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To Russia, With Reluctance

But the Journey Changes a Collingtonian's View

by Ginny Mintz

After years on both sides of the wall in Berlin, I'd had it with totalitarianism. However, Raisa, an Uzbek friend, and Azat, her colleague, who are applying for citizenship in Russia, convinced me to visit other Uzbek friends now living in Russia. I got to know Raisa when she was a guide on a six-week tour through Central Asia in 1996. Since then we have visited back and forth.

In Russia, I was pleasantly disabused of many of my prejudices. In four widely separated towns, I learned what it was like to play visiting sardine with three generations in two-room apartments and love it.

Arriving in squeaky-clean Moscow, I was delighted to see neat parks and flowers everywhere. Trees and well-equipped playgrounds separated huge apartment complexes – the most expensive real estate in Europe. Stores and shops mirrored our own. In grocery stores, often in big malls, I saw crisp produce, unlike the pitiful blobs I had known in 60's East Berlin. Sweets and alcohol were ubiquitous. But the prices! While the aver-

age disposable income is \$700 per month, everything costs as much as here. Cars in cities tend to be foreign, large and ubiquitous while towns feature the small domestic variety, like the Lada. We, however, used trains, buses, streetcars, *mastrushkas* (vans), taxis and many rubles for our local travel. Unlike here, a man or kid always popped up and offered me his seat.



Typically Crowded Russian apartment
Photo by Ginny Mintz

Moving to friends on the other side of town, I again played sardine, joining three related families and their cat, socializing in the kitchen until all hours. Days I was left in the care of my friend Tatiana's Korean mother, Olga, who spoke not a word of English. But we made out famously, joining daily gossip sessions in the little park between the apartment buildings or watching young kids on the colorful playground equipment. Olga proudly informed everyone she could find that she had a genuine American in tow.

In St. Petersburg, thanks to Raisa's travel connec-

tions, I was dragged around for five hours a day by a moonlighting professor of social philosophy, who only once asked me what I wanted to see. Instead, I got the standard blur of masterpieces and gold - 100 kilos of which decorates the outside of the Catherine Palace alone.

Back at my hotel, the Nevsky Grand, the rooms were closet-sized and efficient but nobody seemed to know why there was no hot water – until the maid dared to reveal the pipes were reversed.

The next day I boarded a spotless and well-equipped train to Kazan, (capital of Genghis Khan's territory) – even the toilets had every amenity one could want. The restful 24-hour trip passed mostly flat, black dirt fields of sunflowers and wheat with scattered towns shielded from the tracks by stands of evergreens and birches – nothing ugly.

In Naberezhneya Chelni I once again shared three rooms that were constantly teeming with family and visitors. A neighbor invited Raisa, Azat and me to dinner where, out of pity, she fed her 40-ish alcoholic lawyer son a water glass of vodka. She had previously sought treatment for him at a local hospital but was rebuffed– not enough beds. He died shortly after I got home.

Safety appears immaterial. For entertainment, Azat spent one afternoon watching horrible Russian car crashes on You Tube. Seat belts are finally mandatory, yet it's still no place for pedestrians and handicapped, for whom there are zero provisions. Sidewalks and streets are all booby trapped with holes, steps, dips, barriers, etc. Hence the handicapped are rarely seen in public.

During my last week in Russia, Raisa's brother-

in-law, Albert, drove several hours to ferry us back to their quaint little village of well-used blue or green log houses with folk-style window trim and welcoming locals. I was enchanted with their farmette complete with fruit trees, vegetables, cows, chickens, ducks and geese, flowers and a frantic guard dog. Albert's wife preserves, freezes, chills, bakes, or juices everything for later use. Their bees produce many two-gallon jars of honey selling for \$50 each and the woods provide plenty of rose hips and berries. I was only sorry that U.S. Customs would probably confiscate any goodies I brought home.

The final stop was in Kazan, where we attended a small festival celebrating Tatarstan's independence that featured local food, handicrafts and Disney decorations. The next day, despite my long-standing opposition to Aeroflot, my very good friends accompanied me to the airport, where we said good-bye and I reluctantly boarded an Aeroflot plane for home. I've reformed!

The Collingtonian

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The Collingtonian invites all Collington residents to submit articles, photographs and story suggestions, preferably concerning Collington and its people. We also welcome "Letters to the Editor" commenting on the Collingtonian and its content. Submissions may be e-mailed to collingtonian@gmail.com or placed in the Collingtonian mailbox. All submissions are subject to editing for length, clarity and style.

Keeping Fit at Collington

by Tony Harris

Collington residents have many opportunities to engage in exercise and physical activity. From exercise classes instructed by certified staff or S.A.G.E. instructors, to community activities such as bocce, there are many options to choose from. The Fitness Center and pool are also available for individual exercise programs. Now, why is it important to have a physically active community? The answer is maintaining optimal health and well-being as we age.

Exercise and physical activity have proven positive effects, not only on physical health but also on mental and emotional health. A recent study at the University of Maryland found that regular treadmill walking improved cognitive function in inactive adults at risk for Alzheimer's disease. The National Sleep Foundation lists regular exercise as a means of achieving quality sleep. Studies have proven exercise can help ease arthritic pain through weight reduction and strengthening joints. Exercise can also help those who suffer from mild to moderate depression and even play a role in treating severe depression.

Prior to starting an exercise program, complete a thorough Medical History Questionnaire and consult with your primary care doctor. This is especially the case if you do not regularly see a doctor. For all its benefits, exercise can exacerbate medical issues that are not known or controlled. Next, if you are unsure where to start, please consult with a fitness professional. A certified personal trainer or someone with an exercise-related degree (exercise science or kinesiology) can help with choosing the appropriate exercises and intensity.

Tony Harris is Collington's Fitness Manager. He will be writing regularly about physical activity for older adults.

Letter to the Editor - A Difficult Decision

In discussions of community living at Collington (dress in the dining room, for example), you sometimes hear, "It's my home. I should be able to wear (or, perhaps, do) whatever I want." Reasonable as that sounds, the matter doesn't end there. Allowances have to be made for public spaces.

This was vividly brought home to us as we faced one of the most difficult decisions of our 52 years together: Was our rescue Doberman ever going to fit in at Collington?

When we first got her, we heard a few negative comments about Dobermans but shrugged them off as uninformed. Yet our vigorous Becky did not go unnoticed. Many admired her athleticism and energetic dog park antics. Few saw her suited up in her life vest cruising the lake with Grant in the early a.m. Others could not help noticing her straining at her leash trying to chase a deer, car, cat or even a jogger.

Seeking to tame her exuberance, we sought trainers and worked with Becky for hours each day. Her intelligence rewarded our efforts as she learned new skills. Still, worries continued. Would she in time become a dog that Collington would be comfortable with? Could we be sure she would not be a problem in any situation? We sought expert opinion again, and were eventually advised that Becky was not suited to Collington's environment. We decided to return her to Doberman rescue. Our home isn't just ours. We think of our friends, friends who would never ask us to make this decision. Those who may have noticed her absence should know that a sad, difficult decision was made. The remaining kibbles in our pockets, and squirreled-away well-worn tennis balls, are reminders that we are now former dog owners. Sentimental, of course, but feelings about well-loved pets are genuine. We wish with both our hearts that this story had turned out differently.

Margaret and Grant Bagley

We Welcome Our New Neighbors

by Barbara Allen



Hannah Tyson

Cottage 4009, Ext.7341.

Hannah moved to Collington from Santa Fe, N.M. She was born in Manchester, N.H., and has lived in Washington, D.C., New York City, and Western Massachusetts.

Hannah has a Ph.D. from Catholic University in Washington, specializing in medieval and eighteenth century literature and 20th-Century poetry. She taught at Catholic University, as well as at Mount. St. Mary's College in New Hampshire, and Northfield Mount Hermon School in Massachusetts, and lastly at United World College in New Mexico. Currently she is a senior consultant with International Baccalaureate, a nonprofit educational foundation that provides a pre-university credential for international students. She does workshops for teachers, both on line and face to face.

Sally Hopkins



Cottage 4201, Ext.7365.

Sally moved to Collington from Vermont. She was born in Akron, Ohio and began her education with two years of art school at Washington University and then attended Kent State

University, where she received a B.A. degree in liberal arts. She had various work experiences before the 22 years she spent in Missouri working for Hallmark Cards Inc. She ultimately

became manager of collections and archives at Hallmark.

Sally describes herself as “the luckiest person I know” and also as “a citizen of the world,” a designation she has earned as a world traveler. She has seen Antarctica, South Africa, Western China, Egypt,, Morocco, and Iran, one of her very favorite places. She has ridden elephants in Cambodia, India, and Botswana. Some of this travel was a result of her taking part in the National Geographic Genome Project to trace ancestors. In addition to traveling she loves the arts. She has no immediate family but a number of nephews and nieces and great nephews and nieces.

Pizza at Ledo's or Ledo Pizza?

By Jim Giese

It's the same, only different. Those who attended the University of Maryland since 1955 or lived near campus are very familiar with the popular Ledo Restaurant that was on University Boulevard in Adelphi. Ledo's was founded by Tommy Marcos, Sr. It is the sauce, a secret formula, once prepared only by an elderly man in the restaurant kitchen, a thin, crispy crust and thickly sliced pepperoni that made Ledo's pizza different and considered by many to be the best anywhere.

Sometime in the '80s, Marcos joined with another restaurateur to open Ledo Pizza carryout franchises, using the same recipe as the restaurant. The franchises became very popular.

Later, the owners split and the franchise corporation took ownership of the Ledo Pizza name. The franchises broadened their Italian menus and became small restaurants. There are now over 100 of them.

The Marcos family Ledo Restaurant still made its popular pizza as well as offering a full menu of Italian specialties. Three years ago it moved across campus to downtown College Park, bringing its old ovens with it.

Art Imitates Life in ‘The Grand Manner’

“The Grand Manner,” presented as a dramatic reading by a Collington cast on Nov. 19, tells the story of a young admirer encountering the great American actress Katharine Cornell. For one audience member the play held more than theatrical interest.

Like Katharine Cornell, Helen Smith hails from Buffalo, where her mother went to school with the future queen of the theater. When Helen was a young girl, her mother took her to see Cornell appear in Boston. Mother and daughter visited the actress in her dressing room.

“I didn’t stay as long as Peter [the Buffalo boy in the play] but I did see her,” says Helen. By coincidence she lives a few apartment doors away from Marion Henry, who played Katharine Cornell in the reading. -- **GN**



*Photo by Peter Pfund
Thespians: Bill McGhee as Guthrie McClintic,
Katharine Cornell’s husband; Chris Cobb as the
star-struck Peter, Margaret Bagley as Gertrude
Macy, Cornell’s personal assistant, and Marion
Henry as Katharine Cornell.*

Through a Glass, Profitably; Cases Help Collington

By Frances Kolarek

When a collection of carved wooden animals fell into the Op Shop’s hands recently, Claire Penn read the descriptive material and knew she had something special. Both whimsical and realistic, these creatures are the work of a group of Japanese living near a stand of Cryptomeria trees. Their main income derives from the figurines they carve from its wood. Placed in our Glass Cases, the carvings sold briskly.

Claire Penn is a New Yorker to the core, from Brooklyn, The Bronx, and Massapequa, Long Island, where she owned The Family Gift Shop. Arriving at Collington last April, she spotted our glass cases, where gift items and jewelry are displayed for sale, and felt right at home

RoAnne Hartfield, who for years has managed the Glass Case items, was delighted to invite Claire to join her team along with Sheila Givan, Margaret Bagley and herself.

The glass cases are an offshoot of the Op Shop - our thrift shop - whose income supports the activities of the Residents Association.



For their wares they depend entirely upon contributions from Collington residents, for which RoAnn and her team say “Thank you very much! Keep those donations coming.”

Gertrude Mitchell, who keeps track of Op Shop funds, has calculated that the display cases brought in 27 percent of the total Op Shop income from April to October of this year. And then, too, Gertrude points out, there is the income realized from the sale of furniture and other effects left behind when a resident passes on. Last April, such a sale netted \$1,700, thanks to the work of Ria Hawkins and her helpers. Ria tells us that swarms of staff and residents flock to these sales.

Shopping! An addiction? We hope so.

'Beltways Within Beltways' Typify China

By Frances Kolarek

Julia Freeman and RoAnne Hartfield are home from a two-week trip to China. For RoAnne the trip fulfilled a lifelong dream resulting from her close friendship with a Chinese-American school friend. So when she learned that Julia was joining a tour group, she signed on, too.

A first impression: the overwhelming size of China's cities, with populations of 20 million and more. "Beltway' in China is not singular. "There are beltways within beltways," Julia notes.

Tian'amen Square in Beijing brought history to life for RoAnne, who recalled pictures of a young man standing in the path of a tank. At the theater she enjoyed the performance of the Suining acrobatic troupe - young people skilled in hair-raising physical exploits. And the problem of gifts for family was solved when she found small bottles, painted on the inside, each supplied by the artist with the names of its recipient.

Visiting the Great Wall, the two travelers joined throngs of tourists including, to their surprise, dozens of sightseeing Chinese.

Chongqing, where the group stayed at the InterContinental Hotel, typifies the enormous size of urban areas, with a population approaching 30 million. Julia remarked on the endless rows of identical buildings that house this multitude. RoAnne was captivated by an artist who paints in traditional Chinese techniques on the leaves of the banyan tree,



RoAnne and Julia at the Great Wall

and acquired a sample of his work preserved in clear plastic.

In Shanghai, Julia ventured on to the subway which, she points out, is only 10 years old. Directional signs are posted in English as well as in Chinese. When she appeared uncertain about her desired stop, she found her fellow passengers friendly and helpful.

On her iPad, Julia says, she had no difficulty getting e-mail, but could not access Facebook, the Washington Post or the New York Times, which are apparently blocked in China. Both would like to have Julia present a slide show of the many pictures she took during the trip.

(A longer version of this article is in the Collingtonian Extra at keepingupwithCollington.org)

Collingtonian Recalls Travel to China with Nixon

By Norman Kempster

Was it really only a little more than 40 years ago that Air Force One touched down in Peking (as Beijing was then known), signaling President Richard Nixon's historic visit. In 1972 China was an economic and political backwater, isolated from much of the world by U.S.-led sanctions and its own hard-line diplomacy.

Not all of China's subsequent economic miracle can be attributed to fallout

from the Nixon trip, but some of it can. And for two radically different groups—the Chinese Politburo and the Nixon White House—the trip provided an excellent opportunity to shape world opinion at a time when almost no one in the West knew much of anything about events in the secretive Middle Kingdom.

I was one of 87 newspeople accompanying the Nixon party. The Chinese imposed a ceiling on news representation, leaving it to the White House press office to select from the thousands of applications. I was working for United Press International at the time, covering the White House beat with Helen Thomas. UPI and The Associated Press were allotted three slots each for correspondents. Helen and I got two of the UPI spaces and diplomatic correspondent Stewart Hensley the other.

Both the Chinese government and the Nixon



Official White House Photo

Aboard Air Force One: Norman Kempster is in the aisle seat next to Jerrold Schecter of Time magazine. Behind them is Jerry terHorst, then with the Detroit News, later press secretary to President Ford. Standing next to President Nixon is Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler.

administration were secretive by instinct, and kept a very tight lid on contacts with the press. We knew we were being stonewalled, of course. But it really didn't seem to matter much because everything in China seemed to be a story. Almost every correspondent wrote some variation of the "thrifty Chinese" story. Chinese are so honest, the story went, that Americans could not throw anything away. One version: a correspondent brought long underwear for the cold stops like the Great Wall but tossed it in the wastebasket after that phase of the trip was over to provide more space in the suitcase. Next morning, the long johns were returned, freshly laundered. That didn't happen to me because, like our hosts, I was reluctant to throw potentially useful things away. But I did chuck out a used-up ballpoint pen, only to have it returned. Of course, it is now clear that this ballet was carefully

Keeping Up with a Changing China

By Jeanne Barnett

Peering out the window of the fast train that links Shanghai and Beijing, I saw a China very different from the one I had seen on multiple visits with my husband, Doak Barnett, in the 1980s and 90s. The tidy, well-kept fields that I remembered now sprouted “skyscraper villages” in a frenzy of building that testifies to China’s race to emphasize its modernity and world presence in the 21st Century.

My trip last spring was perhaps the fifteenth since my first visit to China in 1978, when as a neophyte I was leader of a women’s group for a trek all over that vast country, then just beginning to move on from the long, drab and often tumultuous Maoist years. In many ways it was something of a homecoming, inasmuch as my husband was born and raised in Shanghai and became a prominent writer and scholar of post-World War II China. Each year in that city -- now a thicket of skyscrapers -- I seek out the cluster of large English-style houses built by his father for YMCA families in the early 1920s, and am delighted to find the Barnett house in wonderful shape, its garden abloom with roses that I am sure my mother-in-law planted all those years ago.

Shanghai was my destination again this year to attend the eighth annual Barnett-Oksenberg Lecture on Sino- American Relations. In Beijing, there still exist old neighborhoods and lanes, where many “ordinary folk” still live, although I was dismayed to see one such area near my Beijing hotel being demolished. The “Forbidden City” has been vastly “spruced up” in recent years, with many new areas in its western quarter now opened to the public. On weekends throngs of people, mostly Chinese, line up at the

entrance gate.

In Beijing, as I do on every visit, I hired a car to go to Tanzhe

si, a lovely temple complex whose

origin dates back more than a thousand years. It spreads out over a remote hillside a 45-minute drive southwest of Beijing. This is always a “must” for me, one of my favorite spots on earth – notable this time because my great-nephew and his wife and I were the only westerners there, unlike times past. Interestingly in this now officially non-religious country, many of the throng of Chinese on a lovely Sunday outing were lighting joss sticks, genuflecting before the many figures of Buddhas in the various temples and having a lovely time with their picnics and such.

These annual trips allow me to is reunite with a host of Chinese friends, mostly diplomats or ex-diplomats, academics, and students, with whom I have developed warm and strong relationships over the years. As I approached the glorious new Beijing airport, all of my travels in China were worth the stress of that long trip out and back.



U.S. Ambassador to China Gary Locke speaks at the 2013 Barnett-Oksenberg Conference, named for Jeanne Barnett’s husband. (State Department photo)

Ken Burton Joins Collington Board

By Jim Giese

Ken Burton joined the Collington Board of Directors for a three-year term at its October meeting, replacing Pat Battin.

As a resident member, Ken joins RoAnne Hartfield and Kay Laughton. Resident Association President Janet Jones, who also took office in October, participates in board meetings in a non-voting capacity -- all part of Collington's unusually strong resident participation in governance.

Ken brings significant experience to the board. His life career was in health service planning and information technology. At Collington, he has served on the Fiscal Review Committee and as Resident Association vice-president.

He has been planning coordinator for a medical center and a regional health services agency in the Philadelphia area, where he also assisted in the start-up of an HMO.

In 1995 Ken moved back to the Washington area, where he was born, continuing to do consulting work.

In 2003 Ken and his wife, Jane Engel, seeking a retirement community, chose Collington because they liked the landscaped grounds, the people they met, and the fact that no building was over three stories in height. They love the view from their villa, with not another building in sight.

Ken kept working with a travel service

for military and government personnel, for three years at an office and another three telecommuting from Collington. He retired in 2009.



Ken Burton

Ken has two children and two grandchildren. He is an active participant in the Seekers Church in the Takoma Park area of Washington, serving as steward. This liberal Protestant church is lay led and has no clergy.

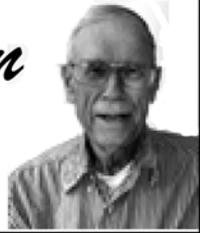
Ken serves on the board's finance committee. At present, the big task is monitoring the efforts to refinance Collington's debt.

Ken also continues to serve as a resident member of Collington's Strategic Planning Committee. He believes this committee -- composed of Collington staff, board members and residents -- has developed a plan for a successful Collington future. He noted that on the way to our interview he had passed workers painting the hallways in the apartments, one of the first implementations of the plan, which has both short- and long-range objectives.

In the short time he has been a board member, Ken has been impressed with the high level of commitment and interest of his fellow members, particularly the non-residents. "That's something you don't always find in a board of that kind," he said.

(A longer version of this article is in the Collingtonian Extra at keepingupwithcollington.org)

Bill Preston on Gardening



What's new for bedding plants and pot plants for 2014? There are so many attractive, dazzling new varieties this column can hardly begin to cover the offerings. But I can mention some good ones: Coreopsis Solana "Golden Sphere", a perennial 12 inches high with double blooms produced continuously. Hibiscus Summerific "Cranberry", a perennial with big blooms, needs moist soil. True Geranium "Rozanne" and "Blushing Turtle", perennials with long blooming periods. Verbena Temari "Candy Stripe", an annual or tender perennial with spectacular bicolor pink/white blooms. Gerbera "Cartwheel Strawberry Twist", a dwarf pot plant or tender perennial with big semi-double blooms ranging from light yellow to red. Pentas Starcluster "White", "Rose", "Red", and "Lavender", pot plants or tender perennials that perform well in summer heat, and will attract butterflies. Calibrachoa Superbells "Pomegranate Punch," an annual that loves sun, is vigorous, reliable, and showy. Pericallis Senetti "Magenta Bicolor" is a tender perennial pot plant that likes cool temperatures and shade, and reblooms when trimmed. Mandevilla Sun Parasol "Red Emperor" is a tender perennial vine with big brilliant red blooms. Look for these at nearby garden centers this spring.

The Garden Committee has ordered some fairly new bedding plants that are resistant to deer browse. These include Petunia Supertunia "Mini Blue Veined", Scaevola "Whirlwind Blue", Lantana "Luscious Tropical Fruit", and Euphorbia "Diamond Frost". Also, Calibrachoa Superbells "Cherry Star" may be resistant to deer. We will again include Marigold "Janie Yellow" and "Janie

Deep Orange" that are very deer resistant. These and many others will all be available in early May at the greenhouse.

A beautiful cut flower you may not know is Lisianthus, ordered for Flower Committee use. It will be grown at the Hilltop Garden next summer.

Nixon in China from p. 8

choreographed to make the point that the Chinese propaganda machine wanted to make. But it seemed plausible at the time.

We now know that Mao Tse-tung was virtually on his deathbed at the time Nixon dropped in. But no one in the West knew that at the time. Nevertheless, Mao played a very small role in most stories filed from the trip. Mao's second in command, Chou en-lai, was a constant presence. Chou and Nixon seemed to hit it off very well and they spent a lot of time in each other's company, usually with a White House press pool looking on and trying to capture a morsel of news. I was in one of those pools. Unlike the usual procedure in which reporters were kept so far away that they could not overhear anything, our group was able to get close enough to make out some of the conversation. The leaders were chatting, in English, about a sequoia tree that was part of an official gift package. Chou was apologizing because the sapling had been planted too close to the road to permit it to grow to its gigantic height. Nixon said there was no need to worry because the tree would not be fully grown for centuries. Chou replied, "It is for future generations to enjoy."

As I look back, I wonder how tall that sequoia has become. At any height, it still is important as a token of detente between the U.S. and China and a fascinating experience for me.

Collington in Autumn, Indoors and Out



Photos by Joe Howard

Collington's Holiday Bazaar Nov. 22 raised more than \$2,700 for the Residents Association.

At left, garden guru Bill Preston did a brisk business in persimmons.

Anna Shea, foreground, and Carol Kempske presided over the popular baked-goods table.

Lions Keep Watch over Collington



Photos by Pat Howard.

Some Collington cottages have at least one thing in common with the New York Public Library: Their entrances are guarded by lions. The lion made of driftwood stands on Jim and Molly Cline's patio. White lions guard John and Barbara Bailar's home. Mike and Anne McCulley acquired this lion, and its mate, in China.