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Intelligencer photo by Bill Hunt

Pat Baverstock and her sister Alice Masson share a laugh over a cup of coffee, this week.

view. "You could develop it, maybe better than me."

Reading is another favorite hobby of Baverstock's. She 'reads' via cassette tapes acquired from the CNIB library in Toronto.

"I don't read braille (books). It takes too long," she explains.

Dressing was another challenge. Baverstock has help now, but she used to wash and iron her own clothes. Braille tags identify what is what, although she can sometimes tell by the feel.

She comments on the wine-colored pants she is wearing.

But how does she know what the color is?

"You know how wine in a glass can be kind of a warm color?" she offers. "I

think of wine in those terms. And blue I think of as kind of soft and kind of bright, (but) not bruising," she adds.

For transportation, Baverstock usually relies on her sister, but she also takes the bus.

"I sort of know the bus routes," she says, and the bus drivers direct her to a seat at the front of the vehicle.

"The white cane is a wonderful stick. I've taken white cane training and I do it pretty well," she says, although it isn't necessary in her house.

But outside or in unfamiliar buildings, the cane is mandatory.

"Some buildings are quite large and seem like a Chinese maze," she notes.

"That cane will give you information. 'Oh ya, here's a door...so I veer to the left.'"

When she worked at BGH she typed medical records from a dicta phone.

Forms for different types of records were kept on different shelves. "I would say, 'Consultation reports are third from the bottom,'" she recalls. She also memorized the number of spaces to leave on each form before beginning typing. "What you had to do was be careful not to hit any of the writing on the sheets."

Nor to type too far to the right, nor too far down the page. Being "sightless" requires a lot of memory work.

Although Baverstock doesn't worry about political correctness, most people with no vision prefer the term sightless to blind. "Because blind — it sounds so blank, so useless, and blind people are not useless," she says.