

# THE VILLAGE NEWS

VOL. 9, NO. 4

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF CABIN JOHN AND BEYOND

FEBRUARY-MARCH 1976



20731

Photo by Linda Ford

By Morris Fradin

Dennis Touhey became the first postmaster of the tiny community of Cabin John in 1890. Dennis was a descendant of Irish immigrants who helped build the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal and the Union Arch, then stayed to settle the area.

For 35 years, until Dennis resigned in 1925, the postoffice was a tiny but vital part of the general store on Conduit Road that became Touhey's Tavern. The white frame building stood on MacArthur Blvd., west of the fire house, until it was demolished about 1973.

Between 1925 and 1936, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Scott ran the Cabin John Postoffice as part of the general store at 77th St. and MacArthur Blvd., across the street from the Methodist Church.

Wilbur and Irene Carper purchased the property from the Scotts and ran the general store, with its stock of meats, groceries, ribbons, thread, drygoods, shoes -- oh, yes... and also the postoffice, until World War II in 1942, when Ruth Touhey Shuff, granddaughter of Dennis, took over as postmistress until 1943.

Laura McKelvey assumed the position of postmistress from August 1, 1944 until she retired in June 30, 1972. The Postoffice was a small frame adjunct to her home on 77th Street. She originated the graceful custom of wrapping stamps in waxed paper, bless 'er! And with a smile too. 29731 attracted customers, especially near Christmastime, from Virginia, D.C., Potomac, and all points: North, East, South and West. (continued on page 2)

"WHY NOT OPEN THE BRIDGE ON TEMPORARY BASIS?" ASKS CABIN JOHN CITIZENS

By Carlotta Anderson

At an impassioned meeting January 27 at which Cabin John residents demanded that the Union Arch Bridge be re-opened one way or another very soon, Harry Ways, Chief of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, admitted that no one had investigated the possibility of re-opening the bridge on a temporary basis.

His surprising admission came in response to a question from one of the frustrated Cabin John residents--cut off more than a year from neighboring communities on the east: Why can't the bridge be opened to traffic immediately since it is structurally sound and has fencing erected where parapets once stood?

Ways said he would support a study of temporary restraints to permit re-opening of the bridge and asked that citizens write letters to his superior, Col. Robert McGarry, District Engineer, making the same request.

Meanwhile, the Cabin John Citizens Association, which held the meeting, voted to seek legal advice regarding the possibility of suing the Army Corps of Engineers for damages and demanding the re-opening of the bridge.

Also present at the meeting at Clara Barton School was Keith Schizik from Congressman Gilbert Gude's office, who called the bridge problem "the biggest bureaucratic tangle I've ever seen."

So far no one--State, County, District of Federal

(continued on next page)

**POTOMAC FLOWS ON**

By Kevin Flynn

The Potomac River averaged 10 billion gallons a day in flow past Washington during 1975, the fourth largest flow on record with the U.S. Geological Survey since record-keeping began in 1930. The 1975 flow peaked in late September following tropical storm Eloise; and the low flow for the year occurred August 6, when 2.6 billion gallons were recorded. The estimated sediment load for the year: 2.6 million tons of sediment, most of which settled in the Potomac estuary below Washington, D.C.

(From the January 1976 Potomac Basin Reporter with the permission of its editor)

**BICENTENNIAL FREEBIES**

Spring approaches, bicentennial fever spreads. Need something to do on a nice afternoon in March? Below is a listing of just a few walks, talks and tours in the area.

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**THE VILLAGE NEWS  
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o The ART BARN located at Beach Drive and Tilden St., NW will feature a new sculpture exhibit beginning February 10 through March 7. The Art Barn is open Tuesday thru Friday 10:30am to 2:30pm and Saturday and Sunday 10am to 5pm. For more information call 426-6719.

o Though February and March may be cold to some, the C&O CANAL extends a warm invitation to all visitors to view the historic structures while hiking or biking the serene towpath. When below freezing, there are opportunities to skate on the rewatered areas. Call 299-3613 for program information.

o OLD STONE HOUSE, Washington's oldest home, located at 3051 M Street, NW, in Georgetown is open from 9:30am to 5:00pm daily. Tours of the house, Georgetown and the C&O Canal may be arranged by calling 426-6851.

o PEIRCE MILL, a 19th century Grist Mill, is open 9am to 5pm Wednesday thru Sunday. A slide show will be presented about milling, at 1 and 3pm on Saturdays and Sundays and upon request weekdays. Call 426-6908 for reservations and more information.

o Discover the natural wonders of THEODORE ROOSEVELT ISLAND on a guided nature walk. Meet the ranger at the memorial. Walks will be held each Saturday and Sunday at 11am and 2pm.

o TURKEY RUN FARM portrays the day-to-day existence of a low-income homestead of Virginia in the 1770's. The scene is recreated by costumed interpreters who work with crops and animals representative of the period. Household activities may also be seen in the small cabin. Hours are 10am to 4:30pm, Wednesday thru Sunday. For information call 557-1356.

**20731 (continued)**

government--has been willing to accept responsibility for spending the \$850,000 Ways

Shirley Shuler, a former Cabin John Gardener, now a Virginian, became the present postmistress in 1972. She helped engineer the move of 20731 on Tuesday, February 10 to the attractive new quarters (once the old auditorium) in the north end of the Clara Barton School.

And if you have trouble remembering the PRESENT cost of mailing a first-class letter (1 oz.), just add up the sum total of 20731.

CABIN JOHN BRIDGE from page 1 estimates would be needed to restore the bridge to its original appearance, as promised to the Committee on Historic Preservation.

If money were available, Ways estimated it would take nine or ten months to repair the bridge, with a three month process "just to get started." When some residents scoffed at the lengthy period, he retorted that "it took nine years to build." It was completed in 1860.

He said damage to the surface of the bridge was done by putting salt on it for 20-30 years. However, the major problem is replacing the sandstones on the sides, one of which fell to the Parkway below last year. The State of Maryland spent \$80,000 removing the remaining loose stones above the Parkway, but refused to spend money to replace them.

Ways said it would be "totally irresponsible" to reopen the bridge in its present condition because the fencing on the sides is not sufficiently strong to prevent a car from breaking through.

(Reprinted from the February 1976 issue of THE ECHO)



## CABIN JOHN BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION SET FOR JUNE 5

By Shelly Keller

Under the able guidance of Calvin Kytte, Chairperson, the Bicentennial Committee's plans for Cabin John's June celebration seem to be well under way.

At the October meeting of the Citizens Association, it was decided that Cabin John hold its bicentennial observance on a single day rather than over a weekend as originally proposed. The date is Saturday, June 5th. Our event is now listed in the official bicentennial calendar of the Montgomery County Bicentennial Commission, and one of the commissioners will present us with the official bicentennial flag at the February 24 meeting of the Citizens Association. We will also receive a grant of \$200 to help defray expenses.

Since no work has been started on the Seven Locks Park, we can get no assurance that it will be ready in time to serve as the site of Chautauqua '76. Therefore, the day-long celebration will be held at three principal locations: Clara Barton School, Cabin John Recreation Center and Cabin John Gardens Community Center. In addition, the congregations of Cabin John United Methodist and Gibson Grove Mt. AME Zion churches have been invited to participate in the events.

Among the activities planned are the publication of a

souvenir booklet on local history and the day's events, a photo contest for young people in the community, a crafts show with demonstrations, a softball game featuring our volunteer firemen vs. THE VILLAGE NEWS, an old fashioned tug-o-war, a play based on Morris Fradin's history of the C&O Canal, an ole-timers' night, a square dance, a bake sale, snack stand and soft drinks and beer, and a Community Box Supper featuring Maryland Fried Chicken, a delicacy that originated at the old Cabin John Hotel.

If Cabin John is blessed with the same beautiful weather and high spirits which graced the Crab Feast last July, the celebration should be a high note of everyone's summer of '76. If you would like to participate in the planning and execution of this event, you should contact one of the following Cabin Johners: Bill White or Jim Wilner (for Fun and Games), Allyn Reike or Dagny Newman (for Food and Drink), Peter Vogt, Ron and Cappie Morgan, Dagny Newman or Morris Fradin (for Exhibits), Janet Dence or Frank McKinney (co-chairpersons for Arrangements), or Calvin Kytte (chairperson of the Bicentennial Committee). If this event is to be a community event, it will take everyone's participation. It's your community's celebration, and it will take you to make it happen!

## CABIN JOHN FOUR YEAR OLD SCHOOL REGISTRATION SET FOR APRIL 8

Registration for next year's Cabin John Four Year Old School will take place on Thursday, April 8th at 7:30pm at Clara Barton School. The meeting will be

in the Four Year Old Classroom. Annette Davis, who will teach the class again next year, will discuss her ideas about teaching. After Ms. Davis talks and answers questions, plans will be made for next year and registration forms will be completed. The Board of Directors for next year will also be formed. The Board has responsibility for decisions regarding policy and administration of the program.

The School is a five day per week, 2½ hour per morning, pre-kindergarten. Priority is given to Cabin John resident children who will be four years old by January 1977 and to members of this year's class. To insure a place for your child in next fall's program, you must attend the April 8th meeting.

The Cabin John Four Year Old Program has been actively supported by the community since 1964. Parents have not that adjustment to kindergarten is usually easier for graduates of the Four Year Old School.

The program is unique in that it is open to all members of the community --not just to the affluent or those with lower incomes. No one is turned away for inability to pay although parents are asked to pledge a specific amount each month usually \$25.

The School will continue to meet at Clara Barton. We feel very fortunate that Annette Davis and JoAnn Bast will again teach the class. The program this year has been exciting and successful. Ms. Davis is a highly trained and qualified teacher. If anyone has questions, call Susan Luchs, 229-0187.

# EDITORIAL

On December 23 Andy Rice, Jim Wilner and I met with officials of the Park and Planning Commission to discuss the means of returning the downzoned properties in Cabin John to their previous C-1 status. We informed these officials of the decision reached at our town meeting and of our town's willingness to re-examine this issue. We expect the same willingness of these officials and we shall wholeheartedly support them in their efforts to correct this situation as soon as possible. The individuals in charge are Messers. John Mathews and Lee Cunningham. Sometime in the next few months, each of these gentlemen will be invited to Cabin John to speak before our Citizens Association and to explain how they are helping us to correct this zoning misfortune. We expect to cooperate with each other to prove that zoning concerns are really in the hands of the people, and are not abstract decisions made at higher bureaucratic levels. The future of these properties concerns us in Cabin John more than anyone else. Their status really only affects Cabin John residents, and we are the ones who should have the right to determine what our town will be like. EDITOR

## CLARA BARTON DAY CARE CENTER IN FULL-TIME OPERATION

On February 9, the Clara Barton Day Care Center hours changed to 8am to 6pm. Children may attend either for a full day or for the morning or afternoon session, 2, 3 or 5 days per week. Financial assistance is possible. Please call 320-3796 or 229-1444 for more information.

AN OPINION: Cabin John can surely have a better name for its bicentennial celebration than Chautauqua '76. Why not, "Cabin John--Bicentennial and Beyond!" or "Cabin John Times, a Unique Community Experience."

Chautauqua '76 does not seem to represent accurately the nature or character of our town and it seems like an attempt to rip off the glory that is Glen Echo's, and not Cabin John's.

Bruce Youngblood

## LOCAL DEMONSTRATORS DEMAND BRIDGE RE-OPENING

By Carlotta Anderson

A group of local citizens carrying signs marched across the Union Arch Bridge from both sides on Saturday, January 24, to ask for re-opening of the bridge.

They were led by Delegates Judith Toth and John X. Ward. Town Councilwoman Nancy Long (of Glen Echo) estimated the group to number about 100, and said the demonstration was orderly. Reporters from Channel 4 and 9 were covering the event.

"Open the Bridge" and "Let's Get Across to People" were on two of the signs.

The citizens issued a statement saying the closing of the bridge "has had dire effects on the community..."

(Reprinted from the February 1976 issue of THE ECHO)

## CLARA BARTON HOUSE VISITING HOURS

The Clara Barton House in Glen Echo, now a part of the National Park Service, is open from 1:00-5:00pm daily except Mondays, holidays and holiday weekends. There is no charge for admission.

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## IN THE PARK AT GLEN ECHO

By Deborah Hollander

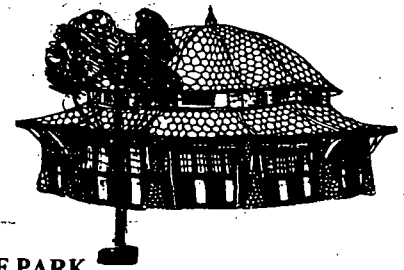
Glen Echo Park is an "art park", a gathering place for artists and those interested in trying a craft themselves or just watching the artists do their own work. When the area was under the influence of the National Chautauqua Association (1891-93) there existed a very ambitious but unfortunately a fleeting educational venture; the attempt to build the nation's greatest center of general culture. In fact, in the original deeding of the land by the Baltzley Brothers (builders of the unique early structures similar to the Tower still standing at the entrance to the park) it was stipulated that the property could be devoted only to education; any other use would invalidate the deed. The Chautauqua Charter best explains the movement's purposes: to promote liberal and practical education especially among the masses of the people: to teach the sciences, arts, languages and literature.

Before introducing the proposed changes for Glen Echo Park outlined in the master plan being considered by the National Park Service, I'd like to delve somewhat into what actually is happening at the Park today. What art courses are offered, and how to get involved. This month I visited the pottery and sculpture studios.

The largest part of the Yurt Village (those round, wooden, earth-roofed structures) serves as housing for the Glen Echo Pottery. The pottery is composed of a two building work area and a kiln section. These three different areas separate the four processes in making pottery: the actual construction, the first firing, the glaze and the final glaze firing. The largest yurt is completely equipped with 5 electrically powered and 17 kick wheels and the smaller yurt contains the glazing area. The kiln area has several types of propane powered kilns plus two electric kilns that all display a variety of glazing effects.

A staff of 5 professional potters offer classes geared for beginner and intermediate levels in techniques of throwing (working on the wheel) and in the handbuilding of pottery. More advanced students are encouraged to try different glazing techniques as well as kiln building and firing. The atmosphere is relaxed and friendly. For class and sales information, call 229-5585.

One of the fastest growing and busiest studios as the park is that of the sculptors. Located in the locker and filter rooms of the defunct Crystal Pool are the sculpture studios and the Big City Foundry. Four resident artists, all working under grants approved by the federal government, do their work and enjoy conversing with the visitors who come through the studios. These sculptors offer classes in stone and wood carving, welded sculpture, figure modeling, metal casting and sculpture, and sculpture for children. Workshops can be arranged and the classes are offered both days and evenings. Where free expression of creative ideas is the rule rather than the exception, this studio is rapidly becoming one of the main focal points of Glen Echo Park. The sculpture studios may be contacted directly at 229-1457.



## IN THE PARK

## NEW MARIONETTE SHOW AT GLEN ECHO PARK

The Chautauqueers, in cooperation with the National Park Service, the Montgomery County Recreation Department, and Adventure Theatre, are presenting their original marionette musical, "Somewhere in Forever," at Glen Echo Park February 28 through March 21.

Performances are at 1:30 and 2:30 Saturdays and Sundays and tickets are \$1.50. For reservations phone 320-5331 between 10am and 2pm weekdays.

## YOUNG ACTORS SOUGHT FOR CABIN JOHN PLAY ABOUT C&amp;O CANAL

As part of the bicentennial celebration in Cabin John set for June 5, 1976, there will be a special play about the C&O Canal in which you could star!

If you are interested in participating in this play, contact Diane Kellogg at 229-8163.



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**BANNOCKBURN NURSERY SCHOOL  
OPEN HOUSE ON FEBRUARY 28**

The Bannockburn Cooperative Nursery School will host an Open House on Saturday, February 28, from 9:30 to 11:30 in the morning, at the Clubhouse, 6314 Bannockburn Drive. Three and four year old children and their parents are invited to see the school and meet the teachers. For more information, please call Lauri Morrow at 229-4076.

**COMMUNITY YARD SALE  
AND CARNIVAL ON MAY 8**

Please begin to save your rummage for the rummage-bake sale to be held for the benefit of the Cabin John Four Year Old School. In order to continue the program, we must raise more money for next year. We have not in the past relied entirely upon tuition to cover our expenses. If the county continues to give us the use of the building and a teacher's aide, we will still have to raise a fairly large sum. Donations of good usable rummage, any household goods, or even money would be greatly appreciated. Please call any of the following people and they will be happy to pick up any items from your home if you cannot deliver them to their homes. Judy Skillman, 229-3292, Fran Patch, 229-8542, Susan Luchs, 229-0187, or Sissy Peyton, 229-6030.

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**WANTED TO RENT:** small house in Cabin John. Responsible, excellent references, call Joel at 362-1044.

**WANTED:** Players for VILLAGE NEWS softball team to take on fire department team at Bicentennial Celebration on June 5. Only the experienced and daring need apply. Call 229-7530.

**CABIN JOHN  
POTTERY LESSONS**

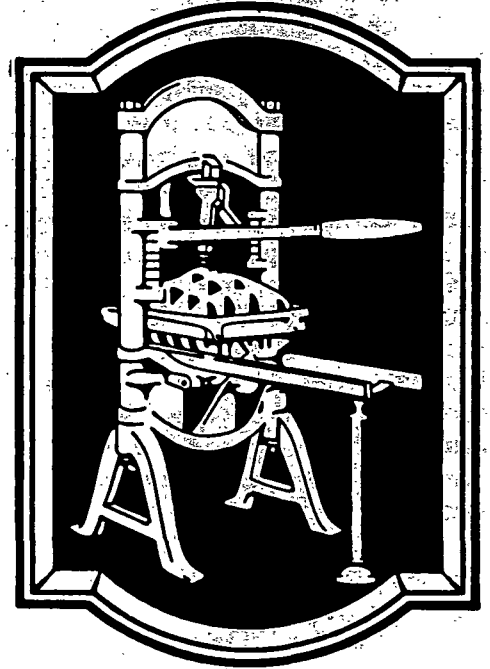
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THE VILLAGE NEWS thanks Souder and Associates of Bethesda for its cooperation and support in the production of this issue.

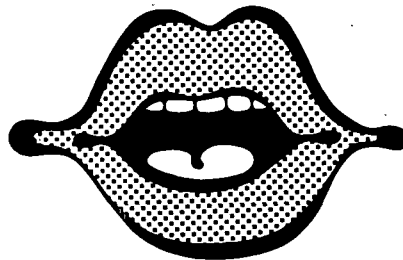


**2ND ANNUAL INVITATIONAL  
GRAPHICS EXHIBITION AT GLEN  
ECHO GRAPHICS WORKSHOP**

An exhibition of graphics by more than 25 metropolitan area artists will open in the Graphics Workshop on March 7, with a reception from 2-5pm.

Included will be etchings, lithographs, silkscreens and woodblocks. The exhibit will remain on view until March 28. Hours are 10am-5pm daily and Saturdays. For further information, call 229-9741.

**graphically  
speaking**



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