

# village view

by Andrea Leonard

"There's no Spring on the Cape." I've heard that said, over and over. I've said it myself. Haven't you? Well, we had spring, this year, to help celebrate Easter.

Wasn't it lovely?

We may not get any more of those days before full summer. The timing was perfect, combining as the weekend did, Easter, Patriot's Day and weather like that.

Springtime is one season of the year when the list of Things To Do seems longest. The weekend was perfectly suited to clean-up-the-yard chores, getting the gardens tidy and setting up the birdbaths.

It was a weekend for finding mayflowers; noticing which azaleas are about to blossom; admiring forsythia, hyacinth and jonquil — bright and fragrant — blooming in every sunny garden.

Easters past — and I remember a goodly number — have offered a variety of weather to Cape Codders. I've seen many an Easter Sunday when it snowed, the wind blew a gale, and it was cold as January.

I've known Easters when it rained the entire weekend, spoiling Sunrise Services and dashing hopes to display new bonnets at church.

There've been Easters the sun shone, ones when it was sunny part of the day, and ones with fog and overcast skies and that damp raw chill we know so well seemed to strike clear to the bone.

Of all the Easters I remember, this 1976 Easter Sunday brought the best weather to Cape Cod. No finery was ruined, nor did it need bundling up under winter coats. New shoes weren't spoiled in puddles. No part of the weekend was marred by raindrops, dripping umbrellas, muddy paths or chilly breezes.

Patriot's Day on the Cape was one lovely day — ideal for relaxing at the beach, in the back yard, or just resting and enjoying the softness of the air, the really hot rays of the sun.

Even if we're blessed with not one single solitary additional day of the kind visited upon us during the holiday, this year will be remembered — not only as the Bicentennial Spring — but also as the year when Easter and Patriot's Day fell on the same weekend, and the weather was like summer.

Dozens of weather records were broken. It was a tremendous treat after a long cold winter.

About this time of year most women have grown tired of their cold-weather-wardrobes. They long for warm days so they can shift to summery clothes. Spring never seems to come soon enough to satisfy this yearning.

Because we've discovered how comfortable it's possible to be during the winter, we women have taken to wearing pants during the cold months; our dresses and skirted suits have hung unused in our closets.

Now's the time to make use of them. It's no longer so cold we'll miss the pants' legs; besides we're really sick of everything we've been wearing all winter long.

Spring, even if the weather is still far from balmy most of the time, deserves recognition, and what's a better way for us to welcome it than by leaving the pants on their hangars and switching to skirts? It's a change of pace to give us a much-needed lift.

Everyone can use that, these days. The men, too, seeing women back in skirts, get a treat. Men are so used to seeing us in pants, they've forgotten how feminine we can look.

Once summer's really here to stay, of course, we'll be wearing pants again, at least part of the time. Those air-conditioned shops and offices require clothing suited to the temperatures.

ut on their days off, this summer, if the ladies will remember to wear skirts and dresses when it's hot, they'll find they look and feel cooler and calmer, less rushed and bothered, and everyone will enjoy summer more for the change.

It's only one woman's opinion, of course, but I'm glad to see longer, fuller skirts are fashionable again. We look better in this style than in short and skimpy ones.

No woman needs to see herself in a full-length mirror to know she looks elegant in a floor-length gown. She feels prettier, and she knows she looks prettier.

Pants are great for straddling bikes, horses, fences, and grubbing in the garden. They keep us warm when the weather's bad. For looking like **girls**, though, there's nothing quite like a skirt.

Short skirts — or short pants for that matter — are great for tanning legs. As clothing they just don't make it. Sitting in a chair upholstered in plastic is like being glued to it. If the upholstery is wool, you develop an itch. If the chair is caned, you walk around with a patterned imprint on your thigh.

And if you think short skirts or shorts are, somehow, more beguiling — be reassured. Men I've talked with prefer to see women in longer skirts. They don't mind if some things are left to their imagination. They enjoy guessing whether knees are dimpled or knotty.

They enjoy playing this game of imagination whether they know the ladies or not. Even certain knowledge the knees they cannot see are dimpled doesn't spoil their pleasure in seeing us in skirts that cover those knees.

Strange creatures, men. Truly bewildering to the modern woman who presents herself in a direct and uncomplicated fashion — one she's been brought up to think of as her "role".

That role, it now turns out, lets her play the part of good friend, buddy, helper, or pal to a man; but it doesn't engender feelings of masculinity in him.

And a man likes to feel masculine.

Given a chance, it begins to seem, a woman enjoys feeling feminine, as well.

This spring, as we look about us — and as we think back to how people appeared five or six years ago — we're seeing men take on a more assertive role. We're seeing them seek the company of women who are ready to assume the feminine stance that once was traditional.

Unisex — in dress and behavior — has run its course. As a fad, it's had its day.

Men are yearning to be men. For all their belief in the Equal Rights Amendment which both men and women are now supporting, women are yearning to be women.

The spring of 1976 is a good one. It's come on a spring-board of fine weather. People know who they are and what they are, and once again are proud of themselves and their roles in life.

Let's give them a big hand — it's been a long wait!