

8th February 2022

Pens

**"Biting my truant pen, beating myself with spite,
'Fool,' said my Muse to me; look in thy heart and write."**

Philip Sydney, Arcadia

I phoned a business this week and had to give some information. "Just a minute till I get a pen," a man said. I could hear the "clunk" of his phone being laid on the desk. I heard papers being moved, drawers being banged and much muttering, culminating in a cry of exasperation: "Why can you never find a pen when you need one?" Back on the phone, he said, "Sorry about that. Pen problems!" and added, "You know, I think there's a huge hole out there which is filled with pens. They keep disappearing, and I never find them again. They must be somewhere!"

I had to agree! And suggested there's another large hole which is filled with odd socks ... *and* all the stuff we never seem to be able to find when we need it. "Biting my truant pen," may have been something Philip Sydney was inclined to do. But biting *my* truant pens doesn't seem to stop them truanting when I need them to be here! Methinks I shall have to chain my truant pen to my side to make sure it doesn't disappear ...

I spoke with friend who was about to retire from a high-powered and stressful job with a large media organisation. "What are you going to do when you retire?" I enquired. Quick as a flash he replied, "Lie in front of the nuclear convoys at Faslane, and ... write with a fountain pen!" I'm not sure which of these took precedence, and I was greatly encouraged by both. But, in the moment, writing with a fountain pen warmed my heart.

I'm writing this on a Word Processor, and, even when it's edited, it'll still be on a screen. But I like nothing better than writing letters, *and* with a fountain pen too. *My* Muse says, "Look in thy heart and write." So my pen takes my love, support, guidance, friendship, encouragement to people who matter to me. So excuse me while I check that my fountain pen is where I left it, and hasn't wandered off to the large depository where all truant pens seem to want to go.

A prayer for today

*St Paul said: "You are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry,
written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of
stone but on tablets of human hearts." Wow! That's some pen!*

2 Corinthians 3:3