

The

Collingtonian

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May 2004

Collington's New Management Team



In the Courtyard on a warm April day are, from front to back: Sally Erdman-Jones, Executive Director; Rita Chapman, Administrator, Health Services; Mike Maddox, Director, Housekeeping and Laundry; Alan Blose, Director of Facilities and Kay Haw, our newly-arrived Director of Nursing.

Photo by Elsie Seetoo

Any newly-arrived resident knows how daunting it is to face 300 new faces, attach names to them, weave a path through our maze of corridors and indoor "bridges" and finally arrive at his destination.

Think how difficult it is for a newly-arrived Executive Director to master the immense complex of Collington with its staff of over 200 and its 367 apartments and cottages spread out over 125 acres.

Filling the new units our expansion program created has been a top priority, and ten sales last month have cast a rosy glow on this picture.

After four full months on the job, Sally Erdman-Jones seems to have got it down pat. She comes up with our names more readily than we residents often do, and her grasp of the mechanisms that serve us our meals, maintain our physical plant and, most importantly, take care of our health, seems now complete.

We asked her what she found different at Collington from the other life-care communities where she has worked. Having residents on the Board of Directors, Sally says, is the single new aspect she has encountered. Asked if Collingtonians were more outspoken, more

demanding than residents in other communities, she said, "Not really. The folks at other communities never hesitated to tell me what was on their minds."

She values the support she gets from Life Care Services which steps in with helpful solutions when thorny problems arise.

Both Mike Maddox and Alan Blose came to Collington at the behest of Interim Executive Director David Zwald. Mike, a veteran of 11 years at the Ginger Cove retirement community in Annapolis, had been running his own successful catering business for over six years when David offered him a job at Collington. He accepted, and since arriving he has restructured housekeeping services and is overseeing the placement of our furniture that has been getting a face lift. One more shipment is still due to be returned, and Mike plans to use it to decorate the public spaces in the apartment building which were considerably enlarged in the course of expansion.

Alan Blose, from Easton, PA, worked for years in hospital administration in Baltimore, focusing on facility maintenance and construction. He had moved up to life care services and was building experience as Executive Director of Kensington Park Retirement Community when David tempted him with a job at Collington that was right up his alley. He couldn't resist the challenge.

It makes you wonder what gives Collington such a strong appeal!

Alan lives in Columbia, Maryland with his

wife. The couple have two sons, 25 and 29.

Rita Chapman came to Collington in 1995 to take charge of recreational activities for our residents suffering memory loss.

Within a few years she began training with Stacy Guthrie, Collington's then-Health Services Administrator, an experienced mentor of young people aspiring to pursue a career in her field. When Ms. Guthrie left Collington a year ago, Rita moved into her job as Health Services Administrator. Her deft touch with both staff and residents has earned her respect and affection.

Rita is looking forward to the day when the 2-room suites in our Brandywine Wing are filled with residents who need only minimal assistance with the chores of daily living. These suites are equipped with mini-kitchens containing a small refrigerator/freezer, microwave oven and sink where residents can prepare a quick meal if they choose not to go to the dining room. Two units have already been reserved.

Kay Haw, newest member of the team -- she joined the staff on April 12 -- is a native of Maryland where she has spent most of her life. Her training includes a B.S. in nursing from Towson State U., and an M.S. in Health Administration from Central Michigan University. She is pursuing her doctorate and has just returned from a 3-day seminar at Johns Hopkins.

Her many years' experience as a critical care nurse for the State of Maryland have given her a solid background in geriatrics.

She is divorced and has two grown sons.

Phyllis Sternau -- A Force

By Sheila Hollies and Frances Kolarek

Ever since Phyllis Sternau arrived, Collingtonians have come together each year at a Seder, the meal which marks the Feast of the Passover and is an important Jewish rite. All are welcome to participate in the singing, in the readings and the four glasses of wine which punctuate the Haggada -- the service which explains and celebrates the feast. The Seder is a family affair and thanks to Phyllis' efforts, we Collingtonians come to the table as a family.

At the dinner in April, Cynthia Parker and Ruth Coale-Turner helped with arrangements.

Phyllis is a true New Yorker -- a Manhattanite whose family lived on Park Avenue where she grew up. When her father's business slumped during the Depression, it fell to a wealthy uncle to see to her education. Uncle sent Phyllis and her sister "on a fabulous trip around the world." This experience awoke the travel bug in Phyllis who, after her husband died, became a travel agent and visited most of Europe as well as Egypt, China and Taiwan.

Once the sisters were back home from the "fabulous trip," Phyllis had hoped to attend Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., where she had been accepted. That was not to be. Uncle decided it wasn't worthwhile to send a mere girl to college. It was secretarial school for her instead. To this day, Phyllis bemoans her lack of a college degree, although who would guess if she didn't tell?

After a brief career, Phyllis married Howard Sternau, an accountant and a Bridge champion. The couple adopted two children. Her daughter lives in California with her doctor husband. Her son is deceased.

Phyllis found her true *métier*, however, when she became involved with the Adoption Committee of Westchester County, an organization where her heart lay and which she served in several different capacities.

Her travels over, in 1990 Phyllis came to Collington, thinking to put her working days behind her. That, too, was not to be. Since arriving she has been involved in a variety of activities. As chairman of the Hospitality Committee she invited all newcomers to her home to meet groups of other

residents and go to dinner. She has been active in the Outreach and Dining Services Committees.

And when she could find the time, she translated into Braille books sent to her by the Jewish Braille Institute of America, Inc. She worked on a special Braille machine in her apartment, "but I haven't done much with it for the past year," she says.

Despite some physical limitations, Phyllis continues to be a force to be reckoned with here at Collington. If there is a job that needs doing, she is ready to take it on. If she cannot do it herself, she manages to talk someone else into doing it -- and she is certainly a persistent and effective advocate!



Phyllis Sternau
Photo by Elsie Seetoo

Helen Gordon's Goings-on

Bill Burleigh is not only a retired legal expert, a great Woodshop fixer-upper, and a clock doctor, he is also a very talented organist. It is with great pleasure that we watch Bill as he sits at the organ in the Clocktower in his characteristic pose with his fingers moving nimbly over the keys. We, the listeners in the alcoves and hall, are treated to beautiful interludes by a sensitive organist and to observe how his eyes and face are reflecting the mood of the music. Bill is in another, kinder world as he plays, and so are we who listen.



Over the Easter weekend Janice Newman single-handed kept the floral arrangements fresh and watered, and placed the Easter lilies to their best advantage. She came in early, worked all day, and left late. Thank you, Janice, for our Easter flowers.



You could write a book about the unique experiences that take place at Collington. Brought together for dinner by Mary Olmsted, Mildred Marcy and Evelyn Colbert discovered that they had been in the same class at Barnard College and both had served in senior positions in the Department of State, without ever having crossed paths -- until here and now.



We have many dedicated volunteer workers who spread their talents in several different directions in Prince George's County. This is

Fran Dutton's third year to organize and mastermind the Book Fair for children one to fifteen years of age at the Prince George's Hospital Center. Last year the drive collected 300 books. The container for drop-off books sits opposite the library. Books, as well as monetary gifts, will be received at the Book Fair Shower on May 7 from 2:30 to 4 p.m. in the Game Room. Refreshments will be offered. Make your checks payable to the Residents Association noting Book Fair in the left-hand corner. For further information call Fran Dutton on 7338.



Another volunteer at Prince George's Hospital is Norma Schoch, newly arrived at Collington. Norma goes several times a week to help out at the reception desk, and has done so for years.



Mary Witt, listening to Herb Gordon's "Know Your Neighbor" talk last month, was amazed to learn that he did military training in 1941 at Camp Croft, South Carolina, at the same time her father commanded a regiment there and the family was living on base.



A former resident who moved to a more urban setting, has presented Collington with a terra-cotta bust of mother and child. It now decorates a spot in the Clocktower between two windows.



Collington has received the gift of five one

foot tiles from Virginia Yager, who for fifty years has been making decorative tiles for architectural institutions. You will find this special creation in the hallway between the clinic and the Marketing Office. For more details about Virginia's adventures working with the Taiwanese on tiles and glazes, see *The Collingtonian* of March 2003.



Unique walking canes measuring five feet or more do carry a great deal of authority and in two cases here, absolute originality, to boot. DeWitt Patterson has the most unusual of all canes in a "natural" style. DeWitt is very careful not to leave this staff of life standing alone for long. He wouldn't be able to duplicate it in Collington's woods. Curtis Langford's 5-foot waxed bamboo walker which he calls his MANTRA, goes with him on every walk. Does he imagine he could only safely walk with three legs?



People come up with some big surprises at times. Take Alex Dragnich. He sits next to me at exercise class. First, I heard that he has recently written a monogram called "Serbia Through the Ages" which will appear as a 150-page volume in an East European Series. I asked him about this and found out that he has written four books while at Collington. I asked him if all four are in the Ivy Room and he replied "all eight."



Leafing through the notebook I carry in my purse, I recently came upon this anonymous message: "Let's form a committee to do away with committees." Who wrote it? I don't know.

Did you know that Virginia Beaty has played the piano since she was five years old and taught herself to play the organ since coming to Collington? Virginia easily plays by ear.



We are accustomed to women collecting staggering numbers of shoes, purses, or rings, but it appears that we have a number of men here who also enjoy indulging in accessories. For example: Cole Blasier has 40 bow ties. He can wear a different tie every day of the month



and still have plenty left over.



Ardyce Asire, at left, is wearing a copper medallion awarded her by Holland-America lines as the result of her having sailed on cruises with them for one hundred days!

The medal is made of pure copper, the officer making the award assured Ardyce. Then, in a stage whisper he confided: "The copper medallions are made of solid metal. The silver ones -- for 300 days -- are not pure silver, and the gold -- for 500 days -- well, they sure aren't solid gold."

Not only an ardent cruise-goer, Ardyce is another Collingtonian who volunteers at P.G. Hospital. She also runs an eagle-eye over our copy in an effort to keep typos and other errors out of *The Collingtonian*.

Nature on Display

By Edward Behr

As May arrives, Collington's cottage gardens are once again displaying a colorful eye-catching array of flowers. Daffodils and myrtle have been blooming in almost every cluster. Magnolias and redbud trees have been flowering profusely.

Every cottage cluster has had something to contribute, occasionally something new and different: In the 1200 area newly planted petunias have been added to pots of geraniums, iris and narcissus. In 2000 scarlet-flowering azaleas are brightening the spring scene and the cherry trees seem to put in a better show each year. In the 3000 cluster Tom and Margaret Aldrich have been planting not only flowers but herbs and vegetables as well, adding to a garden that features a Japanese sculpture surrounded by white stones. In the 4100 cluster a new resident, Harry Smith, has added attractive plantings to a garden established years ago.

The 4200 area has been distinguished by an array of all-white daffodils and by early-sprouting peonies, among other things. Pat and Lauren Brubaker have enclosed their garden with shrubbery and put in stonework enclosing a sundial. Young cedars grow around the rear of the cottage and artfully arranged azaleas create an arc around the garden.

In the 1100 cluster Faith Jackson's garden has taken shape as spring moved on. Hostas and lilies of the valley have been blooming and Faith calls herself "very pleased" that her hard work has had such happy results. It's been a battle with the nearby deer, which came 10 feet

from the front door and chewed up some hostas. One consolation -- birds, notably a pair of nesting doves, have been coming to the bird bath there, for the first time in her six years in the cottage.

Collington's garden beauties extend to the eastern side, where cottagers have produced things well worth seeing. At 5101 Carol Ann Kempske has grown pansies both in front and back of the cottage, and the gold finches and purple finches have been attracted to the flowers. At one end of the Hilltop Gardens, raspberry bushes are sprouting. And in a box next to the greenhouse, Art Longacre has vegetables -- lettuce and onions -- coming right along.

Many other gardeners are producing spring beauties of one kind or another -- more than *The Collingtonian* can find space to report just now. We hope to give them credit in future editions.



MCMXCIV + X = MMIV

By Ardyce Asire

Thank heavens for the Arabic number system. But now in the early years of the 21st Century, the Roman system is not so freighted with extra "Ms" and "Cs", either.

If you are a fan of BBC comedies, you may note that the production year is always given in Roman numerals. The credits would run by too fast for me to determine the exact year. Try translating MCMXCIX or MCMLXXXVIII in the blink of an eye!

What a delight to figure out quickly that the latest episode of "Last of the Summer Wine" was produced in MMII.

More Travelers

Betty Atherton is back from a week in Damascus, a city where she and her husband spent four years when he was in the diplomatic corps. "It was like going home," Betty said with a broad smile.

The trip was sponsored by AMIDEAST, an education-oriented organization. Betty has been on its Board of Directors for some fifty years, she says.

"In Damascus we visited AMIDEAST's offices where there are classrooms for adult students who want to attend English language classes and where they may take exams to determine if their English is proficient enough for them to enroll in American colleges or universities," she explained.

Suzanne and Ainslee Embree have returned from a trip to London and Paris. "Purely for pleasure," Suzanne says. In London they attended a concert by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra whose conductor Suzanne had known when he was a 3-year old attending the nursery school she ran. In Paris she looked up a cousin who recently celebrated his 91st birthday.

Gift Book

David West, author and brother of Elisabeth FitzHugh, has given a copy of his most recent book to Collington's library.

Fritz Muller: A Naturalist in Brazil is a biographical account of Muller's adventures as a pioneer farmer and naturalist in Brazil during the 19th century.

To find the book, look in the Biography section of our library.



This is Mr. Darcy, tall, dark and handsome, just like his namesake in *Pride and Prejudice*, who lives in Cottage 2002.

A standard poodle, he belongs to Angelina Theodorakos, a native Washingtonian and retired interior decorator.

Angie spends a great deal of time with her year-old twin grandchildren and a 4-year old granddaughter, the children of her two sons. "I am very family oriented," she says.

Happy Birthday, Aileen!

Friends marked Aileen Aderton's 100th birthday last month with one celebration after another. For a biographical sketch of Aileen see *The Collingtonian* of June 2000.

A Spectacular Easter Dinner

First of all, let's give top marks to the Dining Services team for a memorable Easter Sunday dinner: Michelle Wells, Acting Director, Tina Williams, and chefs Tyrone Batts, Mark Thompson and Nicole Sutton, as well as the many servers who gave up their holiday for us.

Family groups came in such profusion that Raymond O'Meara at the Security Desk reported a veritable traffic jam at the gate.

Nevertheless, everything went smoothly and our guests enjoyed the deluxe cream of crab soup, rack of lamb, ginger rum-glazed baked ham and broiled salmon steak with horseradish crust and vegetables to adorn.

And if one could handle another bite, there were strawberry shortcake, chocolate mousse cake and other delights.

Thank you, Dining Services!

New Honor for Knowles

Virginia Knowles has had two major interests for most of her life. The first of these was international relations, in which she obtained an M.A. She was involved in some fascinating work at the State Department, the CIA and the Office of Education. Eventually, however, her humanitarian interests led her to enter the ministry. She is now an ordained minister in the Unitarian-Universalist Church. She worked on the boards of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in both Northern Virginia and at the state level. We are fortunate indeed that she has now been invited to join the ACLU Board in Prince George's County. S.H.

Slimming Down

The Weight Loss Challenge group, organized by Carrie Fein, Fitness Coordinator, is proving to be fun as well as productive. The Group of Seven meets every Wednesday at 4:15 p.m. to compare notes, offer suggestions and provide support. Carrie emphasizes that there is no pressure for conformity; people make individual choices about reaching their own goals. She is happy to report that every one in the group has managed to make a good start on losing weight. Early on a few men expressed interest, but did not stay with it. (Timid Teddy Bears?) New members are always welcome, Carrie says.

S.H.

Clip and Save This

Arbor:

3rd floor, turn right from elevator, go through Brandywine and enter through double-doors.

Brandywine:

3rd floor: Turn right from elevator. Two-room suites are here.

Chesapeake:

4th floor. Straight ahead. Not yet renovated.

Potomac:

4th floor. Take a right.

Shenandoah:

4th floor: Take a right, walk through Potomac and enter through double doors at end of the hall.

**YOU ARE
INVITED!**

**FREE
ADMISSION
FOR TWO
ADULTS**

May 13, 2004 - 7:00 PM

Prince George's Philharmonic
Post-Concert Social at Collington

10450 Lottsford Road, Mitchellville, MD 20721

RSVP: 301-925-7706

Marketing Plans Open House

It was mutual admiration night at the Philharmonic last month when the orchestra recognized Collington's contributions and Kassie Foundos and Hollie Mitchell of Marketing waved the Collington flag.

Each member of the audience was given a ticket to a May 13 party here (see facsimile above). It'll be an Open House at which Philharmonic fans can admire our newly redecorated areas and enjoy a snack and beverage prepared by Dining Services.

A quartet from the Philharmonic will provide music; Conductor Charles Ellis will be available to answer any and all questions and chat with his fans.

At the April all-Mozart concert the orchestra

showered encomia upon Collington, acknowledging that the "vigorous action taken by Collington residents in the early 1990's was largely responsible for the survival of the Philharmonic during critical economic times."

Mentioned by name in the program notes as conspicuous supporters of the orchestra were Ethel Belinky, Dr. and Mrs. Chris Bever, Connie Grisard, Mary Olmsted, Mary Ann Pellerin, Betty Williams, and Bob Willing.

After the concert, members of the audience were invited to look under their seats for pink slips indicating they had won either a Collington umbrella or a tote bag. Winners lined up and walked away with handsome prizes, happy to promote name recognition for our community in their neighborhoods.

Marketing Q & A

At a power-point presentation in the Auditorium in April, Larry Harris, rector of St. Barnabas' and Collington Board member, ran through the 42 questions and comments presented to the Board about our marketing approach.

A print copy of the questions and the Board answers is available in the Marketing Office.

The Collingtonian

10450 Lottsford Road, Mitchellville, MD 20721

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Editor: Frances Kolarek

Staff: Layne Beaty, Edward Behr, Dorothy Brown,
Sally Bucklee, Louis Dolbeare, Gloria Ericson,
Helen Gordon, Marguerite Gundlach, Sheila Hollies,
Catherine Hudson, Faith Jackson

Logistics: Ardyce Asire, Judith Shaw, Bertha

Remembrance of Things Past

By Gloria Ericson

It's impossible to reach the age of a typical Collington resident and not be beset by fits of nostalgia -- a dewy-eyed remembrance of things past. But I have discovered a way to tweak this natural phenomenon. I call it Themed Nostalgia. You pick a specific category and let your mind drift back, focusing only on that topic. For instance:

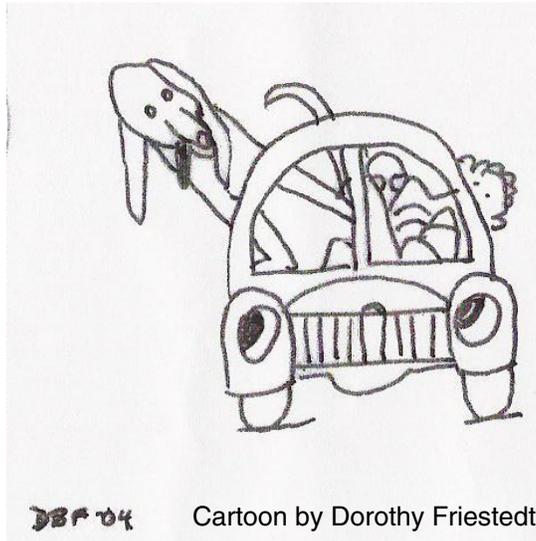
For women, clothing is always a good category: That pink prom dress and satin bridal gown. But how about that blue dress you wore to shreds just because you looked so damned *good* in it?

Another category is pets: Remember Fluffy, Pugsie and Duke -- their furry faces and loyal hearts? That could get a little weepy, so let's move on to something like:

Cars. Ah, cars. I'd like to linger on that one for a while. As newlyweds my husband and I went through a series of used cars. The first was the British Morris Minor -- a teeny-tiny car that looked like a conventional sedan that had been left out in the rain and had shrunk to one-third its original size. (My husband had a fetish about good gas mileage).

At the time we owned that car we also owned a large beige Afghan hound -- a breed that manages to look regal and goofy at the same time. Suki didn't mind riding as long as the car kept moving. But when we stopped for a red light,

she'd panic and thrash about and my husband would have to strong-arm her until the light changed. This meant that she had to sit up front with him so as to be accessible for the strong-arming. And that meant that I was relegated to the barely-there back seat -- a seat that was O.K. as long as you didn't have legs. But what I



Cartoon by Dorothy Friestedt

really disliked about sitting in the back was that the windows there were sealed shut and I could envision an accident in which I'd have to claw my way over a possibly unconscious husband and a manic dog, so I began keeping a brick in the car, planning to smash my way to freedom through the rear window. But one day my

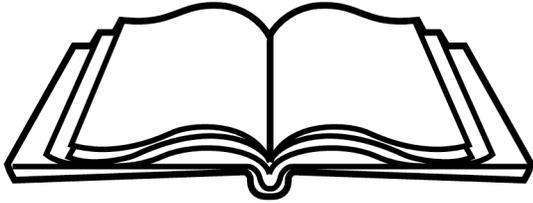
husband discovered the brick and confiscated it, explaining that *every* bit of extra weight would hurt our gas mileage. (As Dave Barry might say: I'm not making this up.)

But my most memorable ride in that car was the one in which we brought our newborn daughter home from the hospital. My husband had convinced himself that she was so fragile that any stray germ might do her in. So he wore a surgical mask whenever he was anywhere near her. He was wearing one that day on the ride home. And there were many near-accidents as drivers passing us swiveled their heads in disbelief at the sight of a masked man, with a regal/goofy side-kick, whizzing by them.

We owned other bizarre used cars but my allotted space is used up, so this will just have "TO BE CONTINUED."

Learning to Read

By Cynthia Parker



At age 28, Rohan could not read. He was dubious that I could teach him how. Nobody else had been able to, he told me. I tutor for the Literacy Council and teaching has been my life-long profession. I was eager to tackle Rohan's problem. For his part, one hurdle was already overcome -- he was from Jamaica, English was his native language, and he had been in the United States nine years.

We started our first lesson slowly, sounding out some consonant sounds. Then we turned to rhyming words. I chose "cat," and told Rohan a rhyming word would be "bat." He quickly came with "rat, mat, sat, fat" and "hat" and I wrote them down as he called each word out. Suddenly he could read seven words! We moved along to "cap" and Rohan came up with "map, sap and tap." Now he could read 11 words! Before our hour was up, Rohan could read 75 words!

At our next session he laboriously copied all the words he had learned into the spiral notebook I suggested he bring. We kept right on with rhyming words, and for our third session I brought *The Cat in the Hat*. He read it with very little difficulty. A milestone.

But we had a new hurdle to jump: Rohan suffers severely from dyslexia, which means he often reverses words and letters, seeing "d" instead of "p" or "b" or reading "was" for "saw." However, he recognizes the problem and is

quick to correct himself. "That's not a 'd,' it's a 'p,'" he will say.

Within six months Rohan was reading with some fluency and we had gotten through 26 books; a year later, we have read 86.

Recently Rohan was offered the job of supervisor of the shipping department of the wholesale grocer where he works, but he turned it down because he knew the job required reading and writing. He simply pretended to be satisfied with his present position. But he talks to me frequently about becoming a supervisor, and he's working diligently to attain that goal.



An Appreciative Audience

The Friday afternoon group that spends an hour with Arbor residents each week, knows a reward beyond price, its members say.

When the "entertainers" arrive, they usually find the audience in a dozing mode. But the minute the music strikes up and the songbooks are handed out, there's an awakening of interest.

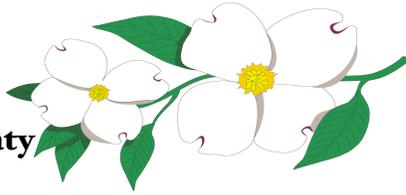
Soon everybody is singing -- songbooks are not needed, but they're a nice prop. The enthusiastic audience knows the words by heart -- and have known them for many years.

Now they are sitting tall and smiling and nodding and life is good again! Like old times -- almost.

For Betty Atherton, a regular member of the Friday Group, it's a rare and rewarding experience. Among others in the group are Marion Henry, Mary Ellen Hines, Chuck Dell, Dorothy Brown, Ruth Coale-Turner and Judith Shaw. There are many others, too.

Also . . .

By Layne Beaty



Congrats to whoever changed the tower clock to daylight saving time without delay. . . Remember when the clock struck the hours and we were serenaded with listenable tunes for a few minutes at lunch and dinner time? . . . It's nice to see Priscilla Atkinson back at her old stand there, part-time now. . . Joe Hysan likes to listen to others playing the tower electric organ. He sometimes brings along a list of his favorite pieces. . . But his entrepreneurship of a daily post-prandial game of Skip-Bo in the Ivy Room is also a priority. Just ask regulars Sally Listro, Eliza Miller or Leola Flynn, or Junius Jeffries, also known as the Boniface of Bingo. . . So you can't find the new pool table? Try the first room left as you exit the elevator on floor 3.

Is there no limit to this man's talents? Ten oil paintings by our Jim Gholson were the attraction at a reception April 18 after a Candlelight Concert at nearby St. Barnabas' Church observing its 300th anniversary. Mr. Gholson is a longtime member.

Think in millions. How many words of wisdom (WOWs) have been lost to Collingtonians by our inept use of microphones at our public gatherings.

Roy Battles, who at 92 left us last month for the Great Beyond, may be best remembered here for his rich baritone in conversation across the dining room or in the weekly sing-along. Early in his career he had been a radio

broadcaster and public speaker who maybe didn't need a mike at all.

We have been shown many fine films here, and some stinkers. We sometimes miss the old Hays office of the moviemakers.

Around here, walking seems to be the product of matching cane and able.

It is probably agreed that MaryAverett Seeleye understands poetry better than most of us. She also recognizes a good "put down" by two experts. So, George Bernard Shaw, in a note to Winston Churchill: "Dear Winston, My play opens tonight. Here are two tickets. Do come and bring a friend, if you have one." The Churchillian reply: "Dear Bernard: Sorry, I am busy tonight. Would be glad to attend the second performance, if there is one."

Memorable Mots

"For the colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady are"
"How would I know?"
"Bring out your dead. . ."
"Ladies will please remove their hats."
". green has gone to war."

ODE TO THE CLINIC AND THE ARBOR:

How do I love thee?
Let me count the angels

Persuading the residents of the 1000 and 2000 clusters to stick to the zigzag paved walks to the Clocktower is like getting the Iraqis to accept democracy.