



# Greer School Alumni Newsletter

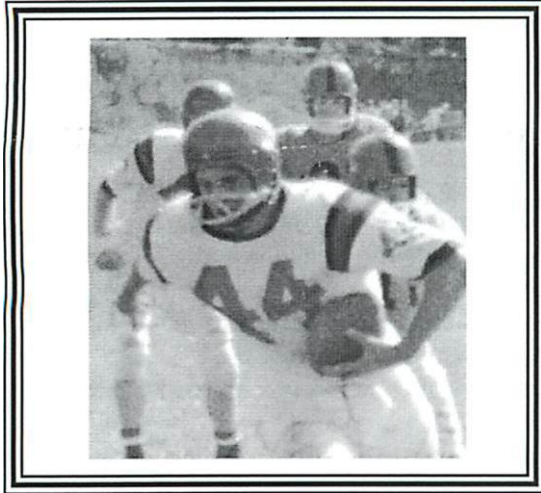
Fall 2009



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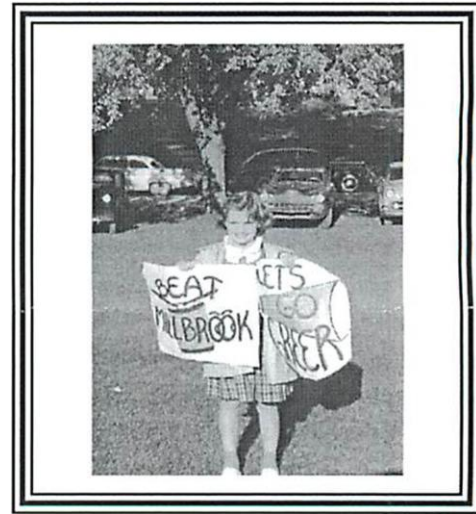
Dear Alumni and Staff:

A special memory of Tom



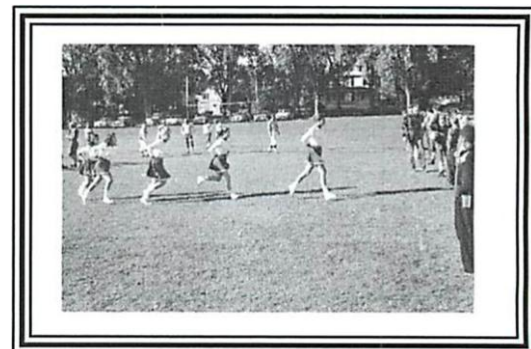
Fullback Tom McCandless, 1961

As I have mentioned in previous autumn issues of the Newsletter, Greer had a lot of success in its football program over the years. Each autumn my memories of Greer turn to the athletic aspect of our Greer lives. My Junior year in 1961 was a special football team, but it's a memory of **Tom McCandless** that remains with me all of these years later. **Coach Ken Lynn** developed an incredible backfield that season that included the quickness of wingback **Doug Skipworth**, the speed of tailback **Ed Martin**, the power running of fullback **Tom McCandless** and the excellent passing and play calling of quarterback, **Bob Jenkins**. Greer won 5 of 7 games and in those 5 wins; the team averaged 35 points per game. In qualitative terms alone, it was a great season, but in retrospect, what stands out about that season is not the wins and losses, but the camaraderie that developed throughout the season among the players. Forty-eight years later, there is one event from that season that to this day remains crystal clear in my mind's eye. It happened as the season was drawing to a close and we were scheduled to play one of our heated rivals: Millbrook High School. Millbrook received the opening kickoff and then on the very first play from scrimmage, Millbrook came up with a surprise formation that resulted in a long touchdown run. We were



Greer booster, 1950's

all stunned by what had just happened and as I turned to my teammates, there was **Tom McCandless** with this huge smile on his face. It was as if Tom was saying, "OK. Millbrook, you had your fun and that was a cute play, but now it's our turn." Greer went on to score 32 unanswered points and won the game easily, but that calm, classy reaction by my good teammate, Tom still vividly remains with me today. Tom understood that getting angry and frustrated wouldn't solve anything and he gave credit to Millbrook for a good play, but his smile after Millbrook's trick play was re-assuring to me and remains to this day a reminder of the positives that can happen in the arena of athletics. So thank you Tom for that good example of a long ago wonderful autumn football season. And thank you Greer for providing all of us with the opportunity to participate in the men's and women's athletic



Cheerleaders at Millbrook field, 1950's

programs at Greer. All of us could cite a special memory that came from our participation in Greer athletics.



Great smiles, field hockey players, 1950's

### **From Bob (Ilde) Ildefonso, 1950- 1960**

Funny when I think back to when I left Greer I was really excited. If there was one thing that Greer taught us it was to not fear the future. We learned how work, live, prosper, and survive in group living. We were part of a very diverse group that lived together and would share with one another.

I read **Armin Ali's** comments in a Fall 2009 previous newsletter regarding Greer's students being sent to Millbrook High School starting in 1963 and joining the Millbrook football team. Millbrook and Greer were great rivals, and in my senior year in 1959 we beat them for the first time in several years. It was one hell of a game and our victory ended a fairly long undefeated streak for the Millbrook football team.

(\*Editor's note: Many of the Greer players felt a sense of revenge because four years earlier in 1955, Millbrook's team ended a four year undefeated streak of the Greer football team)

The following week the entire Greer football team went to Millbrook to cheer them on for their final game against Red Hook. This victory by Millbrook over Red Hook gave Greer a share of the league title. Millbrook did a special thing by inviting Greer's team to the Millbrook awards dinner. I was really impressed that the Millbrook

players thought enough of the Greer team to invite us to share in their celebration of the season. The next year, I joined Millbrook's



Football, 1950's

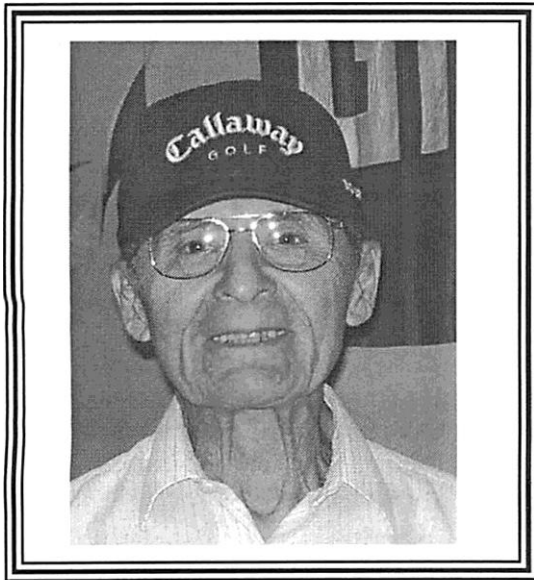
star running back, **Phil Struthers** at the Thompson Academy in Boston and had the opportunity to play with, room with, and get to know Phil very well. Phil was a remarkable person and fit in very well with former Greer coach, **Jack Maddox** who was the coach at Thompson academy that year. He and I had a lot of fun teaching the boys in Boston how to play football. Phil and I made a number of trips back to Millbrook that year and I would stay with his family and found them to be a remarkable family. After his year at Thompson Academy, Phil was invited to try out for one of the Canadian Professional football teams and apparently made the team, but returned home instead. Considering that he was only 18 or 19 at the time, it was no small feat for him to make that team. After keeping in touch with Phil for a number of years, I unfortunately lost track of him in the 1980's.

### **From Robert Dorren. 1937-1943**

In the summer edition of the newsletter on page 6. I found a short note from John Rogers. I remember John Rogers and we now share a special membership in the "age 84" club.

I arrived at Hope Farm in November of 1937. Mr. MacKinley met me at the train station in Dover Plains. When I arrived at campus, the first thing that caught my eye was the steeple atop of the Main House. My first impression was, "this must be some kind of church school." In our memory, for many of us that steeple has become a

symbol of a home where we found security, hope, and learning.



Robert Dorren

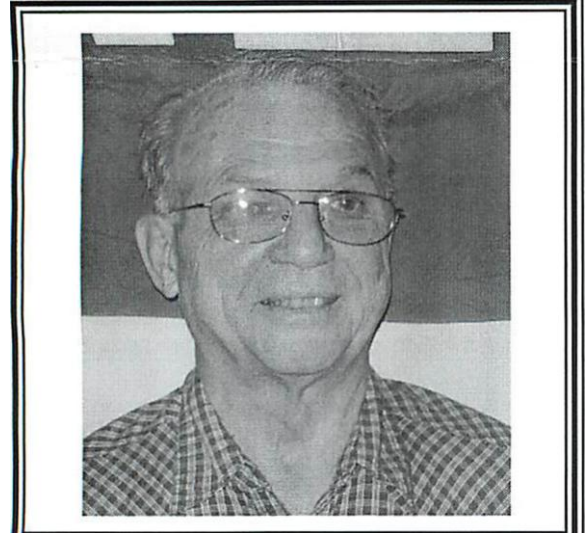
I've enclosed a picture of the 1941 football team that went undefeated and received recognition as the number one team in Dutchess County. Most of us who played on that team enlisted in the armed forces right after graduation. Many of us served in Korea as well as WWII. I would like to hear from my teammates and can be reached at the address provided to you by the webmaster of [Greerschool.Org](http://Greerschool.Org).



1941 Undefeated football team

I am beginning to sense that the alumni membership is growing - one of the main reasons is because of the efforts of you and your wife at publishing the newsletter. We are all grateful for your time and efforts at putting the newsletter together for us. The newsletter has become a blessing and a source of encouragement for many of us.

\* Editor's note: Thank you Robert for your kind remarks. Those of you who have similar feelings as Robert could show that appreciation by sending us your memories of Greer and/or what you have done since leaving Greer so that we can share your experience and memories with all 318 of us who receive this quarterly newsletter.. Send your comments to [tonyvaz@greerschool.org](mailto:tonyvaz@greerschool.org) or request my (John Hudnor) e-address from him.



Jim Lucas

#### **From Jim Lucas (Luke), Class of 1948**

It seems that all young boys go through a stupid stage and I was no exception. It was in January, 1944, and Johnny Brown, Tom Hughes, Rod Hilsinger and I left Rapallo cottage and went walking down to Camp Barbey in the middle of winter looking for something to do. Right at the entrance near the flag pole was an old 30's roadster up on blocks. My three friends went down to the swimming pool to play with the ice, but I stayed with the roadster, curious about the gas tank-and dropped a match in to see what would happen. Big mistake! There was some gas down there and there was an explosion. When I screamed, my friends came running to my aid and escorted me to the pool to wash out my eyes and face. Fortunately, no real damage was done, but I was one scarred 13-year old. All Mrs. Jensen could say when she saw my very red face was, "What have you been into now. Jimmy?"





Bea and Joe Fischer, Houseparents & Coach. 1950's

After WWII, our coach from 1941, Jack Hefner returned as football coach and picked me to be a running back for the 1946 team. I was all of 130 pounds but the coach encouraged us to play hard and fast and so we did: we had a great season and won 6 or 7 games despite our opponents being considerably larger than us. Our success gave me lots of encouragement to succeed in life in spite of the heavy obstacles.

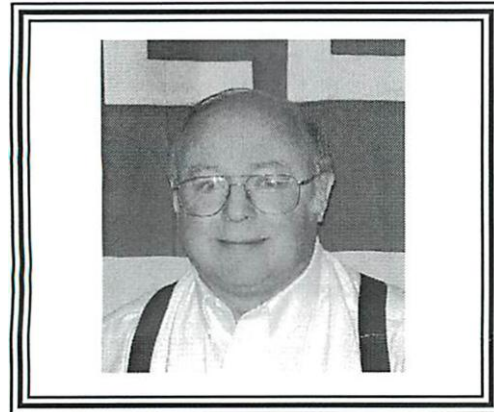
After Greer, I lived in New York and went to school at night so I could become an aeronautical engineer. When the Korean war got close, I enlisted in the Air Force and went to electronics school. I eventually became a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Navigator. I enjoyed the military and stayed in for 20 years. In the meantime, I married and after retirement from the Air Force, taught electronics in Fort Worth, Texas for 10 years and then became a Peace Officer serving as a Bailiff in the Tarrant County Courts. Now, I enjoy camping in our trailer. On Sundays, I play trumpet in a 44 piece Church Orchestra. Also, we have a 25 piece Big Band. Staying young is my goal and I hope to live to be a 100 and look forward to attending many more Greer reunions.

#### **From Gavle (Houser) Fox, Greer Teacher 1950's**

John, the last time that I saw you was probably when you were in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. I do appreciate getting the Greer newsletters even though I was only teaching at Greer for two years. In a recent issue of the newsletter, I recognized many of the people in the pictures. So, thanks as I appreciate your sending the newsletters all of these years, and taking the time to do the newsletters-I know that it's quite a project. I did visit the campus a

number of years ago with **Pat Dallas** when we were visiting her and it has changed quite a lot.

I've been retired for a good many years now, but I still go teach at our church school-Northumberland Christian School-one morning a week and teach K-3 Bible as well as grading papers for some of the teachers. As a result, I manage to stay out of trouble.



Tony Voight

#### **From Tony Voight. Class of 1961**

Just a note about the "Martin Play." When I was working at a place called the Christian Home for Children in Fort Lee, New Jersey, I didn't put on the play but I read the story to the kids and it was very well received. It's funny how things like the Martin Play stays with you over the years.

I've retired for about 5 years now and do not particularly like it, but I still do have lots of energy for work.

My family is fine and both of our daughters are married. My eldest daughter Connie has two children: Natalia (10) and Mason (9). My other daughter Jodi is working on becoming a licensed Councilor in adduction.



Cheerleaders, 1950's

### From David Tower. 1943-1948

I was at Greer from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, so I would have graduated from Greer high school in 1955 if I had remained at Greer.

My memories of Greer are still very vivid.

I remember living in Plum and Marcy cottages. Fish each Friday, cod liver oil, spankings with a rubber skate guard, going to bed with the sun shining on long summer days. One time a horse ran away at the farm and ran over a girl. At Marcy, I helped in the curing of a sheep skin in the bathroom and the smell was awful. Taking hikes in the woods brings back memories of pulpits-in-the-woods and there was also a path from school across the girls ball field and through the woods to Marcy cottage..Lastly, I was the Christ child in the Christmas play for a number of years. One friend that I recall was **Roy Gastel**.



Six man football, 1956

### From Bette Thomas Goudey, Greer staff from 1949-1952

My husband Gordon and I have enjoyed receiving the Newsletters. Actually a lifelong friend recognized me from one of the pictures of the girl's field hockey team which **Ruth Ann Wichelman** had sent. That led to conversations with **Lois Adamsen** who sent your address to us. Gordon and I were at Greer from 1949-1952. I was **Bette Thomas** and taught girl's and elementary P.E. I met Gordon and we were married in November of 1952. We kept in close touch with Lois and Ross Adamsen, but unfortunately, I lost touch with all of the students I knew except for **Grace Richie** who would give me occasional news of **Georgia King** and others. We would see **Ruth Freitag**, the science teacher, but lost contact on one of our

moves.

We retired to North Carolina in 1989. Our children, Lorna and G. Thomas both live in North Carolina and we enjoy visiting with them. Lorna has two boys, aged 19 and 17. Gordon had some health challenges in recent years, so we do not travel very far from home, but I do enjoy reading about the Greer staff and students. Keep up the good work.



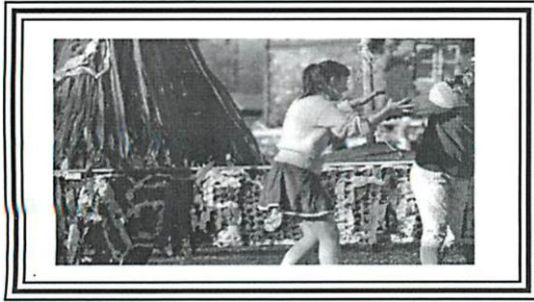
Square Dance, 1950's

### From John McHenry, Greer Staff. 1950's

In a recent edition of the newsletter, I was so pleased to see a picture of **Bob Rolston** and **Roy Gastel** with me behind Gate House feeding the raccoons. When I think of Bob and Roy and the other Greer students that we worked with, that is the age that I still think that they are!

I recall so many of the events I experienced at Greer. My 3 children were born in Sharon, Connecticut and Gate House was their first home, so you can see that I have a lot of precious memories. We finally moved to the "Hemlocks" which was a renovated farm house done by the Vocational group that was headed up by **George Groh**.

We are enjoying Florida (20+ years), but return to Pennsylvania during the summer months at our "A" frame house so that we can be closer to most of our Grandchildren and my wife, Bonnie's parents-who are still enjoying their lives.



Football Homecoming Float

### From Steve Russo

My grandmother was a resident of Hope Farm along with her three sisters: **Martha Lange, Augusta Lange, Elsie Lange, and Dorothy Lange** form 1918 through their graduation from Hope Farm high school.

### From Helene Morley, Class of 1936

I do enjoy receiving the Alumni newsletters even though I left Greer (Class of 1936) long before many of the alumni that are featured in the newsletters arrived at Greer. I wish that I could attend the reunions.



Square Dance. 1950's

### From Ruthann Wiehclman Teacher at Greer, 1949-1951

I remember when Greer did the play, "The Mikado" in the 1950's. By this time, I had left Greer, but would often come back to the campus to visit. I lent Greer my Kimono (having taught in Japan in 1954-1955 so they could use it for the operetta.

I recall Miss **Dorothy Schafenacker** was the pianist that evening.

### Miscellaneous

1. We will let you know the dates of the 2010 reunion as soon as we get the dates set and the logistics finalized. This is being worked on and we will let you know as soon as possible so you have adequate time to make plans to join us and again celebrate our Greer experiences, lives, and friendships.
2. I received some suggestions from **Bob Constantine and Robert Dorren** that I would like to pass on to you. Bob suggested that *when we submit our memories of Greer and/or what we have done since we left Greer that we include the years that we were at Greer, the cottages that we lived in and I would add, our name that we had while we were at Greer.* Some of you have changed your name via marriage or for other reasons and it would help us all to be able to identify you more easily to know your name while you were at Greer.

Robert's suggestion was that *we consider replacing the letterhead with a picture of the "copula" that was on top of the Main House. As his letter suggests, that image conjures up many pleasant memories of Greer.*



Field Hockey in action, 1950's

3. Dues remain our lifeline to the continued publication of our newsletters and we appreciate your on-going support. The suggested yearly dues are \$25, but any amount will be helpful.

~~Lastly, please make the check out to "John Hud nor" because the bank will not allow me sign checks as the 'Greer School Alumni' without going through all sorts of~~



~~bureaucratic forms and filling out yearly tax and other report forms. Signing the check under my name gives me immediate access to the funds I need for the publication and postage expenses to get the newsletters to you in a timely fashion. The account is a Greer Alumni account, and is kept separate from my personal accounts.~~

I left "bureaucracy" and its hassles behind when I finished up my teaching career although some of you who have worked with government retirement programs (read: Medicare) are probably laughing at me when I suggest that I will no longer have to deal with "bureaucracy" after retirement.

4. Pictures and Letters used in each newsletter.

My goal is to try and match the pictures with the current season of the newsletter. Thus, most of the pictures in this edition should reflect the activities that we did in the autumn season at Greer. I try to publish letters that are representative of all eras of time of our Greer experience and also try to mix in letters from staff and alumni in each issue. For obvious reasons, I'm especially interested in publishing letters from those of you who attended Greer in the 1930's and 1940's. You are truly our "Greer Sages" with your many years of wisdom and insights.



Football, 1950's