces over the past few years. As she prepares to leave Shepherdstown, she offers a moving tribute to the place; it's obvious that she has given as much to the town as she says it has given to her.

— Hunter Barrat, Kids Page Editor

Shepherdstown: A Memorial

Lindsey Long

As my family and I prepare to move to Virginia, I find myself reflecting more and more on the last eight years of my life. Our family of five moved here when I was just six years old, but I was well aware of the move. Although I wasn't born here, I have always considered Shepherdstown to be my hometown. Since the very beginning, Shepherdstown has provided a safe and wonderful environment for me to grow up in and cherish. From putting my plastic duck in the Town Run with the rest of my first grade class as part of Shepherdstown Elementary School's annual Duck Buck Races to beginning to write for the GOOD NEWS PAPER when I was in junior high school, this town has been the backing behind my childhood years.

Tucked back over the river and through the woods, Shepherdstown has been the supportive and loving community that any child should grow up with. In a small town like this, there is no hiding from your neighbors or anonymity when you walk down the street. Of course, there is no getting away with anything either. Let's just say that pranks and such are very uncommon when your next-door neighbor is a police officer — as mine is! This is the kind of town where kids walk to the local library after school every day, grabbing a bite to eat at the bakery next door. I bought plenty of brownies (usually with my friends' money) from that very bakery. And how many times have I seen kids dropping overdue books in the library's box on Fridays because they don't want to spend their allowance on overdue fines? More times than I care to count, is the real answer. The wall in front of McMurran Hall, a favorite hangout spot for almost every kid within the town limits, is both a blessing and a curse for parents. Although they find it's nice to have their children out of their hair for a little while, it's difficult to pry them off the wall before sundown!

And Shepherdstown is always celebrating! The annual May Day Parade features cute little girls in spring dresses, while the Christmas parade is full of bundled-up children waiting for Santa. I have been in numerous parades such as these, including one Christmas parade where I was so cold that my knees were shaking — but smiling all the way!

It's the kind of town where every child is enrolled in the local soccer league, and good sportsmanship is even more important than winning the game. Being a veteran of AYSO soccer, I'm a prime example of how far it can take you — I made the varsity soccer team in ninth grade.

When it comes to babysitting, no price is too high for a mature, responsible teenager, and it usually is the most guarded secret around a town like this. As a babysittee gone babysitter, I know how thankful my own parents became when I was old enough to babysit my younger sister! I was trustworthy, mature, and they could employ me for free during the day (at nights I charged).

The churches in Shepherdstown are not closed off but are welcoming to all. Summer Vacation Bible School is shared among every church in town so that children can get a well-rounded view of Christianity. Going from a participant to a volunteer, I know this for a fact. I've been a part of this program since I was in third grade, and I always loved snack time. Now, I get to see how happy the kindergarteners are when we serve "Dirt and Worms"; it's always a crowd favorite.

The week-long Jefferson County Fair is attended by all, and is always a success. Children of all ages (and some adults too) show off their handiwork in various exhibits as well as the produce and livestock they raise. Everyone gets a chance to enjoy the festivities, including going on various rides that I, more often than not, chicken out of before ever getting in line. Although I have to say, I'm a veteran of the Scrambler. Nothing can beat a classic.

Some say that small town life is overrated, but I think it's great that everyone knows each other. Playing "Mary Had a Little Lamb" on the saxophone for the first time is a celebrated event for beginning band students at any school performance, and in Shepherdstown, I have been congratulated for doing so by people who heard me play even if they didn't know me personally. The experience of eating out includes seeing friends and teachers in the same restaurant as well as consuming a fabulous meal. Before I leave, I have to find out how the chefs at Kazu make such wonderful Chicken Pad Thai!

Shepherdstown is a college town, and to the outside world, that is all we're really known for. We don't have many other claims to fame. But Shepherdstown is so much more than that! We are a real community in every sense of the word, standing behind each other when the situation gets rough. I can honestly say that I call this place my hometown, and I am happy to say that. I will miss everyone. So before I go, thank you for those memories. Thank you to everyone for sticking with me, from my first Girl Scout meeting to my last varsity softball game. Lois McMaster Bujold, one of the greatest science fiction authors of all time, once wrote, "My home is not a place, it is people." As long as I remain welcomed here by the people of this town, this will always remain my home.

Photo supplied by Long Family

Meeting Nancy Craun

Thomas Harding

Photo supplied by author

"I got my start in catering at my dad's drive-in theatre in Martinsburg. I was seven years old, I stood on a milk crate and served people popcorn and sodas."

I am sitting with Nancy Craun in her living room in her contemporary home on South King Street in Shepherdstown.

Nancy Craun — huge smile, painted toes, black pants and shimmering blouse, presence of a television anchorwoman, midwife to a thousand brides and their golden wedding-gown dreams.

All around the kitchen
cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo
All around the kitchen
cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo

"We were too busy to get into trouble at the drive-in," continues Nancy. "We all worked at the theatre — my brother, sister, mother and dad. We had an apartment under the screen. I loved pumping sodas and watching movies like *Thunder Road* with Robert Mitchum."

Nancy started to dance at eight years old. Dancing was her passion. She won her Bachelor in Fine Arts in dance choreography. She was the first Artist in Residence in Virginia. She taught dance for five years at Virginia Commonwealth University. "I loved the audience, the performance, knowing people were having a wonderful time." This sense of performance would carry on to her work later in life.

At 36, she decided to stop dancing. "I decided to stop at the height of my profession. I walked off stage remembering the moment, on a high," she told me. "Dance monopolized my life. I wanted to make a change."

"If you are talented in art, you can work in many fields. Some people try and restrict, inhibit artists. That is death. I found that fellow artists were telling me what to do. I decided to step back."

Nancy was at a loss at what to do. She took some time working out her next move. Then while at dinner with a friend, she made a T-bone dinner dare. She would apply for a management job with Kentucky Fried Chicken, which had one of the best management training schemes in the country. "I was shocked," said Nancy. "I went for the interview and they never even asked me if I could cook!"

Nancy spent two years with KFC learning the ropes of the catering business. Her job was to bring new products to the KFC stores. Her fondest achievement was bringing the chicken sandwich. "We were in the chicken business and we were the only fast food chain without a sandwich. That cracked me up. But I appreciated that KFC was taking its time to get the recipe just right."

Now stop right still
cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo
And put your hands on your hips
cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo
And let your right foot slip
cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo

Nancy then went to work with her father. By this time he had a number of restaurants. Nancy opened the Aikens Sizzling Steak House in Leesburg. Soon she was running six stores and 450 people. It was a very busy time.

"I wasn't very happy working with my dad. He wouldn't hire other women managers. He was old school. Bottom line was he never treated me like he treated my brother who also worked with him. I saw myself as dad's little girl. I had to get away."

In 1990, Nancy moved on and set up her own catering business, Encore Special Events. Sixteen years later the business is still flourishing. "At first we were very hungry," says Nancy. "We put in a couple of proposals for 600 people at the Apple Blossom Festival. We couldn't believe when they gave us both the contracts."

Nancy leans back in her plush sofa, takes a drink of water, "I love to create a spectacular event. Everyone leaves feeling good. That makes me feel great."

Nancy typically runs 40–50 corporate events and 70–90 weddings a year. Since she started, Encore has served an incredible 200,000 guests, and has used over one million pieces of silverware and china.

Encore has evolved from a catering design company into specializing in managing locations for events. These locations have included Hartwood, The Villa on Paris Mountain, Wheatland Manor, and currently Hillsborough Vineyards, Silverbrook Bed and Breakfast, and Morven Park.

I asked Nancy who pays for the weddings these days. She told me that until 10 years ago, weddings were typically paid for by the parents. Today things are different. With couples marrying in their mid-30s, it is the bride and groom who usually pay for the wedding event. "It is actually easier. I work directly with the bride and the groom. They know what they want. There are fewer people involved."

Nancy shared one of her worst moments at a wedding. She laughs as she remembers.

"I was on my way to the wedding reception. My station wagon was in the shop and the only car I could find to rent was a red Thunderbird. I had the wedding cake in the back of the trunk. When I got to the reception I went to get the cake but I couldn't find it. It had slid all the way forward and was schmooshed. We only had two hours before the event was set to start. We fixed the cake up as best we could, using a cascade of flowers in front of the cake. We told the bride and groom we needed to eat the cake first as it was so hot. Of course we just didn't want anyone looking too closely at the mess. It all went fine. The funniest thing was that I got a call a few weeks later from another client saying that they wanted the wedding cake for their reception with the same flower cascade," Nancy chuckles infectiously and then says, "You never know what is going to happen at a wedding event."

I asked Nancy why she moved to Shepherdstown. "I grew up walking everywhere. To school, to the stores, to the park. It gave me a wonderful feeling. A sense of smallness, a sense of safety. My business is so fast paced. It has such high demands. When I come home I can relax. I calm down. I slow down. I love Shepherdstown. There is something wonderful about walking down the street and saying hello. When people visit they are amazed at how friendly everyone is. It is safe here.

Now stop right still
cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo
And put your hands on your shoulders
cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo
And put your foot up in the air
cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo

And what about the future? Will Nancy continue to work in the kitchen and catering business? "I want to work more in Jefferson County," says Nancy. "We have been focused in Winchester and Loudoun County for so long. I want to cut down on the travel time and work closer to home. I would like to work as an event consultant, working with decision-makers or site-owners, who want to use events as a marketing tool or to expand their income. I would love more than anything to have my own location here in Jefferson County."

For more information about Encore go to www.Encorespecialevents.com

Thomas Harding *has had a portfolio career including environmental activism, television production, and most recently, real estate sales with Greg Didden Associates. He lives in Shepherdstown with his wife and two children.*

Deep Roots

Betty Lou Bryant

A fine wine improves with age and comes from vines with deep roots. The same can be said of George Marshall who just celebrated his 62nd wedding anniversary with his wife, Dotty. George was born in the old King's Daughters Hospital in Martinsburg in August 1921. Several generations of his family were area residents. His great-grandfather and grandfather owned Windward off Shepherd Grade Road, and it was called Marshall Hall in those days. Many of his predecessors are buried at Elmwood Cemetery. George had a sister, Ann, who was 10 years older than he.

Dotty, an only child, was born in Fort Sam Houston Army Hospital in San Antonio, Tex., in March 1927. Her father was a 2nd Lieutenant in the Army. Longevity is in both sides of this family, as George's mother lived to be 101, and Dotty's mother lived to be 99.

After graduating from Martinsburg High School, George was active in the Martinsburg Little Theater Guild, and in the summer of 1942, a Navy recruiting officer requested that the Guild provide a cast to present a V-5 Navy Aviation Cadet recruiting program on the Winchester radio station. George was cast as the young prospect and, in the course of rehearsing and presenting the program, was himself recruited. His first duty station was at Bethany College in West Virginia where he was enrolled in civilian pilot training (CPT). From there he was sent to the University of Georgia Preflight School, then to Norman, Okla., for Basic Flight Training. He had his advanced flight training at the Navy's University of the Air at Corpus Christi, Tex. He was commissioned as an Ensign and Naval Aviator in October 1943. He had operational training in Lake City, Fla. and Beaufort, S.C. and then was assigned to a squadron in Key West, Fla.

Dotty was a senior in high school in Key West in 1943–44, and they met at Fort Taylor Army Officer's Club in Key West in February 1944. George's squadron was flying Anti-submarine Warfare (ASW) missions, and in late spring the squadron was transferred to Cuba. Missions back to Key West allowed their relationship to grow, and they became engaged in May. They were married on July 22 in the southernmost Methodist Church in the U.S. It was a whirlwind courtship! On the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary, their minister, Randy Tremba, commented that if they had come to him for pre-marital counseling, he would have told them to wait. And then he mused, "So what do I know?"

July 22, 1944 wedding photograph

George returned from Cuba for their wedding and a brief honeymoon in Miami. Later his squadron was transferred to Natal, Brazil. World War II ended and George was released to inactive duty in November 1945. They were finally able to have their first home in Alexandria, Va. George began working for Eastern Airlines at National Airport. Their two daughters Deborah and Kathy were born at the Old Alexandria Hospital in 1946 and 1948.

The Korean War began in late June 1950, and George was recalled to active duty on September 15 of that year. Dotty and the children followed him to many duty stations including Norfolk, Va.; Honolulu, Hawaii; San Diego, Ca.; Trenton, Mi.; Marietta, Ga.; and Arlington, Va.

In 1954, son Larry joined the family, and in April 1956, three and half weeks after they were transferred to Hawaii, a second son, Peter, was born. When they were stationed in San Diego, George's sister, Ann, and her husband Ray lived near them in Garden Grove near L.A. There were many swims in their pool and visits with them. The children endearingly named her "Crazy Aunt Ann."

George's final duty was on the Staff, Bureau of Naval Personnel in Arlington, Va. He retired as a Commander on July 1, 1970 with 28 years of service and 4,000 flight hours, primarily on multi-engine airplanes. They enjoyed life in McLean, Va. for 19 years.

Younger son Peter attended Shepherd University, married his college sweetheart Tia, and stayed in our area. During an outing with them at Coolfont, Dotty and George decided they should move to Shepherdstown. They found a site they liked in Steamboat Run, and Peter was the prime contractor in building their house. They had lived in that home for 19 years when they moved to their present home in Fernbank at Cress Creek in October 2004. They now have seven grandchildren and two great-grandsons.

All four of their children now live in Key West, Fla. Deborah and her husband Sidney, with their son Chris as CEO, and Deborah's sister Kathy as Controller, own and operate Sloppy Joe's Enterprises there. Hurricane Wilma in October 2005 caused significant damage to Key West and to the Marshall clan in particular. They lost a total of seven automobiles and two of their homes were flooded. Deborah's house was undamaged and has served as temporary (eight months) housing for Kathy, Chris, and his wife and five cats. We sometimes forget that other parts of the Gulf of Mexico coastline besides New Orleans are struggling to repair damage done by a hurricane last fall.

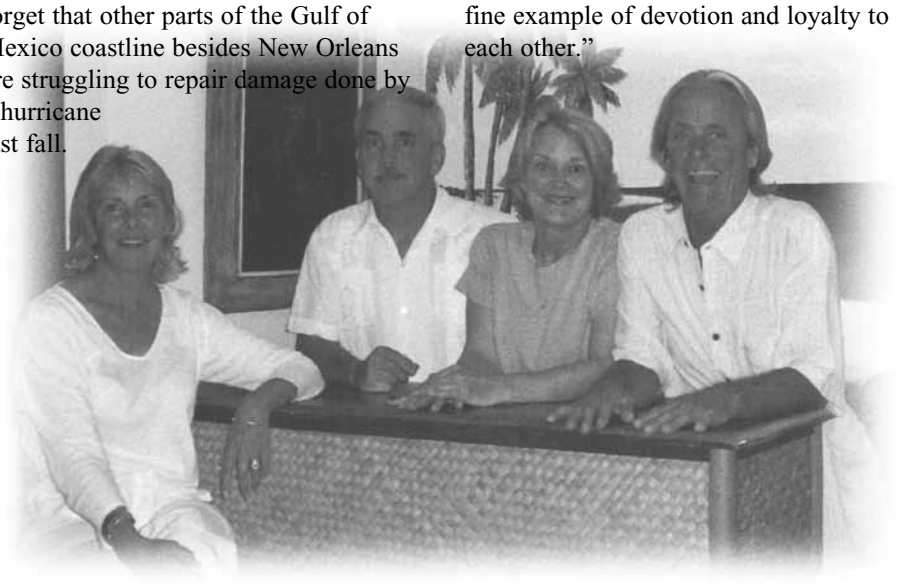
George and Dotty Marshall, 2006

Photographs supplied by the Marshalls

Dotty and George have continually contributed to the community with their time and talents. George has been treasurer of five different organizations: Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church (13 years), Men's Club (six years), Historic Shepherdstown (10 years), Jefferson County Historic Society (seven years), and CASA (one year). He has served on the boards of these organizations plus the Elmwood Cemetery and the Millbrook Orchestra. Dotty spent many hours doing the bowing for the music for this last organization. Together they drove for Meals on Wheels for 10 years.

George says, "We love it here. There are more roots here than I ever knew existed. It's a fabulous place to live."

And we say, "Thank you so much for being such a significant part of our community and for setting such a fine example of devotion and loyalty to each other."



The Marshall's children — Deborah, Peter, Kathy, and Larry

ROBERT PARK
Hard Work Never Hurt Anyone

Malcolm Ater, Jr.

Photograph by Malcolm Ater, Jr.

Robert Park

Last April more than 400 people gathered at the old Nip Parkinson farm at the corner of Shepherd Grade and Scrabble Roads to say goodbye to Robert Park as they watched the auction of his farm equipment, machinery, and all the tools he used in nearly a lifetime of farming. It was a sad day for the many friends and neighbors who came by, but for Robert, it was time to move on.

Robert Park is a true Shepherdstown native, born in 1940 in a house just two buildings down from Bill Trail's old gas station on the outskirts of town. "It was a good place to grow up," recalls Robert. "Back then Shepherdstown seemed to have a number of little communities within the town itself, like *Little Philadelphia* west of the four-way stop sign or *Angel Hill* east of the railroad tracks towards the river, past what's now the Day Care Center. And over by Shepherdstown High was an area we called *The Boom*, made up of people who had middle and upper class jobs, but there were also laborers and service workers who lived there.

"I'm not sure what other folks called our neighborhood," he grins, "but it was really a little town by itself. The only rule we had as little kids was don't go beyond the railroad tracks by O'Hurley's unless we had an adult with us. But we were free to roam the area around the Hurley house down past the Whit Club [a local restaurant]. I remember everyone had a garden and everyone shared their food, and the adults looked after the kids like they were all their own."

Robert paused to stroke his chin. "My mother got real sick with colon cancer when I was seven, and they didn't know too much about it then. She spent a lot of time in the hospital. But the neighbors saw to it that my sister Vivian, and me and my two brothers, David and Paul, always had something to eat. If you were in someone's house when it was time to eat, you were always invited to stay; no one was ever left out. It was like having surrogate families. People like Ms. Hilliard and her husband, Leo, Ms. Hurley, Miss Florence Fouts, and Walt and Betty Whittington, among others, who treated us like family. Of course," he adds with a chuckle, "if you misbehaved they'd whack you a good one, just like their own kids."

Although Robert wasn't too big on schoolin', he does have fond memories of the Shepherdstown Grade School located on High Street. "It was a beautiful building, brick, and had two stories. There were five classrooms downstairs for grades one through three and five more classrooms upstairs for grades four through six. The kids couldn't wait to get in the fourth grade."

When I asked him why, he laughed and said, "Because of the fire drills! When we had a fire drill and you were downstairs, you just walked out the door. But," he said, his face lighting up, "when you were upstairs you got to use what we called *the big tube,* which was like a sliding board that you used to slide all the way down to the ground and land in a big sand box. *That was fun!*"

Robert's mother passed away when he was 12, and a year later in 1954 he went to live with an aunt on a working dairy farm, Oak Hill Jersey Farm. It was there that Robert began a lifetime of hard work. "I'd pick cherries at the Lucas Orchards, a half-mile beyond the forks towards Charles Town, or across the road from where I lived on Rt. 480 at Myer's Orchard. I got paid 10 cents for picking a two-and-a-half-gallon bucket, and on a good day might pick 20 buckets. Entire families worked the orchards, white and black together, and any mixture in between. We never paid much attention to color back then."

Robert tried to remember the way things were. "No one really understood what was going on in the Deep South with the Civil Rights movement because that sorta stuff didn't happen here. Everyone had the right to vote if they wanted to, there weren't any Jim Crow laws to keep people from voting or things like that. No one had to go to back doors of restaurants or businesses; everyone entered through the front door 'cause their money was as good as anyone else's. The only exception was the old opera house where they had to sit in the balcony. But no one ever questioned it, just like no one ever questioned why the white and black kids went to different schools. It's just the way things were. We played with the black children on the public lands, but we never went to their homes. We never saw any difference in color, though I reckon the adults might've felt a lot differently, I don't know, but we never heard 'em talking about it."

Even when Robert was going to Shepherdstown High School (grades seven through 12), he was working. "When I was 13, I'd load a cart behind my tractor with corn or grain and drive the tractor a mile up the road to school, where I'd park it in the parking lot. At lunchtime I'd drive the tractor over to Knode's, they'd be waiting for me, and they'd grind up the corn or grain into meal for the animals." He laughed as he continued, "I always liked it when it rained because then the principal, Mr. Eustler, would send me home early on the tractor so the food didn't spoil."

It wouldn't be the first time Mr. Eustler sent young Robert home early. "We didn't have a football field for our games back then, so we played all our games at Shepherd College," he explained. "You either paid 15 cents to watch the game and walked over to the college, or you had to stay in study hall. It didn't take Mr. Eustler long to catch on."

"Now Robert," he said to me one day. "You always pay your fifteen cents but you never show up at the game. Where do you go?"

"I told him I went home early to get a head start on my chores or maybe pick some cherries for extra money. After that he told me to skip paying the 15 cents and just go on home."

Of course Robert found other ways to get out of class. One spring when he was 14 or 15, he successfully got out of different classes by volunteering to help

dig out the foundation for dressing rooms under the combination gymnasium/auditorium for the school's sports teams. "There might be a half dozen boys doing the excavation work at any one time under the watchful eye of a local contractor, who was actually paid to do the work himself. We got it all dug out that spring, and then in the summer the school board came in and finished building the rooms."

Robert disagreed with me when I suggested the contractor might have taken advantage of the boys. "Naw, that's the way we did things back then. It was our community, and you didn't have to ask anyone twice to help with a community project."

In 1957, Robert left the farm and went back to live with his family in town next to the Old Towne Restaurant. But he still worked, of course. "I had me a hot-looking convertible, and to pay for it I'd get up at 3:30 every morning and drive down to Cavalier Farm (now Cavaland development) and milked cows and cleaned up the place. After school, I'd go milk 'em again and clean up. Saturdays were bad, 'cause I had to work all day getting the feed together for the following week."

When I asked him how much he got paid, his eyes grew bright. "Big money! Twenty-five dollars a week, and to a 17-year-old boy that was big money! I could make my monthly car payment, fill up my tank for a week, and go into town every Friday night to *drink enough beer to get your snoot full!*" He went on to say that the drinking age back then was 18, but at Smitty's Pool Hall next to the Entler Hotel, there "was a lotta looking the other way," he said with a smile.

Robert graduated from high school the last day of May in 1958, and two days later was at Lacklund Air Force Base in Texas for 11 weeks of basic training after joining the 167th West Virginia Air National Guard. He would proudly serve on active duty in the National Guard for 22 years and another 21 as a reservist.

Upon his return from basic training in August of 1958, Robert began working on Nip Parkinson's farm on Scrabble Road. He certainly wasn't the only boy who worked for Nip. "I can't recall how many boys worked for him over the years, 50 or 60, including the Billmyer boys, Snyder boys, Johnny Hilliard, one of the Shipley twins, the Doss brothers, the Stinger boy, to name a few, but Nip taught all of us a lot about life. He taught us work ethics, how to handle machinery, animals, butchering, how to deal with other people, and just a lot about nature itself.

"Anyone who worked for Nip left there with a sense of self-esteem, that you were somebody," he continued. "When Nip died about eight years ago, just about every boy that worked for him was there for his funeral. He meant so much to everyone; for me, he treated me as well or better than any father. If you did something wrong, Nip would tell you, maybe sometimes he'd harp on it a bit too long, but if you did something right, he'd be the first to tell you."

In 1961 Robert got married, and it was about that time that local dairy operations had to comply with new health regulations to be considered a Grade A operation, and without passing the requirements you were basically out of business. Converting the machinery cost a lot of money, and Nip was no longer able to pay Robert enough to support his family that would eventually grow to four children, Catherine, Robert, Danny, and David. Robert reluctantly left working for Nip, but "as friends with a great deal of respect for each other."

> "It was hard work, but enjoyable work, and you had a sense of being with nature..."

Robert began working for the West Virginia Highway Department before accidentally becoming a long-haul truck driver. He'd never driven further than Hagerstown or Winchester, but then one day a fella offered him $75 to take a mobile home to someplace called Kenosha. "I wasn't exactly sure where in West Virginia this Kenosha place was and I didn't ask, so the man handed me a map and wished me a good trip. I found Kenosha all right, but it was in Wisconsin, not West Virginia," he laughed with amusement. "I left on a Tuesday night and returned to Martinsburg on Thursday night, didn't waste no time."

Robert would continue driving a truck and later work for the government until 1980, when a yearning for the land took him back to Nip Parkinson. They formed a partnership with Robert in charge of the daily operation while Nip supervised, and if Nip didn't like something, "he'd be sure to set me straight" says Robert, but the two men worked well together. When brother Paul retired from the Air National Guard in 1997, he, too, joined the operation.

"It was hard work, but enjoyable work, and you had a sense of being with nature," he'll tell you. "If you wanted to take a rest after plowing a field, you did it. If you wanted to rest and look at the stars, you did it. You set your own standards, and the only person you'd be hurting by not getting your work done was yourself. I've never taken a vacation in my life, or at least never had a break of longer than two days, but I never missed not working. It was something I wanted to do." He shook his head. "No regrets."

The hard work Robert knew as a boy has continued all his life. Most days start at 4:00 a.m. and don't end until he goes to bed after the late news. Robert remembers many a week where he would awake on Monday morning and not go back to sleep until Friday night, except "maybe for slouching over a tractor steering wheel for a quick 10- or 15-minute nap." He's never needed an alarm clock to get up in the morning, and a typical workday might end around 7:00 p.m. when the milking was done, though sometimes he would do extra work like mowing fields or raking hay when the night air was cool.

Nip passed away in 1998, but left the land to Robert to farm as long as he wanted. He had a heart attack in 2000, prompting him to give up the diary part of the operation, but he and Paul continued raising corn, barley, and wheat, and at one time had over a thousand laying hens before the government stepped in with more regulations. They also raised maybe 500 hogs a year, butchering about 150 of them. Their cattle herd numbered nearly100 on the farm.

He notes with sadness that young kids today don't appreciate hard work. "When I came back to the farm in 1980, it wasn't any problem getting boys to work for you. Kids were used to hard work and enjoyed making some extra money. Nowadays, you wouldn't even know any kids live around here unless you happen to see a school bus pick them up or let them off. Kids don't go outside anymore; they stay inside with air conditioning and play video games. They can't take the heat because they're not used to it. Most aren't used to hard work because everything is given to them instead of having to earn it. When I was a boy, you took pride in your work because it was something you did." He looked over at me and added, "Nothing was given to us. We earned everything we had, and that's the way I liked it."

Unfortunately, government regulations on how a farm could be run — what you could do and how you did it, not to mention the many things you couldn't do, eventually got to Robert. There were other issues, too, but Robert asked me not to mention them. "No use stirring anything up," he said ruefully. "In time, everyone gets what they deserve."

So on April 21, to the sadness of his many friends and neighbors around Shepherd Grade and Scrabble Roads, Robert and his brother held a final auction of their farm equipment. A month earlier, he had promised my wife that he'd be by to plow our vegetable garden the way he has for the nine years I've lived near him, but I figured he'd forgotten about it and certainly had too many things on his mind with the auction coming up.

Two weeks later I was mowing my back lawn when I heard a rumble coming from my neighbor's property as a tractor emerged through the tall grass and crossed a break in my fence line. "Robert," I said in astonishment. "I didn't expect to see you again."

He looked at me sternly. "I told your wife I might be late with the garden this year, but I hadn't forgotten you or the other neighbors. I promised to plow your gardens, so I kept one tractor back from the sale so I could keep my word to you."

Robert and his brother have now relocated to Hedgesville where they farm their own 10-acre parcel. But as Robert told me, "The memories of Shepherdstown will always be with us, and hopefully we'll be in the memories of the people we knew."

Count on it, Robert.

Malcolm Ater, Jr. *has been a special education reading teacher for 18 years, and has published 70 human-interest stories in magazines and local newspapers, mostly about the people of Jefferson County. A story about the time a gang of motorcycle thugs invaded Shepherdstown in the 1960s when Clarence Wright was mayor will appear in the winter issue of* GoldenSeal *magazine.*

A Satisfied Man

A Conversation with Orchardist Charles Miller

Claire Stuart

There are no hayrides or country music shows at Rellim (Miller spelled backwards) Orchard in Kearneysville. There's no Web site or retail store. There's no cold storage, so when the fruit season is over, it's OVER.

In short, Rellim has none of the merchandising aids that most orchards employ to stay in business. The prices that packers give for fruit is less than the costs of production, so direct sales to consumers are the only option.

Rellim has only fruit trees and the barn built by Charles Miller's grandfather in 1888. A small sign goes up on the gate when fruit is available. A long rope pull is attached to a bell mounted high on the barn, and a sign instructs you to ring LOUDLY if nobody is in the barn. You buy cherries by the gallon and other fruit by the bushel or peck.

So how does Rellim stay in business? "I don't depend on this for a living," says Charles Miller bluntly. "If I did, I'd be in the poorhouse." Miller, nearly 87, has no plans to retire. He had one knee replaced in 1999, the other in 2000, and says he will keep working as long as he can get around. He's made one concession to the years and rides a golf cart in and out of the orchard.

"I'm like the man who climbed the mountain because it was there. I do this because it's here." He shrugged, "What else am I going to do, sit on the porch? I like to play golf, but you can only play golf so many hours a week."

Help has been increasingly hard to find, and Miller seldom has help except at picking time. Itinerant pickers may or may not show up. His wife, Ruth, often waits on customers in the barn. His son, Dr. Stephen Miller, a scientist at the Appalachian Fruit Research Station, helps out on weekends. Miller noted that he, his son-in-law, and a neighbor picked 94 gallons of cherries this year. "That's pretty good for some old men 86, 73 and 62," he smiled.

On the wall of the barn hangs a photograph of Tom McDowell, Miller's lifelong friend and neighbor, labeled "Tommy 1908–2001." McDowell worked for Miller, his father, and grandfather, finally retiring at 88, leaving a gap that can't be filled. "Tommy was part of the family," said Miller. "He knew what to do and you could trust him implicitly. You could give him your pocketbook, your house keys, and he'd take care of everything. It's hard to find anyone you can trust anymore."

Photograph by Ruth Weese

Charles Miller

As for the orchard's future, Miller will only raise enough fruit to sell locally. He is taking out all the big, old trees and replacing them with dwarf and semi-dwarf trees that are easy to pick. "Steve is making the selections because he's the one that will wind up with this," he said.

In his work clothes and old hat, Miller looks the way "city slickers" expect a stereotypical farmer to look, but looks are deceiving. Miller, an accountant and former professional baseball player, has spent a lot of time far from the farm. Miller attended the University of Richmond on an athletic scholarship and earned a degree in business administration, majoring in accounting. He played college baseball and was signed to play for Hagerstown at age 21. He played minor league ball through the 1940s, pitching for Raleigh, Knoxville, Buffalo, and Fort Lauderdale, with time out for service in World War II. Although he did not go into the major leagues, Miller looks back with pride on his professional baseball career. "I was good enough to make my living at baseball," he said with satisfaction.

When his baseball career ended, Miller returned home to work as a cost accountant and help his father, who was also the local mail carrier, run the family orchard. When his employer closed local operations, Miller was offered work in New York. He visited the city but declined. "I wanted to be able to look outside and see my old hunting dog and look out across the field," he said.

He went on to do financial work for a local charter flying service with government contracts to fly VIPs, including Supreme Court justices and astronauts. "Once we had all nine astronauts scheduled to go on one plane," he recalled, "but decided that wasn't a good idea in case there was a crash!"

Miller moved up in position to Executive Vice President. When government contracts ran out, the company bought an operation in Florida. Again, Miller declined to relocate. He went into business for himself, opening a tax preparation office in Charles Town that he operated for 30 years while continuing to run the orchard. When the real estate and insurance agents with whom he shared space quit, he decided to quit as well.

"I'm still doing taxes," he sighed. "I told my clients to find someone else, but they won't let me quit!" Miller converted the milk house on his farm to an office and continues to do taxes for 30 or 40 old clients.

Miller says that his wife and son tell him to raise his fruit prices. As an accountant, he is perfectly aware of the bottom line. However, he gets satisfaction from the fact that customers know where the fruit comes from and that they will always get a fair measure at an affordable price. "Let someone else stick it to them with prices," he said.

He enjoys visiting with customers, some who have been coming for years from as far as Arlington, Va. "I like to take time to talk. Some people tell me that even if I had nothing to sell, they'd stop in just to talk a while."

Miller recalls a finance teacher in college telling students to save a bit of everything they earned, no matter how little, invest it in something that paid compound interest, and they would have enough to retire. Miller took that advice seriously and enjoys a comfortable life, although he has not retired. "You save by doing without the things that you just *think* you have to have," he said.

Although Miller describes himself as highly competitive, he is not acquisitive. "When I was playing baseball, I was a poor loser," he remarked. "In school, I always wanted to be on top. I want to be best at whatever I do, but I don't care about a bigger house or a fancy car. A car gets you from here to there. Ford or Cadillac, it doesn't matter to me."

Miller is a rare person — a man satisfied with his life — although he wonders if he should be doing more to help civilization. He and his wife have set up a scholarship for student athletes at the University of Richmond and another for a music student at Shepherd University in memory of their daughter, Nancy, who was killed in a auto accident and who had been a music major.

Miller considers himself fortunate that he has had good health and has never had many wants. He married his high school sweetheart, and they will have been married 65 years in October. They raised three children successfully. He fulfilled a dream by playing professional baseball. He was born at a time that has let him witness enormous changes.

"I went from buggies to the man on the moon. I remember one day when my dad came in from his mail route and said, 'Boys, I just heard on the radio where a man flew across the Atlantic in a plane all by himself.' "

Claire Stuart *is a confessed and unrepentant fruit-o-holic. What fruit she can't grow, she buys by the bushel.*

Growing Up at "Toidy-foist and Toid" Helped Prepare Him for His Job

Al Henderson

Take one part academic training and one part life experience, mix well, bake for five-plus decades and sprinkle with a quick, dry sense of humor, and you get John Sheridan, Shepherd University's Dean of Libraries and Information Sciences since October 2005.

The second youngest of seven children, he grew up in a "smallish" New York City rent-controlled apartment at "Toidy-foist and Toid" with his siblings, parents, and maternal grandparents, a total of 11 people. With a twinkle in his eye, he says that at one time his bedroom was the apartment's only bathroom. All four of his grandparents were Irish immigrants with little or no formal education.

"My father was a clerk at Equitable Life Insurance for 38 years," Sheridan said. "He started working there when he was 14 and worked there until he died. He was frustrated at seeing younger workers with more education getting more responsible positions than he had.

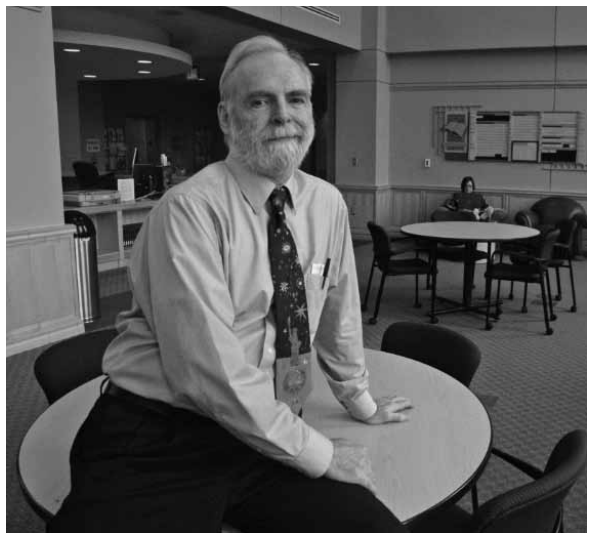
"My father got his G.E.D. three months before he died at age 52. He used to get a bag of books from the public library every week. He read a lot of fiction, mysteries as well as Hemingway. He read some travel, biography, some self help. He was an abominable investor.

"My mother finished 10th grade with a certification. She insisted on hearing my spelling lessons and asking my times tables. So I had a momentum, which got me into an academically competitive high school. I also happened to live near a long row of used bookstores, which I started to haunt in my teens. The 'joy of discovery' was motivating my decisions about what to do."

A graduate of a Jesuit high school, where he learned Latin and Greek, Sheridan received a Bachelor of Arts in classics from City College of New York in 1970, a Master of Arts in classical studies from Indiana University in 1972, and a Master of Arts in library science from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee in 1973. He reminisces about the difficulties of getting his bachelor's degree during the unsettled campus life during the Vietnam era.

By the time he began his master's program, he was on a path to teach the classics but quickly opted out when he realized he'd be teaching Latin to students who really did not want to learn the language. He then turned his attention to what had given him great pleasure as both an undergraduate and graduate student — library research — and opted to switch his career objective.

"As I wended my way through undergraduate school and a master's program in classical studies," he said, "it slowly dawned on me that I might make a living at sharing this 'joy of discovery.' I realized that everyone has a different threshold to be bitten by the bug, which irretrievably instills in them insatiable curiosity, critical thinking, and a penchant for creativity. I want Shepherd's library to maximize opportunities for patrons to have that experience."



Photograph by Ruth Weese

John Sheridan

Immediately before coming to Shepherdstown, Sheridan was the library supervisor at Zayed University in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Previous to that, his long career as a college and university librarian took him to Soka University of America in California, Colorado College, Transylvania University in Kentucky, Knox College in Illinois, and University of Nebraska at Kearney. In 1996-97 Sheridan was an ALA USIA Bookfellow at the University of Kyiv Mohyla Academy in Kiev, Ukraine.

Sheridan was recently interviewed by West Virginia public television about his experience in Dubai. "Having been bitten by the ex pat bug when I worked in Ukraine, I found the prospect of working in the United Emirates intriguing," he said. "U.S. relations with Iraq were strained in the summer of 2002, but my research indicated that Dubai was a safe haven. I also asked my children, who are Jewish, if they would be comfortable visiting me there, and they said that Dubai was probably the only place they would. I had not been involved in a teleconference interview before the one with Zayed University, so that served as a harbinger of other changes I would experience."

He explained that Zayed University is a federal university and that all of its students are citizens of the U.A.E. There are campuses in Abu Dhabi, the nation's capital, and in Dubai, the country's financial center. The language of instruction is English, so virtually all of the faculty are from, or have studied, in the West.

Because most of the students were in a second language situation, the faculty recognized that the teaching styles and materials needed to be modified. This conscious effort led to more innovative and active styles of learning, from which Sheridan says that he continues to benefit.

"As my three-year contract was winding up, I decided — like 70 percent of other Western ex-pats there — to rotate back to the United States," he said. "This decision was soon reinforced by the news that I was to become a grandfather."

On his role as head of Shepherd's library system, Sheridan says, "I work some shifts at the information desk so I will get to know the students and faculty better. What I see here at Shepherd are many students — both straight out of high school and returning students — who are working hard to get their degree and increase their options. I also see some who are developing a drive to find out more than they have to. A few weeks ago, a student asked a question about the writings of Jung and we located a book that was helpful for her paper. A week later she came back and wanted more information on Jungian archetypes, even though her paper had been turned in." He says he is impressed that this enthusiasm for knowledge comes from a student body largely consisting of the first generation in their families to attend college.

"Scarborough Library is daunting," says Sheridan. "To virtually all of our students, it is five to six times larger than any library they had ever used. We must make it comfortable and welcoming. I see in students that reticence, that fear of being found out to be an impostor, which I experienced hanging out in the used bookstores when I was a youngster in a family not grounded in academic achievement."

He noted that 20 years ago we looked for as much information as possible on a subject, while today we can summon up more information than we can possibly use. "Evaluating sources and information has overtaken searching for information as the biggest challenge,"
he said. "And, of course, this is fueled by the marriage of computers and telecommunications. I believe that the joy of discovery also has to do with taking control of the pace of looking/reading/reflecting. The medium of the computer program, Internet and a screen works against this. I want to find better ways of using emerging information technologies to satisfy and trigger curiosity.

"My times in the Ukraine and Dubai showed me that the transcendent primary role of libraries is still to connect people with ideas — whether those ideas are on paper, in a computer, on a DVD, or wherever. We also have to be ready to teach people how to use the equipment."

Sounds like a recipe for success.

***Al Henderson** is a retired writer, photographer, and college adjunct instructor of English. His e-mail address: awhenderson@adelphia.net.*

ARTWORKS

Rhonda Smith:
Mysteries Revealed and Concealed

Nan Broadhurst

Photograph by Nan Broadhurst

Rhonda Smith

In Rhonda Smith's studio, one wall is covered with a world map, which is sprayed with pins for all the places she has visited — lots of pins! She is inspired by the arts, culture, language, and people of her destinations, and collects objects everywhere that find their way into her art one way or another. There are amazing artifacts, images, trinkets, and doodads everywhere you look. They all lead to a sense of mystery and fun that characterize the life and art of Rhonda Smith.

Rhonda was born and spent her early years in Fort Worth, Tex., moving to Richmond, Ky., when she was 12. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from Eastern Kentucky University, and her Master of Fine Arts in printmaking from the University of North Texas. After graduate school she returned to Kentucky, and worked at a local museum as an assistant curator and exhibit designer for a few years. But then she headed north for a job designing exhibits for the National Park Service in Harpers Ferry. After one year, she took off for an adventure in Albuquerque, New Mex., but then returned to the Park Service for a job as an art director for Wayside Exhibits (outdoor exhibits) — again in Harpers Ferry.

Feeling the need to reconnect with the fine arts, she signed up for a drawing class at Shepherd College (now Shepherd University) with Dow Benedict. He recognized her abilities, and offered her a position as a part-time (adjunct) teacher, and eventually she became a full-time professor in painting. Later she switched to teaching printmaking and drawing, which are still her specialties, and for a few years served as head of the art department and also as gallery director for the Creative Arts Center Gallery. She has participated and presented papers at several educational conferences, and organized many student art shows.

The travel bug bit Rhonda when she visited the Museum of African Art in Washington, D.C., and then took a two-week class at West Virginia University on Asian and African art. She encountered images of marvels that she wanted to experience firsthand. Her opportunity came with a three and a half week trip to the Ivory Coast in Africa, offered by Drew University. She met and worked side by side with potters, weavers, brass casters, sculptors, carvers, and other artists. That was the beginning of Rhonda's adventures abroad.

Through an educational travel organization, Shepherd offers trips for students every year to faraway places, and Rhonda helps to recruit and accompanies the travelers. They have been all through Europe, including Spain, Italy, France, England, Scotland, Germany, Greece, Belgium, the Netherlands, and the Czech Republic. They have been to Africa three times (including Egypt), and to Peru. A trip to China is planned for next March.

In addition to these trips abroad, the students are also offered trips to Washington, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York City, and other regional spots to see exhibits of contemporary art. Rhonda also takes advantage of trips offered to faculty in the summer whenever she can. After each trip, she produces a journal full of her personal notes, drawings, photos and mementos that give a comprehensive view of her experiences.

These trips support the direction that Shepherd University has decided to follow for their arts curriculum. Shepherd has established itself as a niche for contemporary art, emphasizing the process of producing and making a living with art in today's world. The classes lead the students to explore on their own and to develop self-reliance; this includes the exposure to and use of many varied resources at every level, working with projects and clients outside the classroom, participating in internships and residencies, and competing successfully in regional juried competitions. Basic foundation skills are taught, but the more traditional subjects are not emphasized at Shepherd; rather the focus is on experimentation.

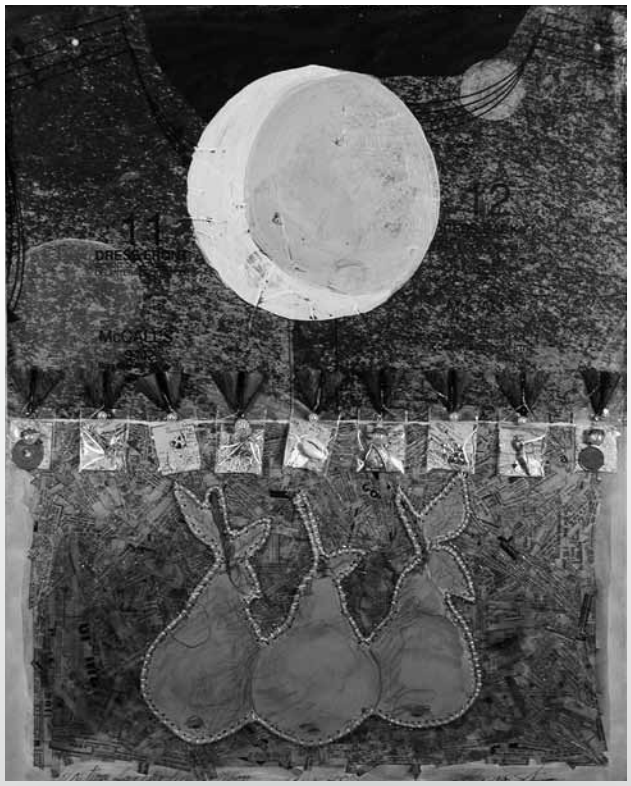
For her own art, Rhonda works in a combination of printmaking techniques and collage, preferring the tactile qualities of these mediums to painting. In her voyages, she constantly gleans new symbols for her own art, especially from Africa. She combines symbols discovered in these places with her own western understandings and artistic ideas, often uncovering multiple interpretations. Snakes arrive as messengers, alerting us to pay attention. Pears and bananas, representing the feminine and masculine, featured prominently in her series of works on marriage. Horny toads have appeared as evil though harmless aggressors. Many of her past works have dealt with various issues about relationships and other topics in a narrative fashion.

Lately she has been doing a series on the Talisman, inspired by decorative amulets and talismans worn by African hunters on their shirts as outward symbols of their heroic deeds and beliefs and knowledge of the world. They include little pouches or boxes containing a potion or a piece of paper with words written on it — to protect, empower, or heal the wearer. The content of the pouch is hidden from view, and may be placed there by a shaman. Often the hunter can't read, so he must have faith that the words are right. So these talismans have things revealed and concealed, a recurrent theme in Rhonda's work.

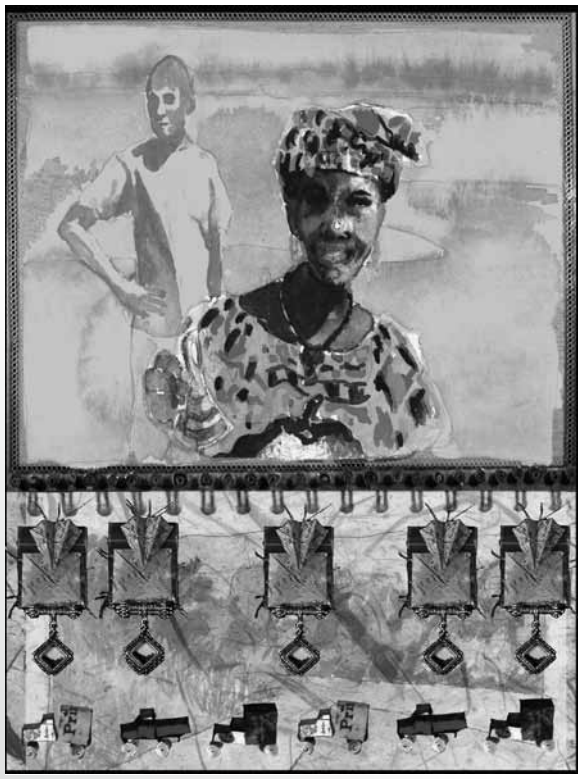
Rhonda is making small little personal travel talismans that feature a map to guide, ribbons to soften the rough spots of the trip, and small items from past journeys. They all have a folded, rolled, stacked or spiral element to symbolize a circle of safety. There are many repetitive steps in making these tiny works, and they represent a contemplative act of remembrance and prayer for safe passage. Rhonda loves recycling, and this is reflected in the base of the talismans — a little dog food tin. Recycling the old is one of the reasons she loves collage so much, using old drawings and prints, objects collected on her travels, and materials encountered daily. The transformation of the discarded into a new image reflects the history and memory of each scrap of material. Images, materials, and words combine to convey feelings and connections between people.

Rhonda has exhibited her work in many regional venues, including Shepherd University (Shepherdstown, W.Va.), the Corcoran (Washington, D.C.), Shenandoah Arts Council Gallery (Winchester, Va.), West Virginia State University (Institute, W.Va.), Blue Elephant Art Center (Frederick, Md.), College of Notre Dame of Maryland (Baltimore, Md.), and the Academy Art Museum (Easton, Md.). Her work is also exhibited at the Ghana U.S. Embassy Residence as part of the Art in Embassies Program.

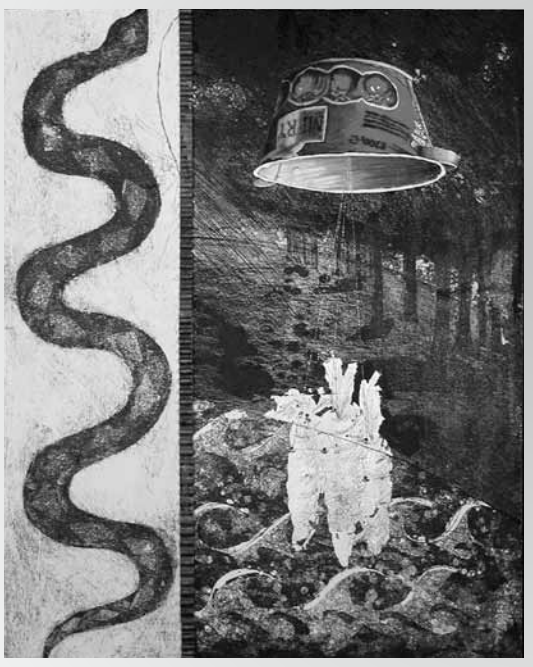
Mali Watches



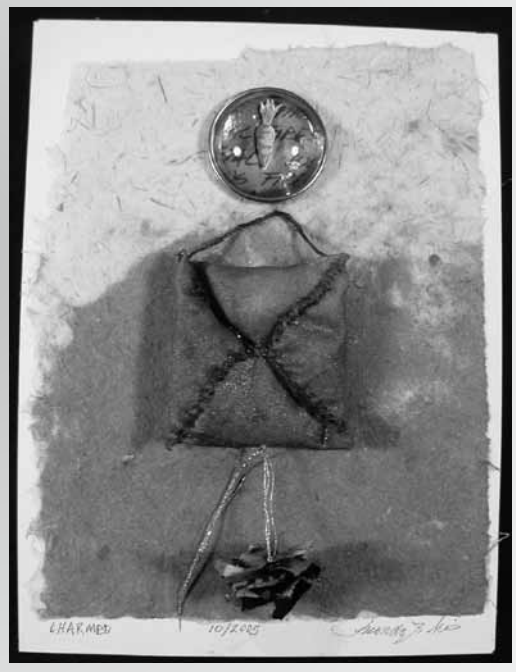
Waiting for the Full Moon



May smiles await on all your journeys

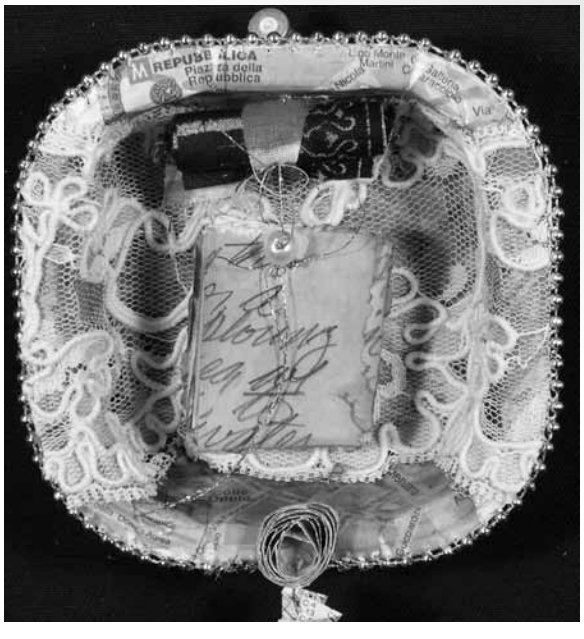


Bucket of Promises



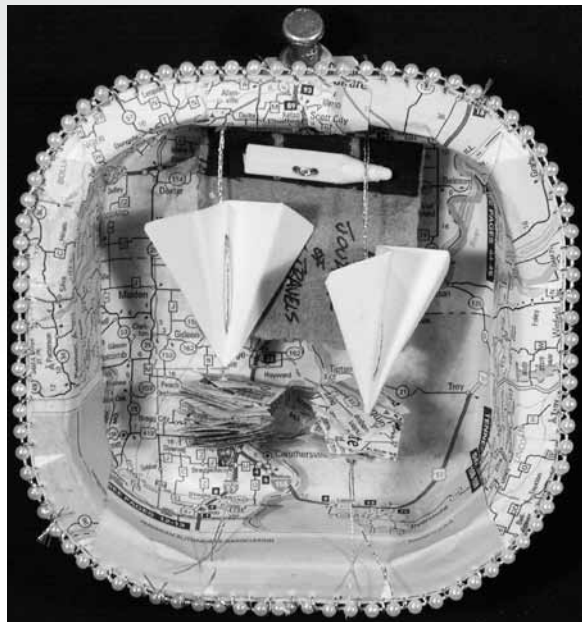
Charmed

Photographs supplied by Rhonda Smith



Personal Talisman 1

Personal Talisman 2



Personal Talisman 3

Flash Fiction

Edited by Ed Zahniser

The GOOD NEWS PAPER *here begins a regular feature of flash fiction, a short, short form of storytelling. While not a new genre — Anton Chekov, Ray Bradbury, and Franz Kafka used it — it got a jump-start from Internet publishing.*

Flash fiction should not be confused with vignettes or character sketches. It should convey a complete sense of story. The French call it the nouvelle. The Chinese call it the pocket-size or palm-size story. Length? Up to 2,000 words might be the genre sudden fiction. Flash fiction, many would say — 1,000 max. Then there's micro fiction, postcard fiction, and nano-fiction — the latter genre specified to tell a complete story in exactly *55 words. You can buy complete short stories printed on coffee mugs.*

Google flash fiction and enjoy the venues and various discussions. The Internet literary E-zine Vestal Review*, for example, specializes in flash fiction.*

— The Editors

***Alan Tinkler**, novelist and short story writer, teaches creative writing and English courses at Shepherd University and is faculty sponsor of its chapter of the national English fraternity Sigma Tau Delta.*

***Geoff Fuller** is a writer, editor, and writing mentor who lives in Charleston,W. Va. He led a sudden fiction workshop at the 2006 West Virginia Writers, Inc. conference and co-led a workshop on sudden fiction and prose poetry with poet, author, and professor Rob Merritt. Visit Fuller's Web site: www.drwriteclinic.com/custom.html.*

Cutting Through Bush
By Alan Tinkler

Bubia Wini carries a bow and a small cluster of arrows. His son, wearing threadbare shorts, stands behind him, pressed against his massive thighs. His shorts, worn according to the Australian style, are tight; his feet, thickly calloused.

"Yu spik Pidgin?" Bubia asks me.

"Liklik, tasol," I admit.

"Em i orait," he assures me.

Bubia's son carries my bilum, a string bag containing my clothes and groceries for the week. With surprising rapidity, we exit the environs of Goroka. I become so disoriented as we navigate the circuitous path that I readily accept that I will never be able to hike out alone.

To keep pace with Bubia's powerful stride, I have to concentrate. His gait is fluid — a superb balance of grace and strength. Periodically I look back to see Bubia's son taking cuts through the bush to shorten his path. His abridged route gives him time to sit and eat the raw peanuts I have given him.

Bubia raises his bow as we pass each village. Bubia holds up his hand, signaling us to stop, as we approach yet another village. He pulls back an arrow; it whistles free. The trajectory is low, and it skips across packed ground. The shaft just misses a woman who is sweeping the ground in front of a small bush house, thatch darkened by smoke. The woman jumps as the tip strikes the door; Bubia laughs at his wife's screams.

From *Perhaps the Last Survivor*
By Alan Tinkler

Believing she is achy with the flu, Nicole goes to bed early. To London, she simply says: "I feel queasy."

"But what do you mean," London asks, "in your stomach or in your head?"

"I don't know," Nicole answers. "I suppose all over, all over my body."

London kisses her forehead, tells her not to worry, tells her everything would be okay.

"Okay," Nicole agrees as London walks from the bedroom to the kitchen. As London tears open a box of macaroni and cheese, Nicole mutters her son's name.

If Nicole knows she is dying, she says nothing. London has no idea.

Fair Memory
By Geoff Fuller

A small boy, no more than five years old, dreams when he's awake. Beside the boy, a woman and a man with a three-year-old girl riding on his shoulders, her blonde wisps bouncing with each step. The four of them, the family, walk over the uneven grass pressed into slick clay-mud that leads to the county fair, while other people, talking and gesturing excitedly, stroll slower and faster around them, all bigger than the boy and therefore passersby. They draw near the temporary turnstiles of the fair — but before that, the garish bus: *Jesus saves YOU! The Lord awaits!* spray-painted on it, and the family hears singing inside. The boy can read and tugs at his mother's waist: *Can we go in? Please?* Dad shrugs. Mom says, *You go. We'll wait right here.*

Inside, a crowd of swaying shadows and all flickering light, as if powerful candles illuminate everything, and there's clapping and singing and fresh sweat scent and everyone smiling. A guy plays a tiny keyboard, sort of sideways behind the driver's seat, and people are smiling at the boy, clapping, singing, and he feels warmth, acceptance, magic like he's never felt. He moves to the back because everyone else was there first and it wouldn't be right to crowd in near the front. He begins to clap with the rest, not knowing the words, but he can feel the music moving inside him, and he is swept up more and more, gradually realizing that everyone on the bus is coffee-colored, he alone skinny and pale and not knowing the words. The song reaches a crescendo, and the preacher calls for the saved, and the boy finds himself moving forward — not knowing why then and he still doesn't — but he looks up with pleading eyes at the preacher who touches his forehead with two fingers….

ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL

The Greatest Story Never Told

Mark Madison

For the last three summers the Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church has been holding "Storied Evenings" in which people use their biographies to tell their life stories. This program got me thinking about the relation of stories to history.

I had a humbling experience last year in trying to recount a bit of my family history to my middle son. He has issues with impulse control — he basically has none — so I decided to tell a tragic story from my youth when I was not much younger than he was.

When I was about eight, I was obsessed by American Indians. I wore moccasins, beat incessantly on a toy drum, and created a teepee in the basement out of my bedspread and a mop handle. Being from Wisconsin, I was a Chippewa Indian who depended on white-tailed deer to provide food, clothing, and sustenance.

Of course I begged my father to make me a bow and arrow. After several months of begging, he (in a temporary lapse of sanity) agreed. We went to the woods, found an appropriate branch, notched it, added string, and found three dull but roughly straight branches for wooden arrows. I was presented with the bow and quiver with only one stipulation ("tribal law"): *I was not to shoot my four-year-old brother with the arrows.* My father even built an archery target the size of a Volkswagen to entice me to shoot at inanimate things.

I had the bow and arrow approximately three minutes before I called my younger brother over to play an innocent game of "Indian and deer." Initially skeptical, he gradually realized the serious intent on my face and began to scamper. Unlike a proper deer, he ran straight away, disastrously choosing not to zig and zag around my inexpert archery skills, and I was able to get a weak shot right to the derriere. My brother immediately took the issue to tribal council, which saw fit to remove my bow and arrow forever and exile me to my bedroom for the day.

The lesson I meant to impart was how the item I coveted most was torn from me through my own lack of impulse control. However, my five-year-old became stuck (no pun intended) on the shooting-in-the-derriere part of the narrative. Forever after, his uncle is officially known as "the uncle dad shot in the butt."

This imparts two important lessons of history. First, although we can carefully craft our histories, we are never entirely certain what (if any) lessons the audience will take from them. The second is that if five-year-old boys wrote history books, we would have many volumes about butts, burps, bugs and other things that they find amusing and important. Each generation understands history within its context.

Having spent most of my life as a teacher, I have learned that stories can inspire even when the subject is, upon first appearances, uninspiring. This historical figure (let's call him Charley) was born into a comfortable Victorian family; his father a wealthy and well-respected physician, his mother an heir to the Wedgwood ceramic fortune. His early surroundings were an elegant English country estate where he was doted on as the baby of the family.

Charley was originally scheduled to follow in his father's footsteps and become a physician. Horrified at the bloody and primitive medical practices of the day, Charley abandoned his medical degree at Edinburgh and went to Christ's College in Cambridge. He received an undistinguished Bachelor of Arts in 1831, excelling only in hunting, insect collecting, and hiking in the surrounding countryside. In fact, Charley had prepared himself perfectly for an undistinguished career as a country parson and naturalist dilettante. Then word came through Cambridge colleagues that a gentleman naturalist was being sought to accompany the *HMS Beagle* on a five-year voyage around the world. This letter arrived at the door of the man we remember as Charles Darwin.

Charley's father was aghast at the idea. Charley had already failed one program. Like many a father today, the elder Darwin feared Charley would never settle down to a proper career and wife. Darwin's father scolded his son, "You care for nothing but shooting, dogs, and rat-catching, and you will be a disgrace to yourself and all your family."

Yet his uncle Josiah Wedgwood II argued in favor of the journey, noting sagely, "The pursuit of Natural History, though certainly not professional, is very suitable to a clergyman."

Eventually his father relented and, more important, agreed to underwrite Darwin's expenses on this extended study year abroad. Darwin traveled around the world visiting, among other places, the Galapagos Islands. He then spent the next 20 years synthesizing his research into a groundbreaking book — *On the Origin of Species* (1859) — that revolutionized the world of biology and introduced evolution to the world.

I love this story because Darwin was a late bloomer. Now I have had my share of late bloomers in my classes — sometimes they even make up the majority. But I like to inspire them with Darwin and show them that they, too, may one day revolutionize the world and transform the very way we understand ourselves.

Currently I am an environmental historian, examining the changes in the environment over the centuries. The interesting thing about the history of the environment is that the subjects of study often have no voice. This is the *Lorax paradox*, the fictional creation of Dr. Seuss that "spoke for the trees." As an experiment, I wondered what a history from their perspective might look like. So I present the following:

While perhaps a useful lesson in historical perspective, this story requires a suspension of belief. Although we have found animals that use tools, laugh, talk, and even fall in love, we have found no other species that tells stories. In that sense we are truly alone in this world.

The more we create honest stories, compelling stories, and stories with meaning; the more we share them with others and even, occasionally, learn from them; the more we will progress (even evolve) as a species and society. *Homo sapiens* is the storytelling animal. That is what distinguishes us from all other animals and makes us human. Storytelling is our species' great inheritance. We are all tasked to use our storytelling gifts wisely, generously, and fully cognizant of the power of stories to shape histories.

***Mark Madison** is an environmental historian who teaches at the National Conservation Training Center and Shepherd University.*

A Walk on the Plains: A Buffalo's History of North America
By Bill Bison

"The bison history (or herd-story as is preferred in these more progressive times) was fairly stable for several millennia. Ever since the Bering land bridge arose, the two-legged creatures hunted a few of our numbers, but we held steady at about 65 million buffalo in various herds. Then around 1500 bc (bison calendar) some white two-legs introduced the horse, which gave the original two-legs a distinct edge in hunting us, but still our numbers remained stable. Unfortunately, around 1850 the white two-legs started hunting the original two-legs and us at the same time. Rails and fences were laid across our territory cutting up our homes. The ironically named Buffalo Bill Cody shot up to 100 of us in a day and soon our tongues and hides were shipped across the continent. Our country suffered an uncontrolled immigration of lazy little cows and insipid sheep. By 1900, there were only 300 of us wild buffalo left. I was shipped off to New York and dumped in the Bronx Zoo — Buffalo, N.Y., would have been more appropriate. The last of my herd was shipped to this bison reservation. Yet my grandchildren are being sent back by train (irony of ironies) to Montana in a belated attempt to make amends. One can only look at this history and conclude it would have been easier to leave us in peace out West in the first place. Alas, buffalo seem to be the only species so far shown to possess logic."

BERRIES

Food for Everyone

Virginia (Provenzano) Winston

Fall is the time for berries. True, there are summer berries. Juneberry, *Amelanchier spp*., produces its tasty blue fruits in June, and members of the *Rubus* family such as Raspberry and Blackberry bear fruit in July. The several members of the Blueberry family, *Vaccinium*, fruit in mid-summer too. However, the majority of our native plants ripen their fruits in the fall, just at the time when animals are building up their stores for the winter ahead, and many birds are preparing for their long migrations. What a nice combination, to have something beautiful growing in our gardens that is useful to the wild creatures as well.

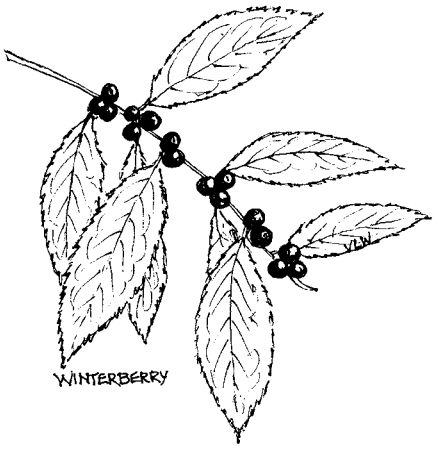
Chokeberry comes in two colors, red and black (*Aronia arbutifolia* and *A. melanocarpa*). These are tall shrubs that bloom in May with dense clusters of white flowers. They are often found growing in seasonally moist soils but will do fine in ordinary garden soil. The masses of red or black berries ripen in autumn as the leaves turn brilliant scarlet. These fruits remain on the shrubs well into winter, an important late season food for over-wintering birds.

Fringe Tree, *Chionanthus virginicus*, or Old Man's Beard, is a small, broad tree whose white, fragrant, fringe-like flowers appear in late spring. The dark purple fruits are produced only on the female trees, but both male and female trees flower, and it's always nice to have a pair.

Silky Dogwood, *Cornus ammonium*, is a tall, multi-stemmed shrub that produces white clusters of flowers in late spring, followed in late summer by dark blue berries. Dogwood fruits are known to have exceptionally high wildlife value. This shrub is particularly colorful in fall and winter with its blue berries, red foliage, and dark red twigs. Another similar dogwood, the Gray Dogwood, *C. racemosa*, sports white berries with red stems and purple foliage. Wow!

There are a number of hollies that make an autumn show of berries in the garden. In all of the hollies, it is the female tree that produces berries, though both male and female trees bloom (you know, pollination). The American Holly, *Ilex opaca*, grows into a rather large tree with dark green, spiky, evergreen leaves. This is our typical winter holly with its small clusters of red berries. Inkberry Holly, *I. glabra*, is a medium shrub that is also evergreen, but its leaves are small, like a boxwood's, and its berries are "ink" colored. The most spectacular berry-producing holly has to be the Winterberry, *I. verticillata*. This large shrub is deciduous, its leaves turning golden-bronze in the fall. Large clusters of scarlet red berries are produced that last well into winter, providing abundant food for birds, and wonderful decorations for humans. (These berries are not edible for us.)

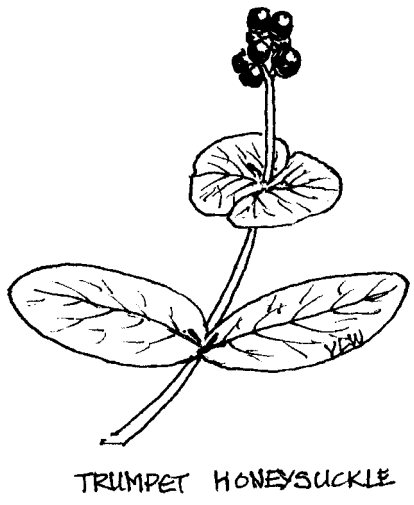
The Spicebush, *Lindera benzoin*, is



one of my favorite plants. All parts of this small, understory tree are aromatic and have herbal uses. The autumn foliage turns a soft yellow, and the abundant red berries are readily eaten by birds and other creatures.

Our native honeysuckle vine, Trumpet or Coral Honeysuckle, *Lonicera sempervirens*, is semi-evergreen like its Japanese cousin. This vine blooms with beautiful coral and yellow trumpets throughout the summer, followed by red berries. Not only do birds eat the berries, but also the flowers are a favorite of hummingbirds.

Our wild roses, (not to be con-



Illustrations by Virginia (Provenzano) Winston

fused with the infamous multi-flora rose) provide important wildlife food. These are the Carolina or Pasture Rose, *Rosa carolina*, the Swamp Rose, *R. palustris*, and the Virginia Rose, *R. virginiana*. These are all medium to large shrubs that bloom with single pink flowers in summer, followed by red-orange rose "hips" in autumn. The fruits not only delight wild creatures, but also are very high in vitamin C and can be made into nutritious drinks and jellies.

Several members of the Sumac family, *Rhus*, provide red berries in fall and winter that are sought out by wildlife, and all of these shrubs put on a brilliant show of fall foliage color. Staghorn Sumac, *R. typhina*, grows into a small tree that forms colonies. Shining Sumac, *R. copalina*, also likes to form colonies in open, sunny areas. The Smooth Sumac, *R. glabra*, produces fuzzy berry clusters and is extremely drought tolerant. Fragrant Sumac, *R. aromatica*, can be a tall shrub, or a very short cultivar called "Gro-Low." This entire plant is pleasantly aromatic and produces fuzzy edible berry clusters, but only on female plants.

The American Elderberry, *Sambucus canadensis*, grows into a tall shrub that provides clusters of purple-black berries in early fall that attract many species of birds. These berries can be made into delicious wine and jelly, but are best not eaten raw.

There are a number of native shrubs of the *Viburnum* clan, all of which bloom with white clusters of flowers sometime in spring or early summer, produce clusters of berries in fall, and have colorful fall foliage. I said the Spicebush is one of my favorites, but the Viburnums as a group are hard to beat. Arrowwood Viburnum, *V. dentatum*, produces dark blue berries in fall along with crimson foliage. Possum haw, *V. nudum*, is a beautiful big shrub with pink to dark blue berries and rich red autumn foliage. American Cranberry Bush or Maple-leaf Viburnum, *V. trilobum*, displays bunches of scarlet red berries along with red foliage. The Black Haw, *V. prunifolium*, produces a blue-black berry that is edible and can be made into preserves and puddings. Its fall color is reddish-purple.

Any of these shrubs and trees should be easy to grow in our gardens, given a happy site. After all, they are native here.

Virginia (Provenzano) Winston *helps folks design their gardens with habitat for wild creatures in mind. To aid in planting these gardens, she also has developed a small, native plants nursery. Her e-mail is provenzano4@earthlink.net.*

Notes From the Wilderness East of the Potomac

Marge Dower

"Oh give me something to remember you by," I hummed as I carefully planted the latest division of a partly wilted yellow violet, bits of which I have carted around from place to place since it was given to me in the mid-60s by a young girl whom I met when I was teaching Sunday school in Chevy Chase. The little bit of violet is tucked beside Judy Stokes's *Violacea odorata*. I have a small garden in my retirement home that will never be a tidy, organized, horticultural delight because it is a garden of mismatched strange companions, chock-a-block full of memories saved by making cuttings and divisions of plants given to me by friends.

There is the bit of *Mertensia* (Virginia bluebell) to remind me of the West Virginia woods and the many delightful hours spent with a good friend as we dug them up from the roadside and re-planted them farther back in the woods. We were trying to save them from the ravages of the bulldozer that was scraping the roadside down to nothing in order to widen Terrapin Neck Road. It's a wonder she and I didn't get scraped up in the process for we often were right ahead of the machine. We didn't want to interfere with progress, but when it came to rescuing a threatened bloodroot, bluebell, or Dutchman's breeches, we were fearless. These adventures ended when we were too exhausted to wield a trowel but still able to hold a glass of wine to — as the other old song says — "revive us again."

I have also squeezed in a cutting of *Syringa patula* "Miss Kim," which was given to me years ago by Ivan M. Johnston, a botanist friend who worked at the Arnold Arboretum in Boston. I think there are many gardens in Shepherdstown being graced by bits of that same sweet, spicy-scented, dwarf lilac which, since it blooms a week after the regular lilacs, extends the season.

I treasure that wretched, worse-for-the-wear *Calamondin*. It is a radically pruned, pathetic miniature orange, which is recovering from an attack of whitefly. I let the whitefly damage get out of control while I was moving. A mixture of vinegar and ammonia did the flies in (and almost did in the whole plant). That little tree was brought out from Bethesda by my son to spend the summer in Shepherdstown years ago. It was never reclaimed and has rewarded my tender ministrations by producing enough oranges to give me a tiny jar or two of marmalade twice a year.

There are a group of plants I refer to as my Isaiah plants. Why Isaiah? Because they are *the remnants that shall return*. (Isaiah 10:20) This group of miracles has survived many moves and from time to time has almost become extinct due to my tendency to tuck a plant under a bush intending to root and pot it and then forget all about it. Somehow they manage to survive against all odds and magically return when I least expect them.

I moved late last fall and I forgot to bring a clump of *Begonia grandis*, the lovely hardy begonia that happily fills in any border with tall, delicate, pink blooms in the fall. The seedpods are charming little hearts that make wonderful dried arrangements. Kathleen Carter gave me a division years ago. She has been dead for 30 years, but her memory is always fresh, especially when the begonias go to seed and spring up in unlikely places. Yesterday, when I was watering my assorted flowerpots, I started to pull up an interloper growing around the base of the orange tree, and there it was! The begonia had cast some seed into the orange tree pot and the seed survived the white fly, the ammonia, and the vinegar.

Photograph by Bob LaFollette

Caterpillar on dill

Photograph by Marge Dower

Dill flowers

Photograph by Marge Dower

Justicia

My cactus plants are remnants, too. When I was last visiting my old home in Phoenix, I brought back some tiny seedlings. They remind me of the desert, and while there is too much moisture here in the summer, they are growing fat and even producing blossoms. Cacti are easy to grow from seed. They have to *carpe diem* and sprout rapidly when the rains come. After that they are on their own. I gave many of them away to friends, but since they are difficult to care for after sprouting (too much water or too little water do them in) I never inquire about them when I visit. I did spot one languishing on a bookcase of a dear friend and I reclaimed it, saying, "I can't bear to see it die a slow death." (We are still friends, I hope. She is far too polite to tell me if we aren't.)

Other remnants have recently returned unexpected: *Artemesia annua*, or Sweet Annie, and dill weed, *Anethum graveolens*. I am fond of them both for fresh and dried arrangements even though they are thought of as weeds. I proudly display the West Virginia dill weed in a pottery jar on the ledge outside my apartment door. Last night when I returned from dinner I discovered another living reminder of Shepherdstown. A marvelous caterpillar was munching away on my arrangement.

A neighbor said, "I didn't know you were allowed to bring pests into the building."

My answer was, "I'm a bit dyslectic so I read 'pets allowed' as 'pest allowed.'"

One of my favorite survivors is a plant I bought one Sunday at the Shepherdstown Farm Market. I did not recognize it and the seller had no idea what it was. Its tag was illegible. I bought it for a hostess gift. One of the branches accidentally (really, it was an accident) broke off, so what could I do but root it? It turned out to be a *Jacobinia carnea*, or Justicia (see picture). The blossoms are a delicious pink and it blooms nonstop all summer and into the fall. It is not hardy, so one has to bring it in for the winter. It serves as a wonderful reminder of the Shepherdstown Market and all the delights therein. Delights include all the wonderful sights, scents, and sounds of friends and strangers greeting each other.

And then I have some spearmint, which holds memories of juleps and teas, the Corsican mint and cow slips that grow in England, and I could go on and on, but I just got a call from a lovely woman who, when she was a little girl, gave me the yellow violet. She is coming over to Fairhaven for dinner tonight. Of course her husband, my son, Roger, is coming with her. They have been married over 25 years.

I must water that violet.

Reflections of Autumn

From a Chinese Five Element Perspective

Natasha Baihly

Acupuncture is about movement. The traditional Chinese character for *qi* or life force or energy is an image of a rice pot lid continuing to move up and down on the pot while the rice is cooking. In Five Element Acupuncture in particular, health is described as the smooth transition through the five stages, represented by seasons or different types of energetic movement. Illness may be defined as a block to the energy's movement. It's very simple — *move* and be healthy. Be *stuck* and get sick. In this context, *movement* pertains not only to the body, but also to the smooth flow of the emotions. Small children are often good at this movement as they go from anger over losing a toy, to laughter in finding another one, to crying over breaking the toy, to falling asleep within a matter of minutes.

In spring, the energy rises, and life bursts forth from animals, plants, and trees. In summer, life opens unto itself; plants blossom, people and animals come out and mingle. The tone is expansive and light. During these seasons the energy goes to the exterior, reaching out. After rising to the apex of the ascent set forth by spring, the energy takes a turn, descending into the fall. The nature of the autumn energy contracts and descends, setting a limit on the *boundless* nature of summer. Nature, in her wisdom, knows that what goes up, must also come down.

Our culture as a whole tends to value the *up and at 'em* energy of spring and summer and the creative, joyous atmosphere they provide. So what does autumn have to offer a culture that values productivity and fun?

For one, autumn offers clarity. The quality of the light becomes clearer and sharpens as the haze of late summer dissipates. The sky seems higher, more reflective and often a brighter blue. The air turns crisp — you get the feeling of *awakening* from the humid days of late summer. The leaves change color, release and drift gracefully to the ground.

In agrarian cultures, fall is a time to harvest, a time when growth pauses, a time to acknowledge the accomplishment of all the work put into the planting and cultivating of crops. In our culture, this tradition continues in the form of Thanksgiving. In addition, it is a time to get rid of superfluous possessions and to store up food and other essentials that would sustain life through the winter.

> "The three months of autumn
> Are called plentiful and balancing.
> The qi of Heaven becomes pressing,
> The qi of Earth is resplendent.
>
> One goes to bed early,
> one gets up early . . . .
> . . . Exerting the will
> Peacefully and calmly,
> To soften the repressive effect
> of autumn,
> Harvesting the spirits
> And gathering the qi,
> Pacifying the autumn qi,
> Without letting the will be
> scattered outside,
> Clarifying and freshening
> The lung qi."

In speaking of life as a cycle of seasons, spring and summer are about creating our lives and being more actively engaged in the world. In the *autumn* of life, the time comes to take a breath of repose and appreciate what we have accomplished and the way we have come. As the energy shifts from the *yang* to the *yin*, from the expansive to the more reflective, the movement of the season brings us home to ourselves, to reap what we have sown in order to replenish our personal resources. To truly benefit from the gifts of this season, it requires being comfortable *living in your own skin*. During this season of recognition, autumn is also a time to reflect on our lineage, acknowledging those that came before us, and asserting that our actions matter to those generations to come. It is bowing to those who raised us and to those who have yet to be born.

In spring and summer, life is more about building and accumulation. With the coming of autumn, the focus shifts to letting go of the unessential as gracefully as the leaves. In ancient China, fall was the time for executions, reflecting a time of the year for a "clearing of the accounts so the balance of life would be maintained." Letting go of things requires being very clear about discerning what is of value for keeping and what needs to be released. It's the time to clean house, both literally and spiritually . . . a time to lighten your load by getting rid of what no longer serves and holding on to that which is essential. The element that corresponds to the autumn is *metal*, as in precious stones or metals such as gold, that are hard to come by and worth keeping.

According to the *Neijing Su Wen*, a Chinese medical classic, in autumn it is important to "keep the body and mind in a state of quiet harmony and to not allow your energy to drain away." To align ourselves with the condensing quality of the fall energy, it helps to live in an ordered way, with more discipline and consistency than in seasons prior. Just as squirrels gather nuts for the winter, so it is suggested to "gather our spirit and energy, to be more focused, and not allow our desires to run wild."

The organ networks associated with the autumn are the lung and the large intestine. It is fascinating in Five Element Theory how the functional aspects of the organ systems tie into the more spiritual ones representing an element or season. In this case, the lung maintains rhythm and *inspiration* in the body, and the large intestine absorbs the last of that which is essential from our food and lets go of the rest. This rhythmic *taking in* and *releasing* is critical to the health of our body, mind, and spirit.

Some possibilities for aligning with the fall energy are as follows: Maintain healthy lungs by practicing a form of regular breathing exercises, possibly incorporating yoga or meditation, and refrain from smoking or try smoking less. Spend a little less time *out and doing* and a little more time reflecting. Take inventory of your surroundings and your life. Get rid of things, habits, ideas that no longer serve you or those around you.

Although dietary suggestions are very individual, some general suggestions for seasonal eating in autumn are: increase sour, astringent, and heartier foods such as sourdough breads, olives, cheeses, yogurts, pickles, lemons. Integrate bitter foods and slightly salty foods, and use root vegetables such as turnips, carrots, and beets to thicken the blood for winter; and lastly, use cooking methods to prepare food more slowly, such as baking or slow roasting.

"Autumn is also a season of grief and the end of things." For this reason, it is important to be able to "let go of something or someone" in a fitting manner to maintain health. Grief is a necessary emotion and healthy when expressed versus suppressed. A possibility for supporting a loss is to maintain rituals around it, to acknowledge that something beloved to you has passed. In some parts of Asia, traditionally the day a person died was marked with a memorial celebration for years to come. This served as a way to connect those living on the earth with those that still live in spirit among us by allowing a time of remembering.

According to the ancient Chinese, humans are the union of heaven and earth, having qualities of both inherent in body, mind, and spirit. Therefore, any remembrance of our connection to the universe is a form of medicine. In considering the glory of autumn and the restorative energy it brings, the image that exemplifies this to me is the changing of the foliage. It takes my breath away to witness the brightly colored beauty of the leaves as they prepare to leave the tree. Never have they appeared so lucent as at this time, as with great grace they let go to nourish the soil that nourished them. And the cycle continues . . .

Festival Poets

Edited by Ed Zahniser

Mark your calendar for the Second Annual Sotto Voce Poetry Festival in Shepherdstown, Friday and Saturday, October 27 and 28, 2006. Grace Cavalieri and Richard Garcia will read on October 27.

The Heart For It

— after New Orleans flood

By Grace Cavalieri

In this plain box of a house,
the tiny dresses are lined up in case
I ever have another baby.
The rack goes from one end of the room
to the other, dozens of little outfits,
pink smocked dresses with green stitches,
a red and blue play dress with
bloomers to match,
the white sun suits, a yellow sun dress,
three ducks embroidered on the front,
and four dresses different sizes,
all exactly alike, all blue, so soft
I could not leave them in the store.
I just didn't have the heart for it. After all
someday I might have another baby.
But now there is a warning.
In a land of empty houses, it's
time to pick them up from their hangers
and carry them next door,
someone will need them.
Oh. No one is there to collect them.
Perhaps every hour on the hour someone
will come. No lights are on. Who will I give them to,
little dresses hanging on hangers like dreams.
No one is home. What shall I do with
these beautiful things I've saved?
In this land where
no birds are singing, the only visitor is
my friend Jan, back
from the dead, carrying an empty
photo album for our future.

Why They Stayed Together

Take Snow In My Arms (H. D.)

By Grace Cavalieri

First there was the
Powdered sugar
Covering all thoughts
Like a Winter storm in the ghetto,

Then — the weight of the trees
Around the house,
Roots entangling
Growing through the chairs,
Wood conspiring to connect
To keep them there,

Finally it was the crooked
Hands that matched just right
The loose door knob and twisted key
Inside the burnished lock within the frame,

At last, it was their sleep intertwined
As if it were planned that way
As if it had somewhere to go.

Grace Cavalieri *is the author of 14 books and chapbooks of poetry and several produced plays. She hosts "The Poet and the Poem" on public radio, now entering its 30th consecutive year. She is consultant to the poetry archives of the Library of Congress. Her many awards include the Allen Ginsberg Award for poetry, Pen-Syndicated Fiction Award for short story, 2005 Bordighera Poetry Award, and a 2005 Paterson Prize for Poetry.*

Park in Edinburgh

By Richard Garcia

Take a walk by the gated park in Edinburgh.
You've heard how each apartment dweller
across the street has their own key,
except for those who live in the basement
apartments, no keys for basement dwellers.
Climb the fence that's covered with lobelia,
leap off, careful not to land on the violets,
and slip between two scraggly cypresses
that are too sad to remind anyone of Italy
or of Van Gogh's flame-like cypresses.
Make your way toward the luxurious solitude
of a bench in a cul-de-sac. But what if someone
pokes their head out a window and yells,
Can I help you? — meaning, What are you doing
in our park, you stupid American? Perhaps
a gamekeeper in a checkered shirt will emerge
from one of the basement apartments
and ask you to leave. But so what?
This park is a memory, or maybe a photograph
of a memory. But then again, when you look closer
at the ivy trembling in the breeze, the park
could be a painting collapsing into blotches
and swirls of viridian and burnt sienna. You like
the soft clatter of dishes and muted conversation
from the windows. You like being outside the houses,
listening, not belonging in the park, and the way
the trees soak up gray light, as a flock
of starlings flash black and white,
an alphabet flung against the sky.

New Orleans

By Richard Garcia

You're strolling hand in hand, occasional
mouth to mouth, through the French Quarter,
all bons temps rouler, when a one-eyed jack
gives you the mal ojo. So you duck into a shop
where an African mask with a corona of snake
warns you in the voice of Marie Laveau — Your wife,
she look for juju to hoodoo you. But you
don't care, you're off to the bayou, where Spanish
moss drips from banyan trees that are up
to their knees in trouble, and the pluff mud smells,
your lover says, just like childhood-sour pennies
in morning mist. Your tour guide, Mr. Magpie,
god of the crossroads, fluent in English, Creole,
French, Gullah, walks by your side. He of the frock coat.
Tiny preacher, hands behind his back — talk to him,
He'll listen, head cocked to one side, nodding.

Richard Garcia *published his chapbook* Selected Poems *in 1972 and then stopped writing for many years until a letter from Octavio Paz convinced him to resume. He published a bilingual book for children,* My Aunt Otilia's Spirits*, in 1978, and* The Flying Garcias *(poems) in 1991. He holds a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing from Warren Wilson College Writers' Program. Boa Editions published his third book of poetry,* Rancho Notorious *and will publish* The Appearance of Objects *this year.*

St. James Lutheran Church Celebrates 150th Anniversary

Karen Fitzpatrick

Old Lutheran Church at Uvilla, 1875

Current St. James Church (since March 20, 1898)

St. James Lutheran Church, located in Uvilla, will be celebrating the 150th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone in conjunction with their homecoming the weekend of September 8. St. James was founded by Lutherans from Bakerton, who sold their building to Presbyterians. A log schoolhouse, in the town of Unionville (renamed Uvilla after the Civil War), was utilized for their worship until their own church was built adjacent to the school. The original deed states that this "house of religion" on one half acre would be known as Luther Chapel. The deed continues by stating that the Trustees and their successors must never permit the lot to be used for any other purposes than religious worship. Though Luther Chapel started with members from St. Peters Lutheran in Shepherdstown as laymen, the separate membership rolls were being kept by 1866, and today the two churches remain united as the Shepherdstown Lutheran Parish.

Luther Chapel was improved in 1878, having an additional 12 feet added along with Gothic-styled details. The ceiling's angular shape and the center arch of a height of 21 feet, along with frescoing of walls and installing cathedral glass completed the interior. The brick church with varied architectural details and stained-glass windows retains the grace intended. According to the *Shepherdstown Register* article in 1878, "the windows, turned purely Gothic, are finished with handsome patterns of stained-glass. The walls and ceiling are handsomely frescoed. The pews are grained walnut and the pulpit marble. There are few country churches which can equal this in general beauty and finish of style." The records indicate the improvements of 1878 almost didn't happen. Mr. George Licklider argued against the extension and declared obstinately that since he had helped build this church, not one brick would be removed unless it was done over his head. After a defeated resolution, the improvements were finally passed. (Indeed, the church has just had its glass windows repaired, and has hired a local artist to restore the Narthex's stenciled artwork.)

The next remodeling of Luther Chapel, 20 years later, was more like a demolishment. A group of volunteers dismantled the church saving the windows, pews, and furniture. The roof was *saved* by removing it in sections that were then sold. Each brick was saved and stacked one by one. Reconstructed in 1897, the old cornerstone was re-laid at the ceremony, followed by laying the new cornerstone. The church was described as having a corner tower of 60 feet, antique oak, Gothic design throughout, large arches forming the nave for pulpit and choir, circular pews of polished oak with curved seat and back, frescoes, and handsome, stained-glass windows. The *Register* article concludes, "The universal expression is, 'It is beautiful beyond my expectation,' and the members have reason to be proud of their new place of worship." The tradition of a homecoming celebration began in 1938 and has continued ever since, including the Centennial Homecoming held in 1956. Many former pastors attended the event and delivered messages.

The graveyard outside the church has monuments to 11 Civil War veterans and many other heroes from World War I and II. The first grave, William Hendricks, dates to July 21, 1862. Interestingly enough, he actually was killed in 1861 in the Battle of Manassas as a member of the Stonewall Brigade. Another Civil War casualty, Adam C. Link, was buried and then exhumed and reburied in Elmwood Cemetery. He actually was first buried near New Market, Md., where he died of measles in a field hospital. His soldier's copy of *Lutheran Hymns*, inscribed in his own handwriting, was discovered and treasured by the family. The church's rich history is accounted in detail in the book, *On This Rock*, by Gladys Hartzell, published in 1970.

The cornerstone for Luther Chapel, currently St. James Lutheran Church, was laid 150 years ago, on August 28, 1856. According to the *Shepherdstown Register*, published on August 16, 1856, the public ceremony was as follows:

"By Divine permission the Corner Stone of the Lutheran Church about to be erected near the Union School-house, one and a half miles North East of Duffield's and immediately on the road leading from Shepherdstown to Halltown, will be laid by P.G.M. William H. Chapman of Virginia Lodge, I.O.O.F., on Thursday the 28th inst. The different Lodges of Odd Fellows, Tribes of Red Men, and Divisions of Sons of Temperance in this, and several in the adjoining counties have been invited to attend and join the public procession.

"The Reverend Mr. Seiss, of Baltimore, and other eminent Ministers have been invited and are confidently expected to be in attendance, and to deliver addresses.

"The services of the Shepherdstown Brass Band will be secured for the occasion.

"A plain, but substantial Dinner, will be prepared, of which the members of the different orders, who may have joined in the procession, will be invited to partake without charge; but for all others who may be pleased to dine, a charge of 25 cents each will be made. The Ladies of the neighborhood will be prepared to furnish refreshments, such as Ice Cream, Cake, Candies and Lemonade, etc., the money arising from the sale which will be applied to assist in the erection of the Church.

"We are also requested to announce that, previous to laying the Corner Stone, a beautiful Banner will be presented by the Ladies, to Phoenix Division, No. 13, Sons of Temperance, with an appropriate address and reply.

"The public are cordially invited to participate.

"George Licklider, Adam Link, John Ronemous, Building Committee. August 16, 1856

"N.B. — Hucksters are hereby notified that they will be positively prohibited on that day from selling anything near the place of holding the above meeting."

Karen Fitzpatrick, *a local school teacher veteran of 29 years, enjoys gardening and collecting antiques. She also sketches the* Shepherdstown Chronicle *cartoon titled "Townamals." After graduating in the last class from Charles Town High School, she pursued her elementary degree from Shepherd "College" and Masters from West Virginia University. Her husband, Edwin, and her dog, Zipper, are also faithful St. James attendees.*

St. James Lutheran Church announces a three-day celebration Homecoming beginning on Friday, September 8, 2006. Pastor Fred Soltow, along with the congregation, wishes to extend a warm invitation to the public. The community is invited to attend and join in all the events. Past members and pastors have been invited to attend also. Local church congregations are especially invited to join in the celebration. A traditional hymn sing will begin on that Friday, at 7:30 p.m., to be followed by a dessert reception in the fellowship hall. Both old and new hymns will be sung.

On Saturday, an old-fashioned picnic will be held on the church grounds under tents and the pavilion. Along with a buffet of foods, there will be games and fun, paired with music from the Parish Pipers. The Most Rev. Dr. Ralph Dunkin, Bishop of the West Virginia–Western Maryland Synod will be officiating the traditional Homecoming Service on Sunday, September 10 at 11:00 a.m. After the service, a buffet dinner of a variety of covered dishes will be provided. A booklet, documenting the rich history of St. James, will be on display. The afternoon will include viewing many old photos and sharing memories.

Religious Worship and Education Schedules

Asbury United Methodist
Rt. 480 (Kearneysville Rd)
Rev. Rudolph Monsio Bropleh, Pastor
Telephone: 876-3122
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

Baha'i Faith
Entler Hotel, German St.
Telephone: 876-3995
Sunday Worship: 11:30 a.m.
Discussion Group:
1st & 3rd Fridays, 8 p.m.

Christ Reformed U.C.C
304 East German Street
Bronson Staley, Pastor
Telephone: (301) 241-3972
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m.
Sunday School for all ages: 10:10 a.m.

Christian Science Society
Entler Hotel, German & Princess Streets
Sunday worship & Sunday School: 10 am
Testimony meetings: 1st & 3rd Wednesdays
3 pm from September through May
7 pm during June, July, and August

Christian Science Reading Room, located at 203 S. Princess Street, is open Mondays and Wednesdays (except holidays) from noon until 3 pm.

Telephone: 876-2021
Sentinel radio program Sundays 7 a.m.
on WINC 92.5 FM

New Street United Methodist
Church & New Streets
Dee-Ann Dixon, Pastor
Telephone: 876-2362
Sunday Worship: 10:45 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

St. Agnes Roman Catholic
Church & Washington Streets
Father Mathew Rowgh
Telephone: 876-6436
Sunday Eucharist: 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
Saturday Eucharist: 5:30 p.m.
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

St. John's Baptist
West German Street
Joe Liles, Pastor
Telephone: 876-3856
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m. & 7 p.m.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

St. Peter's Lutheran
King & High Streets
Fred Soltow, Pastor
Telephone: 876-6771
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.

St. James', Uvilla
Sunday Worship: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday School: 10:45 a.m.

Shepherdstown Presbyterian
100 W. Washington Street
Randall W. Tremba, Pastor
Telephone: 876-6466
Sunday Worship: 8:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.
Sunday School: 10:45 a.m.
Nursery year round
www.spcworks.org

Trinity Episcopal
Corner of Church & Germans Sts.
George T. Schramm, Pastor
Telephone: 876-6990
Sunday Worship: 8 a.m. & 10 a.m.
Sunday School: 10 a.m.

Unity of Shepherdstown
Minister: Reverend Anne Murphy
Morning Celebration Services
Sundays at 11 a.m.
Shepherdstown Train Station
Seasonal Classes & Workshops
Telephone: 876-1053
www.unityofshepherdstown.org

ANNOUNCING

Sotto Voce Poetry Festival

IN **SHEPHERDSTOWN** WV

October 27 and 28, 2006

Richard Garcia

Grace Cavalieri

Sotto Voce Poetry Festival in Shepherdstown is an annual festival promoting public awareness and appreciation of poetry. Each year it features prominent national and regional poets, provides exposure for area poets, and offers poetry workshops. All events are free.

Special thanks to the Shepherdstown Town Council and to HBP, Inc., our corporate sponsor for the festival.

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