



**GLADYS LERCH** is one of the many great educators we were

lucky to have had as teachers during our high school years. She taught Typing, General Typing and Office Practices at Liberty High School from 1958 until she retired 34 years later in 1992. She said she has many special memories of Liberty and the students, so she couldn't single out just one.

Miss Lerch grew up in Bethlehem near the area that now houses Stabler Arena. She graduated from Liberty High School in 1952. She was influenced by LHS Business Education teacher Tess Stelyn to attend Rider University in New Jersey and to major in that field. After graduation from Rider in 1956, she taught at Governor Mifflin High School for two years before starting her career at Liberty in the fall of 1958.

Two of us have special memories of Miss Lerch, because as editor in chief and managing editor of the 1961 *Cauldron*, Rusty Shunk and Barbara Zamadics Martin, relied on her expertise as the advisor to the yearbook to get it to publication. She confessed that she did not volunteer for the job of yearbook advisor, it was assigned to her as a new faculty member. Unlike today, she doesn't recall that she was paid a stipend to do it. It just became part of her job assignment. She said she knew nothing about yearbook publication, but quickly learned on the job. We can attest that she learned very well and continued as the advisor for 4 years.

One significant time in her career that she remembers is the transition from the "typing age" to the "computer age." Suddenly, the course she was teaching was no longer called Typing, it was now Keyboarding. Miss Lerch had to quickly learn the workings of a computer, and as we all recall, the first ones were not exactly super user- friendly. She embraced the training provided and the transition went smoothly.

Miss Lerch is an accomplished pianist and very much enjoyed traveling. She has traveled extensively in the United States, visiting 48 out of the 50 states. North Dakota and Minnesota are the only 2 states not visited. Her favorite trip was a cross country trip taken one summer with a friend. They took the southern route on their way out west and the northern route on the way back. They spent 2 of the 6 weeks in California.

Miss Lerch is enjoying her retirement years. She still plays the piano at her retirement community's worship services and has played at over 300 of them. She loves to read and do crossword puzzles. She has also served as an officer of the Residence Council. She feels very lucky to already have had 17 good years of retirement and looks forward to many more. She lives in the Phoebe Terrace Retirement Community in Allentown.