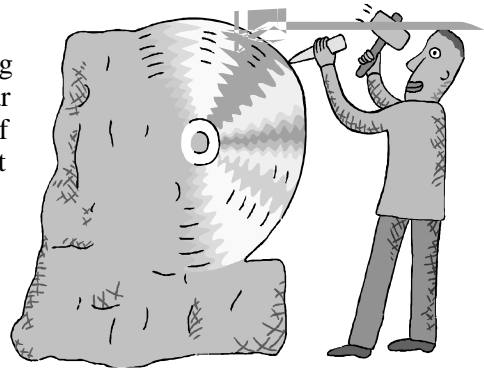


WE'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY!

By Patricia A. Gilbert, PLS, Scientific-Atlanta, Inc.;
Becky Ragusa, Womble, Carlyle, Sandridge & Rice;
and Lovette Bennett, Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP

Three of us legal secretaries were sitting around the other evening discussing how far we've come in our offices in terms of equipment and technology. Without actually divulging how far back we go in office experience (we wouldn't want to give away any secrets about age) we determined that we have seen tremendous leaps in technology in the office world.



Lovette: I took typing and shorthand in high school, and later took some refresher courses at a nearby college, to stay “up to the minute” in my skills level. What a shock I received when I took a temporary job just prior to relocating to Texas from Alabama—a two-week stint in a law office in Montgomery, where the Girl Friday had gone out for surgery. Yes, two weeks was all they allowed her to “recuperate.” After I finished holding down her desk for three busy attorneys with nothing more than an IBM electric typewriter, making six sets of carbon copies, and trying to type totally error-free so as not to need to correct the carbon sets—I nearly went out on a medical leave myself! That almost scared me away from the legal field altogether. How did we do it?

“Do you remember when we first got the truly futuristic Magnetic Tape Selectrics—known as the MT/ST?” I asked Becky.