

Early Typewriters

Martin Howard, Collector

[Animated ROM logo appears with sound sting]

[View of Martin Howard, private collector, on Level 2, Rotunda ceiling visible in the background] This collection is comprised of typewriters from the first 20 years of the typewriter industry, *[view of typewriters on display, Hilary and Galen Weston Wing, Level 2]* that's the 1880s and the 1890s, *[view of Martin, the Rotunda visible in background]* and during this period there was tremendous diversity in the design for typewriters, *[image of the keyboard of the Crandall typewriter]* incredible beauty in what was manufactured *[image shows detail of decorative painting and inlay on the Crandall]*.

[Image of letter-selecting device of the Mignon 2 typewriter] It wasn't until the beginning of the 20th century, *[fade to view of Martin, the Rotunda visible behind him]* that a typewriter came along that would standardize all typewriters, so they essentially look the same, and that was the Underwood *[Underwood typewriter appears on screen, alongside Martin]*. But prior to the Underwood coming along, *[image of the Underwood typewriter is superimposed over Martin as he speaks]* there was an extraordinary explosion in typewriter design.

[Two sequences of Martin's hands demonstrating how the Mignon typewriter works]. There's various significances to this collection. I think, what's particularly relevant right now *[close-up of Martin's hands demonstrating the functions of the Columbia 2 Index machine]* is bringing them out into the public eye, and, as I mentioned before, they have *[10 images of different typewriters on display in the exhibition]* great beauty, ahhh...remarkable designs, but perhaps most importantly, everyone can relate to these machines, and these machines provoke all sorts of memories from people who have...typed as a child, or people, perhaps, who have never seen a typewriter, but use a computer keyboard. So it really crosses all generations, uh...both genders, and internationally, uh...keyboards are everywhere, so these typewriters *[view of Martin standing beside a display in the exhibition]* speak to everyone.

[Close-up of Martin, the Rotunda visible behind him] The typewriters on display here, and there are 20 of them, uhh...selected from my collection, are predominately American-made, uh, however, there is a very notable European machine on display here, called the Hammonia, from 1883, *[close-up of Martin's hands demonstrating the functions of the Hammonia, clattering sound of metal on metal]* and it is the first European typewriter, made in Hamburg, Germany. Ah, but the European countries *[view of Martin, with the Rotunda visible behind him]* also were very active at manufacturing typewriters at that time, and I continue to hunt for them.

[Cut to view Martin, the Rotunda visible behind him] I...I have many favourites, I love them all, um...*[close-up of the nameplate of the Crandall typewriter, zooms out to view of entire machine]* The Crandall typewriter, historically, it's important, in that it's the first typewriter to have a single type element, i.e. the IBM golf ball, *[overview image of the Crandall typewriter, followed by two sequences of panning close-ups]* so there were no type bars on it, and also, it's an extraordinarily looking Victorian

machine, lavishly decorated, with um, inlaid mother-of-pearl and hand-painted roses.

[View of Martin gesturing towards the Victor index machine, white wall in the background] This typewriter here, is the world's first typewriter with a daisy wheel, and those who have been around long enough, will remember the daisy wheel from the typewriters from the 1970s *[zooms in on Victor index machine]*, and it was a little nylon wheel with little flexible spokes for each character. *[Sequence of Martin's hands operating the Victor index machine as he describes each component]* Here it is in a typewriter from 1890, again, it is the world's first typewriter to have a daisy wheel, and it was operated by putting one's finger on that little cup, and moving back and forth to select the character that you want, and then, pushing down over here...And this hammer would push the character towards the paper. *[Sequence pans across the Victor index machine, and zooms out to overview of the machine]* It's a very rare machine today, again, it's again, a beautiful example of some of the Victorian engineering that was going on, and I'm very happy to have it in the collection.

[Video ends with animated ROM logo and sound sting]