

# *Island Arts Community Offers Review of 1984 Summer Season*

By RICK FLEURY

The curtain has fallen on another summer of arts on the Island. This week, the people who have made the Vineyard an increasingly active arts community looked back on this season and offered a review of their own: it has been a good year.

Sales were healthy this summer in the Island art galleries. Audiences, on the whole, were consistent and appreciative of a wide range of theatrical and musical offerings. The consensus in the arts community here seems to be that the arts of summer on the Vineyard continue to grow in quality, and are in fact becoming a definitive part of the seasonal scene.

This is the first summer season extending beyond Labor Day for the Vineyard Playhouse, and Isabella Blake, co-director of the theatre group now in its third year, says it has been a very successful season. "Attendance is up, I know that," she said. "For more people, it's becoming part of their regular vacation plans."

Mrs. Blake said the theatre received a grant from the Massachusetts Arts Council, and a small award from CBS this summer. She hopes that continued fund-raising efforts will someday allow the theatre to be open the year 'round.

For the Island Theatre Workshop, "It has been a good summer, but not an exceptional summer," said artistic director Mary Payne. Attendance was "moderate" she said, and enrollment was slightly down in the Children's Theatre. "But,"

she said, "I'm more interested in our internal development, and in that respect it has been a very good summer."

ITW is a repertory company performing at five different locations on the Island, which Miss Payne says gives the organization an identity problem. "People may not know where to go, or don't have a clear conception of who we are," she said.

Walt Sado, administrative director of The Yard in Chilmark, reported a very good summer for the professional dance company which now returns to New York for the winter. "It's really been a good summer, with full houses throughout the season — a considerable increase over last year," Mr. Sado said.

For the Vineyard Dance Company, sponsors of a six-week summer course in modern dance and ballet, and the annual Vineyard Dance in Concert, now held at the Oak Bluffs Tabernacle, the summer was about the same as last year, which is to say good, according to program directors Bill and Kathleen Costanza. Mr. Costanza noted a healthy turnout for the annual concert, which was cut from two nights to one this year due to rain. "The Tabernacle has been just great for us," he said, "and we plan to build on that as time goes by."

The several summer programs of the Nathan Mayhew Seminars held their own this summer, but little more. "It wasn't a

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# Summer Arts Flourishing on The Vineyard

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good summer, but not a bad one either," said Seminars director Thomas R. Goethals. Mr. Goethals estimated attendance at the events at about the same or slightly better than last year.

Mr. Goethals said the jazz concerts sponsored by the Seminars and held at the Hot Tin Roof have been very popular, as were as the weekly concerts of jazz pianist Brooks Kerr. He also noted that the Alfred Hitchcock film series was quite successful. The Seminars held other cultural events including the Authors Series, a poetry and a chamber music series, which, Mr. Goethals said, drew audiences much like last year's.

The Martha's Vineyard Art Association, sponsors of classical and folk concerts held throughout the summer at the Old Whaling Church in Edgartown, reported a season of successful growth. "The concerts were very successful and very popular," said Mrs. Ruth Appeldoorn Mead, president of the association. "Perhaps more so than ever." The concerts, which benefit the Old Sculpin Gallery and help finance art scholarships on the Island, have brought finances to a very healthy state, Mrs. Mead said.

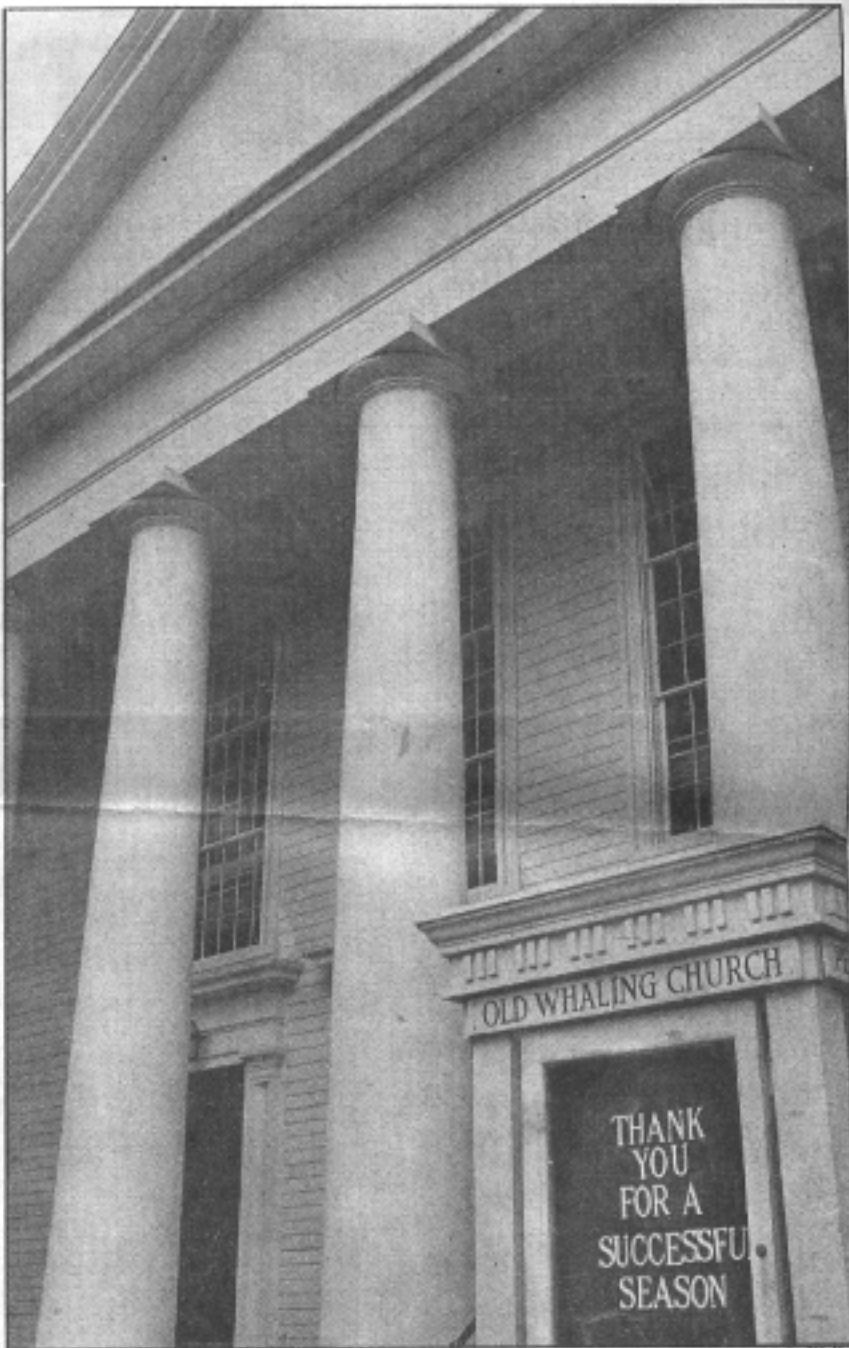
Audiences for classical music concerts at the Old Whaling Church, sponsored by Vineyard Concerts are "solid and growing," said the organization's president Evie Bolloten. "But," she added, "the audiences are not large enough for such high class performers in such ideal surroundings." Mrs. Bolloten said there is still a large Island population that is unaware of the ideal setting the Old Whaling Church provides for quality concert music.

The Chilmark Chamber Concerts, according to co-director Caroline Worthington, have been a great success this summer despite a "terrible" financial status. Mrs. Worthington reported "standing room only" at nearly all of the concerts, and said there is a great and growing appreciation for classical music on the Island. "The audiences have been fantastic," she said, "and the response has been wonderful."

The major galleries on the Island regard the summer as a successful one, for the galleries and for individual artists as well.

Brandon Wight, co-owner of the Granary Gallery at the Red Barn Emporium in West Tisbury, said the gallery "has seen one of its better years." He said he has had some very successful shows, pointing to that of painter Steven Mills as the most successful of the summer. Mr. Mills sold 19 of his 24 paintings on display at that show, Mr. Wight said.

At the Old Sculpin Gallery in Edgartown, the reaction is similar. "It's been a good summer to this point," said



M.C. Wallis

gallery director Ruth Galley. "It has seemed rather slow," she said, "but we're up and slightly ahead of last year."

At the Edgartown Art Gallery, owner Gery Conover also reported a very good season. Regular artists Kib Bramhall and Ray Ellis did very well, he said, as did Peter Sculthorpe, new to the gallery this year.

And it was a "fabulous season" at the Field Gallery in West Tisbury, according to that gallery's manager Helen Reid. After her second year with the gallery, Mrs. Reid said, "I was very excited. Last year was good, and this year's been even better."

Many new artists were featured at the gallery this season, she said. Response has been good, and sales have been also. "Everyone's really pleased," she said.

Lee Fierro, co-director of the Island Theatre Workshop with Mary Payne, said that with the continuing growth of the arts on the Island, scheduling is becoming increasingly difficult. "It seems as if there's always something going on,"

she said. "We used to be able to keep away from each other in scheduling, but there's no way for everyone to do that any more."

But in spite of the continuing growth of the arts on the Vineyard, Miss Payne said there is room for a far better awareness of the arts among Island residents.

"I think the general standards on the Island are pretty high, and the results are excellent," Mrs. Payne said. "But many people are simply not aware of the quality of work here."