



crossroads

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Computer Terminal Opens New Vistas



Fr. Peter, Nancy Naughton, Jack Richford, and John Drogos

work on a computer problem using the new 1050.

Until the fall of 1968, computing of any kind, whether educational or administrative, was looked upon by Belmont Abbey College as a luxury which only the large colleges and universities could afford. However, when the school year began in 1968, a staff member of the North Carolina Computer Orientation Project visited our campus and offered us one year of free computing service.

The resulting computer terminal consisted of a teletypewriter connected via telephone line to a remote computer at Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. Students punched their programs into a paper tape which was then transmitted over the line to the computer. When the program had been processed, it was returned automatically in printed form on the teletype.

The Chemistry Department enthusiastically supported the idea of computer service and gave the new terminal its warmest welcome. To encourage further interest and to show that the new stranger on campus was really a friendly giant, short courses in programming language were offered to students and faculty members. Chemistry students used stored programs for obtaining mathematical analyses of individual and group experiments. Freshman mathematics students supplemented classroom instruction with computer programs. A team of business

students entered the intercollegiate business game competition sponsored by Emory University and used the teletype to transmit decisions and receive results.

When the year of free service was over, the College elected to pay the cost and to continue computer service. By the end of the 1969 Fall term, a level of activity had been reached which severely taxed the capacity of the teletype. A National Science Foundation grant awarded to the Abbey in November 1969, made it possible to replace the teletype terminal with an IBM 1050 terminal which was installed in February, 1970.

The 1050 reads cards instead of paper tape. With the use of a keypunch machine, students now punch their programs into cards and then transmit the

information to the computer via telephone line. Although a low speed terminal, the 1050 can handle about twice the volume of work that the teletype could handle, because programs are now punched out on a separate machine, thus freeing the terminal for full-time data transmission.

The old teletype was located in the William Gaston Science Hall away from the center of the campus. Many of the non-science students and certain faculty members believed that the computers were large, expensive calculators that scientists used. The new 1050 terminal was installed more centrally in the Administration Building.

Because of the 1050's many operational advantages over the teletype and because of its central location, the Abbey is able to integrate computer applications into the educational process more successfully. For example, students and faculty in the Social Sciences now have access to a large data bank that affords the user an experience in statistically analyzing social sciences surveys such as the pre-presidential election survey of 1968 and Murdock's ethnographic atlas. This program provides a wide range of opportunity for the fields of sociology, political science, anthropology, psychology and other disciplines involving survey analysis.

Economics and business students will find the computer
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Nancy Naughton and John Drogos are utilizing two key components of the new 1050 System.

Focus



DR. FRANK DEFELICE

A shock of reddish hair, an intense gaze, and a distinctive Bostonian accent are several of the natural endowments of Dr. Frank DeFelice, Professor of Economics, and one of the new members of the social science faculty.

Frank completed his undergraduate work at Michigan State University and received his B. A. degree magna cum laude. He has been in North Carolina since he began his graduate studies in the early 1960s. He was awarded the M.B.A. and Ph.D. in economics by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Before coming to the Abbey, he taught at East Carolina College, at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, at Davidson College (as a visiting associate professor) and at Queens College. He did post-doctoral work through a Ford Foundation fellowship at Duke University. During these years he also produced a number of articles for various learned journals.

His special interest in computers won him a grant from the National Science Foundation to develop programs designed to integrate the computer with instructional work in the classroom. In his economics courses this study is already bearing fruit, for the Abbey students are using the computer terminal more and more. In collaboration with Fr. Peter Stragand, Frank is making plans to upgrade the whole program for the various disciplines of social and physical sciences.

He lives in Charlotte with his
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