



We do hope that you all had a happy holiday and that most of you are enjoying getting back to work. Again we are calling for anyone who may be on-line with the computer to let us know who you are so that you may join the growing number of alumni who send each other e-mail. It is an easy way to keep in touch. It is also an easy way for you to write something for the newsletter for it can be done from the comfort of your house. As we haven't had any letters from any one that we can add the letter is a short one, this time.

From: **Georgia King**, [REDACTED] Malibu, CA 90265

Well once again, we have survived another fire. The fire came right into the back yard where the fire department people were waiting to put it out. I had to evacuate the horses to the north of Malibu, about 30 miles. When I was returning for the second load (after dark) at the section of the highway I had flames on both sides of the road and live sparks blowing across the road at 60 mph. I decided not to take any more horses in the trailer through such a hazard. When I returned to the house (and happily found it still there) I discovered the Scott's cat had not been removed. So with no cat carrier handy I had to tie him in a sheet and proceed up the road to hand walk the next three horses from an area that was still burning to a place that was now safe. There I was, with two friends helping, leading these wonderful horses past many, many fire trucks, through the creek with the unhappy cat, in the sheet, tied to my belt. All this happened Monday, October 21. That Friday, I left for my vacation to the East Coast where Tom, my brother, met me in Old Westbury, LI. From there, we spent a day wandering around Greer and reliving some old, wonderful memories. The week of October 29, I spent in and around NYC enjoying horse shows at Madison Square Garden and visiting friends.

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

Had a letter from Herta Taussig Freitag. The Fibonacci Quarterly (official publication of the Fibonacci Association) dedicated their November issue to her. This is quite an honor. It was never done before. They mention her enthusiasm for math, that late brother George took to further his education, as she saw a great potential. Then it was Dr. Latucha (dentist) who told George to go to CCNY (City College of New York) and the rest is history. Had a Christmas card from Pluma Swain who was George's teacher in the 3rd and 4th grades – see what wonderful teachers and staff we had to guide us – also the Finks, Mom Morton, the Mack's, etc, etc, etc.

I forgot to mention that Herta is 89 and still gives lectures every November at Armstrong State University in Savannah, GA. Incredible. With the wonderful staff we had at Greer, that is the reason many students were successful and we stayed together as one big happy family. That's why my number one project is the homeless. I thank God every day that Greer was there when I needed a home.

We all thank you and Mitzi for keeping the Alumni Association going.

From: **Ward Bell**, '38-42; [REDACTED] Sea Cliff NY 11579

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all. I have seen ex-faculty member Donald Thompson and Frank Braynard, also former student Mary Austin Fertig. Just got an address for Mary Kerten Niencyzk in Florida. Her brother Harry Kerten died last year. The next cards that I write will be to Mary Cuevas Krawczyk and Helen Wehenkel Belehrad.

Do you have more small towns like Sea Cliff that have 3 ex faculty and once had 4 ex students of Hope Farm?? Perhaps even more than I know at present.

Locally, I am known as the Harbor Historian, I got the title from the village government because of my interest in sailing local waters, my interest in history and the fact that I was born in my grandfather's house in 1915. Now I moved across the street in 1954 to

my great grandfathers' house where Jim and Wayne visited me last year. Best to everyone.

The Oracle Hope Farm School 1937

Class Motto – “He is the conqueror who first conquers himself,”

Class Colors: Royal Purple and Gold

Class Flower: Pansy

MEMBERS

Helen Lenita Barbieri

Robert Henry Davis

Robert Kemp Irwin

Edward Arthur Johnson

Viola Hannah Judge

Clifford Andrew Peterson

Evelyn Gabrielle Pilzer

Titus Martin Sunriemi

Congratulations – 60 years have passed.

Au Revoir Greer School 1947

Class Colors: Maroon and Gold

Class Flower: Red, Red Rose

Class Motto: “Scientia venit sed sapientia manet.”

MEMBERS

Ross Barrett

Lawrence Bates

Helen Gregory

Richard Hine Hilsinger

Louise Jones

Hugh Newell

Charles Tompkins

Helen Zarakovitis

Congratulations – Been 50 years since you went to Greer

The Talisman Greer School 1957

David Abel

Edward Baker

Charles Berry

Suzanne Chisholm

Shirley R. Elliott

Emil Freitas

Russell Golden

Diana Haynes

James Robert Kennedy

George Van Anden

Georgia King

Harry Walter McCandless

Diana Munzer

Thomas Oliver

Theresa Percival

Jack Kenneth Rolston

Doris Ruiz

Anda Marina Selga

Victor Von Radics

Congratulations: only a short 40 years since you graduated.

That's it, folks. Short and sweet.

See you in the Fall.

As always,

Mitzi and Doug

Jim and Isabel



Dear Fellow Alumni

October 1997

We have been chatting with some of you on the Internet and our list continues to grow. Again we are listing those of you who are online. Isabel and I traveled to Sun City West this summer and we looked up Herb Cuevas. Guess it wasn't hot enough here so we wanted a little more warmth. Also will report as of this writing Mrs. Fink is fine and is having her house painted. The April 1st storm did a lot of damage to the house. We also received a video tape from Louis Paul with many scenes of Greer and also the reunion that was held at the Ramada Inn.

From: **Ed Crump**: 551 Main Street, Metuchen, NJ 08840

Hey Bear!

I noticed in the first draft, the names appeared and disappeared with no indication of which they were, so let me start with a cast of characters. Denis & Muriel are French and were a little shy about using their English and so had little to say. Jean-Loup is Denis' brother, a Washington University Professor of Computer Science & is married to Diane (American and great fun) Marie is from California and seems to have been everywhere I have been. Jo Ann had just moved from Phoenix to Colorado and is starting a day-care center. She kept getting phone calls from her adult children about emergency calls from her banker. I hope everything turns so for her. Finally, our guide and mentor, Steve who had been to Seal Watch in '96 and is a world-class nature photographer (National Geographic's, etc.) and a very funny guy.

Next, the areas in Alaska included in our 13 day trek: they were Katmai National Park, Kenai Fjords, and Denali NP. If you can locate these places on a map, you will see that we did a lot of traveling. We did a lot of sightseeing, as well.

I arrived in Anchorage and our octet met for dinner where we all tested the personality waters. It seemed right. The next morning, loaded with camera and overnight bags, we were bused to the airport and flown to King Salmon where we transferred to a single engine float plane. More than enough room but unbelievably noisy, even with ear plugs. The flight was very smooth and short. We landed on Brooks Lake since our regular stop Naknek Lake was too windy and rough. The plane taxied up to the beach. No dock. The pilot donned rubber boots and exited the plane, turned it around and pulled it sternward onto the beach. We went down the ladder, along the portside of the pontoon and short step to dry land. Leaving our bags (but not the cameras, you can never tell) we had an almost 2-mile walk along a dirt road to Brooks Lodge.

I see that I have left out the selling point to the visit to Brooks' Lodge in Katmai. The reason is bears! Brown bears, Grizzly Bears! Lots of them. Before our first walk, Steve gave us our first lesson in bear etiquette. He made the point, that bears have the right of way. Quite all right with me, He gave us a quick lesson on traveling in bear country. The key is "noise." Lots of noise. Yelling singing, hand clapping, anything as long as it reads "human" to the locals. Whistling is not a good idea as bears may mistake you for a bird. Bells are OK as long as their ringing is not rhythmical. So down the road we go, saying "Hey Bear" in a loud but inoffensive voice, and trying to remember old camp songs. I let loose with what I can remember of Shakespeare, Lewis Carroll and the preamble to the U.S. Constitution. Another reason why schools should bring back the memorization of various text. You never know.

We passed the trail that leads to the viewing stand at famous Brooks Falls and came up to the stand at the mouth of Brooks River where a pontoon bridge got us across into the home stretch. Finally, there is the lodge and the park headquarters where we are given our official lecture (a video tape) on how to handle ourselves in and around the camp and the woods (Steve was much more thorough) and we were given our Bear Etiquette badges and officially welcomed to Katmai.

It was time for lunch. All meals are served buffet style and there was always a nice variety of things and plenty. As we prepared to walk down to the river platform, it started to rain lightly. Such is Alaska; my raingear was nice and dry still on the beach. Luckily I was wearing my water resistant jacket with hood and it was enough to keep me and my camera dry. We set off down to the river, the bridge and the viewing stand. There were

two or three gentlemen fishing for sock-eye salmon while standing in the icy river. If the bear could stand it, so could they. They were allowed to keep one fish each day and the catch must immediately be placed in a plastic bag, sealed and taken to the fish shack where it is quickly frozen.

Suddenly, above the bridge, through the woods and marsh came a female bear (Sow) and her cub. She was very skittish, looking in every direction and smelling the air. We were told by the Park Ranger that the day before, a big male (Boar) had taken one of her cubs, killed it and had eaten it by the stand. Bears do not lead an easy life. She kept searching and smelling the air for any possible danger. She abruptly stopped, woofed to her cub and they both took off back to the woods. Several minutes passed before the danger appeared. A large male appeared around the bend in the river. Because of the wind direction, she had smelled him before he could see her.

When the bear appeared, the men were told to cut their lines, even those that had a fish. The Park does not want bears to associate with humans with free fish dinners, and they joined us on the platform. At one point, the bear climbed onto the bridge and after investigating the remains of an autopsied fish he found there, proceeded to amble in our general direction. Great Excitement! Each platform has several entries, including a ramp for wheelchairs, which are protected by self-closing, self-locking doors. Hopefully, no bear has learned how to open them. Our bear simply sauntered along in front and disappeared down the road. I wondered if he was going to bring back our luggage.

The viewing was magnificent. Lots and lots of bears – males, females with little cubs, sows with yearlings, all looking for fish. Sometimes, I would forget to take pictures and simply stared.

We finally went back to our lodge for dinner and found our luggage (the bear?). Dinner was prime rib and baked salmon, (not local-flown in frozen). Our accommodations were two joined cabins, one for the boys and one for the girls, each with two sets of double bunks. I suddenly had vision of the “Delphinus” but these were quite comfortable. There was a shower and a sink at the end of the room with an enclosed flush toilet. All the comforts of home. My lower bunk even had a reading light and two wool blankets which were needed. There was also a thermostat to give heat if needed. Before turning in I went for a short walk to a place overlooking the marsh areas where two bears were stalking fish. Across the way, I could see a bald eagle sitting on the top of the slender pine and I could hear him screaming. I went to bed.

The next day was its usual cloudy weather. This time, I put on my rain jacket. After breakfast, the group decided that it was time to head out to the viewing platform at Brooks Falls. We joined a Ranger and headed up the road. About a half mile up the road we met a second Ranger sitting in a small truck. He quietly stopped us and told us that a sow with two cubs was taking a nap on the road ahead of us and we had to wait. We waited. I guess our talking just above a whisper eventually stirred her up (Fool humans, can't let a body sleep- up all night with the kids - darn!). She slowly moved off into the woods. We were allowed to continue (No problem, man) and up to the road and along the trail to the falls; chanting, and singing and talking loudly., arrived to a mob of people already on the platform and they made room for us. No one wanted to be outside the gate. Another Ranger was trying to keep track of who were arriving and who should be starting back and finally sent a batch back along the trail.

The place was crawling (actually standing quite still) with bears. There were at least two just in front of us standing on the edge of the falls, looking down into the swirling water below, waiting or a fish foolish enough to make the leap up stream. These fish are not dummies. It wasn't until the bear had tired of standing in the icy water and walked away that we saw a salmon make that leap. Then there were lots of leaping fish.

Some distance down the river, sitting in the water, was a large male. Nobody bothered him. It must have been his favorite spot and he was being successful. Other bears gave him a wide berth as they passed him. Probably a bit testy. Another bear tried U-boat tactics. He would crouch down so that he was completely submerged and search through the foaming water. His technique seemed to work. A sow with two small cubs appeared above the falls, climbed down to the lower level and decided that there were just too many other bears already there, disappeared back into the woods.

Some people are dumber than the fish. A photographer dropped a lens cover from his super long range lens and it landed just below us on the bank. The Ranger had to restrain

him from immediately jumping down to retrieve it. He waited until a second Ranger came up with another group, had him keep watch, and *carefully* went down to get the lens cap. I mean, dumber than fish.

Finally, I decided that it was time to head back and attached myself to a group led by the Ranger. It was fortunate that I did because the next group encountered a bear who had decided that the trail was a perfect place for a brunch snooze and settled in. The group waited for at least an hour. Luckily the dining room serves its buffet for several hours at each meal and the stranded made it back just in time.

After lunch, I decided to go back down to the river mouth viewing platform. No luck. Just as I arrived at the river bank, a sow and two cubs appeared from the marsh and started to walk in our direction along the road leading to the pontoon bridge. Normally, a bear will cross the road and enter the river where there are plenty of fish, but she had different ideas. The Ranger told us to move back along the road to the camp area and we would be allowed to proceed when the bear made up her mind. We ended back in camp. The bear started up the road but then cut through the woods to the lake beach where the planes landed. I waited awhile and tried again. Same story but this time it was a single bear who wanted to go directly off the end of the road into the lake. Another wait. Finally all the road bears were off the road and we could continue onto..... **(This is a very, very long story, I will end it here)**

Here is a list of growing former students who are online...

Janet Berry	Guy Dorren	Herbert Cuevas	Peter Caram
Ed Crump	Vic Carlson	Anne Foster	Madelyn Niemann
Jim Mathewson	Norman VanRaay		Peggy Sparks
Pat Picco	Mary Ann Webster		James Morton
Diana Munzer	Ronald Cooper		Chip Fowler

From: **Jack Edmonds;** [REDACTED] Brushton, NY 12916

I just want to say to all of you, THANKS for a job well done for all of your time and efforts in the publication of the Greer Alumni Newsletter. From all of the responses you receive and print, I don't think I'm alone when I say; your readers are forever in your debt, especially myself. My memories of the old Greer School, Hope Farm have enabled me to get on with my life after being in poor health for a period longer than I care to mention. Once again, I have to undergo surgery for a problem related to the heart, I won't go into detail.

So I'd like to say now that your last newsletter has caused me to recall a couple of memories I'd like to relate.

Wasn't it great fun weeding the garden everyday during the summer? That included Saturdays and morning while at Camp Barbey. The only break I can think of while working in the garden was when Mr. Fink assigned a few of us to try and rid the garden of woodchucks. We had to locate the holes, set off a smoke bomb, toss it into the hole and then fill it in, with hopes that we had gotten one critter out of the way. But we learned that this was a never-ending battle. As a result, I found myself, along with other boys in Daisy, down in Fairland devising all kinds of traps that we used along the edge of the field behind Daisy. None of them worked but we kept at it for the longest time, until one boy got hurt. I won't mention his name but I will say who the hero of the day was.

After falling into a boy made trap containing a plank with nails pointing up, now imbedded his foot, Bobby Constantine, piggybacked that boy all the way back to Daisy, a 1/2 mile distance at least. There were no tears, no panic, Bob never stopped once and the injured boy was bigger than he was. I don't remember the outcome for this incident but I lost all interest in trapping woodchucks after that.

I have to say here that Jack Miller and I have been doing some reminiscing about our lives at Greer. He brought back quite a few happy memories for me and I hope likewise for him by my memories. After talking to him last, I recalled while at Greer, Jack came back to school with a broken leg he had injured while away on Spring vacation. He wore a cast up to the hip, but this didn't seem to affect him in any way, he came out for

baseball practices, Pee-wee team, as pitcher, he took his turn pitching. We all nick-named him Gimpy, but the name didn't stick long. He's going to read this and laugh. I hope.

From: **Georgeanne Garbus:**

Dear Jim,

I think my dues are due. So here is \$15.00.

I heard that **Judy DeCsaby** had died sometime in early '97.

Here is my address:

Georgeanne C Garbus

██████████

Torrington, CT 06790

That will probably change again soon I'll let you know. Hope everything is fine with you and yours.

So many changes are happening since we became "The Fountains at Millbrook." When I spoke to David Freshwater who is the owner of the Fountains, I asked him about having a room built and dedicated to the Greer Hope Farm Alumni. He told me that this was in the plans, when renovations began and we could expect to have a special place to store and display all our "memories."

They also have plans in the works to convert Gate House to a bed & breakfast, with a restaurant on the ground floor. This will be open to all. When we come back for a visit, it will be nice to know that we have a place to stay. I find the new owners to be very positive about involving us in the history and wanting us to feel comfortable coming "home" again. I will keep you all informed as changes are made.

Please write and let us know here you are and what you are doing. Your news is the 'stuff' our newsletter is made of. Without you, there would be no letters.

Wishing you all a happy fall season....

As Always

Jim & Isabel, Mitzi & Doug



Dear Fellow Alumni

December 1997

We wish everyone a happy holiday. This year has seen a return of wild life to this area. We see more wild things in our yard and killed on the road. Turkey, skunk, raccoons, opossum, deer, coyote, red fox, and both Mitzi and I have seen a black bear in our yards. The one that I saw was eating from a window feeder five feet off the ground and it also bent a ½ inch iron pipe that I had a feed on. We wonder when it will be back.

Audrey Cooper ([REDACTED] Sonoma CA 95476) has just finished chemotherapy again in late October and we wish her the best. Also Joe Obregon ([REDACTED] Wappingers Falls, NY 12590) had open heart operation and doing well in late October.

Mrs. Fink finally has her house back together again after a pine tree went through her roof during an April snow storm. The roof, ceilings, walls, etc. had to be redone.

Again we wish everyone a happy holiday.

From: **Anne (Meyrowitz) Foster**, [REDACTED] Surprise, NY 12176

When my sister Eve & I attended Greer from 1955-1962, we realized that Mrs. & Mrs. Fink were one of the strong foundations of the school. After their retirement, I had not see Mrs. Fink until a Greer Reunion held in 1989 in Poughkeepsie. I went over to re-introduce myself and was surprised when she said, "Mother Superior." About 35 plus years ago, she would come to inspect rooms at Ledge Cottage. My roommate, Karin Townsend, and I had a very 'cozy' room with an easy chair, ruffled bed spread, walls covered with pictures, etc. Mrs. Fink found our room 'a little cluttered'. Karin and I would show her! Next month when Mrs. Fink came to our room, she saw: a stripped down room. School issued bed spread, the walls were bare except for a large picture of a stain glass window, and nothing was on the dresser except for a comb (we felt a hair brush was 'too cluttered'. I said, "Good Morning Mother Superior, I'm Sister Anne and this is Sister Karin." I guess she found it amusing and remembered it.

My daughter attends Marist College in Poughkeepsie, just down the road from Hyde Park where Mrs. Fink now lives. Whenever possible I try to stop in for a lovely visit. In talking with Mrs. Fink, I've come to realize how much she looked out for 'each of her children'. We were in very good hands. Her memory always amazes me. The other day, I recalled a friend, 'April' and I could not remember her last name. Well about 10 minutes later, Mrs. Fink said, 'Jerome'. She is now 104 years old, walks upright (sometimes with a walker when going outside) knows that her cane is her friend, has friends that take her shopping and help with maintenance around the house, keeps on top of current happenings in town and around the world, and has a wonderful outlook on life.

Things here at The Fountains at Millbrook are progressing. The final plans for the renovations have been submitted and they are lovely. But the best change of all is the Fountains willingness to welcome us back. I will keep you all informed of our progress.

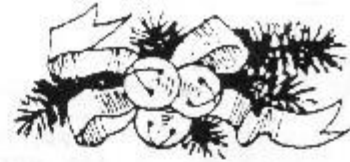
Wishing you all a most joyous holiday and a New Year filled with good health and Rainbows.

Merry Christmas

Jim & Isabel --- Doug & Mitzi

Mrs. Fink: Inspiring the Church at 104 years young:

Inspiring the Church



at 104 Years Young

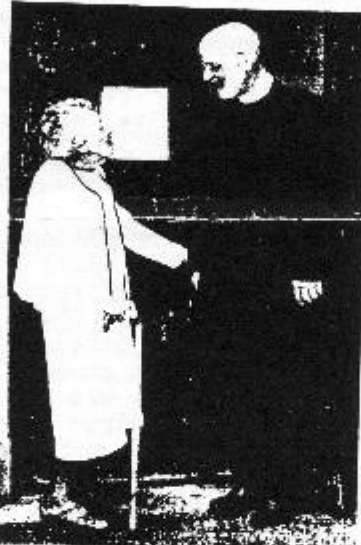
By Allelu Kurtea

Many people stop to chat with Helen Fink after Sunday Service at St. James', Hyde Park where, because of a slight deafness, she sits in the front pew. She admits to "feeling devilishly cross" when lay readers or priests do not speak clearly enough to be heard, but at 104 years young she is surely the good angel of our congregation, beloved by all.

Helen Christmas was born on May 27, 1893 in Hyde Park into a world with no cars or electricity, where everyone traveled by horse and cart or "shanks mare." Her father was in charge of the dairy on the Rogers estate. To her great wonder, a teenage Helen saw the Rogers' barn lit with electricity for the first time. Though the Rogers family offered to provide electricity for her family, Helen's mother was afraid it was too dangerous. She preferred her "much safer" kerosene.

Helen never remembers a time when she did not believe in God. "I certainly didn't think of God every minute, but I would never deliberately do wrong," she recalls. Though her father made "no show of it" and did not say grace before meals, Helen knew he was a deeply religious man. He was a member of the Order of Odd Fellows whose meetings were based on Bible Study. As a child, she attended the Dutch Reformed Church in Hyde Park where she and her sister went to Sunday School.

In 1919, she married Mapledoram Fink who came to Dutchess county to



Helen Fink talking to the Rev. James Heron after the Wed., Aug. 29 service at St. James', Hyde Park.

teach industrial arts at the Greer School. An Episcopal priest officiated at their "home wedding" because Helen's Dutch Reformed Church was searching for a new Rector. Mapledoram knew the Episcopal priest from his work with the Boy Scouts. They worshiped for the next 40 years at the Greer School's Episcopal Chapel. When they retired to Hyde Park in the early 1960s, they became communicants of St. James' where the Rev. Gordon Kidd was Rector. Both were active in the parish. Helen was St. James' first female vestry member. Their marriage lasted 61 years until his death in 1980.

For Helen, the greatest change in the Church occurred with the introduction of the new Prayer Book in 1979. It was a difficult transition from the 1928 Prayer Book. However, in her typical open-minded way she says, "It's the same thing with different words. That makes it more accessible to new generations." She also had to adjust to a weekly Eucharist after being accustomed to a monthly one. (She adds that the Dutch Reformed Church had a Communion Service only four times a year!)

As she looks back, Helen says, "I had a peaceful, easy life, not having to worry about the future, but I worry more now. I often think what is the Lord going to do! There was trouble in Sodom and Gomorrah—what happens now?" But she also admits to the joy of living a day at a time, thanking God for everything. Her comment on her longevity is "It's the Lord's will."

As her friend, I venture a few comments. Perhaps it is because she worked so long with young people at the Greer School (many of whom stay in touch with her), that makes Helen one of the youngest-thinking, most positive people I know. She has been extremely supportive of women taking on increasingly visible roles as lay readers, preachers, and licensed Eucharistic ministers. She genuinely likes people. Her humor is a delight, and one often finds her playing dominoes or Parcheesi with neighborhood children. May she live many more years to inspire us!

Kurtea, a member of St. James' Hyde Park, was the first woman lay reader in New York State.

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

During the summer of 1944, Alan Murray and I noticed two young farm horses which were put out to pasture in the field behind the football field. Here was an opportunity for some adventure.

We walked past the horses several times each day until they got used to our presence. Then we started to approach them, bringing offerings of apples, carrots and handfuls of grass. At first they shied away so we stood still and waited for them to come to us. It took a week or so but soon they accepted our gifts and even allowed us to stroke their sides and scratch their heads, while we fed them grass (merely saving them the trouble of bending their necks).

At last, the special day arrived and I was ready to ride. We gave one of them a good handful of grass to distract him and then Al gave me boost up onto his back. The horse bolted and I hung on for dear life. He zigged and zagged across the field and then headed straight for the woods, probably to try to scrape me off his back. About ten yards from the trees I got the message and bailed out. He made a sharp left turn and headed back to his buddy, who also ran away from Al, to a safer part of the pasture.

It was lots of fun for us and nobody got hurt, but we figured that we would quit while we were ahead. At Greer we could always find another diversion.