



## The Douglass Leas of Waterford, Virginia

A few years ago, Julie and Doug Lea happened upon Waterford, Va., an 18th-century mill town an hour's drive from Washington, where they lived. The streets of the tiny old town were quiet, the fields and woods were close by—ideal for little Benjy and Zachary to play in. Julie, an artist, and Doug, a journalist and project director for the American Civil Liberties Union in Washington, both loved it and bought a newly restored 1810 house.

The first thing Julie did when they moved in, she recalls, was begin painting as she'd never done before: "In the city, you're swallowed up by the complexity and fads of the art world; here you paint what you want, and no fussing with galleries—you

just hang out a sign." And so she did, opening up Peaceable Kingdom in her home. The shop features Julie's own watercolors, drawings, needlework, dried herbs and rare teas, plus the handicrafts of assorted friends and neighbors. Open only on weekends from July to October, the tiny shop is "a real Mom and Pop operation," according to Doug. "First thing in the morning, I sweep the walk; then we sit out front and talk with the neighbors."

Waterford, with its three streets and 70 old homes, is a very neighborly town. Says Julie: "We have transplanted Washingtonians, natives, old people, young people. And we all love talking and visiting, having summer picnics in the pasture back of town and old-

time covered-dish parties all winter long. We have our own theater group and music program, too."

In the winter, while Doug works at his carpentry, Julie paints and sews for Peaceable Kingdom and teaches art in a local school and at home. In the warm months, all the Leas enjoy walking in the woods and gardening. "We do everything together here," Julie explains. "And we do simple things—nothing that costs money. We're much closer now to the changes of seasons, to animals and things that grow." "We do have spells in winter when the electricity fails," Doug admits, "and there isn't a floorboard in town that doesn't creak. But to me, Waterford is nice to come home to every night."



The Lea family's comfortable old home (top) has a ground floor shop called Peaceable Kingdom. Inside (above), everything on sale is natural or handmade: the weaving, the pinecones and shells, the stained-glass pieces, Julie's Beatrix Potter-like crewel-work pillows.



The Leas (far left) love being outdoors. Benjy, 9, and Zachary, 3, often join their parents on picnics, bike rides and long walks in the woods and fields near their home.

Doug (left) enjoys working in the garden, which is patterned after an 18th-century "sallet" (or kitchen) garden. Many things in it—ferns and wild clover, for example—were found on family outings and then transplanted.