



The Hope Farm / Greer School
Alumni Association
Newsletter



**Winter 2014
Volume 8 No. 1**



Main House in Winter

have a "story to tell" and I genuinely enjoyed listening to your stories and look forward to sharing those stories with the rest of the alumni.



Sandy and John Hudnor; Angie (Oliver) and Joe D'Ambrosio; and in front, Pat (Jordan) and Gene Picco ; Friday evening

Maintaining a balance. . .

Reunion, 2014

Thank goodness for our Greer reunions: they are a perfect balance in my life. I had thought after I'd finished working full time there would be a "what-do-you-do-next" dilemma. . . Ha! I am as busy as ever, and getting away for activities such as Greer gatherings are the perfect solution to keeping things in perspective and in reminding me of what's important in my life: family and friends. Our gathering this past September helped to again restore this balance.

One of the things which made this gathering so special was the opportunity to do one-on-one interviews with over 35 of you. It was great to learn about how Greer affected your lives, but more importantly, what each of you are doing with your lives since leaving Greer. These profiles will be published in issues of the Alumni Newsletters. I discovered that all of you

Reunion Report

Registration and lunch on Saturday provided the opportunity for all of us the excitement of being with friends to catch up on our lives as well as to share pleasant memories. After the lunch gathering, many choose to tour the campus on a beautiful, sunny, and warm September afternoon. A more formal dinner was held at the Ramada Inn in Fishkill. Some of the alumni who came to lunch were unable to stay for dinner, but although our numbers were somewhat fewer, there was an intimacy during this evening that was wonderful and palpable. I felt warm, comfortable and happy as we were together and enjoying each other's company. In fact, words cannot really describe the deep feelings which were felt. Let's do this again! As goodbyes were said, I felt as resolved as ever to do this again as soon as possible: I do not want to

wait for two more years to see all of you, and I will organize another reunion as soon as possible. Finally, many thanks go to the **Berry's, Vaz's, and the Fountains-at-Millbrook staff** for making this reunion so memorable and fun.



Maureen (Meyer) Miller, Nick Anderson, and Mike Ennis at Lunch on Saturday

Greer as it is in 2014

Come with me on a journey around Greer's campus as it currently looks in **2014**. My walk began at dawn on a beautiful Saturday morning when I left the high school auditorium and departed out the front of the high school entrance. The **pillars** at the front of the high school remain, and have weathered quite well since the last graduation at Greer was held in 1963. Turning right, I walked past the **McAlister House** and found that it is still used as a residence by the retirement community. Next came the **vocational building**, and **Mom Mac's home**, which is now privately owned. However, the vocational center is still owned and used by the Fountains community.

Continuing down **Flint Road** heading toward the staff residence at the "**Southlands**," I passed the field on the right where **Herby Van Anden** would harvest corn each September in order to keep Greer's dairy herd well fed during the winter months. As I turned right on to the **Camby Road** heading toward the "**Hemlocks**," I saw and heard the sounds of geese and crows breaking the silence of a Saturday morning.

When I arrived on the road leading to the "Hemlocks," which served as the home for the principals of Greer High School (**Jack McHenry and Paul Schultz**), I was pleased to see the house was just as beautiful as it was fifty years ago, and I remembered this home as being one of the stops on the "**progressive suppers**," an annual event each September to open up the **Young People's Fellowship program** for the new school year.



The Beautiful "Hemlocks"

Continuing down the road past the Hemlocks, I came upon two stone walls. What got my attention was the wall on the right side of the road was newly built with the stones in perfect order and flat slabs in between the stones to give this wall an almost perfect shape.



Billie Phillips comes back for his first reunion at Greer



New stone wall

On the other side of the road was a very old stone wall with its rocks scattered to and fro. The thought occurred to me that this was a parallel to our lives. There are times when things are orderly, routine and predictable: this was reflected in the new and orderly stone wall. The old stone wall reminded me of times when life can be out of order, uncertain and unpredictable. And yet, as a rule we all ride out these times of uncertainty and eventually return to a more orderly routine.



Old stone wall

Retracing my steps, I walked back past the Hemlocks toward **Gate House**. Along the way, I met a couple taking an early morning walk who were staying for the weekend at Gate, which is now a beautiful country inn. They were visiting the area from Rhode Island, and the three of us commented on the beauty and tranquility of this September morning. I was able to tell them a little about you and life at Greer and they enjoyed learning about Gate and cottage life before it became a country inn.



Gate House restored as a country inn

Walking past the **entrance to Greer** at Gate House, I headed for the road that encircled what was **Daisy Cottage** and saw the **football field**. The grass on this field is still mowed on a regular basis, but what was missing was there would be no homecoming football game on this 2014 homecoming reunion Saturday, or dance in the high school auditorium on this evening.

Starting up **Main House hill**, I turned left on **Rapallo Road** and remembered many sugar maple trees along this stretch of road. Next, I was passing the **Chapel of the Child**, and I was happy to see there are still beautiful pine trees along the road from the chapel heading toward Main House. I ended my walk passing the road to **Ledge Cottage** and past where **Crest Cottage** used to be and came back to the **high school**,



Bill Monza



Harry McCandless and his wife.

where registration was underway for the beginning of a wonderful day of renewal with friends.

Yes, the Greer School of **2014** is much different than 60 years ago in **1954**, but **beautiful** is an accurate description of a community which still remains. I invite you to come to our next gathering and enjoy ongoing **friendships** and the **ambiance** of our cherished campus.

John Hudnor, Greer, "63" and BYU, "67"

Alumni Profiles

Tom King:

Tom was born in New York City and entered Greer in 1943. He remained at Greer until his graduation from Greer in 1955. During his high school years, he served as his class president for one of those years and he was a three sport athlete for all four years of high school.

After leaving Greer, he attended Hunter College in New York City. Next came four years in the Navy, and during this time, he went to Electronics school and while in the Navy, he was stationed in Newport, Rhode Island and also in Europe.

After leaving the Navy, Tom settled in Silver Spring, Maryland with his wife and they raised three children. They now are the grandparents of four grandchildren and even some great grandchildren. During this time he spent 39 years working in an electronics company from which he retired in 1999. He currently enjoys reading and bicycling.

In reflecting on his days at Greer, he especially enjoyed the traditions surrounding Thanksgiving and Christmas. In sports, he vividly remembers the night football game against Chatham High School when Greer won and broke Chatham's four year winning streak. He added that Joe Fischer and Helen Fink were good role models for him. Joe Fischer was subtle, but at the same time very real. Helen Fink was a very nice person and very comforting: especially when he got into trouble. She chose to be helpful--not mean--in guiding one through very tough times.

George and Laura Fisher:

I am combining this profile because both George and Laura attended Greer at the same time, but they did not marry until after they both met at an Alumni Association reunion years after both had been students at Greer. Laura pointed out they did not date while they were students at Greer.

George attended Greer from 1937 to 1949. After graduation from Greer, he served in the Air Force with deployments to Alaska and Korea during his time of service. Next, came college at City College of New York and New York University. After college, he was employed by New York Telephone for 5 years. After marrying Laura in 1957, George spent his career in the printing and publishing business until his retirement in 1995. In his retirement, George enjoys painting, reading mysteries, woodworking, and family.

In reflecting back on Greer, one of his favorite memories was Thanksgiving. As for who had an especially lasting influence on George, he cited Ruth Freitag and Herta Taussig. Ms. Taussig went on to become a fairly famous math professor at a Virginia university (Hollins) and had one of the buildings at this university named after her because of her skills and influence on her students.

Laura Fischer attended Greer from 1944-1948. After leaving Greer, she worked for Metropolitan Life Insurance--first in New York City and later in Poughkeepsie after getting married to George. Both are the parents of three children and two grandchildren.

Pam Pequeno:

Pam was at Greer from 1957 to 1968, and after leaving Greer, she moved to Litchfield, Connecticut. In her career, she was initially in the manufacturing and retailing aspect of the jewelry business and mentioned to me that she worked in the World Trade Center from 1980 to 1988. I am glad Pam was not still working in this center in 2001! Later, Pam was in marketing in the Wall Street area of New York City, and currently she is in the Real Estate Business.

Pam said some of the most memorable events at Greer were the traditions which centered around Thanksgiving and Christmas. I am glad Pam does not remember all the teasing I

used to do with her when I was dating her older sister. Pam is still a very nice person who I always look forward to seeing at our gatherings at Greer.

Some of Pam's current interests are making jewelry, and reading print books as well as listening to e-books.

Newsletter Changes

As most of you may be aware, John and Sandy Hudnor resumed the authorship of the **Greer School / Hope Farm Alumni Association Newsletter** effective with this issue.

What you may not know is that the publication and distribution of the newsletter will remain the responsibility of Tony Vaz with support from Peggy Mathewson Sparks and Mitzi and Doug Berry.

Tony will edit and format the newsletter as before, print and mail hard copies, and will e-mail versions in only .PDF format. The reason for this change is that due to the large memory requirements of a Microsoft Word document with many graphics, it causes problems with e-mail delivery. If you are unable to read the .PDF format by downloading and installing the Adobe Acrobat Reader from this gratis Adobe web site: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>, let us know by e-mail or postal mail and we will send you a hard copy, at a reasonable cost (see below).

Peggy will maintain a database of addresses, both postal and e-mail. If you have a change in address to either, you need to contact Peggy. If you fail to do so, your continued receipt of the newsletter may end. Peggy's mailing address will be provided on request.

Mitzi and Doug will maintain the Alumni bank account set up long ago in the Bank of Millbrook. All forms of payment should be sent to them, whether it is "dues", newsletter subscriptions, reunion funds or donations.

The correct address is as follows:

Mitzi and Doug Berry

Contact tonyvaz@greerschool.org for address information.

You should realize that printing out and mailing hard copies of the newsletter is not done without a cost. Beginning with the next issue of the newsletter, we are asking all of you that receive a **hard copy** to contribute to its publication and mailing. The approximate cost of printing and mailing newsletters to you is approximately \$5.00 per year (for four quarterly issues). **Former staff members are exempted from this cost.**

If you decide to not contribute, we may have to discontinue the service, although we may reconsider on a case-by-case basis. We have had some very generous, anonymous donations that will allow us to continue for a period of time, but not likely to last forever without additional funds. We can't expect the anonymous donors to keep covering the costs for everyone.

If you are receiving the electronic versions, with the color photos, you will receive them gratis (**free**) as long as we are able to put them together. If you also want to receive the hard copy (sans color photos) in addition, we are asking you to contribute. Please consider getting only the electronic versions. Again, send your contributions to Mitzi and Doug.

Greerschool.Org Web Site Update

Nothing new has been uploaded to the web site since the reunion in September except the following death:

John E. "Jack" McHenry passed away on Sept. 29, 2014

I was able to scan photos of all of the Seniors in the yearbooks from Millbrook High School for the years 1964 through 1969. With a little help from

the alumni, former staff and residents of those years, I will, hopefully, be able to cull the non-Greer residents and display the Greer folks on the Yearbook page in the Milestone section.

I brought home several of the smaller photo albums from the Fountains library and will attempt to get them scanned and uploaded in the near future. I also have quite a bit of personal photos from several of you waiting for me to get uploaded.

That's all for now.

**Tony Vaz – Webmaster Greerschool.Org
Greer Class of '61 (Honorary)**

In addition to reporting any change of address to Peggy Sparks, you can contact me at tonyvaz@greerschool.org

Send newsworthy articles to:

John Hudnor - johnhudnor@

Sandy Hudnor - shudnor@

Peggy Sparks - pegsparks59@

or "snail" mail them to the return address on your hard copy envelope.

