



## In Memoriam: Dennis Clark

BY GREG FUDACZ

ON MARCH 28TH OF THIS YEAR, AN ANTIQUE typewriter collector, a true legend, left this world for the next.

My friend, Dennis Roger Clark, was born on September 24, 1944 in California, and though he would eventually settle on the opposite end of the country in Connecticut, his engineering background took him to every corner of the earth. He enjoyed spelunking when he was younger, and he was always willing to help a stray animal scratching at his door. Dennis collected sewing machines, burglar alarms, velocipedes and, of course, typewriters.

Mind you, these weren't just any typewriters. Through his 40+ years of hunting, Dennis amassed some of the rarest examples on the face of this earth. The Wagner, Index Visible, Hull, Harrington, Bonita Bearing, Lasar, Jones Typographer, Malling-Hansen prototype, various U.S. patent models and 14 (fourteen!!!) Sholes & Gliddens are just a few examples of his 700+ typewriter collection. He was called both a "vacuum" and "the most aggressive collector around" in his day—buying individual rarities and entire collections whenever they presented themselves. Either Dennis or Dennis's typewriters were featured on the cover of ETCetera five times, and they received countless mentions within the pages.

He was always most enthused talking typewriters and sharing the stories he'd collected. One such story I recall Dennis telling me was about a curved Williams No.1 that he didn't purchase because, then, at \$50, it was too pricey. And another story about when he and fellow collectors

Jim Rauhen and Uwe Breker traveled the country looking for typewriters. After the three rested one night at a hotel, somehow, in the middle of the night, Dennis's car had been populated with a few more rare machines. Or the story about a Sholes & Glidden he was hunting in New Hampshire because he got wind of one "on the front porch of a house behind a round school building." Did he visit every school until he found it, without Google or GPS?... damn right he did!

I know Dennis burned a lot of bridges, but he was always kind to me ever since we met at "Herman's" one year. I was just a dealer then, but after I found my second Morris, it was Dennis who encouraged me to collect. He was genuinely happy for me when I found something new to add to my collection, even if it was something he didn't have—especially when it was something he didn't have. Some evenings we would speak on the phone for hours, which would always start the same way: Dennis would pick up and I would say, "Hey, Dr. Clark! What's cooking?" and he would reply with, "Not much." From there our conversations would meander from typewriters to food, from patents to politics, from the past to the present and occasionally to the future. I miss these talks the most.

In the end, cancer took Dennis. He battled it before and won, but not this time. He, I, we all kind of knew this was it for him. Having this knowledge afforded us the chance to exchange proper goodbyes, which I know is a great gift. I'm grateful for having known him, and I will miss my friend, Dennis. ■