

Gloria the goose survives to see another Christmas

By Lisa Saunders

Special to the Press

Despite the name of the shop, The Gray Goose Cookery does not specialize in cooking geese—instead, this gourmet kitchen store was instrumental in saving Gloria, the regal yet cranky, arthritic goose residing at Olde Mistick Village.

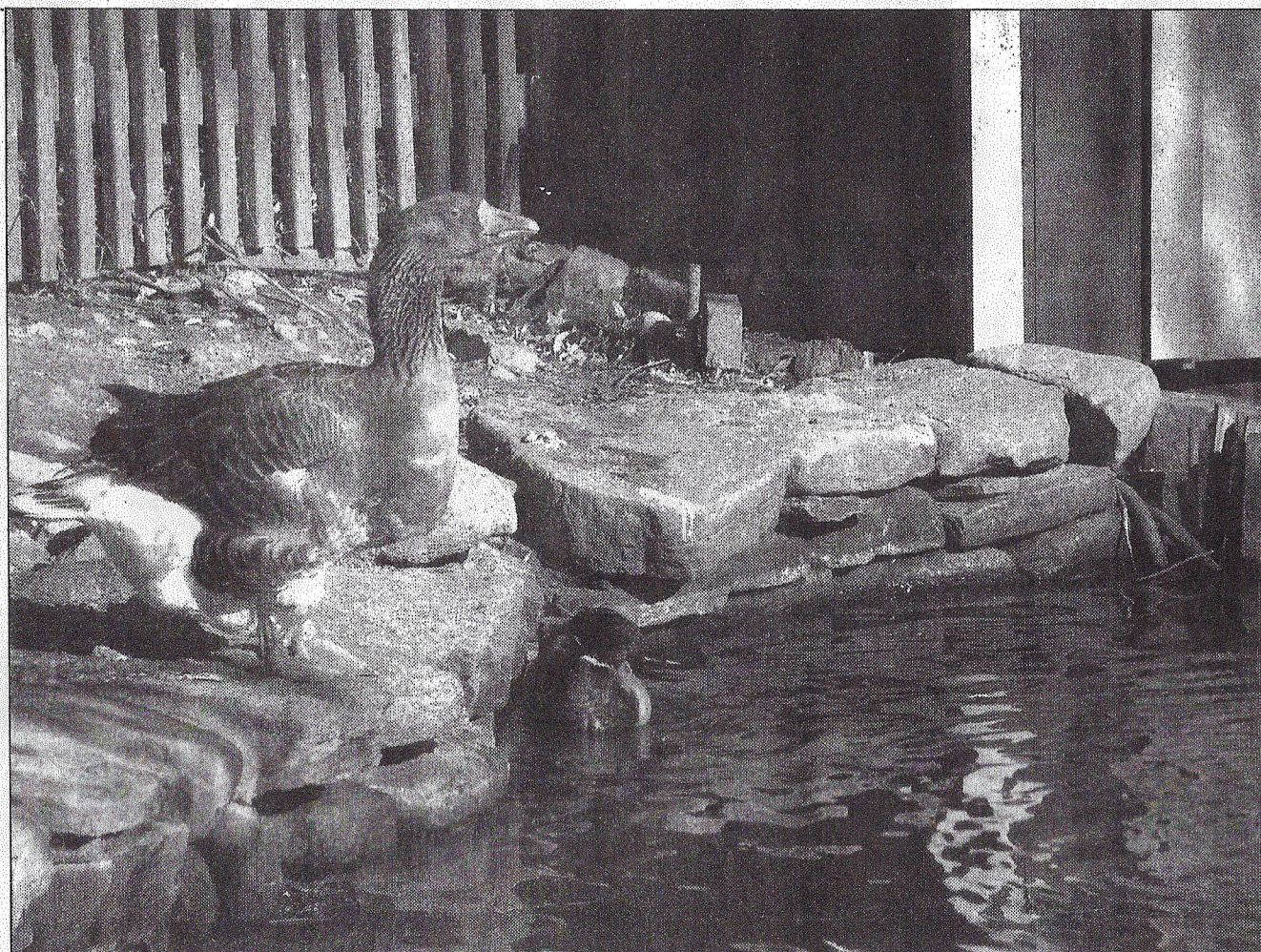
“Earlier this year, an employee of The Gray Goose Cookery told us that Gloria was ailing,” says Christine Robertson, office manager of Olde Mistick Village.

“She looked a little sluggish to them. She wasn’t her normal, feisty self.”

Gloria first came to Village in the mid-1980s when her owner could no longer care for her. Knowing the Village maintained duck ponds for their shoppers to enjoy, her owner thought Gloria could live out her life among the ducks that were permanent residents there. A goose in captivity can live up to 40 years.

When the Village office learned that Gloria wasn’t feeling well, they called in a vet.

“These birds are part of our family, and Gloria is the reigning bird. We call her Queen Gloria because



Gloria the goose reigns over the duck pond at Olde Mistick Village.

she is very bossy and hisses when displeased—but she is very protective of her subjects—especially the swan we once had named Gracie. They were

good friends and if a duck or person got too close to the swan, Gloria would warn them off with a hiss.”

The vet, who doesn’t

know for sure if Gloria is a female, discovered that she had an infection. So every day, the maintenance man in charge of feeding the birds caught

Gloria and held her close to his chest so Robertson could give her an injection.

“She started feeling better after the first day,

so catching her for the rest of the treatment was almost impossible,” said Robertson.

Gloria recovered completely, and despite her arthritis and a slight limp, is still reigning as queen in the main duck pond.

And what happens if age and arthritis eventually get the better of Gloria?

“We have a duck pond near the maintenance barn that we call the “Geriatric Ward.” That is where we retire all the birds who are too old or feeble to defend themselves from an aggressive duck.”

Spring is a particularly busy time at the Village because of mating season. Ducks fly in to raise their ducklings then fly off again. Many, however, reside at the Village year-round.

“Why would they want to leave?” asks Robertson.

“They have everything they need here.”

The birds are fed five, 50-pound bags of duck food per week by the maintenance crew and the public can feed them duck pellets purchased from the Franklin General Store at the Village.