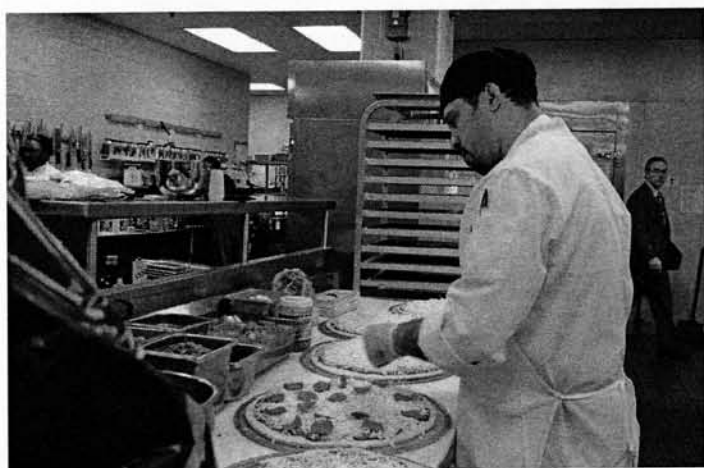


Kenny's Pizza

by Joanne Ferguson

When I turn the corner to head for the café at lunchtime, I find a hubbub coming from a long line inside the cafeteria and reaching halfway down the hall. "What in the world is all this?" I ask, and the answers come back, "Kenny's pizza!" everyone smiling and chattering. The tables are full, and diners have moved across the hall into the clubroom.

Just when I thought I knew everything that goes on at The Forest, I find I don't. And I've already eaten my frugal lunch, so I determine to catch it the next time Kenny springs into action-- the third Thursday of every month. (He begins his preparations at 8am.) Since I've missed eating pizza I slip into the kitchen amid all the shouts and hurtling bodies of the lunch rush, keeping carefully to the margins. (I'm not really supposed to be here without an escort.) I find Kenny just sliding a pizza off the baker's peel into an oven, then turning back to the wooden work table covered with cornmeal to set up another. He makes various kinds: some vegetarian, most with pepperoni. "There is something for everybody," he says.



Kenny making pizza



Photo by Dick Aroner

When I leave, I meet **Sandy Mouras** in the hall and exclaim over the crowd. She laughs and says, "Yes, it's busy today; Kenny has created his own monster!"

Kenneth Johnson was born in Brooklyn, the youngest of four, but brought up in Huntington, Long Island. He watched his mother and grandmother cook, and every other Sunday after church they ate at his grandmother's, who spoke half-English, half-Italian. It was she who taught him to make calzones.

When Kenny was fourteen, he got a job in a bagel shop. I ask why bagels are better in New York, and he shrugs his shoulders and shakes his head but says, "They say it's in the water." At seventeen he began working in pizza joints and loved it.

When he went to Huntington High School, he became the New York State wrestling champion. He went to Nassau Community College and after graduation was on the Long Island alumni wrestling

(Continued on page 4)

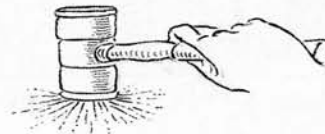
The Forester

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President's Podium

by Jack Hughes

One of the low score items in the Residents' Satisfaction Survey (Holleran Report) was the program for resident orientation. There have been a number of improvements, but a few areas still need to be addressed. One of these is to better define the roles and responsibilities of the Residents Association Board and to make the information available to new residents, and keep all residents informed through periodic reminders. Article IV of the Bylaws, Board of Directors, states, "The business and affairs of the Association shall be managed by its Board of Directors." The purposes of the Residents Association are given in the 1996 Charter, but a broader definition of the role of the Board would be helpful. To that end, a committee chaired by Tynette Hills will address this issue in the coming months.

The Board continues to work with the administration on the Long Range Plans. There is a glimmer of hope that work on some of the more urgent projects will get underway soon.

In response to a recent suggestion, I would note that if you have paid cash for anything in the Café, you likely have paid 6.75% sales tax as required by North Carolina law. Overspending your quarterly food allowance will be billed on the following monthly statement – without any tax. So unless you want to make a contribution to the state's general tax fund, don't pay cash in the Café.

In Memoriam

Virginia "Gia" Wolfe

January 19, 2012

Library Science 101



by Carol Scott

As announced in last month's column here, notices are now being received by residents for books that are four weeks or more overdue. These books may be renewed, but this must be requested in the Library. You do not have to bring the book with you for this. The earlier reminder means we can all keep up better with the whereabouts of our books. It also means you can find out on the Library computer if a particular book is checked out. Thank you for helping us with this new procedure.

Back copies of "Our State" magazine, containing each month an article about some sidelight of the Civil War in North Carolina, are now being placed on the stand with the new books, near the desk. They can be taken out of the Library overnight.

Resident Jean Anderson's new book on the history of Durham is now available in the Library Classroom in the Resident Authors section. It is the product of MUCH research for all the interesting information and photographs it contains.

Last month in this column we asked for suggestions – both pro and con – for the new Library. Several have been received, and here are some of them, with answers. Please keep the suggestions coming!

Q. Why must there be an entire window wall with a door to outside on the front of the building? This would reduce the space needed for shelving, and would allow anyone with an outside key to enter the Library at night after it is closed.

A. This has been referred to the architect in a letter from the Library Committee.

Q. Can the signs presently on the exterior doors of the Library be removed?

A. They were added last fall when the Library began closing at night, to tell newcomers and visitors what lies behind the closed doors, and during what hours the Library is open.

Q. What size will the library be?

A. The architect has been asked that.

Q. Can we have shelving that is neither too high nor too low for older residents to comfortably reach the books?

A. That will depend upon the size of the room and the amount of space available for shelving.

Q. Can we have a workroom so that boxes of donated books do not obstruct the shelves behind the desk and/or make the Library look cluttered?

A. That also depends on the size of the Library, whose dimensions have been requested from the architect.

Don't forget that "*The Undaunted Heart*," the true story of the love of a Southern belle, daughter of the President of UNC, and a Yankee general at the close of the Civil War, will be discussed at the Book Club next week, and that the following week instead of the afternoon's Resident Readings, the author, Suzy Barile, who is the couple's great-granddaughter, will be in the auditorium at 7 pm to give us more information about this unusual couple. All are welcome to both events.

Kenny continued

(Continued from page 1)

team. They performed in upstate New York and all over the tri-state area. He won four gold medals in the Empire State Games. The team had sponsors who paid for their travel; he worked as he wrestled.

He eventually moved to Melbourne, Florida, where he opened his own pizza place. But, as New Yorkers do, he got homesick. Walking on the beach on New Year's Day watching dolphins didn't seem to him the thing to be doing. So it was back to New York, where he coached in the Huntington School District, catering on the side: anything Italian related.

When Kenny moved to Durham and came to The Forest, he worked as receiver of all the kitchen supplies. His father died in New York the night of his first day on the job. Barry Lobo, Peter Hoffman, and Michael Ahern told him to go for as long as he needed to (it was three weeks), and his job would be waiting for him when he got back. "They have been very good to me here," he says.

He had always helped in the kitchen, prepping, making calzones, when he finished the receiving for the day. When he was offered the job of cook in the café he was pleased. "It's more fun than receiving."

He owns a farm between Durham and Hillsborough, where he keeps four horses, eight chickens,

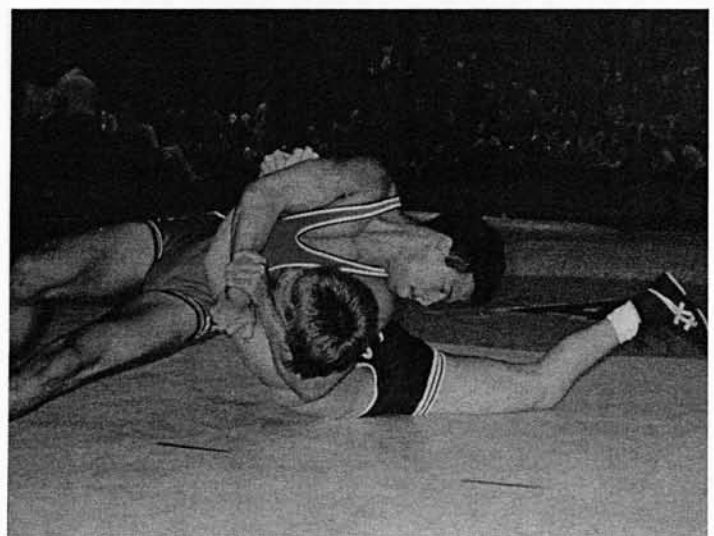


Pizza crowd in the Cafe

seven dogs, four cats, a pig, a rat, and a rabbit. Most are rescue animals. The horses are Gypsy, Twilight, Thunder, and Ace. Ace is a retired racehorse that belonged to the Petty family of NASCAR fame. The pig is named Skillet. It was Kenny's daughter, Chapel, who requested the rat and named him Halo. "I wouldn't ordinarily go out and buy a rat," says Kenny, and then with a grin, "It's pretty far from Brooklyn, isn't it?"



Kenny with the baker's peel



Kenny victorious

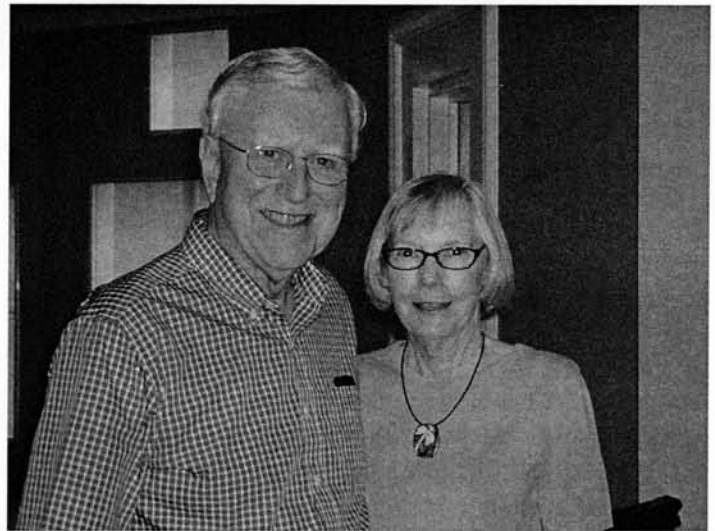
Welcome, New Residents



Herb Carson

Apartment 4029 401-0158

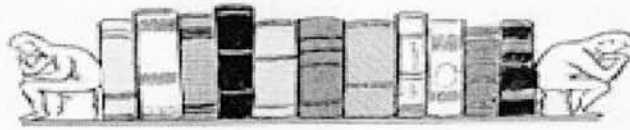
Herb lived much of his early life in Philadelphia. After army service in Tokyo, he earned degrees from Pittsburgh, Columbia, and a PhD from Minnesota. He taught high school at Orange, NJ, but made his career as a professor at the Universities of Minnesota and Nebraska, and at Ferris State University in Michigan, concentrating on classical humanities and philosophy. He also served as a visiting professor at Youngstown State University. He is the author of a book on successful speaking, many articles, poems, and short stories, and is the co-author with his late wife, Dr. Ada Lou Carson, of a number of books spanning the fields of literature, biography, and the classical period. He has acted in productions by universities and regional theaters. Retired in 1994, he moved to Durham, where he served on the Civic Center Authority. He has been a member of the Independent Scholars Association and Beth El Synagogue. His many other interests include art, current events, and, most of all, his three children and six grandchildren.



Bob & Gretchen Dix

Apartment 3044 544-4458

Bob was born in Bridgeport, CT, where he lived until age 11. After spending 3 years in Dallas, TX, he attended high school in Milford, CT. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in mechanical engineering at MIT and made his career as an engineer in defense command and control systems. Gretchen was born and lived in Raleigh until she was 13. She attended Ravenscroft School, then high school in Potsdam, NY. She earned a B.S. in nursing from Simmons College in Boston and an M.S. from Boston University. Her nursing career spanned 35 years. They have two sons and five grandchildren. One family lives in Bethesda, MD; the other lives in Amherst, NH. The Dixes lived in Massachusetts before moving to Durham in January 2011. Both have been active in social justice issues through their church and other organizations. They have participated in many Elderhostel programs and in the OLLI program in the Berkshires and at Duke. They enjoy reading and many other activities as well as visiting with family and friends.



Bookshelf

Room by Emma Donoghue

by Peggy Quinn

I had no intention of reading a book narrated by a five-year-old child. But I kept hearing such good reviews and everyone who read it insisted that it was a really good read. So I bit the bullet and opened the book. I read it, in fact I hated to put it down. Emma Donoghue has written a novel about a subject that kind of chills our bones. Chilling, yes, but quite beautiful in its portrayal of a mother and a child who live together within the confines of an 11x11 foot room. They have lived there for seven years, and Jack knows nothing of the world outside his room.

With this in mind, what kind of a child, or what kind of mother would you expect to find in this little room? Meet Jack, our five-year-old narrator. Jack is intelligent, intuitive, a lovable, happy little boy. His mother, Ma, the only name we ever know, is a strong, practical and very loving mother. Ma has created a structured, lively regimen for him, including exercise, singing, reading and chores. The main objects in the room are given capital letters: BED, WARDROBE, RUG, PLANT, WALL. They are named things in a world where his only companion is his mother. "RUG-RUG" becomes his friend. There is order and purpose.

Ma was kidnapped by a sadistic predator when she was nineteen. She was locked in the room and violated. She became pregnant and Jack was born. The author does not dwell on the rape. What she does is to create a life for this twosome who are completely cut off from the real world. Ma is determined to make life as normal as possible in these most un-

usual circumstances. She maps out a track and they run around the track for exercise. They watch TV, but not too much because it "rots the mind." (The TV set is old and reception is not good.) They string egg shells together with a needle to make a snake, they worry about PLANT not getting enough light, and they read and reread the few books that are available to them.

Old Jack, the man whom they refer to as their jailer, visits once a week and brings supplies. When he comes Ma puts Jack in the wardrobe. WARDROBE becomes a hiding place, a safe place for the little boy. WARDROBE is also his friend. Sometimes he peeks when Old Jack comes. Sometimes Old Jack brings a surprise, once a new book and once a lollipop, a revelation to Jack. Sometimes Ma asks him for a special favor and sometimes he punishes them for some unknown reason.

Jack is a funny little boy. He mixes up his words and his tenses. He is curious and constantly questioning the meaning of things that he doesn't understand. Now that Jack is five, Ma becomes more determined to escape from their prison. A plan is hatched and Jack is called upon to be very, very brave. Ma tells him, "Scared is what you're feeling, but brave is what you are."

Donoghue's storytelling is simple yet complex. She lets us hold our breath for a few moments as the story climaxes. I don't want to give away the ending, but the author does pace her story right down to the very end. Sometimes you feel that you would like to shake Ma and say, "do something," and then the next moment you want to grab hold of both Jack and his mother, hug them tightly, and beg them to take care, stay safe. There is suspense, intensity, and finally revelation as the story ends, and we are left missing

Bookshelf continued

the company of two beautifully drawn characters.

N.B. Some readers found it shocking that Ma still breast-fed Jack at age 5. I must admit that I felt a little uneasy and uncomfortable with the concept. However, when you consider the circumstances of their imprisonment, where only mother and child exist for each other, breast feeding serves as a special bond that Jack needed to assure him that Ma was there for him and wouldn't leave him. Once his world opens up he no longer needs the comfort that nursing afforded him.

Gunna:**"The road to hell is paved with good intentions!"**

by Herb Carson

Movie dialogue (approximated):

Joan—Hi, Jim. I'm back. I'll tell you, flying a red-eye from L.A. to New York is really tiring.

Jim—Hey, Joan, gosh, I was gunna meet you.

Joan—Oh, Jim, that is really so nice.

Jim—Yeah, I was really gunna.

Joan—How sweet. You really were gunna, huh?

Jim—Sure. I was gunna!

In life, we are often given promises, good intentions, gunnas. There is the neighbor who, as you emerged again in public after a two-week stretch of pneumonia, says, "Oh, I was gunna bring you some soup." Gunna!

There is the friend encountered at the movie who says, "We were gunna invite you to come with us, but we thought you might not like comedies." Gunna!

There is the family member who at the reunion says, "Gosh I was gunna write you to see how you were doing." Another gunna.

Then there is the guy who was in the men's room when the restaurant check came. "Darn, I was gunna treat tonight." Gunna!

And of course the politician who says, "I'm gunna increase support to our fighting men, increase our state's share of federal moneys, leave Social Security and Medicare alone, balance the budget, and decrease taxes on estates and large businesses to encourage investment. And that's not all ..." Gunna gunna gunna!

As for the biggest annual gunna of all, New Year's Resolutions—uh uh! I ain't gunna talk about that kettle of fish.

Well, I could go on with other examples, but I have to sign off. You see, I'm gunna write the great American novel. Yep, gunna, just after my nap and then lunch, I really am gunna!

As I Age

by Ann Marie Langford

Having my frugality gene
Kick into a lower gear
Would be helpful.

But no, I run the back
Of my comb from bottom up
The not quite empty toothpaste tube
One more time.
Ridiculous!

This has been going on for WEEKS.

John Henry's *Conversations*



- Reminds me of my daughter and me.
- Conversation with a ghost
- I really think you should!
- I'm upset that you are going to the prom and I'm not.
- Why are you worried? You look stunning.
- I can't believe you're wearing that—the party is CASUAL!
- You know you shouldn't have gone out with that boy. I will read to you. Then you must go to your room and repent.
- You are so beautiful
- Of course you look nice, but looks aren't everything—and aren't those *my* earrings?
- Have you had a hard day? Tell me about it. You'll feel better to get it over with—let me sit down and we'll talk.
- It's very pretty, Alice, but it's nothing I would wear.
- I absolutely love this painting!



- Really—the younger generation has no sense of dignity—or even morality.
- Don't preach at me!
- I'm sorry I haven't lived up to your expectations for me.
- "Really" has it spot on.
- The Bible says ...
- Tut, tut, look what the young girls are wearing.
- I love my boyfriend and I don't agree with your rules.
- Two ladies, tourists in, say, Belgium, are waiting to hear from the young woman at the keyboard, but she seems to have fallen asleep.
- Sister, I don't think you should wear that.
- You must know how disappointed we are. Right here in this Bible it says ..."
- God loves you—we do too—we want to share God's words of comfort and strength.
- A sullen teenager with two old maid aunts!

Mystery Food: Polenta

by Bill Harrington

In one of the most famous lines in literature, Oliver Twist slowly walks up to the front of the dining room and says something like, "Please, sir, may I have some more?" Ever wonder what Oliver's gruel was made of? Maybe it was some kind of polenta recipe. If so, the stuff would have been imported from Italy. We all know the answer to the question: What are the foods of Italy? Of course, the answer is pasta and pizza. Polenta, dubbed the "elegant gruel" by some, may be the third. In fact, some food historians believe polenta came first. To some Italians, I'm sure this must be akin to saying that Coach K was seen having dinner on Franklin Street – with Roy Williams!

While pasta and pizza were the dishes of southern Italy, polenta was the chosen food of northern Italy. "Italian grits" can be traced to ancient Rome. Traditionalists still contend that it must be cooked the old fashioned way with a round bottom pot known as a *paiolo* and a long wooden spoon called a *tarello*.

The ratio of water to polenta must be 3/1. Finally, if the concoction is not stirred *constantly* for 50 minutes, it's not authentic polenta.

Like several of the foods we enjoy at The Forest, polenta was first a food of poverty. Before it was prepared the traditional way as depicted above, polenta was cooked in an even more primitive way. It was one of the earliest and simplest foods made from grain. Polenta was first made from wild grain and then from a primitive form of wheat (millet or spelt) or chickpeas. The grain was mixed with water to form a paste and cooked on a hot stone. This recipe for polenta may have pre-dated bread because yeasts were often very difficult to procure and milling had not yet been refined.

Polenta has marched through the centuries from the peasants' tables of northern Italy to gourmet restaurants – from a very simple recipe to the many va-

rieties that fit today's palates. Polenta can be a main course or a side dish. It can be served sliced, fried, grilled, gratinéed or hot and runny straight from the pot. It can be cooked in the oven, on top of the stove or in the microwave.

In our kitchen here at The Forest, polenta is usually cooked and then allowed to cool in a pan. Next, it is cut into squares or wedges. Tony Ellis tells me that adding a little Gorgonzola or Parmesan adds to the flavor. For the citizens of our country who come from north of the Mason-Dixon line or for the southern traitors among us who don't like grits, polenta is a valid substitute – even if it did originate in *north-ern* Italy.

BUT remember – to be real polenta, it must be cooked in a *paiolo* using a *tarello*.

Friend

by Barbara Birkhead

When I don't have to worry about what I say
And feel a freedom in what I do,
When my comments on sex are all okay
And my politics are listened to,
When my religious thoughts need no amend
And when it's ok just to be me
I know I have a friend.

Hey, You Down There, It's Me!

By Don Chesnut

What will remain when we no longer are,
Where will we find repose?
Is there some purpose to it all, or,
As they say, God only knows?

Do we indeed return to sod,
Back into this world's crust?
Can one only say "My God,
Is it just earthly dust that's us?"

Or does something else transcend
When our life ends, my friend?
Is there a better way, you ask,
To aid the cosmos in its task?

I think one *can* take a grander view.
For long ago when died a star
It was its dust that made us us,
That's what we are!

So though I'd have to travel far,
I think I'd like to be a star.
Hey, you folks down there below,
It's me, it's me, I'm all aglow!

I'm up here nearly every night,
So look me up, keep me in sight.
I'll be here for all to see,
It's what's called immortality!

What remains when we no longer are?

-- A star!

Christmas Card, 2011

by Barbara Birkhead

With the end of 2011 we cancelled a year.
Constant change in GOP runners
made the party fear ...
they might not have one to combat Obama.

As for allure, movies couldn't compete—
We never thought Romney might be beat.
Perry forgets his issues, Cain ogles 'em all—
The rest vie with the Tea Party doll.

Prince William's choice of a bride,
Kate, enchanted us all.
But an eight million job loss helps us recall
better times.
And Occupiers rose around the world,
amazingly calm but minimally directed,
angry at Wall Street.

A brand new word entered our door,
spread through our current technology—
apps, whatever that may be—
Netflix, and facebook and many more.

Would fracking improve our power source
or harm the land we live on?
Does the Arab Spring give us hope?

Happy holiday

Odds and Ends

The Forester Makes a Journey

Carol Scott has written the following letter about her article in the December issue:

"Murry Perlmutter sent to the CEO of Southwest Airlines a copy of my article 'Benefits of Growing Older,' which was in The Forester in December. You will remember that a pilot pushed me in a wheelchair up the ramp from the plane. A surprise follow-up came yesterday.

"The CEO sent a copy to the pilot (after much research, I'm sure, to find which pilot it was that day) and to his supervisor, with a commendation.

"He also sent to Murry and to me, through her, a beautiful four-inch glass heart, embedded with another smaller heart --- a display piece -- in its own dark blue velvet-y box. The symbol of Southwest is LUV, because of its headquarters' location

at Love Field in Dallas.

We were both SO SURPRISED! And Murry is about to change her up-coming booking for her next Chicago trip to Southwest!"

But That's Not All

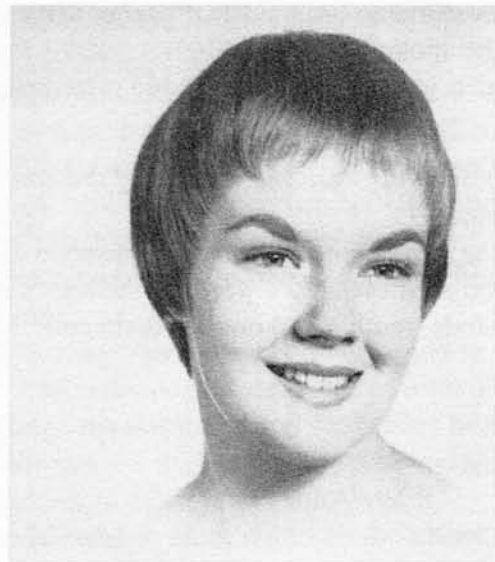
Priscilla Squier had a remarkable Southwest experience some years ago. Her plane was parked far from the building way out on the tarmac, and the attendant pushed her wheelchair all the way out to the waiting plane and to the bottom of a long flight of stairs. Whereupon the pilot came down and carried Priscilla up the flight of stairs!

I believe we should add Southwest Airlines to our new publication "The Residents Choice."

Mystery People — Do You Know Who They Are?



High School Girl in Potsdam, NY



College Freshman in North Carolina

Not For Sissies

(with anatomical notes by *The Preacher*, Ecclesiastes)

by Ned Arnett

When I was only fifty
I thought it would be nifty
to ask my eighty-year-old Dad
“What’s it like to grow old?”
Without a moment’s hesitating,
ruminating, or equivocating,
he replied, “It’s humiliating.”
The loss of admiration is scarcely fun,
or losing the authority to get things done.

*“Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth
Or ever the evil days come
And the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say
I have no pleasure in them...”*
The pessimistic bronze age preacher knew
whereof he spoke;
“Golden years” aside, getting old is still no joke.

*“... in the day when the keepers of the house
shall tremble
and the strong men shall bow themselves ...”*
We too aren’t what we were, for heaven’s sake,
our hands tremble and our backs do ache,

*“...and the grinders cease because they are few
...
and the sound of the grinding is low ...”*
Lacking dental hygiene and the use of floss
who can escape strategic dental loss?

*“...and those that look out the windows be dark-
ened ...”*
Cataracts, glaucoma or detachments draw a
screen
without Duke Eye Center to intervene.

And so with every anatomical detail correct
Ecclesiastes lists the body’s failures step by step,
the loss of strength, sphincters, senses
and finally the mind’s defenses.
The bronze age preacher tells us like a brother,
“Old age is one damned thing after another.”