COLLOQUIY

This March was the eighth Gathering 4 Gardner held every two years in Atlanta to honor Martin Gardner. Gardner was instrumental in the start-up of Word Ways and most readers will be aware of the 93 year-old’s long time interest in word play (His book on Word Play is due to be published later this year). Karen and I represented Word Ways at the affair.

Noted mathematicians, puzzlists and magicians from all over the world made up the bulk of the invitees to G4G8. One common interest of all participants was a fascination with word puzzles and games. Even when English was not their first language they tried their hand at word play. For instance, Timo Jokitalo of Finland asked me “Is it possible for someone just released from prison to be called a freeee?: I told him I didn’t think so.

Scot Morris promised to write an article for us along the lines of the old “what plural word becomes singular on adding an S? (Answer: CARES to CARESS) One of his new contributions is COSINES TO COSINESS.

Tom Banchoff recalled that his Shakespearean professor friend complained that the new edition of the OED eliminated some of his favorite obsolete words. “Well, we can’t have archaic and edit too,” Banchoff said.

Ed Pegg Jr. e-mailed us from the Gathering 77 pages of his long anagrams, all run together with no spacing or punctuation. Here are two: GRAVITATIONAL LEN S = STELLAR NAVIGATION and POTENTIAL SUICIDE = SOCIAL INEPTUDE. He wrote his own program in Mathematica to compose these arrangements.

Several articles in this issue are supplied by new subscribers who joined at the Gathering. Many more will appear in later issues.

Ross Eckler gives another “Look Back” essay and, in the same vein, we are running two summaries by the late, great David Silverman.