

The

Collingtonian

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June 1993

News & View

*The Opportunity Outlet
The Op Shop
The "Oh! Oh!"*

*Call it what you will.
It's a Gold Mine*

by Frances Kolarek

It's a Thrift Shop. It's a Flea Market. It's a Bargain Basement. It's The Place to Shop.

You don't exactly stumble over it. A little effort goes into the trip through the fire doors by the Courtyard Level elevators, around the corner and down the hall toward Collington's Ultima Thule. And there it is! Worth the trip? You bet.

What a collection of STUFF: china, glassware, kitchen utensils, furniture, shower curtains, clothing, handbags, whasis items, pet needs, copper molds, collectibles--everything.

Moving quietly through this plethora of merchandise, Hilda Jay and Georgia Payne seem coolly in control. "But we couldn't do it without a corps of faithful volunteers. You have to truly appreciate people who regularly get in here at seven in the morning when we open up. That's true dedication," Hilda says.

On the morning I visited, Hilda was off to a show the contents of a cottage to a potential buyer. She tries to sell

furniture directly out of a housing unit rather than moving it to Headquarters. She keeps a card file (she's a Librarian, don't forget) of all the requests she gets for specific items (a bookcase, a sofa bed) and manages to match new owners to used articles.

The operation literally coins money while performing many services to residents. All its merchandise comes from Collingtonians who have arrived with more than they can fit into their new homes, or from things left behind when heirs and survivors have made their final dispositions.

For its space behind the Laundry Room it pays no rent or utility bills. Income is just about all pure profit which goes straight into the coffers of the Residents Association. Last year the Opportunity Outlet turned over close to \$25,000. In May of this year a contribution of over \$10,000 went to the Fellowship Fund from the Residents Association.

When Hilda finds herself in

possession of a piece of Waterford crystal or some other *article of vertu* she gets in touch with a dealer she ferreted out who will take goods on consignment. In that way, she makes sure that treasures fetch the maximum and gets a free appraisal in the bargain.

On the other side of the coin, oddments and clothing that fail to sell are sent off to Warm Nights, The Salvation Army, Goodwill or church groups who help the homeless or to others in need of clean, tidy clothing to wear to a job interview.

* * *

The O.O. evolved from a chaotic collection of furniture and other personal effects that began to accumulate in the Creighton Center as soon as the roof went on. Some items were proposed for decorating purposes; some just couldn't be crammed into new abodes.

From time to time a giant Treasure Sale would be held in the Auditorium with the proceeds going to the Fellowship Fund. Handled by staff, the job soon became too time-consuming. The collection reached crisis proportions.

"It was a Fibber McGee's closet," Hilda Jay says. "John came home one day from a meeting about the problem and suggested that I might be just the one to take it on." So she did.

She organized three big sales. In the first, furniture went, then kitchen ware, china and glassware. Finally a sale of collectibles was advertised discreetly outside of Collington and drew a big crowd. Then with two rooms at her disposal (management reserved one to store furniture for use in guest units and

the Health Center. Hilda began to organize. The Op Shop was born.

"Understand," Hilda points out, "that the Opportunity Outlet has a responsibility to help residents or their heirs get rid of things they no longer want. Clothing--which we had not handled before--began to come in."

Originally thought to be a monstrous headache, clothing turned out to have unforeseen benefits: staff members, who do a great deal of shopping at the O.O., were enthusiastic customers and residents began to sniff out the bargains.

In addition to the second Thursday of each month when it is officially open, Hilda will open the O.O. by appointment. From her locked cupboards of treasures have come wedding gifts and birthday presents to rescue residents in a pinch. Selling furniture directly from cottages works very well, Hilda says, and a staff member's son recently furnished his first apartment entirely from contents of one cottage.

The greatest mystery about the Opportunity Outlet is why Collington's two smallest residents should be in charge of it. The word "petite" was coined to describe Georgia Paine and Hilda Jay, who are friends and neighbors and work well together. Almost any day, one or the other can be seen pushing a piece of furniture across campus on an especially constructed dolly John Jay built, or guiding push carts full of whatnots toward the Creighton Center. Why do they do it? "Well," they say, "It's worth doing--and it's also fun."

Enter the FUN-DA-THON!
Sign Up NOW--Sponsor a Friend

The Doughnut Girls--Part 3

by Mary Parrish

With pride and pleasure, we have introduced four of Collington's six Doughnut Girls--Aileen Aderton, Katherine Heagy, Peggy Wilhelm as well as Mary Parrish whose enthusiasm and leg-work produced this series. We have marked the 50th Anniversary of D-Day and noted the 49th anniversary of VE-Day. In this final installment, we will introduce our last two Red Cross Volunteers and visit the Pacific Theater.



Helen Brown

Helen Brown's Story

Helen Brown arrived in London in December 1943, and the Red Cross sent her along to Suffolk, "the American-speaking part of England." There she was posted to an American Army Hospital near Long Melford, about 60 miles north of London.

She describes the train trip as "a pitch black ride with search lights roaming the sky, bombs passing overhead on their way to London, an incomprehensible conductor and no bathrooms."

"The hospital was built on a country estate. Nurses were housed in the former Manor House and the Army built a large number of Quonset huts for hospital wards. One of these was assigned to the Red Cross staff of three women--a social worker, a recreational worker and a me--the secretary."

After the invasion on June 6, and for a year thereafter, carload after carload of wounded men arrived from France. "We met the trains, always at night, with words of comfort and reassurance and gave the men candy and gum. There was an air of relief and jubilation among the wounded as they arrived back in England. It was as if they were finally home safe."

As with any wartime post, there were moments of laughter and escape. Helen's favorite story is about the day a G.I. won a hugely pregnant Belgian hare in a local raffle. Panic stricken, he couldn't wait to turn it over to the Red Cross Girls who had proved they could cope with any emergency.

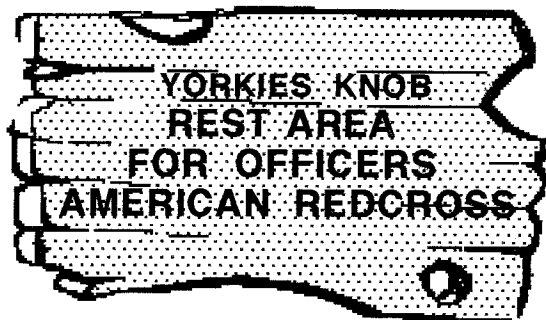
When spring finally broke that year, the War was almost over and there was some free time to enjoy Suffolk's

famous big blue sky. Helen's favorite get-away was bicycling down country lanes lined with ancient hedgerows and stopping for tea at picture-pretty tea rooms in nearby villages.

At about this same time, in early 1944, Margaret Maslin's Clubmobile was within 20 miles of Long Melford, serving troops in the Ipswich area. And one year later, both Mary Parrish and Helen Brown

were escaping their bases to enjoy an occasional dinner at the lovely Swan Inn, a 400-year old landmark at Lavenham. Located about 5 miles from Helen, it was no more than 12 miles from Mary's base at Wattisham. Of course, none of them ever met any of the others!

In October Helen Brown returned to her home in Washington, D. C., where she met and married a young lawyer named Earl Eisenhart.



Marcia Ward's Story

Marcia Ward joined the American Red Cross in February 1943 and shortly left for Brisbane, Australia. There she learned she was assigned to a small rest hotel at Yorkies Knob. From Brisbane, on the east coast, she made a 1,000-mile, five-day train trip "on hard sleeping pallets" to Cairns on the north Coast. Twelve more difficult miles by Jeep brought her to Yorkies Knob. She had been en route 18 days.

The U.S. Army had taken over an old brothel--a small building framed by palm trees standing on a beautiful white sandy beach--and converted it to a rest and recreational hotel for combat troops. The military staffed and supplied the hotel and two Red Cross girls managed it. It was a primitive setup without indoor plumbing. Didn't the officers object to



Marcia Ward in Washington, D. C. 1943

these conditions? "No," Marcia explains. "We kept them too well-fed to complain. I wrote home and my mother sent me all her wonderful dessert recipes. Wartime rations didn't effect us. There was always plenty of everything."

The primitive plumbing got upgraded with the arrival of Eleanor Roosevelt. The occasion for her visit was a demonstration of a newly-developed landing barge. The First Lady was accompanied by top brass from both the Army and the Navy--Admiral King and

General Eichelberger. Indoor plumbing appeared as if by magic and the VIP's found a shower and a toilet installed inside the hotel.

The party remained overnight and the high point of Marcia's entire tour of duty was the evening spent talking with Mrs. Roosevelt whom she remembers with great admiration.

After eleven months in this isolated location, Marcia moved to a Brisbane enlisted men's club for three months.

In September 1944 she transferred to Oro Bay in Eastern New Guinea, then to Biak Island off the north coast, a large

supply depot and stop-off point in the Southwest Pacific Theater of Operations. There she served coffee and doughnuts to returning flight crews.

Armed with the script of a humorous play she had brought from New York City, Marcia finally had the opportunity to produce it. She toured with it through many of the islands of the East Indies, often under conditions that would have tried Bob Hope.

In January 1945, she came home and resigned from the Red Cross. A few years later, in New York, she met and married Ed Behr.



Time to Do All the Nothing You Want . . .

Mutinous Meetings - A Response - by Dick vanWagenen

The May Collingtonian printed Al Rosen's report about the formation of a Committee to Preserve Free Time. Indeed, we could slow down and get in a little retirement time during our limited stay at Collington. It isn't as though we were built like Hobbes. (Calvin said, "He has no setting between 'Off' and 'High.'") And we could even switch "Fast Forward" onto "Rewind," except that some of us don't have the technical skills to press the right button.

However, either of two suggestions might do the job even better.

1. Remove the trouble by removing the symptom. Some years ago, I believe, the railway industry made a study of accidents. They found that most accidents occurred when the last car of a train was rammed. So they cured this by removing that car from every train.

Similarly, when time becomes too oppressive, remove your wristwatch. In Collington's case, the easiest way to slow down would be to remove and hide that tempting, intimidating calendar of Happenings posted in the Clock Tower. What is not scheduled, does not occur.

2. Take a tip from Watterson and Shakespeare. Calvin remarked to Hobbes: "There is never enough time to do all the nothing you want." So if you are asked to serve on a committee or actually find yourself serving, just declare: "I trust, my absence doth neglect no great design, which by my presence might have been concluded." King Richard III, Act III.

What I'm getting to is that all this wild orbiting will only lead to an orbituary. That's nearly as fatal as an inoperable headstone.

A Summa cum laude Hardware Store

by Caroline Farquhar

Need a cherry seeder? A sausage grinder? A bird house?
No problem at the Cloverly Hardware Emporium

Many a Collington resident says, with feeling, "Retirement here is an oxymoron," and a notable example is Mary Ellen Hines. Moving to a cottage in 1991, she took on a lot more activities with the Chapel and Hospitality committees, the Collington Singers, helping with the Craft Show, adding to her already long life list as farmer's wife, mother of five, leader of a 4H Club for 15 years, chairman for five years of the Montgomery General Hospital Supper and Bazaar. This latter event has occurred on a July evening for more than 75 years, ever since a small community hospital was put together in response to the flue epidemic of 1919. She was also very much involved with her church, St. Luke's Episcopal in Brighton.

A busful of Collingtonians en route to the Gaithersburg Montgomery County Fair last August were treated to Mary Ellen's lively account of its history, which she has been involved in since the Fair began in 1947.

This interview emerged from a reporter's visit to Cloverly Hardware Store, a summa cum laude emporium on

New Hampshire Avenue north of Silver Spring, which Mary Ellen and her late husband founded and which she now owns.

In 1947 her father-in-law bought ten acres of land on Colesville Pike, a clover field (thus the name "Cloverly") and in 1951 built there an ESSO station and a small three-store shopping center. "Why

do you want to move there?" a relative asked. "No one will be able to find you." Behind William Hines Sr.'s act of faith was ten years' know-how gained in running a thriving farmers cooperative (Southern States) out of a six-car garage on his farm near Brinklow (not far from where Brighton Dam was later built).

"When we opened the

store in 1961," says Mary

Ellen, "most of the customers were farmers buying feed, seed and fertilizer. We still sell these and farm clothes, rubber and leather work boots, farm kitchen items, such as cherry seeders, sausage grinders, rubber rings for canning jars. But most of our shelves are packed to the ceiling with suburbanites' needs: seed packets, cultivators, small garden tools, hardware, pet food, bird seed and feeders and houses. She laughs, "And bags of dried corn-



Mary Ellen Hines

on-the cob to feed squirrels. If my husband could only see. We used to sell that to the farmers by the ton to feed livestock."

When she and her husband and five children lived just down the road, they all helped in the store. She feels that the store's 20-plus employees today take pride in knowing the stock and how to help customers, most of whom really ask for advice on fixing things or finding a particular tool or part. Since 1979 a son and son-in-law have run the store,

and recently a 17-year-old granddaughter took her place as the fourth generation Hines to work in the business. Its farm roots still evident, the store opens at 7:30 every morning except Sunday. The owner estimates its business now is 10% farm and 90% suburban.

Some routines that used to be part of her farm life--the massive canning and freezing, preserving, and sewing aprons and clothing from the decorative feed-bags--are gone forever. But she would not have it any other way. To Mary Ellen, Collington is like one big vacation.



Collector's Item

Prince George's County will celebrate its 300th anniversary in 1996 and plans are already marching ahead. A T-shirt bearing a newly-devised logo went on sale and Anna Dougherty bought one.

Now it turns out she owns a collector's item. After consideration, the Prince George's Tricentennial Celebration Committee decided the garland of tobacco at the base of the logo is a no-no. "Never mind that the County was

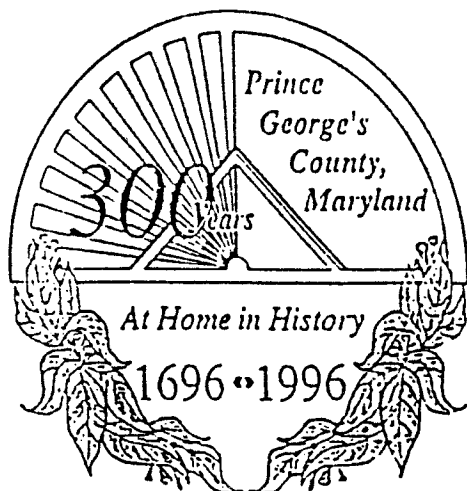
built on tobacco," one native remarked. The noxious weed must go. T-shirts with the tobacco leaves will disappear, and a new design will go on the market. So, like a stamp that is removed from circulation because of an error, Anna's T-shirt will become a rarity.

While we are on the subject of the Tricentennial, our own Mildred Gray, who was born and bred in the County, has been named by County Executive Parris Glendening to serve on the Committee. Her special bailiwick: the County's history and orientation.



Kudos:

The Chicago Serbian Bar Association presented its Annual Merit Award to Professor Emeritus Alex Dragnich for his "eminent stature in America's Academic circles and scholarly and principled portrayal of Serbian history." Alex traveled to Chicago to accept the honor at the group's annual Banquet.



The Offensive Tricentennial Logo

The Return of the Bluebirds?

by Edward Behr

Collington is making a determined effort to bring back our beloved bluebirds, now mostly driven away by villainous house sparrows.

Three additional nesting boxes have been put up in places where there were none before. One is near the north end of the dam, another in a clearing upstream from the lake and the third just beyond the Hilltop Gardens. These boxes are testing a new tactic: in place of the usual wooden box housing the nest, there is an empty half-gallon milk container. The hope is that the bluebirds will be able to make their way into the hole in the container while the sparrows will not. This tactic is said to have worked well in other places.

What's more, some older nesting boxes may soon be moved to new, more promising locations. A box in the courtyard of the 2000 cluster, the site of sparrows' slaughter of baby bluebirds two years ago, may be replanted in a more remote place, less likely to be infested by sparrows.

Even before these changes can take effect, there is some good news to report. Several weeks ago a pair of bluebirds moved in to an older nesting box at the handicapped-parking sign below the Hilltop Gardens. They have produced five eggs; two of these have hatched. At this writing, though, no other new bluebird nestings have been reported.

Our bluebird enthusiasts are planning continued oversight to encourage the birds to come back and stay. The

members of a newly-formed committee, a subcommittee of the Lake and Trail Committee, will keep watch on the nesting boxes, clean them out as necessary and try to bar sparrows from moving in. This committee may well need help from other residents, especially when its members are away. Any volunteers?

The effort to bring back the bluebirds is an outgrowth of the plan to have the wilder, woodsier parts of the Collington property formally designated as an Urban Wildlife Sanctuary. (See last January's

Collingtonian.) For getting the bluebird project started, Collington owes thanks to Sally Sanders and Jennifer Frace, the

University of Maryland students who have been serving as interns here to pursue the sanctuary plan.

But an essential contribution has also come from a Collington resident. It was Karl Wirth, one of our most skillful woodworkers, who designed and produced the new-model nesting boxes that we hope will encourage bluebirds to return.

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Special Friends:

Collingtonians at Woodmore School

by M. J. Cullinane

Woodmore Elementary School, a mile or so beyond the point where Lottsford Road becomes Woodmore, is host to a group of Collington volunteers known as Special Friends. These adults work on a one-to-one basis with children with special needs.

Each week-day different volunteers visit the school and devote a morning or an afternoon giving individual attention to selected students in grades one through six.

These are children who have been identified as needing additional help in strengthening learning skills, developing self-confidence and self-esteem, and practicing appropriate patterns of social behavior. They are often students who,

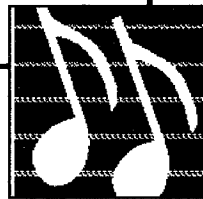
because of economic conditions or broken homes, haven't enjoyed much adult attention or display of affection.

Woodmore Elementary School is over-crowded in relation to physical plant and student-teacher ratio. Relief is expected next year upon the completion of the new Kingsford Elementary School under construction on Enterprise Road between Lottsford and Route 214. However, volunteers will still be needed. There are fears that school construction is not keeping pace with the rapid increase in housing.

Teachers, administrators and student participants in the Woodmore project are enthusiastic about the program. All feel that it is successful and that Special Friends do make a difference.

Grace Notes

Old Instrument - New Sound by Melva Wence



So you thought a saxophone belonged only in jazz bands, swing, hard rock or country music groups. If you heard Gary Louie's recent concert in the Auditorium, you discovered you were wrong.

Mr. Louie has added the saxophone to the violin, cello, clarinet and other instruments played with symphony orchestras. His singing, melodious tones proved that the instrument can do anything the classics require in the hands of the right artist.

Kirsten Taylor (Mrs. Louie) accompa-

nied her husband on the piano beautifully and Mr. Louie's comments between numbers added to his audience's understanding and enjoyment.

The couple chose pieces from their recently recorded "Romantic Pieces for Saxophone and Piano," including works from the modern repertory and transcriptions of earlier works. Composers included Manuel de Falla, Dvorak, Stravinsky, Ravel and Milhaud.

Mr. Louie teaches his new concept of saxophone playing at the Peabody Conservatory of Music. He was a winner of the National Symphony Young Artist

Competition at age 18, and Mrs. Taylor, also precocious, first performed with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra at age 11.



Early Music At a Morning Concert by Jo Bever

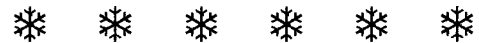
A double musical treat came to Collington on a recent morning. Kay Jones brought her Meadowlane Consort to entertain us and Kay, herself, brought us insights into the early beginnings of the symphonic form. Her group, recorders and harpsichord, gave examples, playing music of the Baroque period. There was lots of Vivaldi (c. 1676-1741), and Johann Sebastian Bach, almost his exact contemporary in Germany. Bach admired his Italian colleague and arranged a number of Vivaldi's string concertos for the keyboard.

Kay Jones has taught recorder over the years for young people in schools and for adults in county recreation centers. She is an authority on early music, closely covering performances and keeping abreast of the developing interest in the instruments and musical techniques of early times.

Meadowlane Consort has been playing with her for more than a decade. They play for various occasions, one of which is an annual program for the Free Music Talks at public libraries sponsored by the National Symphony Education Department.

The Collington audience received them enthusiastically and enjoyed the opportunity to learn about a variety of

instruments, hands on. The Music Committee, sponsor of this program, is encouraged to do more morning programs.



Voices Like Angels by Emily Abouchar

The Maryland Boy Choir came to Collington in early May and charmed an enthusiastic audience. Under the skillful direction of Betty Scott, they sang like angels, without music, a varied program ranging from Bach and Mozart to Benjamin Britten. Obviously they had been well trained; but how Ms. Scott kept them on their feet for over an hour with a minimum of squirming, was something of a miracle. Moreover, they clearly enjoyed singing, even the littlest among them. The rhythm was maintained, the dynamics swelled and dropped to a whisper just as they should. It was a very professional performance. Ms. Scott deserves a "Brava" for her fine work.

This choir was organized in 1983 by a professor of Music at the University of Maryland. Fortunately, Ms. Scott, already well-known for her excellence as a teacher and director, was on hand to train and develop it into a well-known, superior boys choir. It has sung at the White House, Kennedy Center, with the National Symphony Orchestra and elsewhere. Fortunately, it was also able to enroll an accomplished choir choral singer and soloist, as the accompanist. She was splendid. But above all, it is the quality of the boys' voices that is so appealing--clear, delicate and somehow unselfconscious. It is a joy to hear them. They have been to Collington before and we devoutly hope they will come again.

White Lightning Road

by Frances Kolarek

A reader has expressed some surprise and dismay at my reference to Collington's site as a former "trash dump." "I thought it was farm land," she said a mite plaintively.

Yes, indeed, it was farm land. Caroline and Bill Wood who lived in Bladensburg for many years in the days before air conditioning, used to ride out this way on a hot summer evening looking for a cool breeze. They would drive out Lottsford Road to the place where a little bridge crossed it, and turn around and go back home.

White Lightning Road was what they called Lottsford Road back then because the woods were full of small, independent stills that produced Moonshine or White Lightning.

Malcolm Wall once told me a still had been uncovered on the site of Collington. "And a couple of dead bodies, too," he said. Something about the way his tongue got stuck in his cheek kept me from swalling the story hook, line and sinker. But the part about the still I believe. Exploring our trails and edges when I first arrived at Collington, I discovered a trash dump where a sodden cardboard container revealed its contents of empty whiskey bottles. I added one to my bottle collection. It's shaped like a whiskey flask, holds One Pint, and embossed on the bottom are the words "Liquor Bottle" followed by the number "55 11 76." The screw-on cap is, however, of plastic.

From which I deduce that the stills were not just a product of Prohibition but continued to brew tax-free alcoholic

beverages for the local market up until recently. When the County rezoned the area and housing developments began to pop up, their necessary privacy was destroyed.

As for the two corpses, Kevin Shaver, an unimpeachable source of local lore, told me they were found down near where Cry Baby Bridge used to be, and were definitely NOT on Collington property.

Cry Baby Bridge? There's a ghost story involved, and I plan to send my investigating reporter to track it down.. Watch for the October Collingtonian.

Have Fun

Enter the FUN-DA-THON

or Sponsor a Participant



CARVER

This sketch, from the newsletter at Medford Lees, a Retirement Community in New Jersey, was contributed by Ethel Hodel.

Aids Available to Those with Low Vision

Call 2212 for the Calendar of Events for the day.

Audiocassette of each week's Courier--Dial 2214 to get on the list to receive tapes.

"EAR"- a free radio reading service that daily brings readings from the Post, Wall Street Journal, U.S. News, TV listings and more. Call 681-6636.

Xerox-Kurzweil Personal Reader, in Collington's Library, converts printed matter into speech. Lessons available from Burt Dougherty, 2214.

Voyager Vitek machine, in Collington's Library, magnifies printed material and projects enlarged image onto a screen. Call 2214, Burt Dougherty.

Library of Congress Talking Books. Cassette player and tapes come through the mail. Call Judy Reilly, 2248.

Low Vision Group meets occasionally to exchange useful tips on what's new. Dorothea Crook, 7508, announces dates and times of meetings.