

# The Devlin Family: An Invaluable History of Artistry

Continued from Page 13

laboration as "easy and pleasant" with a mutual respect, the husband-and-wife team added, "We do feel fortunate that we're both involved in the same things."

In 1963, a wonderful children's classic flowed from the talented hands of Wende and Harry Devlin - "Old Black Witch." Two sequels followed, over one and a half million copies were purchased, and a movie which was based on the book, *Winter of the Witch*, was released.

"I tried to write a story that I would enjoy," explained Mrs. Devlin, who added that she included a personality, color, and all of the elements which would make the story unforgettable.

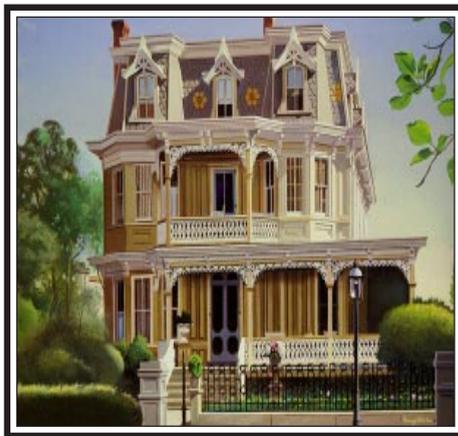
The series of "Old Black Witch" books have included such notable entries as "Old Witch and the Polkadot Ribbon" and "Old Witch Rescues Halloween," which received the Chicago Book Fair Award for excellence in 1974.

The illustrations and stories which the Devlins have vibrantly featured in their books, such as the "Cranberry" series of holiday stories, have been a testament to a child's enjoyment of the familiar and the exciting.

Pointing to their prolific careers and published works, as well as those of other authors and illustrators, the Devlins observed the importance of literacy and cherishing books as keepsakes.

"Both of us have been omnivorous readers. Books were everything. Children's books are by far the most important."

The proud parents of seven children, Wende Devlin-Gates, Harry Devlin, Brion Devlin, Jeff Devlin, Alexandra Eldridge,



Cape May Second Empire, 1988, by Harry Devlin

Nicholas Devlin and David Devlin, the couple said their love for artistry has run through the veins of the Devlin family so extensively that it has inspired and motivated the Devlin's grandchildren.

Her grandchildren "paint all of the time," Mrs. Devlin stated enthusiastically. "Every one of them."

Son Nicholas enjoys creating murals, while daughter Alexandra, who resides in Santa Fe, New Mexico, is also a painter.

Mrs. Devlin-Gates, a real estate Sales Associate with Burgdorff ERA of Westfield, has written six books on various topics. She was also the entertainment editor of *Glamour* magazine and the *Prix de Paris* editor at *Vogue* magazine.

The daughter of Harry and Wende Devlin shared some of her reflections about growing up in an artistic environment, "It was a wonderful way to grow up, to be surrounded

by art. It was a wonderful little oasis up there (at home)."

Raised during the 1950s - the pre-television era when parents and their children had to use their imaginations for amusement - Mrs. Devlin-Gates stated, "We created our own sense of entertainment."

Reflecting upon her mother's talent for relating to people through humor and art, she added that her father was "a fabulous storyteller."

According to Mrs. Devlin-Gates, the Devlin children would gather around their father in the living room and sit awestruck by the tales that flowed from his imagina-

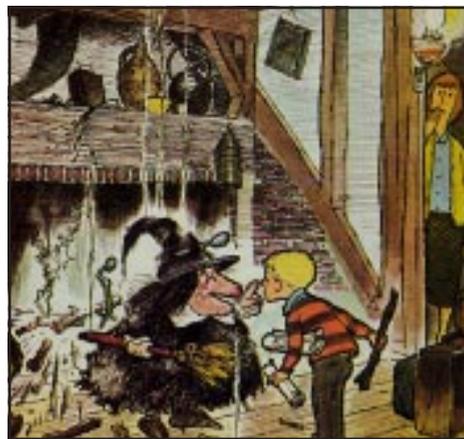


Illustration from *Old Black Witch* by Harry Devlin, 1963.

tion. Mr. Devlin would then intrigue and spark the minds of his children by leaving them in suspense.

"He's an amazing man," she concluded.

David Devlin also caught the creative bug from his parents, as he is employed as an art director with John Howlett & Company, Inc. of Westfield.

The youngest of the Devlin's seven children, he recalled, "All of the Devlins in one way or another were always involved in art."

David reminisced about one value encouraged by his parents that was instrumental in his life: "You've got to be creative or it's just not worthwhile."

To preserve his parents' paintings, David works with his father by creating limited edition prints of the artwork.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Devlin are members of the Literary Hall of Fame and have received the George Arents Medal for Excellence in Art and Literature, a distinguished alumni award, from Syracuse University.

Separate sparks of interest in art, which began as youngsters, later culminating into a partnership in love and in art - the world has certainly become a more creative place because the Devlins have been an indelible part of it.

## Devlin Publications

*Old Black Witch*

*The Knobby Boys to the Rescue*

*To Grandfather's House We Go: A Roadside Tour of American Homes*

*The Walloping Window Blind, An Old Nautical Tale*

*Aunt Agatha, There's a Lion Under the Couch*

*What Kind of A House is That?*

*How Fletcher Was Hatched!*

*What's Under My Bed?*

*A Kiss for a Wart Hog*

*Old Witch and the Polka Dot Ribbon*

*Cranberry Thanksgiving*

*Old Witch Rescues Halloween*

*Hang on Hester!*

*Tales of Thunder and Lightning*

*Cranberry Christmas*

*Cranberry Mystery*

*Cranberry Halloween*

*Cranberry Valentine*

*Cranberry Birthday*

*Cranberry Easter*

*Portraits of American Architecture: Monuments to a Romantic Mood 1830-1900*

*Harry and Wende Devlin may be reached at (908) 233-1280.*

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