



Dear Fellow Alumni

March 1996

Here are your letters, it was good getting this mail & we do hope that you will continue writing us about Greer and yourselves. Also thanks for the addresses that we didn't have on file.

From: **Ida (Farley) Bove**, [REDACTED] Margaretville, NY 12455

I was glad to get the latest newsletter, and then to read there was going to be a Greer School reunion in 1996, God willing, I will be there with bells on. I don't live that far from Poughkeepsie. I live in the heart of the Catskills in a small town named Margaretville. My sister Vicki (Viola) lives in Irving, Texas. I just got off the phone with her, she is also very much looking forward to the reunion. I will start making plans now for it.

In the summer of 1993, she came here for a visit. We took a drive to where Greer School was. Was I in for a surprise? The highlight of the day was going up the road past the cemetery to Ledge Cottage, my cottage for many years. I had such a lump in my throat, looking at that run down building with the fire escape still standing. That brought back some memories. My room was right off the fire escape to the left. We walked up the stairs, really a mess. When I got to my room it looked so small, I found it hard to believe that two of us shared that room. I was thinking of the air raid drills when we had to take our pillows and blanket and lay in the hall. What a scary time that was.

I took some wonderful pictures, which I look at often. The other highlight was going to the Chapel that brought back beautiful memories. Mostly of the Christmas holiday, each cottage would walk up to the Christmas tree with our little gift boxes with a few pennies in it and hang them on the tree.

Well, that's the day I became aware of James Morton, we started talking to an elderly lady by the name of Rose. She lives in the house next to the Chapel. We told her we were former students of Greer and she got right on the phone and she put us in contact with you.

Keep those letters coming, we love to read them. My family at Greer was Viola, Priscilla, Lindley, Pearl (who lived with Mr. and Mrs. Mack) & me, Ida, the Farley family. My sister Priscilla was there about 1936 to 1944. Viola, Lindley & Pearl were there longer. I would love to hear from anyone who was there the same time. They were the good old days!

From: **Mrs. William Kastner**, [REDACTED] Toms River, NJ 08757

I am sorry to inform you that my husband, William Kastner is deceased. He was 88 years old.

He had many Happy Memories of his years at Hope Farm, and he and I made many trips there in the summer (of course that was many years ago). I am 84 years old.

Good luck with your reunion.

From: **Barbara (McGiffen) Derrey**, Main Street, Alstead, NH, 03602

On July 1, 1949, I arrived at 1:30 on a Friday afternoon just after lunch, Audrey Prewitt, Dawn Christian and Grete Aoyagi came up to Main House to meet me and take me to Ledge. My grandmother & our minister Mr. Hoofnagle brought me as my mother had a summer job in east Hampton. It was the first summer I had been away from mother.

When I first saw Greer I thought it was the most beautiful place I had every set my eyes on. That night the movie was "Captain from Castile." Monday was the 4th of July and we had a picnic supper down at Daisy. I was amazed to see the size of the dining room, it was so large.

I worked down at Camp during the time when the little ones were there, I liked it an awful lot of fun. We slept in cabins and we stayed in Owl. In our cabin, were Marideen DeWaal, Karin Venetian, Harriet Evdox, Delores Wadeley, Gwen Jones, & Nancy Seegar. After camp we got ready for school. My job was Main House cleaning. After

Christmas, my job was the Plum pantry and the Dining room. In February, we took a test "Time Current Events Test" and to my surprise I got the second highest in the school. George Freer got the first place. After Easter, I had Greer residence with Audrey Prewitt. It was OK in the beginning but it got tiresome after awhile.

Starting my 2nd year at Greer I worked down at the little kids' camp, this time we were lived in Bobolink. There were Gwen, Sandy, Pat Gerry, Helen, and Martha. Every morning Mrs. Post would come over & wake us up with "Sandra! Sandra! Wake up." Once we slept out and she called Sandy, what a joke. We went up the hill & came back two days later. Then we were in Owl again and my cabin mates were Gay Turner, Betty Metz, Gwen, Gloria Sichel, Helen, Pat, and Helen Adamcick, what a summer we had. We went to the movies & saw "Aged" & "Right Leaf," Mrs McKinley took us in. One time we went to the movies in Millbrook. Irwin Taylor took Gay, Betty Metz, and Pat; and the rest of us went in with Mr. Harpell. Another time, Jack DeWaal took a load of us to see "Rouges of Sherwood Forest" & "Lady Without a Passport".

After the summer, my new job was Greer relief

From: **George Freer**, [REDACTED] Clifton, NJ 07011-1130

Thanks for the latest issue of the Greer Alumni Newsletter & the long list of names.

Missing from the list are 7 of the 9 members of my graduating class of 1951: Richard Abbott, Alan Murray (my frequent "partner in crime"), the twins, Duncan & Susan Stephenson, Elizabeth "Betty" Jean Metz, & the two faculty brats, Dorothy Cronk & Marcella O'Brien. The 8th person, Audrey Prewitt (now Mrs. Bob Cooper never has been to any of our reunions) leaving me as the sole representative of that illustrious group.

Also missing are the names of many dorm mates from my riotous days at Rapallo Cottage: Gary Reed, Richard Devaux, Billy Hunt, Frank Richter, Robert Hougasian, Richard Connatello, Edward & William Childe, Ross "Boogie" Barrett; some of Ciso Lopez's former sparring partners, Larry Bates, Hugh Newell and Fred Stedding; an football teammates like Russell Housen, Russell Raymond, George Maitland, Charlie Tompkins and Bob Cosner. Where have they all gone?

One new name can be added, though. In 1979, while working in the Engineering Dept of the Singer Co in Elizabeth, N.J., I was reminiscing with my supervisor about the good old days, in the service and at Greer School. Across the aisle 10 feet away, a man looked up from his desk & stared at me. A few minutes later he came over & asked, "Did you just mention Greer School"? I said yes & he said, "I used to be there when I was a little kid." He and his younger brother spent only 2 or 3 years there during the mid 1950's, including the summer of 1955 when I got out of the Air Force. Then he realized that I was his counselor at Camp Barbey that year!

His name is Thomas Hade & his address is: [REDACTED] West Paterson, NJ 07424. He lived in Daisy Cottage & was a classmate of John Hudnor. If you have 1955 yearbook you can see their picture on page 21, in grade 4 & 5. Even though he hasn't shown much interest in the Alumni Association or in visiting during reunions, he still has the book, so it must mean something to him. You can sign him up for a year at my expense.

So far, my effort to write a book about the Greer experience are being frustrated by the realization that most of my recollections are of my numerous pranks and misdeeds. The more I write, the more it sound like "The Further Adventure of Peck's Bad Boy," whoever he was.

That's why it took our wonderfully patient & caring houseparents 6 years to get me headed in the right directions. It was almost a 180 degrees turnaround. Forget Dennis the Menace, I was "George the Scourge."

How bad was I? One little hint. In my will there is a provision to pay the City of White Plains, NY, \$1000.00 for damages I caused at Post Road School during the period of 1943 to 1945. And I'm getting away cheaply. It doesn't cover a number of broken street lights....Anyway, that's all behind me now & we can thank Greer School for a job well done.

The newsletter written to Mr. Kenneth Baschuk was returned by the post office stating that he was deceased.

From: **Jack Miller**, [REDACTED] Malone, NY 12953

Since leaving Greer (My brother, Don & I were there from '45 to '51), I graduated from Rutgers Univ., and then put in enough years with the NY State Police to go up through a few ranks & then took early retirement. I even put in a short tour of duty at the old Millbrook sub-station near the Blacksmith Shop restaurant on old Rt. 82 before transferring to the northern reaches of NY State. Six years ago, I started my own real estate business, anyone need property on the St. Lawrence River or in the northern Adirondack??

My brother's address is Donald Miller, [REDACTED] Elgin SC 29045. He's running his own insurance business in Columbia, SC & would appreciate being on the alumni lists.

From: **Bob Constantine**, [REDACTED] San Diego, CA 92119

What happened to: Frank Richter, Virginia Childe, Lindley Farley, and Russell Housen with me in '44 to '48. Also the Rapallo house parents, the Heifners?

I retired from work last June. Now everyday is like Christmas Day.

From: **Virginia (Smith) Miller**, [REDACTED] Upper Saddle River, NY 07458

We came to Greer when I was 7 & my brother Howard was 5. Before we went to Greer we went to the Gould Foundation, of which I have horrid memories of being literally torn from my mother, then the poking and prodding examinations, the shots, & vaccinations.

Then to Hope Farm, Mr. Mac met the train at Verbank in a horse drawn station wagon. Once at Hope Farm I was sent to Greer Cottage and my brother to Marcy. We would meet in the woods, I think it was because we were not supposed to visit but it may have been that he would have been teased, poor little one.

Christmas at Greer" Mrs. Lightowler was our houseparent at the time we all went to the ravine to gather ground pine (legal to do so then) which we stuffed into large burlap bags. It was always cold, our fingers froze and our noses ran. Back at Greer, we wove the stuff up and down the posts of the stairway. Christmas morning we woke to the sound of caroling by the alumni who had braved the cold and the dark to sing to us. We opened presents from our families and each of us got a small box (much like an animal cracker box) of hard candy. I was the type who ate the candy right away. My friend Eppie had to give me some of hers in order to continue the game.

(During my stay at Greer, we always received a 5-pound box of chocolate candy from Greer, the only present: Jim Morton)

I remember Christmas as a warm and happy time, but still sad too for we longed to be home. The Chapel was lovely and the services moving, especially when a boy soprano sang, "Oh Holy Night."

When it snowed we would borrow one of the aluminum pitchers from the dining room. After dark, we would sneak down to the kitchen and "liberate" some cocoa, sugar, and uncooked oatmeal. We dumped the stuff into the pitcher and filled it with snow. SUPER ICE CREAM!! Once I left the pitcher with some of the "ice" in it, under my bed. Next morning, there was a dead mouse in the melted mush.

In Greer Cottage, we slept in cubicle in a dorm. After lights out, we would hang a sheet over the front of the cubicle which we back lit with flashlight, causing shadows on the sheet then we would act out plays.

Speaking of plays, we were forever making them up and acting them out. There was the year we read the "Outdoor Girls" series that we acted out by lining sleds up in the snow, covering them with coats and blankets and pretending we were in the Arctic. In some, we built teepees using thin dead tree trunks as poles and covered them with old sheets.

In winter, we had to spend a given amount of time outside. Once when it was very cold, we gathered around the cottage and chanted, "Mrs. Lighttower, Mrs. Lighttower let they people in". Biblical influence per chance.

I remember Morty, – what a lovely woman. I remember Mrs. Mac at camp. Before Camp Barbey, we slept in a long open shed like building. For mattresses we filled mattress covers with straw. Great for people like me with asthma! I remember Miss (Miriam) Riggs, a tiny woman and a lovely teacher. I remember Mr. Stone who taught English, the poets Shelley and Keats, Canterbury Tales. Mr. Stone also played great jazz piano. Once I asked him why he didn't play the organ in church. He replied he was afraid he might play, "I Can't Give you Anything But Love Baby" during collection.

I remember a great history teacher (alas her name escapes me), she divided the class into two sides and had us act out the Civil War. I remember "Spain" who used to meet me in the woods. We would sit on a fallen log and he would tell me wondrous stories. We always had a beautiful Golden Setter dog, who "Spain" loved, with us. I remember Jimmy Burroughs upon who I had a crush. Once he jumped off his bike and gave me a quick KISS on the cheek then peddled away like mad. The thrill of it all!!

I remember Mr. Barbey, a board member, and a towering giant who taught us how to shake hands with firmness and who retrieved slivers of soap to teach us thrift. I remember the cook at Greer Cottage who had a beautiful garden but who also made us mix large bowls of margarine with yellow dye.

I remember dear Dorothy Southworth who taught me many things including non-Spenserian penmanship. I remember Ida Mae Bell, who played the piano and who I envied because she went to "Northfield" where I wanted to go. I remember dear, Miss Misner, who I visited in the hospital just before she died. I remember Mr. Behrends and the era of the "punishment."

I remember the apples, Northern Spy, Sheep Nose, Banana, and Roma. We had secure places where we stashed them after stealing them from the orchard. I remember "Mosquito Bite Hill" where one could lie on ones back and watch the clouds and the grass blow like golden wheat. I remember too, picking blackberries or thimble heads there and fleeing through the brambles away from a black snake.

I remember the swimming hole before it was concreted where I taught myself to swim and where my brother and his friend would climb a large tree and swing out on a high branch into the water.

I remember the strawberry field in back of Greer Cottage where there was remains of an old horse drawn coach, don't ask how it got there. We spent hours playing on it. Someone told me you could tame a bird by putting salt on its tail. So I put a whole pile of bread crumbs on a board on the coach with a pile of salt about 5 inches away. I came back expecting a tame bird. Alas, no bird,

Also alas, the coach burned in a fire behind Greer.

I remember the Girls Scouts for two reasons. First, earning a merit badge for bird watching, a vocation which remains with me. Second, my scholarship to the Camp Edith Marcy, the National Girls Scout Camp.

I remember Watts de Peyster, a crumbling mansion right out of "Jane Eyre." Exploring the place was hazardous for the floors could collapse, the area around it was magical, tall evergreen woods where rumor had it, lived a pirate. We believed there was buried treasure. The woods smelled so good and there was places where there were smooth rocks going down like a steep hill covered with pine needles. One could slide down the rocks as if it were a small ski slope.

I remember the day I read a book cover to cover.

I remember sleigh riding from the Main House all the way down to the pump house. One year I lost my eye glasses in the snow and didn't find them until spring when the snow melted.

And do I remember the dentist!! I used to pray very hard for not cavities. The drill was run with pedal like an old sewing machine. No Novocain.

I remember Dr von Lackum who flew his own small plane and landed on a field at Greer. I remember the movies. The first "talkie" was "The Jazz Singer."

I remember hiking to Verbank where we bought penny candies, Mary Jane's, Banana Wonders, and Jaw Breakers. What fun to point to the large jars on the counter for the ones we wanted. Verbank was 3 miles from Greer. On the way back when we came to an old wooden red silo, we knew there was only one mile to go. Hiking to Verbank on Saturday was a privilege, one which I often lost, because I was working off demerits by waxing floors at Crest. We used paste wax and buffed it by wrapping rags on our feet and sliding back and forth. Sometimes we hiked to Millbrook but it was 5 miles and not as much fun when we got there.

(A GREAT LETTER---ANYONE ELSE WANT TO TRY????---JIM MORTON)

From: **Viola (Farley) Stiles**, [REDACTED] Irving TX 75061

Do hope you and your family had a lovely blessed Christmas and may I say. I wish you and yours a Very Happy New Year, along with all former Greer resident and their families.

Living just outside of Dallas like I do, snow is almost unheard of, but tonight snow is falling. Oh! It won't be much and probably won't stick, but it brings me back to the excitement of the first snow fall as a child at Greer. Those fun filled winters, sledding skating and playing in all that beautiful snow, making snow angels, etc. We always found something to do during the afternoons when were forced to spend outside, I believe it was 1:00PM to 5:00PM every day unless it rained.

Often think, "I wish there were more places like Greer," that some children today could go to and learn the really important things like not to just exist in the world, but like making friends, and feeling important and know things, like being a part of it and contributing willingly, not just looking for what they can get out of it. Giving them character with moral and ethical values in school, church, and rules to live by, grow and have something real to pass on. My children always said I preached too much but I'm proud of my sons (3 of them) and what I was able to pass on to them and they in turn were able to pass on to their families. We're all very close and the family means everything.

Well I guess you can see what they had to put up with all because of a place called Greer School, Hope Farm, NY.

Hope to see a lot of former member of Greer at the reunion. My sisters Ida and Pearl and I hope to attend next August. We will be three old ladies so excited and have come from (Ida), Margaretville, NY; (Pearl), Colville, WA; and (Viola), Irving, TX.

From: **Pat Hilsinger**, 10122 Clarke St., Philadelphia, PA 19116

(Written on January 8, 1996)

I am stuck in the main train station in Philadelphia after trying to get home from New York City during the bad snow storm. No public transportation is moving and Pennsylvania's governor has declared an emergency so that no one is allowed to drive on the streets until the road crews have had a chance to clear them.

Fortunately, I had your nice Christmas newsletter and my checkbooks with me, so thought I could at least express my appreciation to all of you for all your efforts, send in my dues and say, "Please send me information on the 8/10/96 reunion."

This is written on the back of your envelope to me – all the paper I have.

(Here it is January 13, 1996. I have been shoveling and blowing snow all week and they say it will snow again tonight. Charlie Berry is on my roof getting rid of 8" of ice in the gutter and well over a foot of snow on the roof. When he is done, will have to shovel 4 feet of snow from the back of the house!! Just where is the Spring Time???---Jim Morton)

From: **Jack Edmonds**, [REDACTED] Brushton, NY

Just to keep you informed, I've had a series of heart attacks, serious enough to warrant by-pass surgery, four of them. That was 10/25/95; I am well on the mend and doing great.

I wrote this article over the summer months and found it to be too long for your publication. Since then, I have tried unsuccessfully to shorten the contents but I felt that

any omission of a student will offend someone. So what I would like to do is put in all I can remember and let others with better memories, correct me and possibly add to this with left out information.

The time period for articles is circa 1946-47-48, the last years I was at Greer. First, the coaches, Coach Freitag and Coach Joe Fischer. These two men taught us sportsmanship to the nines, built our character, our confidence, made us believe in ourselves not only as a team but as individuals. We had the support of the older players who got right in there with us, gave of themselves to make us younger boys into a team, they and the whole of Greer School would be proud of and I don't think we let them down. I'd like to give special mention to the older players who I knew to be greatly involved with us, the pee-wee team at the time; Jack Clarke, Arthur Gregory, Bob Cooper, Robin Standerwick. Actually at one time or another, the entire varsity and Jr. Varsity were right in the midst of our training in football & baseball.

Our school colors, Red & White, were worn proudly; each and every team played with their hearts and for the school, all opposing teams knew Greer to be a worthy foe on the field or on the baseball diamond.

I'm sorry to say that I can't recall any of the teams the Varsity and JV played against, nor the scoring. First I'll start with Varsity teams. Usually whoever played on one team played all sports.

Jack Clarke	Arthur Gregory	Bob Cooper
Russell Housen	Bob Doel	Ed Childe
Robin Standerwick	John Brown	Bob Costner
Spider Cannon	Butch Edmonds	Hilsinger Bros.
Gildersleeve Bros.		

Plus many more whom I can't recall.

I really must apologize here, 49 years back is a long while to try and recall so due to my lack of knowledge as to who played JV, I'm going to pass with the hopes that someone will come to my rescue in a later edition of the Newsletter.

Due to the fact that I was lucky to have made the Pee-wee teams my memory is much better:

Dick Lucas	Billy Beer	Fred Trommsdorff
Tommy King	Jack Miller	Joe Lopez
Don Farkas	Jack Edmonds	Howard Hawk
Bill Constantine	Russell Raymond	Bill Mitchell
Jim Mathewson	Walter Heitzman	Lee Arvidson
J. Costner	John Hyland	Gordie Pink

Again, I think I may have skipped a name, but not intentionally. These are four of the teams the Pee-wee teams played; I don't know or remember the scores.

Indian Mountain
Wooster School for Boys
Millbrook School for Boys
Holy Trinity for Boys-Pawling

I can't mention the teams without adding that we had the best cheering group I ever saw or heard. Betty Brown, Inge & Marion Rothenberg, Gloria Sichel, Karin Venetian, and the rest of the girls at Greer, Crest & Ledge Cottages. The boys who didn't play sports were not to be out done; they too, were there for every game and rooted us on.

From: Betty Bernard, [REDACTED] Silver Spring, MD 20904 January 4, 1996

Dear Mitzi, Jimmy, and the Alumni Association

It was a great experience to visit Greer last summer after a period of more than 20 years! Although saddened that it is no longer a "community for children," I am glad that a few landmarks still exist such as the chapel and the schoolhouse, and the surrounding

countryside (Dutchess County) seems virtually untouched. It was wonderful to find out about the alumni association, to talk with Mitzi about old times and to subsequently receive the newsletter. Enclosed is a \$15.00 check for my alumni dues. I am also interested in attending the August reunion with my husband, so please send me information concerning that when you do your mailing.

My maiden name was Chaumont and I lived at Greer from 1961 to 1965. I would love to connect again with former best friends Sandra Zulli, Pat Wolverton, Vicki Lenzi, if their addresses are available or if they will be at the reunion.

I live currently in Silver Spring, MD close to Washington, DC with my husband, Peter, an engineering professor at the University of MD and our three children Becky, Alex and Jenny ages, 11, 15 and 24. I work full time as a writer, (something I became interested in while at Greer) in mainly poetry and short stories, but I have recently completed a novel.

Anyway, it is wonderful to have this opportunity to reconnect with my past, and I look forward to the reunion and future newsletters.

From: **Bob & Audrey Cooper;** [REDACTED] Sonoma CA 95476

Audrey had cancer surgery Jan 25, after feeling sick since mid-November. We've been informed they got between 98 & 99% of the cancer during the operation and that chemotherapy should get the rest. I know Audrey will beat this, she's a fighter. Along with that, we have sold our house in Haywood and are moving February 12, 1996 to Sonoma CA, about 60 miles North West of our present home. Note address above. Phone is 707 [REDACTED]

We would like to let our friends know where we are and invite any of them who are out our way to stop by. Sorry, we will not be able to attend the reunion this year....

That's all for now. See you in the Fall.

As always,

Mitzi and Doug

Jim and Isabel



Dear Fellow Alumni

October 1996

We do hope that you all, those who attended, enjoyed the reunion. The weather even cooperated this time. It was good seeing you all again. We are still requesting that any of you who have the urge to write anything that we might add to the letter, Please do... The next letter will be gotten ready for mailing about Thanksgiving and the more you write, the less we have to fill. So sharpen the pencils up!!!

We would also like to thank Fred Trommsdorff for doing the talking at the reunion as I didn't want to. Thanks to Wayne Holton who helped us check everyone in. Thanks to Ed Crump for making us a lot of address labels. Then, thanks to Betty (Brown) Lucas for the many snap shots she gave us (I will be having fun in the winter putting them in albums) and thanks to Violet (Smalec) Byszynski for the photo album with all the pictures of the building and kids. But a very special thanks to all of you for attending! There were about 85 alumni & staff attending from a period of 1920 to 1971, over 50 years represented....

Before the Reunion

A letter from **Joe & Alice Austin**, June 2, 1996

From: Joe Austin, [REDACTED] Sun City, AZ 85351

I have just returned from swimming in one of our Rec. Center, so I could watch the 2nd half of the Sonic/Jazz game. Alice doesn't like TV sports that much, so she is swimming. 106° today but since the humidity is about 20, it isn't too bad. Not like the Hudson River Valley with its humidity.

Thanks for the newsletter. We didn't know a lot of names, before our years at Greer? Say hello for us.

Sorry we won't make it for the reunion. Friday we leave for Aurora to see Stan, Steve, Joyce and Rob's families. After a few days there we head to St. Paul to see Kathy and Nancy's family Then it's off to Grand Marais, MN., south west side of Lake Superior – 100 miles north of Duluth. We hope the mosquitoes will leave us alone. Our plan is to use Kay and Steve's recreation trailer. Kathy and Steve, Nancy and her Steve and families will visit us there.

In November and December, we spent time renting a condo in Sun City to test the area. We went back to Aurora, then two weeks in China with a tour group that included Alice's brother his wife. Back to Colorado, sold our home and moved down here March 30th.

We are a block from a Rec. Center, so we have lots to do, including golf. Say hello to Mrs. Elliott.

Maybe we can make the reunion in two years, Next year we celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary and we are thinking going on a trip to Europe.

We hear from John Hudnor regularly.

Time to close; we have many fond memories of all of you from Greer.

From: **George Freer**, [REDACTED] Clifton NJ 07011

Thanks for the latest issue of the Alumni Newsletter. Lots of interesting letters from all over the country. There were lots of familiar names, with faces that are still young in my memory. After reading the newsletter (twice), I got out my yearbooks and spent the next four hours reminiscing, looking even more closely than usual, with a magnifying glass and putting more names and faces together.

The mail came while I was out buying NYS lottery tickets (my weekly trip to Pearl River) and as I was opening your letter the phone rang. It was Ed Crump, my old roommate from 8 Dorm in Rapallo. We had exchanged cards and letters, last Christmas, thanks to your list of addresses. Then we made plans and met in the Mall at Menlo Park, NJ, the first time in 44 years since we had seen each other. I was home on leave from the Air Force in April 1952.

When I got back to my base in Wichita, Kansas, I wrote a long letter to the boys at Rapallo. They 'retaliated' with a longer letter, on a 30-40 foot roll of adding machine paper! It included poems, baseball scores, weather report and names of more than 60 other students and staff. The letter has survived fires, floods, and more than two dozen moves. I'll bring it with me to the reunion for a little 'show and tell'. I've made an alphabetical list of all the names on it.

From: **Ingeborg (Nelson) Campbell**, [REDACTED] Palm City, FL 32907

I'm sorry I won't be there for the reunion though I will be in spirit. I found a couple of pictures you can add to your collection. I believe they were taken in 1930-31 in front of Crest Cottage.

I really appreciate what you have done for Hope Farm, Greer and especially looking out for Helen Fink, I wanted to see her when I was up but I developed a cold and was afraid to go near her. We talked on the phone; she sounded the same as ever. I hope she will be able to go to the reunion. My mother, who just died, was 103 and in good shape right to the end.

Have great reunion and a big hello to all the oldies that might remember me.

From: **David Bowman**, [REDACTED] Millbrook NY 12545

I left Greer in 1947, not going on to finish the 12th grade but did get an equivalency diploma thru the Army.

I enlisted in 1947, spent three years in, was discharged and still didn't know quite what to do with my life, so I re-enlisted again and was sent to Korea.

I was no hero, but received the Purple Heart for wounds sustained and was in the hospital a while until I healed. Released and sent to Germany to finish my obligation to Uncle Sam. After 6 years I called it quits.

Time passed and we lived in Woodstock, NY for 7 years, where I had a business. NO, I wasn't exactly a Hippie, but made a number of friends in their group and thru my business. We lived there at the time of the Woodstock festival. Those were the good times.

We moved from Woodstock to Oneonta, NY then back to Poughkeepsie where I worked at construction for a number of years. Finally moving back to the old stomping grounds of Millbrook where we have lived for 21 years.

I'm spending my retirement years hiking the mountains of the northeast and sailing the waters of Lake Champlain.

I do plan and hope to attend the '96 reunion and look forward to seeing some old friends, friends of the past.

To try and remember some of the good times at Greer, I would have to really dig deep and come up with cross country hikes to Verbank, walks to Millbrook, maple sugaring in the spring, canning in the fall, working the farm in summer, school dance. (Jeanne Elms taught me my few steps), the yearly "King of Kings" silent movie, the best picture I think ever made of the life of Christ, the shop work with Mr. Fink, meeting in the pines at night and a few more that escape me, at present.

I had no intention of going on like this, but do hope it would be of interest to other alumni who may have been at Greer from 1942-1947.

Of the 333 names enclosed in the newsletter, I recognize about 20 of the men and I am sure there must be a number of the girls who were there when I was, but I don't recognize their married names.

I will bring a photo of the football team which may be of interest to other alumni and you may have it for your collection. Am looking forward to seeing people I haven't seen in 50 years.

From: **Sydney Mitchell:** [REDACTED] Nova Scotia, Bojito, Canada

Many thanks for the December newsletter, which mentions among other items of great interest, the projected reunion on August 10.

My wife Eleanor, who died from Leukemia in May 1993, and I were house parents at Rapallo from October 1963 to May 1964. Then we moved to New Windsor to join forces with Jim Hamilton at the McQuade Children's Home. Even though we were only at Greer for a short while, there was something about life there that will always be fresh in the memory, particularly so for us as it was our first place of employment as newly arrived immigrants from England to the USA.

I have a small collection of photos of the Rap boys taken during that time, that I would like to donate to the alumni association, plus a gift made for us by the high school age group and presented to us at Christmas 1963. It consists of a Nativity set made in the workshop at Millbrook High School. I think George Nikolatos, Bob Brammer, and Gary Farrington were mainly responsible for the idea of making the gift for us.

I would like to bring this Nativity set back to Greer and wonder if it might be possible for it to be placed in the church during the Christmas period? It originally came from Greer and I feel this is where it belongs.

I have recently moved from Bayswater to a nearby senior complex in the Village of Hubbards, and I have in the past weeks been sorting out a life-time of collections of various sentimental and personal items from England, USA, and Canada, a monumental TASK!

After the Reunion

From: **Betty (Chaumont) Bernard,** [REDACTED] Silver Springs, MD 20904

We just wanted to express our appreciation for all your contribution towards the Greer Newsletter and this year's reunion. My husband, Peter, and I had a very meaningful experience. It was great to see some familiar faces and to walk around the grounds again.

Thank you for introducing yourself to me, it had been 31 years, after all! I enjoyed meeting your lovely wife. Please give Mitzi the enclosed note.

Again, thanks for all your time and effort. I look forward to the Christmas newsletter and future reunions too.

From: **Joe Kaiser:** [REDACTED] Brick NJ 08724

Thanks for all your hard work and organizing for the reunion which we really enjoyed attending. It was great seeing all the familiar faces again and recalling the old days at Greer.

In October, we will be seeing Rammy (Robert Ramirez) who will be running in the Atlantic City Marathon and we will bring him up to date on the news of the reunion.

From: **Bob & Audrey Cooper,** [REDACTED] Sonoma, CA 95476

Now that you have had a week to catch your breath, I do hope you had a wonderful reunion. Audrey and I talked about our going this year for the first time, but as you know cancer got in the way. The first of June, Audrey completed her 6 months of chemo and in July NO sign of cancer showed in any of the blood work or CAT scan. Needless to say the good Lord really blessed us. It's going to be a long road back but I have no doubts that she will make it. I want you to know that since you mentioned Audrey in your newsletter we have heard from George Freer, Barbara McGiffen, and Agnes Slewick. Both girls are and were married so I just used the Greer names. It was a wonderful surprise to say the least.

We will see what next year brings; maybe we can make it...

We still hear from Jimmy Lucas, Richard Lucas, & Jack Clarke every Christmas. It's something we look forward to every year. Again hope you had a great reunion.

From: **Pat (Monza) Bertram:** [REDACTED] Old Bridge, NJ 08857

I just want to thank you so much for all the work you did getting the Greer reunion together. This was my first reunion and I love it. I wish I had been to the others.

Thanks you again & I hope to see you before the next reunion. It is OK of we visit once in awhile, isn't it?

From: **William Constantine:** 5964 Westcott Hilly Way, Alexandria VA 22315

Thanks for arranging a wonderful and memorable reunion. Thanks also to all the others who helped with the arrangements.

My brother Bob and I shared a great experience at Greer from 1943 to 1948. We've been separated by distance during our adult years and had little chance to reminisce about our days at Greer, as we both recall as being great.

The alumni newsletters have stirred many memories and the names of former classmates have helped clear the fog of nearly 50 years of hazy remembrances and have made them clearer and brighter for me.

It's always remarkable to me how so many alumni who have written to you share the same warm feelings about their experiences at Greer and the boys and girls who grew up with them. I've always felt the same way about the whole environment including the teachers and house parents. I can't remember each and every one of the, but here are no bad memories---none..

It amazing how reading someone's name in a letter can start the memory wheel grinding and produce something not thought of in about 50 years. It's a great exercise and proof of the value of your efforts in trying to bring us all back "home," each in our own way.

To my classmates that I remembered – and remembered me – It was great seeing you again after so many years. We should try to round up some of those we talked about who weren't there to give them a chance to defend themselves at the next reunion. Let's work on that.

A special word of thanks to Mrs. Fink – still a remarkable woman in every respect.

Thanks for sharing this reunion with us.

From: **Helen Zarakovitis,** [REDACTED] Miami, FL 33140

Thanks for the list of alumni that went to the Greer reunion.

You were lucky to have such great weather. Sure wish we could be that lucky – every day it is in the '90's.

That's incredible that Mrs. Fink attended both the luncheon and the dinner at the reunion and knew everyone. Sure wish I had pushed myself a little harder.

I plan to go and visit Klora (Brewster) Shotter in St Petersburg, FL in October 21, for 4 or 5 days. Will take Helen (Gregory) Bass along as Ciso and Betty (Gregory) Lopez live 50 miles from St Pete. It will be good to see them all.

REQUEST

A request has been asked for any information about William (Bill) Davis who attended Greer approx. 1941 to 1944. He is an uncle of Anne's and she has lost contact with him, so anyone having any information please help her.

FROM: Anne Marie Novick, [REDACTED] Wappinger's Falls, NY 12590

Thanks for sending the March 1996 newsletter. I enjoyed reading about life at Greer. As I told you over the phone, I have been working on my family tree and am trying to locate my Uncle Billy. I've photocopied his picture and hope you can print it along with this letter in your next newsletter.

My Uncle, William Davis attended Greer for September 1941 until January 1944. Are there other alumni who attended at this time and remember my Uncle? Please write anything you knew about him. Were you his roommate, classmate, did you sit together at meals play sports, get into mischief? Anything at all, any stories you have to tell, would be greatly appreciated. Thanks a lot.

Ed Crump and the Moonshine Caper

Ed Crump Class of '52, [REDACTED] Metuchen NJ 08840

Can I assume that you all remember having a few days off from school in the fall to help with harvesting and canning of the fruits and vegetables for our Garden? Beets, beans, tomatoes, even applesauce, went through our hand & into big #10 cans to be stored away for the winter.

One vegetable that I remember particularly well was corn. Corn was grown by the farm rather than in our garden and we were presented with high piles just outside the window of the canner which were replenished hourly. It was the job of the outside crew to strip the husks and silk from each ear and to then pass the ears through the window to the inside where flashing knives were waiting to cut the kernels from the ear and then to toss the cobs back out where everything was taken to the compost heap to be used as fertilizer in the spring. We were way ahead of our time when it came to recycling.

When the piles of corn kernels on the metal work-tables became too high, they were removed by the pail full and stored in large vats to wait cooking and further processing. The vats had spigots at the bottom so that liquids could be drawn off.

A thought occurred to me. Isn't there liquor made from corn squeezings? White-lightening? Moonshine? Something? Well, with all those corn kernels, pressing down, something was sure getting squeezed. An Idea. A brilliant IDEA!

Aided by a few close friends (who shall be nameless to protect their innocence), I (we) filled two of the large cans to the top with the juice of all those ears, sealed them with lids, smuggles them down to our cottage and stashed them in the back of a closet.

And forgot about them!

This is, until spring cleaning. We discovered, deep in the dark recessed of the closet, two steel basketballs; our two cans of corn juice had undergone a miraculous transformation. Not only were the tops and bottoms bulged out but the insides were swollen as well. There was a lot of pressure them thar cans.

One of my fellow conspirators whipped out his hunting knife and was about to plunge it into the heart of a can when we stopped him. I hate to imagine what would have happened in the little room if we hadn't. A lot of pressure.

Discretion being the better part of valor, we opted to simply wash our hands of the whole idea. Very carefully, we carried the cans out behind the cottage (Rapallo) and left them in the woods. The next few days were still cool, but there soon came a time when the weather changed and it grew quite warm. Perhaps we were all expecting it, we heard the soft *whoomph* and then another soft *whoomph*, but so quiet a sound that no one else seemed to hear it. When we worked up enough courage, we investigated the origin of those sounds. We Knew. As we got closer to the spot, the smell of alcohol grew stronger and stronger. Splashes of corn juice were spread all over the trees and bushes and strands of corn husk and silk hung from every branch and twig and the cans were still on their way to the moon. I think that the amount of alcohol in the air would have produced a buzz if one inhaled enough. We didn't wait to see.

While we were a little afraid of what we had done, I mean there was no way we were going to taste the stuff, we were also a bit proud. At least in our own minds, we had made moonshine! WOW.

When I related this story at our table during the alumni Dinner last August, Mrs. Fink who was also listening very closely, said, "I never knew about that! We never knew about that!" I think it was just as well.

From: Ward S. Bell: [REDACTED] Sea Cliff, NY 11579 July 11, 1996

I realize that my dues are long overdue, so I have enclosed my check. I certainly enjoy the receipt and reading of each issue that you work so hard to put out. Although those letters cover more years that I had there, they serve to reinforce my memories and to appreciate what Hope Farm/Greer was able to do for so many. Their letters to you attest to the quality and success of those efforts.

Out of curiosity, I filled out a coupon for information on Millbrook Meadows and have been receiving material for a couple of years. You may have seen this, or heard about it, but in case you have not, I am enclosing this copy. It was so informative and full of interesting facts, that I thought it might be of interest to you. I have written to them and thanked them for that well written article. If it contains anything that you might use, I suggest that you contact them for reprint permission.

My sailing season is being curtailed this summer because of a massive case of that virus called "Shingles" and it may take a year or more to get back, to use of my left leg. Despite doctors opinions, I got out of the hospital in 5 weeks, discarded a wheelchair after 2 days. Then the four-legged walker that I was directed to use for 2 months, I gave up in 2 weeks in favor of a four legged caned all of which a I abandoned after 2 more weeks. The doctors admit that I am almost 2 months ahead of schedule, so I remain optimistic. I often go to watch the sailboats at a nearby club and keep track of the races which I had usually managed. I can see a great deal from my back yard.

I will be unable to make the reunion, but I wish to be remembered to the great kids that grew up at Hope Farm, any faculty and especially Mrs. Fink. How I wish that we could see you all.

In closing, we would like to say 'thank you' to all that were able to attend this reunion. You are what make the reunions successful! We are always pleased when the turnout is good and all enjoy themselves. We are looking forward to seeing more of you, the next time we get together.

As Always,

*Mitzi, Doug
Isabel & Jim*

Dear Fellow Alumni,



December 1996

Seasons Greetings!

We wish you all a very Happy Holiday and hope that all is well with you and your families. We want to thank all of you for attending our reunion in August. From all reports we have received it was a success and all had a GREAT time with old friends and fellow Greer-Hope Farmites. We also want to thank those who left photos and other Greer related things we can add to our growing collection. Although this is a Christmas letter, we also must report any deaths we learn about and these we add to the letter with our condolences to their families.

From: **Georgianne (Clarke) Garbus**: 152 Old Mt. Tom Road, Bantam, CT 06750

I am writing to inform you that my ex-husband, **Dean A. Hartz** was killed in an auto accident August 28, 1996 in New York State. He graduated from Greer I 1960. He leaves my 3 sons and 2 from his second marriage.

Thank you for the great reunion. I saw friends I haven't seen in awhile.

We have also learned of the deaths of **Thomas Hughes** and **Thomas McCandless**.

I received a telephone message from Joe Kaiser on October 23, 1996, saying that **Evelyn (Brown) Daly** had died.

In loving Memory of

Evelyn T. Daly

They shut the Door so softly,
As they took her from our sight,
And safely carried her at last;
To Everlasting light.
The Other Room is very near,
Its close Door cannot hid;
The joy and peace and happiness
Of those who dwell inside.
She had lived within its Portals,
She had kept watch day by day,
When the Master opened wide the door;
She softly stole away,
All her patience was rewarded,
Her pain forever o'er
And we know her love will reach us,
Beyond...the Closed Door.

From: **Jack McHenry**, [REDACTED] Venice, FL 34287

It was good talking to Gwen Elliott this summer. She reached me at our Pennsylvania home to remind me of the summer alumni meeting. It was impossible for me to attend, but I'm sure it was a successful get together. Always is I'm sure, when the alumni group gets together to get caught up on news and to remember the best of the past.

We now have 4 grandchildren and they kept us busy this summer. Jack is in schoolwork at a private day school in Seattle, WA. Susan lives in Millville, NJ and although very handicapped she tries to make the best of each day, and Tom teaches art and languages in a high school in Corpus Christi, Texas.

I've been enjoying Elderhostel programs and plan to take a week at an Elderhostel in Corpus Christi next February so we'll be with Tom and his family (one daughter, Kerilyn-3 years old) for an extended visit then.

Thanks again for your work and interest in keeping the Greer School alumni in good shape.

From: Mrs **Pearl (Farley) Jarvis**, [REDACTED] Colville WA 99114

WOW!! You really outdid yourselves with the awesome 1996 Greer School reunion.

Thank you for all your hard work and dedication to all your fellow alumni, and thank you to all your helpers.

I was overwhelmed with the amount of Alumni that attended the reunion. Young, middle aged and older, we were all still like brothers and sisters in one big (huge) family and yet not forgetting the ones who couldn't attend.

It was wonderful being able to thank and vie our appreciation to some of the Greer staff, for the part they played in our lives.

Listening and laughing at some of the stories told, (mostly by the alumni men) made me think of how they (the boys) got away with almost murder. Seemed like us girls always got caught for something minor in comparison.

My only let down was in saying good-bye to some old and many new friends. I attended 1939-1949.

Thanks to **Karin (Venetian) Green** for the Greer School Echo's, here are a few tidbits from of some of them..

Fall 1950 '**Satisfaction**' by **Joan Harpell**

- 1 He sauntered thru the open door,
 His brow was doused with sweat,
 He knew his thirst would soon be quenched
 And smiled thru lips tight set.

 - 2 His foot steps quickened, his face grew bright,
 As he strode up to the bar ,
 To the aproned clerk he said, "That Works!
 But make sure it's up to par."

 - 3 He put down his money, picked up the glass,
 T'was a sight admire from far-
 A boy and double chocolate malt
 Emerged from the Greer Snack Bar.
-

Autumn Leaves, by **Vera Lee Jones**

Orange, scarlet, golden and brown,
Are the leaves floating to the ground.
Autumn decked in all her splendor,
Oh, for another line to please Mr. Bender

Old Memories by **David Copeland**

What a thrill it is to look at our past. Its true there are something's that we hadn't done, but when we are young this is less noticeable.

Most of us consider the past as the good old days. Why, we used to sneak down to the swimming pool in the middle of the night and for a dip. This midnight dip was more joy that the afternoon swim. Why? We were getting away with something. That's the main delight in our youth.

How about Thorn and its apples, Daisy and the pantry, Crest and it's girls? Hash yes! "These were the good old days." Who put the jack-in-the-pulpit in the salad, tied all the staff chairs so they couldn't be pulled out?

How did windows in the sheep barn get broken? Who were the mysterious boys headed towards Verbank or Millbrook? What happened to the lemon meringue pie that caused one of the chefs to quit? How about Mr. Finks' new plan of growing watermelons, plums, apples, Mr. Behrends' peaches?

Those days are gone forever for we realized the difference between right and wrong. There's an inner urge compelling us to think before we act but surely we wish we could pull off this curtain and go back to the "good old days."

From: **Joe Kaiser**, [REDACTED] Brick NJ 08724

Robert (RAMMY) Dorren has competed in the Atlantic City Marathon on October 13, 1996. He finished first in his age group, 72. The race was 26.2 miles and Bob completed the course in 5 1/2 to 6 hours and received a medal, a statuette and a T-shirt for his efforts.

From: **Helen Zarakovitis**; PO Box 2383 Miami Beach, FL 33140

I had a great time up in St Petersburg, FL, visiting Kloria (Brewster) Shotter and family. Also saw Betty (Gregory) Lopez & Ciso. Brought Helen (Gregory) Bass with me and she went to Spring Hill, FL to visit with Betty & Ciso.

All the good times we had at Greer – Thanksgiving Dinner, the house parents, alumni etc, how we used to go to camp.

We would stuff our mattress and at the end of the three weeks we would make a camp fire and burn the straw – we talked nonstop of all the good times we had at Greer, and how so many of us are still in touch. It is too bad that we can't find more alumni. Hope someone located Bill Davis.

Thank you for keeping the alumni association going.

To everyone, have a happy holiday.

From: **Agnes (Slewick) Davenport**, [REDACTED] West Palm Beach, FL 33425

It's Saturday morning, August 10th, and I'm standing in the hallway of the school building at Greer. Heart pumping and waves of anticipation coursing through my body as members of the Greer family come through the doors to sign in for the 1996 reunion.

"Who is she?" "Oh it can't be __!" "Will anyone remember me from so long ago?" Warm hugs, hearty handshakes and "how good to see you" abounding throughout the day and evening.

How many of your experience the tap-on-the-shoulder and with your mouth full of delicious food you turn and can't believe your eyes? "How long has it been since we last met?" A rush of excitement as Mrs. Fink arrives! "Doesn't she look wonderful?"

So many "do remember when ___?" "Have you heard from ___?" "Did you see all the old pictures? Now, who is that? I can't remember the name."

The babble of voices and the thrill of laughter echoed throughout the entire campus, and later the hills and valley as we gathered together for dinner in the evening.

What a warm experience to meet so many younger members of the Greer family at this reunion.

"Thanks," Jim & Mitzi and all who worked so long and hard to bring us all together in the old school building.

At this time, I'd like to ask if anyone has information about Grete Aoyagi, Pat Childe, Jessmin Szeto, Jean Decker (1950 graduates)? How about Duncan and Susan Stephenson, Richard Abbott, Alan Murray, Gloria Sichel, Helen Scala and Oh so many others?

If you are in touch with anyone who does not belong to the Alumni Association that attended Greer in the 1940-1951 years, please let me know!!

Happy Thanksgiving to everyone!!

Another Greer? By **Angie (Oliver) D'Ambrosia** 1949-1958

This summer I was forced into early retirement for political reason. I was the Manager for Child Welfare Services for the northern region of Westchester County. I had done all of the programs development for Preventive Services for families with children at risk of foster care for the entire country for 5 years. I had worked on innovative Family Preservation programs and Substance Abuse treatment programs for young mothers who had become a national model and were considered to be highly successful and cost effective. But when the budget crunch arrived in New York State, the County made the decision to close down almost all of the programs, and that was to only be the beginning of downsizing. Of course this left all the high risk families with essentially no services except placement and that was becoming rare, and that left only suffering. Since funding the programs ceased, I suffered the consequences.

Having a great deal of time to think in my unexpected retirement, I began to reflect on my background and how I got myself into trouble. I thought a great deal about my life and upbringing at Greer and how it was almost inevitable that I would choose the career I chose and make the choices I had within that career, because I was a child of Greer and therefore a child of the "system." Of course, the system as represented by an independent non-profit entity like Greer (which was not initially depended on Government funding), was a part of a far better system than the shambles of a system that exists today, which has fallen victim to the injustices of bureaucracy, power politics and corruption.

My husband, my son and I live only about 20 miles from Greer. We passed by Mrs. Elliott's house one day this summer. When we saw the car there, we stopped and were warmly welcome—and that was the beginning of the renewal of an old and very close relationship. As a young girl at Greer Mrs. Elliott had been my mentor, my counselor and a second mother, because I had been one of her "Bittersweet" girls, and had spent many afternoons with her, helping her around Bittersweet but as I look back it was really I who was being helped, developed and counseled by a person who had been supremely gifted by God to help others. As I thought about it, all of us had been helped by staff at Greer, whether it was Mrs. Elliott who was actually a partner with Dr. Elliott in directing or Mr. Groh, the Finks, Jimmy Morton, Coach Fischer, a teacher a houseparent or another child. Our relationships with each other were most important and for many have been lasting lifelong sibling type friendships.

And Greer worked; most of us turned out all right and are fairly successful human beings.

All of this nurturing happened outside of traditional social work and worked (as I discovered with Mrs. Elliott) because of the way Greer was designed, the quality of the staff, and their commitment to working with children, and the experiences which were planned for us or were part of the tradition. Most important were the values which were taught to us—the respect for each other and all human beings no matter what race, creed, or national origin, the respect for and communion with nature which was part of our very beautiful environment and add to that a unique religious education and all of these things became part of our life and made us into what I believe is a group of rather responsible, independent and idealistic people when we compare ourselves to others who did not grow up at Greer.

I am interested in why Greer worked because of my own experiences in Child Welfare and particularly now because of the changes in government philosophy with regard to the placement of children and services to families and children. I am planning to write a book on the history of Greer from my own perspective as child welfare professional. But I would like to include autobiographical material and anecdotes as told by Greer alumni and staff. I am still thinking and planning, but I will probably do some questionnaires to the alumni and telephone conversations or personal interview with anyone who would like to contribute and try to fit at least part of everyone's contributions into the book, since Greer is all of us.

I will talk to Mrs. Fink and I will continue to correspond with Mrs. Elliott who had already related much important material and continue my visits with her again in the Spring to learn more about the administration and history. She will help me get in touch with teachers, staff, students as well as Jim Morton, and Carmine DiArpino who had offered to help with history. He is the town historian in Millbrook. Mr. D has a large

collection of pictures as does the alumni association. In the meantime, if you would like to contribute anything in writing, tape recorded, telephone you can reach me at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Lake Carmel, NY 10512 [REDACTED] or email.

It is hard to believe another year and another reunion had gone by. We hope for those of you who were able to attend, that you enjoyed everything and that the doors to "tucked away memories" were opened. We look forward to seeing those of you who were not able to attend, please know you were missed. We wish for all of you---peace, joy and good health, now and in the coming year.

As always,

Doug *Jim*
 & &
Mitzi *Isabel*