



The  
*Collingtonian*

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•Captain Klein Ready to be Piped Aboard•

by Frances Kolarek

"Assuming I'm elected..." As unopposed candidate for President of the Residents Association of which he now serves as Vice President, Doyen Klein carefully prefaces remarks about his upcoming tenure with this disclaimer, adding with a grin "There's many a slip..." Elections will be held October 10 at 1 o'clock in the Auditorium.

Happily launched in Career No. 4 as a participating Collingtonian, Doyen would like to see "more participation by residents in overall planning." The establishment of the Planning Committee, he feels, is symptomatic of a trend in this direction.

A graduate of the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Doyen spent 31 years in the Navy retiring with the rank of Captain. He spent the next 27 years in the San Diego area of California, working with General Dynamics and the Douglas Space Center where his Naval experience with atomic energy and weapons research was in demand. And when he retired from this second career, he launched Career No. 3 in real estate at the behest of his late wife Jane, who reminded him she married him "for better or for worse but not for lunch."

Long interested in retirement commu-

nities through Jane's membership on a board seeking to establish one, the couple traveled across the country visiting many facilities and learning all they could about what constitutes a successful, attractive community. When Jane's board decided on a course which would lead to a high-rise, the couple realized that Collington conformed most closely to their dreams. Doyen had kept contacts with Academy alumni and was happy to return to the East Coast and root for his alma mater at the annual Army-Navy game.

He has a high regard for AAHSA, the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, and has attended some of their national conventions. He plans to be at the New Orleans convention in late October and has successfully advocated that Collington send the President of the Residents Association as a delegate.

Doyen is a devoted member of the fitness center, a project in which he has played a role since its inception. Calling it "the best thing we have," he credits his participation in the fitness program with his rapid recovery from an automobile accident a year or so ago.

(continued next page)

Small World Notes

His apartment combines two units, with the living room a part of an efficiency and Doyen's windowless but roomy office in space where its kitchen and bathroom would have been. There are two bedrooms and baths in the second unit where Doyen recently entertained his year-old granddaughter, Hannah Jane Klein and her parents Doyen and Sarah who live in California.

In October, outgoing Residents Association president Ruth Dixon will preside over the meeting, and, says Doyen, "I'll take over the gavel at the end of the meeting--assuming I'm elected."

That's a pretty safe bet, if you can find any takers.

17.5 Acres at Entrance Offered

To ensure that Collington controls the destiny of the 17.5 acres to the left of our property as one enters from Lottsford Road, a suggestion has been put forward that the residents consider the wisdom of our purchasing this land.

It has been zoned for high rise apartments and the owner is making decisions about the future use of the property.

Judy Kidney, a member of Collington's Executive Board, has learned that the asking price is \$2,000,000. She would be interested in the views of Collington residents about the wisdom of the purchase of this property, as well as suggestions about the sources of funds to cover such a purchase.

If you have views on the matter, please let Judy Kidney know, on Ext. 7333.

Roger Dixon and Morris Weisz are recovering from the attack of nostalgia that struck when a handsome copy of the 50th anniversary report ("From War to Wealth") of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris arrived here. Both men worked there for a time and Morris was closely associated with it even earlier while an official of the Marshall Plan in Paris. He has practically memorized the report. Maybe he could have written it.



Our John Huizenga was on the receiving end of a glowing compliment from War College lecturer Prof. Melvin Goodman here at one of Goodman's series on "Winds of Change: Russia and Eastern Europe." It seems that Goodman had been much impressed by some of Huizenga's earlier lectures when the two were at the CIA.



Nothing personal, Glendy: Talking with Dorothy Mayer, a cluster mate, recently, Glendy Pabst mentioned a minuscule summer place in New York called Peach Lake where she had spent summers with her husband's family. The Pabsts were old settlers there and owned the water works and electric plant. Dorothy, a one-time Peach Laker, chimed: "Oh, sure. I remember the Pabsts. Dad always said, "Turn the lights off before you go out. We don't want to make old man Pabst rich."



Conna Bell Shaw, Fannie Jeffrey and the late Caroline Wood were each associated at one time with Virginia Beaty in the YWCA or the Overseas Education Fund of the League of Women Voters.

Darwin would be ecstatic if he could see what Collington's geese are up to. "Right again!" he might exclaim. Before our eyes, they are evolving, as in EVOLUTION, defined by Webster as "the development of (an) organism from its original to its present state."

Mary MacMartin, one of Collington's premier bird watchers, expresses this opinion more soberly, but she too is excited. Those striking black, white and tan waterfowl on our lake can't look different from those pictures in classic field guides, but they aren't behaving as once described.

Mary explains the difference. Our geese don't migrate from the frosty waters of Canada for which they are named: "*Branta Canadensis*." Like us, they've discovered the mid-Atlantic suburbs. Summer and winter, they mostly stick around. "If they keep this up," she says, "They may in time be classified as a new sub-specie."

In the meantime, Collington's early morning athletes notice another change: the geese are multiplying. Penny Vickery, who has rarely missed her morning walk in nine years, sees a big difference. Ed Behr, our pre-eminent naturalist, thinks they may have doubled since last summer. The Washington Post recently quoted a four-fold increase in the area. Emily Baker, a watchful apartment dweller, wonders if the lake can hold any more.

Actually, it could. Constant movement makes a good census iffy, but by mid-September about 70 seemed a fair count. That left several open patches of water

available when the groups assembled at dawn for take-off. And, Mary points out, if nature takes its course, there will be more birds next spring. And even more, thereafter.

That's because Canada geese mate for life and have a life-span up to 22 years. Every year there's been at least one nesting pair here. This year, there were two.

So far Collington tolerates its invaders, although some apartment dwellers complain of noise. Ken Muldoon says they wake him as early as 5 a.m. Mary Deutsch and her neighbor Betty Williams find that the birds, described by field guides as "sociable," can be a little too much so. After hatching, ganders and chicks march right up and peer into Mary's window. Then, there's the risk of soiled and slippery grass.

Currently our closely watched geese reveal rather neat habits. Most spend nights here but like other suburbanites depart early to make a living. A vegetarian living at that, which our county easily provides. In mid-September, geese departed noisily between 6:45 and 7 a.m., returning less noisily between 7:45 and 8:30 p.m. After a brief social hour, they swam silently, often in single file, toward the far marshland shore. And so, presumably, to bed.

Elsewhere in the area, the goose population seems less welcome. Sam Saben, a graduate of Leisure World, recalls that the fowl population there was considered a serious problem. Some communities now resort to desperate measures, including so-called "bounty hunters."

## •We Owe Our Soles to the Country Store•

Shirley Fields and the Country Store go together like peanut butter and jelly. Ever since the store opened back in the days when a snack bar and the store were in the space where the level one dining room is now located, Shirley has been in charge.

Patronized more frequently by staff than by residents, the store provides a quick breakfast snack of cheese crackers and a soda for the hurried. Make no mistake, though. To Collington residents the store is more than just a convenience and at one time, when there was a proposal to abolish the store, it became a red hot issue. It doesn't replace the supermarket, but it's miles closer.

Enter an organization called Top Banana which delivers groceries to shut ins at a slight premium. A number of residents call on Top Banana to help them out and by and large are satisfied with results. It was this organization that undertook to keep Collington's Country Store stocked with the things we need every day and a whole lot more.

If you just need a loaf of bread or a quart of milk, or, say, a jar of mayo for a sandwich, or perhaps some syrup for a stack of pancakes, or maybe a tube of toothpaste, or some chocolate chip cookies the Country Store can take care of you. In fact the inventory numbers somewhere around 2,000 items all of which

are entered into a computer with coded numbers. Shirley will tell you all about it if you want to know more.

Shirley came to us nine years ago from the Foreign Service Recreation Association of the State Department, "Sometimes I still miss it," she admits, but the job in the store provides lots of contact with residents and staff. If Shirley calls you Babe, or Darlin' don't take offense. It just means you are high up on her list of nice folks.

Most recent addition to the store is the fax machine on which residents can send letters and other documents to those demanding a quick response. Shirley knows how this works, too.

She is totally responsible for keeping the store stocked, clean and tidy. Sometimes she has to go downstairs and bring up fresh milk, or remove empty cartons that pile up outside the door. So if you turn up and the door is locked, Shirley says please have a seat and wait a minute or two. She will not be gone for long.

Weekends, Charles McCord fills in during the afternoons, so that we have access to those 2,000 items seven days a week.

The store is open weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. with a lunchtime closing between 2 and 2:30. On Saturday and Sunday the hours are 12 to 4. F.K.



Shirley Fields

## Well, How About That?

If on an early morn you think you are dreaming and see the Roman goddess Diana the Huntress and her swift companion of the chase wafting by your window, dream on. But it may be just Barbara Hall being led at a fast clip around campus buildings and grounds by Casey, her substantial and faithful Keeshond. It keeps them both in trim, and they do it twice a day.



We were not unduly surprised that the owner of the vanity license plate "Gadzook" is our biker/woodworker/sailor neighbor George Dankers. He explains that his initials are G.A.D. and this seems to lead to the old, mild oath. The tag was a Christmas gift from his daughter.



Nostalgia overcame Howard Dent when the Washington Redskins played the first game in their new stadium recently. He had attended the first Skins game in 1936 in the old Griffith stadium, and many more, home and away, thereafter. It also brought sadness. He didn't have a ticket this time.



Willard Scott of radio and TV fame (NBC's "Today" show ) has recorded some radio public service spots boosting retirement communities such as ours. Ann Hammond of Collington administration is contacting area stations about them. Old timers in this area may recall Willard and his partner Ed Walker on the old WRC "Joy Boys" radio show.



## Job at Collington

I have these many parts, Lord,  
That make up what is me.  
I know I'm greater than their sum,  
But that's not cause for glee.

I need the parts that work, Lord,  
That do what they should do  
And don't cramp up, close up, throw up,  
And then come down with flu.

That aren't abscessed, inflamed,  
festering,  
Nor with calcium encrusted;  
Not sprained, infected, bleeding,  
Nor withered, nor ruptured, nor busted.

I'm turning back these parts, Lord,  
Those parts that do not work;  
Please requisition another set  
From the celestial supply-room clerk.

A voice comes back that's very sad,  
And just a little tired.  
"Why can't you understand, my son,  
Your warranty's expired."

Wendell Brown

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## Two Newcomers

by Dorothy Brown

Gordon Knox, who moved into Cottage 2206 in April, is a Baltimorean who joined the foreign service in 1940 after graduating from Yale. He was dispatched to Berlin. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor he was transferred to Stockholm, which he describes as "a watch tower on Germany."

Later, on a temporary assignment in the Caribbean area, he "fell in love" with the region and settled in the Dominican Republic when he retired. He taught American History and English in high school there for ten years.

Another April move-in, Walter Smith of Apartment 138 was born in Alabama. He received a master's degree in engineering from Auburn University in 1941 and was employed by the British Ministry of War Transport, which gave him a citation for his work. He was commissioned in the Navy in 1942. After four years of active duty, he continued his association with the Navy as a civilian employee of the Office of Naval Research. He was assigned to Seattle, where he lived for 31 years, retiring as the ONR's resident representative there.

He came here to be near a step daughter who lives in Bowie.

After a five-day cruise on the Gulf of Mexico, Fannie Jeffrey says she feels like she was gone six months. Good thing she wasn't. She would have missed the regatta scheduled for last Saturday and the October 10 election.

## Truth May Be Better than Fiction

by Layne Beaty

Most Americans, modest and self-contained though they may appear to be, have at some time aspired to write for publication, or at least for posterity. Many settle for self-satisfaction.

To help make it even more satisfying to those willing to participate, J. S. McCann, professor of English at nearby Prince George's Community College, recently led another course in autobiographical writing here under the auspices of the college's Senior Citizen Program of Continuing Education.

Praise has been heard in the halls and dining room from the enrollees for Prof. McCann's teachings, and now we have the published volume of 15 autobiographical sketches.

Accepting Socrates at his word that the unexamined life is not worth living, the writers abandoned the arid straight who-what-where-when formula and added the more useful why and how.

Says Prof. McCann, "Often after one of the class members reads (his writings) a hush comes over the seminar... I would argue that what the listeners-readers are responding to with reverent silence is the care the writer has taken in presenting the why and how of an event of 40 or 50 years ago, the why and how examined through the microscope of the writers' 1990s perception."

## Regatta Regret

The second annual regatta on September 27 unfortunately followed press time for this issue of The Collington. We will give a report on November 1.

## •This Dow is No Average•

by Anne Cadman-Walker

Dapper in suit and tie, courtly in manner, he could be mistaken for a Philadelphia lawyer, but nowadays to call him a consumer advocate might be more accurate.

Irving Dow, 94, one of our more active residents, keeps coming up with ideas and suggestions that get the respectful attention of administration and residents and, besides that, he runs the Friday night sessions of Trivial Pursuit.

He raises questions, he says, to be constructive both to the administration and the residents of Collington. One of his ideas is a substantial saving by putting Collington on a single electric meter. He's working on that.

He has also researched the widely-known and still unresolved question of whether life care residents should be eligible for real estate tax deduction. Chat with him for a few minutes and you'll hear some other ideas.

He has an impressive history of public service. While Collington was under construction, Malcolm Wall, our first resident chairman, appointed him to the finance committee. Irv persuaded the county to install a much-needed street light at the entrance of our long driveway off Lottsford Road, and expedited road markings at Lottsford Road's intersection with Route 193.

Irv and Ruth moved here from Silver Spring's Leisure World in 1988. There he had been a director of the residents' group for four years and treasurer for three, plus active in financial affairs.

A graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in electrical engi-

neering, he earned a B.S. degree in accounting later while working. So, he can relate electrical circuits and computers to budgets and business methods. A useful ability.

His career includes two years at the Bell Telephone Laboratories in New York and 38 years with the Naval Gun Factory in Washington where he retired as chief engineer in 1961.

A long-time Mason, he served as Master of his lodge in 1943. He and Ruth have also been active in the St. John's Episcopal Church in Chevy Chase, Md.

Civic minded neighbors like these are our kind of folks.



### What's for Dinner?

Collington's own television service made its bow on September 17 thanks to the ingenuity of our Environmental Services Division and the generosity of Jones Communications, our local cable service.

Under the inspired management now of Aphrodite Peters, of the ESD, we may tune our TV sets day or night to Channel 10B and learn today's or tomorrow's meal menu, schedules of events, special occasions, time of day, whether the mail is in and a dozen other announcements flashed on the screen for 15 seconds each, with background music.

It's a good idea to check it out several times a day. Emergency announcements (weather, maybe) may be made at any time.

L.B.

From June through September, one question often heard at Collington asked "What are you doing this vacation?" Almost as often, the answer were "Same as last year." Residents clearly favored family reunions, and when children were unavailable, cousins or even ancestors provided family focus.

New England proved a popular venue for such gatherings. At Echo Lake, Vt., Chuck Dell arranged a traditional August visit with one son and several grandsons, while Marcia and Ed Behr achieved a comparable reunion at nearby Queeche Lake. To their East, Ruth Quarles joined relatives of her late husband for a tour of his Cape Cod cousins, while farther south, Martha Cox paid her annual visit to son Bill near Hartford. Connecticut was also on Georgia Payne's itinerary for a multi-state drive aimed at Montpelier, Vt., where she admired the portrait of an ancestor who was governor in 1845.

Another eminent ancestor drew Flora and Russell Phelps to Hadley, Mass., founded by Russell's forefather, where cousins made them welcome. In Lenox, Mass., Harriet and Waldo Simons enjoyed a reunion with her sister after a detour to Portland, Me., to visit Harriet's daughter Elissa. Not far away in New York state Leila Wilson entertained a daughter and grandson in the woody summer colony where Leila's grandfather was an early member. Margaret Martin was another of Leila's guests, although Margaret also visited her own family home in Vermont.

Farther north, Dorothy Brickhouse joined her daughters, Ann and Lucinda,

who own summer houses on adjacent islands in Ontario's Ottawa river. In another cool setting, Nancy Stein spent her summer amidst daughters and their families in the legendary north woods of Michigan. Wisconsin witnessed a family gathering for the 60th wedding anniversary of Clem and Catherine Welsh, who have vacationed in the same house on Madeline Island in Lake Superior for 38 years. This year four children, their families and their in-laws came for the celebration, which included one great-grandchild. Perhaps to recuperate, Clem and Catherine then cruised off to Alaska on their own.

By contrast with these rustic retreats, Ken Muldoon chose a condo at Myrtle Beach for a gathering of his sizable brood, which also included the very youngest generation. But not all family-oriented Collingtonians lingered in the East. Chuck Dell drove along the Pacific coast with stops for seven cousins, while Paul Horecky met his lawyer son Fred in Los Angeles, which is about halfway from Fred's home on Guam. Another child motivating travel was Randy Walker's son Stanley, who graduated from California Polytech. En route home, the Walkers detoured to Nashville, Tenn., for the wedding of Anne's eldest granddaughter.

If there were a medal for vacation mileage, Chuck Dell would probably be wearing it, after a third holiday drive around Ireland. If any challengers arise, however, Chuck invites them to submit mileage.





## Artifacts from Africa



An interesting array of pieces of handicraft work from Africa is the current exhibit artistically presented in the courtyard gallery by the Gallery Display Committee. Over half come from a collection assembled by Kathleen Hill, Cottage 1214. She was born in South Africa, taught there until the government found her teaching not to their liking and expedited her exit, so to speak. In this country she was a professor at Howard University for 20 years.

Her collection was the start of this exhibit. As usual, the Committee, chaired by Mary Parrish, advertised for contributions, and as usual was amazed at the outpouring from our well-traveled residents. One of the particularly fascinating items is a history of Dahomey, now Benin, in pictographs applied on a black tapestry. Actually, it is a photograph of the tapestry which Kay Swift acquired in Togo and gave to the Smithsonian Institution. It shows the power of kings and events such as the arrival of the Portuguese.

Among the many fascinating objects are a wooden milk jug, a gold weight, a head of a Zulu male, another head, this one in lignum vitae wood, a depiction of Hottentot huntsmen, and a bronze Masai maiden produced by the lost wax process, looking very much like a modern Giacometti sculpture. There are many animals—rhinoceri, warthogs, elephants, giraffes, lions, tigers. Neat. T.S.

## We Get Letter Drops

A crusade against clutter last year prompted Residents Association President Ruth Dixon to name a committee to go to war against the messy state of Collington's several bulletin boards.

Eileen Henderson headed the group, and after attacking, with notable success, the sorry state of the bulletin boards, they looked around at other untidy spots.

Priscilla's counter, where residents sign up for trips, or ask for help from the wood shop, or deposit answers to questionnaires, was another place that cried out for a tidying hand. Looking at the two large mail containers reposing on the left hand side of the counter, a member of the group said: "Why don't we have letter drops just below our Postal Service mail boxes?"

We have them now, two slots beneath the apartment building letter boxes and two beneath cottage mail boxes. Very convenient. Thanks to the Bulletin Board Committee and to Judy Mutty who got Postal Service approval for the drops. F.K.

## Marshall Plan Vets, Take Notice

Morris Weisz was one of the speakers at the June 2 ceremonies at the George Washington University commemorating the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the Marshall Plan for rebuilding Europe after WWII.

Now, Morris (Apt. 114, phone 7394) offers copies of his statement to Collingtonians and other Marshall Plan veterans, perhaps to interest them in preparing statements of their own involvement in that program, if any. He is also recording oral histories of those years.

## •Historic Churches of Anne Arundel•

by Edward Behr

Prince George's County, as most of us know, boasts a prize assortment of historic churches. But venture a little farther afield, into neighboring Anne Arundel County, and you find still more churches, old and not so old, that are also worth a good look.

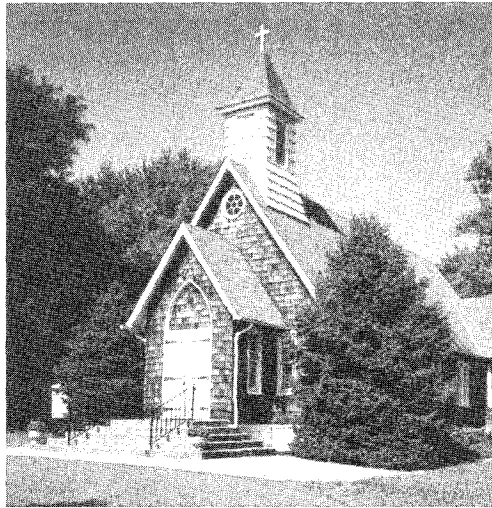
About a dozen miles east of Collington, near Birdsville on Solomons Island Road, stands an 18th-century jewel--a handsome, slate-roofed brick church of modest height (no steeple) and simple design, with a small cross over the entrance and huge oaks towering nearby. This is All Hallows' Church, an Episcopal church in one of the oldest Anglican parishes in Maryland, dating from 1669. Over the years the building has gone through various transformations. After a fire in 1940, it was rebuilt in its present form--which is roughly that of 1740.

Some signs of its age: the church bell was given by Britain's Queen Anne in the early 18th century. In the churchyard lies an old marble gravestone honoring London-born Samuel Peele, who lived from 1667-1733. In one of the old bricks in the church wall are scratched the initials JNL and the date 1822.

The church's pristine interior offers a glimpse of the 18th century--it is simple yet elegant. The walls are pure white with candleholders installed at intervals. Large brass chandeliers hang above the

center aisle. The pews are enclosed, with dark wooden railings above white paneling. The altar and pulpit, simple and low-profile, fit perfectly into the style of the church.

Three miles away, on Route 214 in Davidsonville, stands an offshoot of the Birdsville church. This is All Hallows' Chapel, a rather imposing brick church built in 1860--a good example of mid-19th century style. It has buttresses in the corners, a steeply pitched metal roof, modest windows with diamond-shaped panes, and a cross atop a small steeple. The



Holy Family Catholic Church

chapel stands amid a fine sweep of lawn and trees; a graveyard lies on the north side.

Just to the east, also on 214, a passerby is struck by a juxtaposition of new and old--or what seems to be old. Holy Family Catholic Church is not one building but two. In back is a sparkling modern brick-and-glass church that sprawls across the property. In front, close to the road, is a much smaller church that might seem to be two centuries old. In fact, it is a "modern antique," built in 1929. It is small (roughly 60 feet long and 40 feet wide), has shingled walls, simple stained-glass windows and a sharply sloping roof. Holding about 70 people, it is now used largely for baptisms and weddings. This church was actually built by its members; some say they used a Sears Roebuck design for a barn.

What is this small carved wooden object? A fetish, a totem, a toy, the top of a staff denoting power of a tribal chief, a ju-ju, a bedpost finial? You can see it on the trail. If you go up to the Hilltop Gardens and turn left on the trail, it is on the right.



WHAT IS IT?

Nobody knows that it is. Grace Langley an anthropologist whose expertise was consulted, says it is possibly of La-

tin American origin, obviously done by an experienced carver, but for what purpose? A shrine? Unidentifiable without more evidence.

Georgia Paine says she found it on the beach in Virginia about 20 years ago. It then sat in the yard of her retirement home on the Northern Neck of Virginia. She brought it with her when she moved here, but found it a bit encumbering in a studio apartment, along with other found objects she had acquired.

It occurred to her that it would make a good marker to the trail which leads to the stone marking the boundary of the Waring property, especially when set off by the rings she had also found. It was Georgia who had originally found the stone boundary marker and recognized it as a marker for the Waring property, Heart's Delight, dating back to the 17th century.

Georgia is an amateur archaeologist who has combed our Collington property and a fair amount of the surrounding area in search of interesting artifacts.

She has now marked the trail in to the Waring boundary stone with tree limbs to help others find it. Look for a large stone bearing the initials "B W," for Basil Waring, whose mortal remains rest with those of his wife in the burial ground on top of the hill.

## Now That's Service

Chris and Jo Bever returned from two months' vacation in Maine to discover that their refrigerator was no longer running. Although the food in the refrigerator section was still cool, that in the freezer section was thawed and had to be thrown out.

That was Sunday. They left a message for Environmental Services asking for help. To their astonishment and joy on Monday morning our all-purpose fixer

of things mechanical, Tom Howerton, arrived, checked the situation and returned with a replacement refrigerator, which he installed and had working pronto.

Jo says, "If this had happened at our old home the repairman would not have arrived for a couple of days, would have reflected on the situation for a couple more, and then announced that he had to send for a new part.

"Now this is the way to live!" T.S.

It was a pleasure to read recently of another inconvenience caused by technology. Technology is a benefit to mankind, no doubt about it, but somehow the difficulties that it can cause often arouse in us an irreverent glee, which must mean something important.

What I saw was a short piece written by Mark Twain. Twain was an early possessor of the newly invented typewriter and in 1878 he wrote to a correspondent asking that no mention be made of the fact that he owned such a machine, because if he did Mark would then receive a request "by return mail that I would not only describe the machine, but state what progress I had made in the use of it...etc., etc." And he adds, "At the beginning...a type-machine was a curiosity. The person who owned one was a curiosity, too." That rapidly changed. Mark claims that he was "the first in the world to *apply the type-machine to literature.*" For in 1874 his secretary typed *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* on Twain's machine. After a year or two he found that his "type machine" was "degrading my character," so he gave it away, but everyone to whom he gave it became discouraged and soon gave it back. Finally he gave it to his coachman. "He traded it to a heretic for a side-saddle which he could not use," and after that Mark knew nothing more about its fate.

The typewriter was invented by one C. L. Sholes in 1868, and produced capital letters only. It was this all caps model that Twain owned ("Gothic capitals they

were, and sufficiently ugly.") Shift key models came out in 1878. And you know, of course, that the awkward arrangement of the alphabet on the keyboard (the "qwerty" design) was deliberately made to slow down typists as their typing speed increased, to prevent the machine from jamming.

You will have noticed, of course, the point of these ramblings. Twain's experience with the typewriter parallels our own experience with that more complicated machine, the computer. We, too, know about the computer owner who is still something of an oddity to friends, and the rapid discouragement of beginners. We have also encountered the timid curiosity of the uninitiated and the sooner-or-later exasperation of the user. Rather comforting to think that the typewriter, now almost obsolete, produced the same suspicions and growing pains as the IBM and the Mac.

Twain sank a fortune in plans to develop a type-setting machine, and in his autobiography claimed that he was "the first person in the world that ever had a telephone in his house for practical purposes" (not just for emergencies). He lived quite a few years before desk-top publishing and telephoned connected to modems. So it would be fun to listen in on a conversation between Mark Twain and Bill Gates. I'll bet they both would have a good time.

