

arts & leisure

Ogunquit: P-Town Lite!

BY EUAN BEAR

Well, Ogunquit: what it's like depends on when you go. Mary and I have in the last couple of years gone late in the summer, a week before Labor Day or the week after.

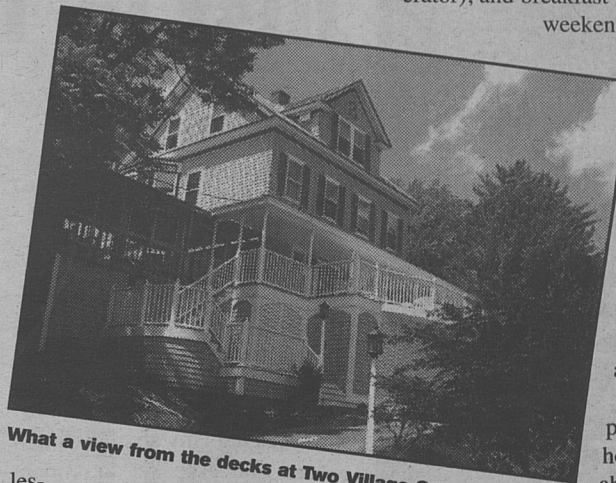
The town is pretty typical Maine seashore kitschy, with some good (and some simply pretentious) restaurants and many, many hotels, motels, small resorts, a time share development or two, and beaucoup B&Bs. There's the Ogunquit Playhouse, with live summer stock - this year including Elton John's *Aida*, Sally Struthers in *Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, *Swing!* and *Nunsations! The Nunsense Vegas Revue*.

Stonewall Kitchens is

close by (home of the best blueberry jam I've ever tasted, and owned by two gay men, though you'd never know it from the corporate headquarters). If you entertain like Martha used to, you simply *must* go there.

There's a cool miniature golf place, Wonder Mountain, in Wells (next town up the coast) for any day that's less than optimal for beach time. And if you've got kids or are a kid at heart, there's Old Orchard Beach's midway and the gentler York Wild Kingdom. Ogunquit has a library ("No Internet Access" reads a big sign on the door).

For nightlife, there are four bars, three of which are reportedly gay or at least gay friendly: Inside Out, Maine Street, and the Front Porch. That last is the more



What a view from the decks at Two Village Square!

lesbian-friendly of the three, I'm told.

Mary and I have stayed at The Heritage of Ogunquit, a B&B owned by a Texas lesbian (built on land inherited from her grandparents). It looks like part of a Fifties housing development, aged gracefully, and added onto to accommodate guests. You can cook in the common space (when we were last there, it offered two two-burner hot plates, coffee maker, toaster oven and microwave, plus full-size refrig-

erator), and breakfast is served on weekends. It's definitely not

a resort, although the shady back yard (and a room of the house) shelters a hot tub, hammock, picnic table, and gas grill.

The place is very homey, and about a 10-minute walk from the beach,

less than that from "the Marginal Way," a shore-side paved walk past rugosa roses, hotel gardens, private houses, and beachside cliffs south to "Perkins Cove," where there are restaurants and galleries and gift "shoppes." Often we drive the car down to the beach lot and drop off one of us with the day's gear and supplies, then take the car back to the Heritage and walk or take the trolley.

The other place we've stayed is Two Village Square, right at the junction of Shore Road and Route 1. It's owned by two gay men, Joe Bellin and CT Steele, who took it over just a couple of years ago. The inn has fifteen rooms, some fronting onto the lovely Victorian living room, and boasts a heated swimming pool and a cocktail party on Wednesday and Sunday nights in addition to regular breakfasts. In last winter's renovation, the guest kitchen was considerably expanded. Dining is mostly al fresco on the poolside deck. The inn is up a steep driveway, sheltered and screened by trees, so it has more privacy than you would expect from the address. Lesbians are welcome, but clearly in the minority, and when we stayed there, we were the only ovarians in residence.

But of course, the main attraction is the beach, three miles of it, both oceanside and riverside. Access to the beach is very organized - take the "trolley" (named Rolly, Dolly, Molly, etc.) for \$1.50 and they'll drop you next to the main beach hotel in the continued on page 18

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