



Echoes of Amos 'n' Andy

by John Howell

When I listened to *Amos 'n' Andy* as a child, I thought it was awfully funny. I liked the show better than “The Lone Ranger” or “The Shadow.” Amos and his friend Andy called their company the “Fresh Air Taxi Company” because their car didn’t have a windshield. They belonged to the “Mystic Knights of the Sea Lodge.” Their friend Kingfish always got them in trouble. They talked in a funny way, and I thought they were black.

Years later I discovered they were actually white—that what I laughed at was “blackface” humor. In fact, I recently discovered that Ralph Northam, Governor of Virginia, and Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, also laughed at blackface humor—if not by *Amos 'n' Andy*, at least by the minstrelsy tradition, since they wore blackface at social gatherings (possibly jeopardizing their political careers).

And I recently discovered that *Amos 'n' Andy* was “born” here in Durham, in 1920, when Freeman Gosden (the voice of “Amos” and “Kingfish”) met Charles Correll (the voice of “Andy”). Durham was a simpler place then, with simpler tastes. The Joe Bren organization had hired them to produce minstrel shows—song and dance stage productions with white men in blackface. Inspired by their experience, Gosden and Correll went on to create *Amos 'n' Andy*.

By the early 1930s, over forty million people (black and white) were regularly listening to the show. Gosden and Correll themselves were invisible. Their “black” voices created humor through distortions of language and logic, while they built suspense with clever plots. The humorous stories—told in minstrelsy dialect—depicted life in Harlem and typically featured Amos as naive and

compassionate, Kingfish as clever and scheming, and Andy as vain and insecure. Though some listeners thought the characters were racial stereotypes, others argued that their complexity transcended stylization.

In any case, television had begun to steal their audience by 1950, so they created their own show. Initially, they thought of doing the show in blackface, as in their RKO movie *Check and Double Check* (1930). But the movie was an incoherent failure. Though it attracted a large audience, many of their radio fans were shocked to discover that Amos and Andy were not black. Ultimately, the movie’s only saving grace was the inclusion of Duke Ellington and his orchestra. (It marked the first real celebration of his distinguished career.)

Instead of performing in blackface, Gosden and Correll decided to cast highly talented black actors in the roles and have them imitate the rhythms of speech established by the radio show. But again there was a problem when what had been invisible became visual. Though the television show received good reviews and audience ratings, too many viewers agreed with Roy Wilkins, head of the NAACP, when he contrasted the “black” voices on the radio with the “Negroes” on television: “The visual impact is,” he said, “infinitely worse than the radio version....The television brings these people to life—they are no longer merely voices and they say...this is the way Negroes are.” In response, and despite the good ratings, CBS cancelled the show after a two-year run—and it would be the last black sitcom to appear on any television network for almost twenty years.

I met Gosden and Correll on an elevator at Columbia Square about a year after CBS cancelled the television show. Columbia Square was the home of

Readers may respond to this essay in different ways. If it sparks discussion, that's a good thing.

—Editors

The Forester

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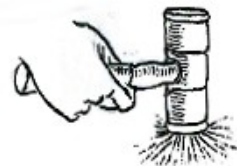
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President's Podium



by Banks Anderson

2020 has a euphonious ring to me and to every ophthalmologist. 20/20 is a great postoperative visual result. In the Snellen notation if you see those letters twenty feet away that the normal young whippersnapper can just barely make out, that is perfect. So for starters, our new year name sounds great. But it is also an election year and we can expect the splattering sounds of media mud-slinging at more than the usual targets to crescendo until their November climax when *subito* we can once again enjoy TV.

An initiative at the January Residents' Association membership meeting is a bylaw change to move the January meeting to February and the July one to June. Unless moved, the customary January meeting date would always conflict with the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday, as it does this year, and obtaining a quorum at the July meeting has at times been iffy. The October Annual Meeting remains unchanged. Before November, then, you will have had a chance to vote here in house.

2020 is my first year as a member of the TFAD "big" Board and my very first meeting with them was the middle of last month. Dean McCumber and Arnie Lerman have been our resident representatives for years and were familiar faces. Alice Sharpe, the chair, excused me from the Greenwood for the vote to seat me and then welcomed me back as a new member when it was affirmative. The RA President's Board seat is by bylaw not automatic so I was pleased. Dr. Harvey Cohen, whom I have known for years, is the vice-chair. A Board retreat is planned that should help me fill in lots of operational details and rationale for past actions that I am missing. Let us hope that we all will have 20/20 foresight in 2020. ☿

In Memoriam

Thomas Gallie	November 25, 2019
Rebekah Hill	November 28, 2019
Robert Wilkinson	November 28, 2019
Stephen Wainwright	December 12, 2019

LIBRARY SCIENCE 101

by Carol Reese

COLLECTION UPDATE

The Library would not exist if it weren't for the generous donations of books, DVDs, puzzles, etc. from all our residents. From September 1 through December 10, 2019, we had approximately 900 different items donated to the Library. Based on the Library's acquisition policy, we were able to add nearly 50 new items to our collection—of which over 70% were novels. What we couldn't use was packed up and then delivered to the Durham County Library for their book sales to help support the County's library network. This is the Library's method of recycling.

From September 1 through December 10, 2019, the Library received over 500 books. Here is the breakdown of these donations:

328 Hardcover Books

179 Softcover Books

40 Paperback Books

Out of these donations, the Library added the following types of books to the collection:

22 Fiction

10 Mystery

10 Non-Fiction

3 Biography

3 Large Print

1 In-House Author

BOOK CARDS

When checking out a book, you will usually find the book card on the last page at the back of the book. However, there will be times, especially with the older books, when the cards were placed two or three pages from the back of the book if there was a map, image, etc. on the last pages. So, please, if you don't see the card on the last page, skim back a few pages inside the book to locate the card.

When you take a book out, please write the date and your name followed by your apartment/cottage number on the card.

FOR OUR LOW-VISION RESIDENTS

If you find that you have trouble reading even the large print books in the Library's collection, you can download audiobooks from the Durham County Library to your computer, iPad, or smart phone by going to

durhamcountylibrary.org/materials/digital-collections and searching for audiobooks to download. You can also check the online catalog of the Durham County Library to see if they have books on CDs in their collection. You may also contact the Southwest Regional Library Branch at 919-560-8590.

Once you have located what you want, you can contact **OASIS** (919-560-0152) to have the item(s) brought to the Forest for your convenience. OASIS comes to TFAD the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month.

In addition, you may obtain other audiobooks from the State Library for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, located in Raleigh.

As for the equipment needed to listen to these audiobooks from the state, you should contact the State Library in Raleigh to get the equipment on loan. The State Library will mail the equipment to you. It also has access to the resources of the Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in Washington, DC. Contact your TFAD social worker for help.

For more information, you can call the state library at 1-888-388-2460 or OASIS at 919-560-0152.

LIBRARY CONFERENCE ROOM

Although the conference room is located within the Library, the Activities Department maintains its schedule. If you wish to schedule this room for some activity, please contact Activities at 919-419-4069.

The Conference room contains a large video-screen display that is easily connected to a laptop computer. Instructions are provided in a pocket below the screen. ♣

Amos 'n' Andy...

(Continued from Page 1)



Gosden (left) and Correll (right) at their microphone.

NBCU Photo Bank/AP

the CBS Network Radio in Hollywood, and I had an entry-level job, delivering mail. Actually, I was delivering mail to Gosden and Correll when I got on the elevator. Since I didn't know what the radio stars looked like, I failed to recognize the two white men standing behind me. Then "Amos" spoke to "Andy." It was not the minstrel dialect of the radio show, but I had heard their voices since childhood, and I'd just begun to eavesdrop in earnest when the elevator doors opened. I followed them to their office, where Gosden smiled at my name and introduced me to their show's director, Cliff Howell, who joked that "we must be related."

By this time (November 1954), Gosden and Correll were producing a pre-recorded nightly program (with a laugh track) called *The Amos 'n' Andy Music Hall*. Instead of generating blackface humor, Gosden, voicing Kingfish, ran a radio station at the "Lodge Hall of the Mystic Knights of the Sea," where he and Correll, voicing Andy, simply joked, played musical recordings, and interviewed celebrities like Frank Sinatra, Jack Benny, and Rosemary Clooney.

A mere echo of the past, the show appealed largely to an older (shrinking) audience, and in 1960, Gosden and Correll gave up entirely and retired. Meanwhile, thanks to the kind words of my "relative" Cliff Howell and others, I had moved across town to a production job at CBS Television City. ¶

John Howell was a professor of American Literature and chair of the English Department at Southern Illinois University. This is an excerpt from a memoir in progress.

Mandalay

by Prem Sharma

Mandalay the city of my dreams
 Though I left you many moons ago
 Your loving arms reach out to me
 I see you each day if only in my imagination
 When your gentle breezes caress my face
 With the fragrance of roses and jasmine
 I hear the sweet chimes of pagoda bells
 And the laughter of your children
 The music and gaiety of festivals
 The rustle of brocade silk and satin
 And the falling of the rain
 You were scarred and ravaged by war
 Waged by brutal men and machines
 But I know you will shine once more
 Enchanting and alluring as before
 And though I may not see you again
 I shall always love you dearly
 As you will forever be
 Dear Mandalay the city of my dreams

Prem Sharma, DDS, MS, and author of three novels, was Professor and Associate Dean for Academic and Alumni Affairs at the Marquette University School of Dentistry.

Great Blue Heron

December Pond Visitor



Photo by Bennett Galef of female Great Blue Heron visiting our pond the week of December 15.

On “Merry Mice for Christmas”

by George Williams

Some twenty years ago I wrote a book for my children, *Of Mice and Bells* (copy in the Library), about the church mice at St. Michael’s Church in Charleston and their response to the change-ringing bells installed in the steeple in 1764. It caught the fancy of our friend and fellow resident, the late George Chandler, who wrote the poem “Something Mice for Christmas” based on it. The poem was published in *The Forester*, first in 2000 and again last month, December 2019, together with illustrations from the late Bob Blake, friend and fellow resident.

When I wrote to commend George Chandler for his brilliant merging of my text and his poem, I was reminded of another connection between two literary works: Clement Moore’s “On the Night before Christmas” and Shakespeare’s “Hamlet.”



It is clear that when Clement Moore began to write the opening lines of his poem (1823), “’Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house, | Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse,” he had deep down in his subconscious mind the opening lines of Shakespeare’s play (1600): “Have you had quiet guard? | Not a mouse stirring.”

It may even have been of some significance to Moore that the opening scene of the play is specifically dated to a night before Christmas and to an hour in the middle of the night. The scene contains a reference (the only one in the entire canon) to the coming season “Wherein our Saviour’s birth is celebrated,” which fixes the date of that bitterly cold scene: “Then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad...so hallow’d and so gracious is the time.”

More to the point, however, is the fact that the

sentinel’s harmless reference to the mouse introduces the line of rodent imagery in the play. The “mouse” in a normal context of romantic love, a term of affection, reappears when Hamlet is berating his mother—“Let not the bloat king... call you his ‘mouse’”—but the context is so abusive that the term loses any affectionate quality it might have had and becomes pejorative or disgusting. The most important use of the word is also Hamlet’s, his name for the device to catch the conscience of the King—the “Mousetrap.”

As the mousetrap is traditionally a device to catch not only a mouse but symbolically the Devil (compare Campin’s “Mérode Altar Piece” where St. Joseph in the right-hand panel is humbly but effectively making a mousetrap), Hamlet’s scheme has very powerful associations. And it works. The trap catches its victim (III.ii) just as Hamlet had hoped it would, or, rather better than he had hoped: it has caught not a mouse—but a rat. The conscience of the King is laid bare, and when, two scenes later, Hamlet stabs the figure which he hears “stir” behind the arras, he cries exultantly: “A rat!” Or, as his mother remembers it: “A rat, a rat!”

Claudius is indeed the satanic rat figure of the play, the center from which all the evil of the play emanates. His soldiers in the opening scene are on guard against Denmark’s foreign enemy; they face outward. But they are mistaken; the enemy is domestic, behind them. They should be facing inward, into Denmark where the real danger is to be found. They may be right that no evil spirit stirs abroad and that no mouse is stirring in Denmark, but it cannot occur to them as they face outward against a perceived foreign enemy, that behind them a human rat is very busy indeed with his satanic machinations. ‡

George Williams, native of Charleston, SC, change ringer, and Emeritus Professor of English at Duke, learned in Shakespeare, is one of the editors of this monthly.

Two Forest Pioneers Talk...

Elizabeth Dube

Elizabeth Dube, who turns 102 this month, says that The Forest at Duke should take full credit for her long and healthy old age here. “It offers so many important assets, from medical care to transportation to balanced diet to...well, everything.”

She says she helped her three older sisters look for their own retirement communities and not one that she saw in that process was the equal of TFAD.

TFAD was an easy choice for Elizabeth and her husband, Bertram. They had met in the dining room at Duke where Bertram waited tables to help support himself while at Duke Law School and Elizabeth, who graduated from UNC Women’s College (“WC”) in her hometown of Greensboro, was working her first job as a dietitian. They married in 1942, just before Bertram was drafted to serve in World War II as a navigator in the Air Force. Once the war was over and Bertram safely back in Durham, he completed his studies for his law degree and the couple moved to his hometown, Hudson Falls, NY, where Bertram practiced law and Elizabeth enjoyed time for her many interests—genealogy, dance, photography, planning trips. Travelling was a shared passion for the Dubes, to the extent that they were, by Bertrand’s retirement, members of the “Bronze” level in the Travelers’ Century Club, having visited 118 countries. Subsequently, they travelled to a total of 122 countries, including a long trip to the tip of South America after moving to TFAD in 1993, and four in Europe on a trip arranged by The Forest.

While life in New York was very pleasant, both Dubes missed North Carolina and so made sure to return to Elizabeth’s home state almost every summer, spending time not only in the area around Duke, but also at several of their favorite Carolina beaches. On one of those summer trips in the early 1990’s, they heard that a Durham couple, the Crapos, were developing the idea of opening a Continuing Care Retirement Community on the site of a tobacco farm off Pickett Road. The more they learned about this plan, the more they liked the idea of returning to Durham in retirement and wasted no time in signing up—in 1992—for the yet un-built Cottage 68, the last to be completed. They moved into it in mid 1993.

Bertram died in 1999, but Elizabeth stayed on in



Cottage 68 watching fellow residents “farm” the plots behind it. She moved into an apartment in June of 2014 and has turned it into a beautiful, bright, welcoming home.

Of the many activities Elizabeth has enjoyed over her long lifetime, perhaps the favorite and longest lasting is her love of dance. There is, on TFAD’s Blog, a wonderful recent profile of Elizabeth Dube, the dancer—“Life’s a Dance.” Asked about whether she’s still dancing, she pulls out a notebook and a tape player in her bedroom and shows the visitor how she practices her latest dance passion—line dancing—every single day. She also participates in the group practice offered in the gym every other Saturday.

Elizabeth’s enthusiasm for The Forest at Duke includes almost every aspect. As a professional dietitian, she applauds the very well balanced (“and delicious”) meals served. As an active and involved member of the community, she praises the amazing number and variety of activities offered—not just dancing, but gardening, music, transportation to off-campus events, and general conviviality. She particularly appreciates that the TFAD Team considers carefully all suggestions from the residents and is continually adding to the activities offerings. She encourages all newcomers to take real advantage of as many of the offerings as possible, but to remember that “all you really *must* do here is behave yourself”!

A last word? “Life here feels like a 27-year cruise!” ♣

...with Editor Shannon Purves

Mary Ann Ruegg

A sparkly silver whirligig spins in #33's front yard, a harbinger of what the lucky visitor is about to encounter in what has been Mary Ann Ruegg's home for the last 27 years. On the walk leading to the front door are more spinning, dangling, floating decorations. And inside there are more, all of them beautiful and joyous. Two particularly lovely pieces are life-sized dogs; one a small, cuddly white one curled up on a living room sofa; the other a seated lab ("Blackie") gazing out the front window. And then there's the small glazed clay plaque that identifies the front hall as "Kissing Zone." The cottage's interior is, Mary Ann says, very much the same as when she and her husband Don settled into it in April of 1993. They had seen the architectural plans and signed up for it the previous October before its construction was completed.

Once it was fully built and ready for the Rueggs' choices of wall colors, carpets, and cabinets, Mary Ann and her Chicago decorator decked it out beautifully. And it remains almost exactly that way today. These are the same beautiful white carpets 27 years later? Yes! This makes life inside #33 particularly happy and satisfying to Mary Ann.

So how did it happen that two Midwesterners who had spent most of their married life in Deerfield, Illinois, decide to move into a still-in-progress unheralded retirement community in a faraway part of the country? They had been looking at places in Illinois without finding anything that appealed when a good friend of Mary Ann's told them about one her elderly aunt lived in and liked very much. So it was in North Carolina...never mind. The southern climate appealed and so the Rueggs travelled to the Triangle to check it out. It wasn't, alas, what they had hoped to find, but when someone mentioned that another one—brand new, and in nearby Durham—was almost ready to open, they went over to take a look. They liked what they saw. Don thought the price was fair. They signed up.

"We never regretted that decision," Mary Ann says now. "Life here has been good from the get-go."

And how would she define "good"? For one thing, because everybody on the brand new campus, staff and residents alike, was new, everybody was in



the same boat, all bonding at the same time. That meant making good, long term friends on many fronts. Mary Ann treasures having gotten to know most of the staff Pioneers back when they were starting out here as drivers and dining room workers and enjoying their friendship over all 27 years as fellow Pioneers. Mary Ann believes that kind of community sociability is valuable and worth continuing. And one way she does just that is by regularly hosting group dinners with residents she feels ought to meet and know one another. Word is that those dinners are a delight for all included.

What does she, at 95, find especially good about living at the now quite well established TFAD? The always carefully planned and balanced meals. The wonderful availability of a wide range of activities. And the immediate access to health care and medical expertise.

And, finally, what advice would Mary Ann offer prospective new residents? "They are, of course, offered more information than was available to us at the very beginning. So I advise them to take advantage of that information, ask for any they don't hear at first, and spend enough time on the campus to get firsthand experience of what's described in handouts."

Since Don's death in 2006, Mary Ann has found many ways to keep her great spirit open and spontaneous and generous. Here's just one: twenty-seven years after decorating and moving into her beloved Cottage 33, she drives a shiny white car with the vanity license plate, "XXXIII." 🍀

Welcome New Residents

James (Jim) Agnew

Cottage 71
336-317-1128
agnewole@bellsouth.net

Jim Agnew was born in Lexington, KY, and grew up in Hendersonville, NC. After elementary school, he attended the Christ School for Boys. He moved to Atlanta where he supported himself working for a bank, while attending night school at Georgia Tech. After obtaining bachelor and master degrees from Tech, he graduated from the Woodrow Wilson College of Law.

He moved to Durham in 1972, where he worked for Central Carolina Bank, which later merged with the Sun Trust Bank. As a portfolio manager, he was responsible for over five hundred million dollars.



His late wife, Judith Barnes, grew up in Rocky Mount, NC. attended Sweet Briar College in Virginia, and moved to Atlanta,

where she met and married Jim. After they moved to Durham, she taught at Chapel Hill Senior High School. She worked with special children, helping them to find employment in the area.

Jim has three children: Lynn Ross currently in Atlanta, Laura O'Dowd in Raleigh, and Lisa Ben-Meir in Rye, NY. He has three grandchildren, two boys and a girl.

Jim is a member of the Westminster Presbyterian Church. He is a past president of the Durham Toastmasters Club, where he prepared and delivered speeches. He enjoys yard work and reading. But his first love is portfolio management, and he continues in his retirement as a financial consultant for Smith Salley Associates in Greensboro.

Jim says that the stock and bond markets have become more volatile, making it more difficult to make and keep money. ☸

Margaret Nordstrom

Cottage 65
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Marge grew up in Alta, IA. She went to Iowa State University for her degree in biology and worked her way through with scholarships and work-study grants in entomology and botany. After graduation she joined the Peace Corps and spent two years in Costa Rica, working on the National Park System being developed there. She loves hearing TFAD residents talk about their vacations in Costa Rica, having been part of what made them



happen. Her next adventure was as a volunteer with the World Health Organization, studying the populations of monkeys in the Amazon jungle.

While her husband worked on his doctorate at Johns Hopkins, Marge worked in the Johns Hopkins medical labs, first in the cancer research center and then as a member of a gastroenterology research team focused on lactose intolerance. While living in the DC area, she got her MBA at George Washington University. Her first position after that was with Arbitron, and then she joined a consulting firm where she spent 12 years—consulting all over the country, specializing in business and technology strategy. A client of the consulting firm, Baker and Taylor, a primary book distributor, hired her away, and she designed a business turnaround for them. She got interested in entrepreneurship, left that company, and became a consultant for start-up businesses and the Kaufman Foundation.

When she retired, she moved to Durham where she joined and became active in the Rotary Club of Durham. One of her favorite Rotary activities was

(Continued on Page 9)

Welcome New Residents

Michael and Ella Bracy

Cottage 35

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Mike grew up in St. Louis, MO, and Ella grew up in the Bronx, NY. They met in St. Louis, where Ella was getting her bachelor's degree in elementary education at Maryville College of the Sacred Heart. Mike attended the United States Naval Academy and served six and a half years as a nuclear submarine officer. He was hired by Chase Manhattan Bank in New York, first in the training program, then as a corporate lending officer mainly in the electric and natural gas industries. After their marriage they were living in Manhattan and loving it. Then Mike was hired by one of his clients, The El Paso Company, first as VP for Finance and then as CFO, which moved them to Houston, TX. When El Paso was acquired by Burlington Northern, Mike left and became CFO of Arkla, Inc. (later NorAm) in Shreveport, LA, as well as CEO of the Pipeline Group. NorAm was acquired by the parent company of the local electric utility, and Mike retired in 1997. He served on the board of Itron, Inc. for 20 years, and also served on two other NYSE boards.

After graduating from college, Ella went to Washington, DC, for a year to study at the International Montessori Institute. She then taught at the Institute's Montessori School in Chevy Chase, and after moving back to New York City she taught at the UN School and the Mt Carmel Guild Child Study Center for children with special needs. After marrying Mike, she taught for a few more years at the West Side Montessori School. Mike's Chase career sometimes



allowed her to travel with him, which ended her regular teaching. The move to Houston was painful, but she volunteered any time she could in public schools in the city, and came to enjoy Houston, but the years in Shreveport not so much.

In retirement they split their time between Houston and Easton, MD. They built their dream house in Trappe, MD, on the Eastern Shore and lived there the longest they had lived anywhere. The house was big enough for large reunions with their extended families.

Mike's avocations were running and golf. He ran for 45 years, including several marathons, until his back made him stop. Now he is a walker. Other loves are opera and chamber music. In Maryland he was on the board of the Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival, serving three years as President. Ella really enjoys antiques, auctions, and visiting friends and family. They both enjoy travel. ¶

Margaret Nordstrom...

(Continued from Page 8)

teaming with another Rotarian to lead the "Fill That Bus!" school-supplies campaign until the Crayons2Calculators organization was "on its feet" to take over. She also tutored elementary students who were having significant reading difficulties, and she assembled a Rotary membership committee that

created a team concept for assimilating new members into the 250-member Durham club. In 2018 Marge was named *Rotarian of the Year* for all she had accomplished. She will most likely continue to look for challenges to put her skills to work. ¶

A Financial Challenge, A Hero Steps Up

by Ted Harris

In 1970, Jerry Falwell, representing Liberty University, was summoned to the Western District Court of Virginia, a federal court, to explain why he had sold bonds in Texas without Securities and Exchange Commission approval and why Liberty was



Ted Harris

not paying interest to the bondholders. A receiver needed to be appointed to manage Liberty. Tom Phillips, Liberty's attorney, lobbied Judge Turk to allow five Lynchburg businessmen to serve in this capacity. Jerry thought of these men as his friends who would have a sympathetic ear. I was chairman of this committee. Guiding Liberty University through this crisis was our challenge.

We needed to do twin things at the outset: Hire an accounting firm to inform us of the financial condition of Liberty and find someone with financial expertise to bring financial leadership to Liberty. This was upsetting to Jerry, but he had no choice in the matter. The unveiled picture from the accounting firm was dismaying. There was no concept of financial management and, equally distressing, Liberty University was five million dollars in the hole. They were bankrupt.

Enter George Rogers, recently a financial executive for a textile company in Lynchburg. George was in his early fifties. His background in finance, easygoing demeanor and persistence made him the perfect person to help Jerry out of the deep hole that Liberty was in, and the receivership committee appointed him to the task. The receivership committee functioned like a board of directors of a corporation. We met monthly with Jerry and George to review the numbers and listen to the financial progress being made.

In 1974, after four of years of receivership, Liberty was in the black. We met with Judge Turk and presented Liberty's successful transition to profitability. Liberty was on its own and our committee was dissolved. Jerry immediately made George Rogers the chief financial officer of Liberty University and CEO of The Old Time Gospel Hour,

Liberty's principal fundraising arm. George served Liberty for another twenty-five years until his retirement in 1999 at the age of eighty. He continued to make a significant and vital contribution to the success of Liberty University

George was an unusual man. In World War II the Japanese invasion of the Philippines led to the capture of ten thousand American troops. The surrendered troops were forced to march for seventy-five miles without water or food. Older residents here at The Forest at Duke will remember reading of the horrors of this event, known as the Bataan Death March. Only three thousand of the men survived. George Rogers was one of them.



George Rogers
Liberty Hero

For three and a half years George was imprisoned in Japan. He felt he survived because he was befriended by a Japanese guard. When released from prison George, who stood at six feet three inches, weighed 85 pounds. His nickname was the Skull.

A group of three army psychiatrists counseled the former prisoners that their life expectancy would be forty-five years, they should not plan on education because they would not be able to keep up, and they would probably be impotent. They would lose eyesight, their teeth, and their hair.

This most chilling prognosis proved false on all accounts for George. The doctors could not believe that George held no grudge against the Japanese guards. George said they were doing their job. George attended St. Louis University, finishing in three years with honors. He was chairman of the Student Council and president of the graduating class.

On August 17, 2019, George died peacefully in his sleep. He was one hundred years old, and although his wife Barbara had pre-deceased him by several years, they were married seventy years. They had five children, twelve grandchildren, and twenty-three great grandchildren.

He was a wonderful friend. ‡

Ted Harris, former banker, legislator, and promoter of old-growth forests was an active force in Lynchburg, VA, for many years.

America: Dirge and Paeon

by Herb Carson

Alone on the bridge, the Emperor
of the Western sea imagines a light
On the empty horizon, a beacon

More ships, hordes of immigrants
not licensed by native tribes
follow in hapless hopes

Eager to share in freedom, some enslaved
a piece of fallow ground
or escaping custom's bondage

Reaching for elusive lure
daring to trod untested ways
seeking daring dreams by lanterns light

Intent on learning and sharing
Indians pushed away, betrayed
some whites luxuriate, others starve

Clarion calls from new frontiers
ever onward, new horizons
dancing dust, choking climes

America—land of free and slave
opportunity and abyss
some soar others sink

America—land of free and slave
we love and deplore her shore
her ambiguities and ideals

America—uncertainties amid hopes
delights and despairs
but always a clarion call

America of decency
democracy
and a mute statue

Lifts her lamp
by the welcoming shores
of Amazing America

A retired Professor of Humanities, Herb has published numerous poems, stories, essays, and, with his wife, five books.

CAROL'S CORNER

Belky Galo-Reyes

by Carol Oettinger

Belky, with her pretty smile, can often be seen at the Café cash register. She also helps with serving.

She is the middle child in her family, with a brother five years older and a brother five years younger. She was born and grew up in Durham and graduated from Southern High School. She took a semester of classes in architecture at Arizona State University. A class in drafting which showed a floor plan which would become a building seemed like magic. This began her dream to become an architect. She plans to take some classes in design at Durham Tech in the spring.



Belky had a cousin who worked at The Forest who told her it was a nice place to work. Belky had been working at a call center while still in high school. This was not very rewarding. She applied to Dining Services and came to The Forest as a server, but after



three months was given a better position as a captain.

She likes being here at The Forest, and because she is aware that she will someday be the age of the residents, she likes to put smiles on our faces and help us appreciate life a little more.

She enjoys spending time with her family. She likes seeing new things, such as the moon exhibit and downtown Durham buildings. She enjoys taking her dog, a Pekinese named Bruno, for walks.

Belky says that she feels that life is a learning experience. We agree. ♪

Photos by Bennett

Back to the Future

by Phil Baer

I'm riding sitting backwards on a forward moving train.
I can't see where I'm going, but you won't hear me complain:
My future hides behind me, but my past is plain to see—
It lengthens as I journey, stretching out in front of me.

I sit here in the present where my future turns to past,
And while the future that's behind me's getting shorter really fast.
The past before me stretches out, further than I see,
And the future just keeps dwindling down, somewhere in back of me.

The present's evanescent, no more lasting than a song—
It's gone before you know it, you just have to get along.
We strive, survive, and stay alive, in momentary presence
And wait to reach the ending of our life-long, too brief sentence.

When your future is behind you and your past is what's ahead,
You will see things that you regret, but can't see things to dread.
When all you see has taken place, what's over and what's done,
Your future turns to past before you know it's yet begun.

I'm traveling backwards to the future, looking forward at the past.
Doesn't matter which I'm facing, 'cause this journey will not last.
Whether barely getting started or getting near the end,
My destination lies behind, somewhere around some bend. ☘

Philip Baer was reared in West Virginia, attended college in Memphis, earned a PhD in physiology from the University of Mississippi, and did post-doctoral work in Montreal and Milan. After teaching at the University of Tennessee, he worked at Glaxo (now Glaxo Smith Kline) in Research Triangle Park. Now retired he gardens, cooks, and studies philosophy.