

Christmas, 1976

As the Christmas season once again arrives, it comes time to share a yearly "visit" with far flung friends. As I look back on my year, my events and activities seem somewhat less exciting, my life more mellow.

Last year Bill's daughter, Susie, flew up from Florida the day after Christmas and lived here at my house for 6 weeks during her school inter-term. She especially wanted snow for her visit - and she got it! Our first snow of the season was falling as her plane flew in and we had several 4 to 6 inch snows in January - to Susie's sheer delight. Our summer visit together was a short 2 weeks when Bill and I drove to Smith Mountain Lake, Virginia and Huntington, W.Va. to visit his family and then had Susie in Cincy for 10 days. Now a teenager, she will probably be with us again this January.

For my theater activities, I played a small character role in Look Homeward Angel last January. Susie thoroughly enjoyed attending the rehearsals, seeing the play develop to its final form, and knew most of the lines! In May I got 2 more TV jobs. I filmed another Juvenile Court segment for local TV and got a small cameo role on Tom Robertson's MGM Young America Experience Series. In January or February, watch for "Nightmare", the story of 2 Jewish children escaping from the Warsaw Ghetto to America in WWII. I play the Salvation Army lady offering refreshment to the children. Also, The Sellin' won several national awards last year and will probably be re-run this year.

The rest of my "theater work" has been with photography. I do all the lobby display photography and "shoot the shows" for Drama Workshop. I did wedding pictures for a friend this summer, and do some other "group" work as well as my own creative type personal pictures.

School has been terrible this year. My 2 American Humor classes are fine, but I again have 2 other new courses to work up from scratch. I'm getting a little tired of always having to build new courses. I don't really mind the Composition for College Bound, but 9th grade English I (repeaters) started out as bad as Courter ever was 6 years ago. There are 17 "boys" (several 17) & 2 girls, several taking this for the 3rd or 4th time, and all with mild to serious psychological as well as learning problems. In Sept & Oct., 6th Bell was a nightmare. The combined efforts of the English Supervisor, counselors, parents, and three principals working since mid-Sept are slowly bringing some semblance of order out of chaos. It's a shame one hour a day can make you hate teaching. Fortunately, for some balance, I've had a perfectly marvelous Effective Speaking class at Univ. of Cin. this fall.

I also taught a speech class at UC this past summer and will teach speech there 2 terms this next summer. Tues. eve. to Thurs eve., (2 days) doesn't tie me down that much, the extra money is great, and half the time Cincinnati Summer Opera is on Wed. nights anyway. Add long weekends in Indiana at the camp, living out of my comfortable new room, and on my farm across the road, and you have my summer, last year and probably next year. Last summer, Bill and I built an outhouse on the farm - first things first! In Sept. I discovered a small lake buried deep in my woods. Deer abound on my land. One Sept evening, we saw SEVEN deer, 3 adults, 3 yearlings, 1 fawn, there at one time!

In May, Bill had an operation removing a granuloma from his vocal cords. For 2 weeks he could not utter ONE SOUND! As a person whose very being seems an extension of his voice, it was an impossibly frustrating time for him. He is fine now and his singing voice is slowly coming back. He is singing King Melchoir in another production (his 4th) of Amahl and the Night Visitors on Dec 9-12, as well as doing his usual King fole in the Christ Church Boar's Head Christmas Pageant.

My father is fine as usual at age 85, still active in Masons and driving thousands of miles each year near and far around the countryside to Texas, Arizona, W.Va., Cleveland, etc., etc. Brownie is truly a dear, sweet dog, but we have just discovered she has a degenerative disease in her back knees, hips and lumbar joints - and she is only 3 years old! At present she is not bad at all and aspirin solves the problem, but I hate to think of the future.

And thoughts of the future call to mind the coming new year. I hope it is one filled with happiness for you.

*July 22, Tom help Bill move in to 3204
Sept. reject So. H. job - now interview for Va. job.
Sept Oct live in Basement.*