



The Hope Farm / Greer School
Alumni Association
Newsletter

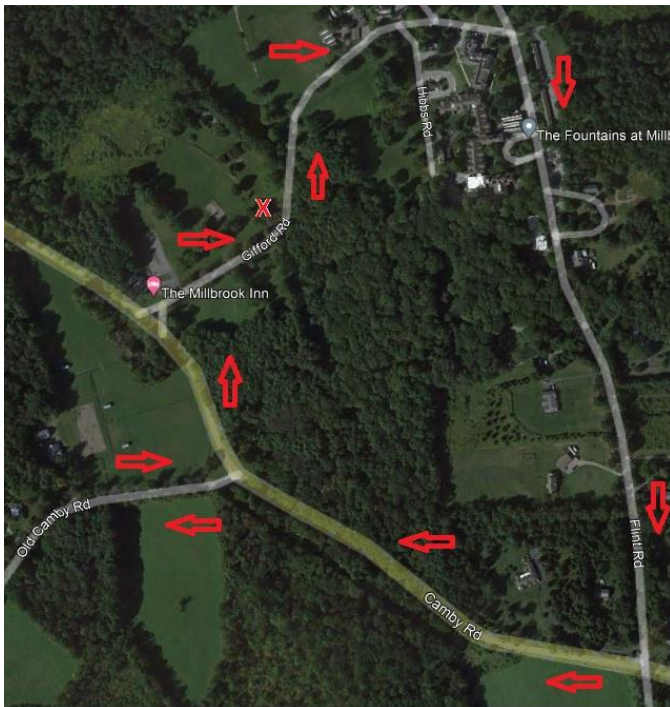


Winter / Holiday 2021
Volume 15 No. 1



The Gathering---Greer---and you!

Sandy and I try to walk an hour each day and that is pretty easy with a dog who loves us get out for a walk, so while we were at Greer for three days, we continued our walking habit by parking our car each day at the Daisy Cottage (X marks the spot) road to start our walk by going up Main House hill,



down Flint road, then past the high school to Southlands. Next, we would turn on to Camby road heading toward the Hemlocks, going just past the Hemlocks where our principals at Greer lived and then headed back to Gate House before ending up at Daisy—a 2.3-mile distance, by the way. The walks were wonderful, and during these walks each day I would see in my mind's eye so many of your faces, and it was wonderful. However, as uplifting

as it was to walk around the perimeter of the campus and think of all of you, the gathering was not the same without being with **all** of you. As beautiful and peaceful as the campus is, it just is not the same without your being there—and it's not even close. In short, you were by those of us who were able to come back to Greer to renew our friendships and catch up on our lives.

John Hudnor, class of 1963

Reunion report

A tradition that has gone back for over 20 plus years continued by the class of 1961. Before every



reunion, members of this class get together for breakfast at a restaurant in the Millbrook area, and this tradition continued this year as they met for breakfast at the Short

Hills diner. **Anne Meyrowitz Foster** reported that

the time together was great as they re-connected with each other and the common thread was they



were all thankful for their time spent at Greer, and even though 60 years have passed since their



graduation from Greer they are still family. We were able to telephone **Syd Nesbitt** and do face time with **Ellinor King**. **Carolyn Ladeau** was able to join in with her classmates for

the breakfast part of the day. Anne also said that it was great to have former staff member **Isabel Morton** join them for breakfast.

For those of us who were able to get together for the reunion luncheon, it was genuinely nice. As the high school or Gate House were not available to



meet at this year, we gathered at a restaurant in Verbank called "**The Iron Furnace**" and the wait staff at this restaurant could not have been nicer

to us as they let us stay after lunch and linger for as long as we wanted. The theme for our gathering was a celebration of the 60th anniversary of the class of 1961, and four members of that class were able to participate in person. They were **Don Berger, Anne Meyerowitz Foster, Nick Anderson, and Linda Wilson Cavanaugh**. Those of us who helped them celebrate this milestone were: **John and Sandy Hudnor, Robert Ildefonso, Doug Berry, Isabel Morton, Bill Monza, Linda Wilson's husband and daughter, Julie**; and if I had not messed up in giving alum **Jack Miller** proper directions, it would be a "baker's dozen" turnout. It really was lots of fun with our small, but enthusiastic, turnout.

A belated thanks to Anne Foster for the reunion photos.

The **good news** is after meeting with the director of the "Fountains-at-Millbrook," **Debbie Slocum**, we will be able to meet at the Greer high school building next **September 24th, 2022, which is a Saturday**. Preliminary planning is already under way and more details will be forthcoming in the spring and summer newsletters. If the renovation of Gate House is finished by then (and the new owner thinks it will be), we can meet there for an early dinner on the same day. My optimistic side says we will be past the lingering and never-ending Pandemic by this time! **Phew!!!**

Editor's Note: Last year I asked alumni to send me their reflections on the "Martin Play" and other Greer Christmas holiday traditions. As this is the holiday edition of the newsletter, it seems appropriate to include them in this issue.

Jim Anderson played the role of Martin in 1963 during his senior year. Jim saw the play for the first time in 1953 as a young Greer student and thus saw it 10 times before assuming the role!



Jim also enjoyed Dr. Elliott reading the "Christmas Apple" each year, the singing of Carols by each cottage, and Connie's Christmas cookies and stollen cakes after the Candlelight service was over. **Louise Manz** says she was the black angel and remembers being very nervous. When she hears Christmas carols each year it reminds her of the Candlelight service at Greer. **Rita Playfair Bourne**



remembers getting together with members of the choir and YPF and visiting cottages and staff homes to sing Christmas songs and carols. She also loved the Christmas decoration contests between the cottages. In 1964, the first year that the Greer high school students were attending Millbrook high school, Rita remembers that her senior class had to plead with Greer's director, **Ian Morrison** to let them do the play, and he finally relented. He wanted to get away from the Greer traditions and more fully integrate with Millbrook's high school traditions. Rita was one of the angels and she spoke the prologue. **Walter Menzel** was Martin. Rita adds that if she could speak with Dr. Morrison today, she would advocate that Greer's traditions were especially important as they gave one a sense of comfort and belonging—especially at Greer where the sense of community was the strongest at Christmas time. As Rita looks back at Greer, she was proud of the fact that spending money or buying gifts played no part in the celebration of our community at Christmas. It was, for her, one of the happiest times of the year and the Christmas traditions we all shared created



lasting memories. **Cherri Abrahamsen Wood** remembers that **Ed Martin** was Martin in the 1961 play. Cherri remembers not only decorating Ledge, but in helping students from the younger cottages with their decorations. Ice skating at the "res" and eating baked cookies and us being warmed by the fire were cherished memories. She

adds that many times there would be snow on the ground, and we would hike in the woods. The air was crisp, and the campus was always awash in natural beauty. This time of year brings back the warmest memories for Cherri. **Izola Fix** remembers being in the play with two friends in 1950. She was honored to be in the play because she was only a fifth grader. She remembers **Mike Ennis** singing "O Holy Night" in practice and thinking Mike had the voice of an angel. After practice, **Mike Ennis** and **Jack Scala** would walk us to our cottage and make sure we were safe. One evening it snowed and we were all making snow angels in a row going back to our cottage. The moon was very bright in the shadows of the trees, and this is a memory that I have held for over 70 years now. **Robert Ildefonso** was one of the children in the play when he was in Marcy cottage. **Diana Munzer** remembers that the parts in the play were supposed to be according to citizenship: the White Angel and Martin being the two most prestigious parts. Diana was the Black Angel, and she had to wear a black robe and **Shirley Elliott** got to wear a gossamer white flowing dress with large white wings as the white angel. **Jack Rolston** was Martin. She remembers that one year **Dr. Elliott** thought we should have a variety of stories rather than the Christmas apple each year, but that there was such an uproar about changing the story, that he gave in and read only the Christmas Apple each year. Our houseparent, **Mrs. Bertie Wood** taught us to harmonize our Carol, "The First Noel", and each year the Marcy boys enunciated very clearly, "I said the cow all Whit--te and red." **Mom Morton** was always so proud of them. It was sooooo cold walking through the woods from Ledge to school, but so glistening and beautiful with the new fallen snow. **George Sievers** played Martin in his senior year, but being in the drama club, his favorite play was acting in the "Arsenic and old Lace" play one year while George was at Greer. **Glenn Fillman** remembers the chapel being bathed in candlelight during part of the pledge service and each cottage putting the pledges on the Christmas tree as high as one could possibly reach to place your pledge on the tree. In the Martin Play, Glenn was not an actor, but was the bell ringer to toll the hour. That was high anxiety for me, he adds, because not only did the

bell have to be rung at the precise time of the play, but it had to toll the hour. When the time to toll was whispered (no cell phones then) up to the 3rd floor tower by my supporting cast, the real issue was tolling as the bell rope had to be pulled in a certain way to only allow the clapper to hit one side of the bell producing a toll. However, once the bell was in motion, it wanted its clapper to strike the opposite side producing a ding-dong effect. The rope had to be operated in such a way as to prevent this double ding-dong effect (like applying the brakes) and pulled again to produce an additional toll. I cannot remember if my tolling went smoothly during the play, but I can say that I was scarred for life by this experience and every time I hear a tolling bell I go into convulsions!!!!!! (LOL). **Pat Jordan Picco** stayed at Greer during Christmas vacation and remembers receiving gifts from Greer staff and a wonderful Christmas dinner with staff at Main House. **Violet Smalec** (Greer, 1930-1942) remembers the Bennett Jr. College girls giving gifts to Greer students at Christmas time. **Mike Ennis** remembers that he was "Ivan" in the play and says that Ivan just seemed to come naturally for him. **Pauline Wendt Kalahale** played one of the angels at the end of the play and in the 60+ years since, she can still remember the first line in the epilogue, and said it was an honor to participate in this play. Jack Rolston's brother **Robert Rolston** was Martin that year. Both Rolston brothers played Martin when they each were seniors which shows how well each were thought of by the Greer community. **John Blass** did the lighting for the play and was also the voice of God. At that time of my life, John adds, I did not believe in God. Who would have expected that I would end up with a degree in Biblical studies and become a teacher at a Theology Institute? Before he passed, **Tony Voight** mentioned that it was such an honor to be Martin in his senior year. **Charmi Neely Mulvihill** once told the story of the play to her Buddhist Sangha in Virginia. Former teacher **Ward Bell** remembers a musical revue the 8th grade class put on before a Friday night movie. It was directed by his fellow teacher, **Mary Cuevas**, and they sang popular Christmas songs. The hit of



the show was the appearance of Santa Claus. As he came on to the stage, he began to lose his pants!!! The audience roared with laughter as Santa was too tall and thin for the part of playing Santa. **Pat Monza Bertram** loved the Candlelight service where each cottage sang a Christmas carol after hanging their pledges on the Christmas tree in the chapel. **Bob Jenkins** loved the Cottage Christmas decorating contest each year as each cottage vied to outdo the other cottages.



Season's Greetings

John and Sandy Hudnor

Doug and Mitzi Berry

Ron and Peggy Sparks

Tony and Jo Ann Vaz

Sad News or in this case Good News

Turns out, we have no sad news to report since the last newsletter in September. Furthermore, we have not had any reports of any alumni or staff cases of Covid-19 all year long, deaths or hospitalizations. We hope that all of you have had your two vaccinations and a booster shot. If not, why not?

Greerschool.Org Web Site Update

All newsletters for 2022 and 2021 have been uploaded to the website (<http://greerschool.org/hudnor2news.html>) with the exception of this one, which will be remedied soon after this one is sent off.

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 or a521@bellsouth.net

Send newsworthy articles to:

John Hudnor - Contact tonyvaz@greerschool.org

Sandy Hudnor – Contact tonyvaz@greerschool.org

Peggy Sparks - Contact tonyvaz@greerschool.org

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

