



Mary and Roger Pellerin at Proctor in the early 1990s.



Jodi Sleeper, owner of American Cottage, enjoys a respite in the showroom of her new location in Gilford. The store, in a building which formerly housed a Volkswagen dealership, is a milestone in Jodi's 20-plus year career as a rug designer. Photo: Adam Drapcho, *Laconia Daily Sun*

## Honoring the Pellerins

This is Chuck Will's column on the Proctor Academy Web site on January 20, the morning when Roger and Mary Pellerin died.

**To Honor and Reflect**  
By Chuck Will  
Proctor Academy

Today's [Web column] features the usual array of photos of students working, playing, being teenagers, etc. That's what I do here, and it's altogether fitting to continue that practice today, despite our sadness. Students from Andover are aware of what happened early this morning, but most students and newer faculty cannot know how tough it was –

"Do they pay you to do that job?!" and, "Why aren't you in the office, doing somethin' productive?" I loved them, and the people of Andover loved them.

[Pictured above] are Mary and Roger twenty years ago, when they worked together at Proctor. Notice the smiles.

Roger and Mary were not in good physical shape in recent years, yet the horror of death by conflagration is very upsetting. Our thoughts and prayers are with Bob and Joe Pellerin, both Proctor Academy Class of 1988.

Perhaps the best I can do in this circumstance is to draw our attention to the good people – many of them from Andover – who make Proctor run from behind the scenes, for that is what Pellerins did.

Depending on your counting measurement, we have approximately 85 teachers. But this school could not function without 100 additional heroes who maintain campus safety all night long, or those who rise at 4 AM to prepare classrooms and hallways. Then there are the folks who staff the Health

Center 24 hours a day.

Then there's Buildings and Grounds, a team that serves a physical plant comprised of 50-something structures, acres of fields, and – oh, yes – the finest privately-operated ski area in existence.

Today, in response to the tragedy of Mary's and Roger's deaths, I was interviewed by newspaper and television crews from Concord and Boston. I was moved by how emotionally moved they were ... through interaction with the people of Andover. This is a special community.

One reporter revealed that several Pizza Chef waitstaff burst into tears at the mention of the Pellerins' names. We are fortunate to live in a town that has a center in which we really know one another.

And so, we will go on with our work. But let us dedicate our work to good causes and good people. Mary and Roger Pellerin were unassuming, good people. They made Proctor a better place, and they made the world a better place, and we miss them.

There will be a **memorial service** for Roger and Mary Pellerin at the Proctor Academy dining hall on Saturday, January 28 at 2 PM. Everyone is welcome to attend.

**The Pellerin Fund** has been established at the Andover office of the Lake Sunapee Bank. Donations can be sent to PO Box 274, Andover 03216.

at dawn – to learn that Roger and Mary Pellerin had perished in a house fire just down the street from school. [See the article on page 1.]

In 1976, Mary moved from the [Proctor Academy] Housekeeping staff to become the first secretary for a nascent Alumni and Development Office. In this role, she was the primary contact for countless graduates who had had little contact with Proctor for decades. She was hugely successful: loving in a motherly manner, funny, smart, bawdy, and altogether lovable.

In 1992, she became secretary to the Office of Multicultural Education, when Proctor became the first school in the nation to complete a multicultural assessment, and she retired in 1994.

Roger served Proctor in many positions ... most recently in Housekeeping, where he maintained an outrageously funny, falsely-cantankerous role with all of us. In recent years, Mary was rarely seen due to physical issues, but Roger was often assailing people from Jake's Market, or at the Transfer Station, chiding me – for example – with,

## American Cottage Moves Into Expanded Quarters

By Adam Drapcho  
*Laconia Daily Sun*

From the January 3 Sun

"This is the culmination of 21 years in business for me," said Jodi Sleeper, owner of American Cottage, as she begins a tour of her new facility. She and husband Kevin moved the home furnishing store down Route 11, from its prior location, next to the Wine'Ing Butcher, to the building which most recently housed Lakes Region Volkswagen.

The Sleepers opened their new store

on December 20, after 12 weeks of moving and sub-floor-to-ceiling renovation to make the building at 9 Gilford East Drive suitable for its new use. The store sells some antiques and many new items, much of which, especially the rugs, were designed by Jodi. American Cottage had been at its previous location for two years but the story of the business goes back more than two decades.

About 22 years ago, New Hampshire natives and young couple Jodi and Kevin opened their business. See Jodi on page 40



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