



Dear Alumni and Staff:

It has been said by the famous author Thomas Wolfe that you can't go home, but I beg to differ! Sandy and I made our annual pilgrimage to Geer during a beautiful September weekend this autumn and re-connected with two important "going home" criteria. The first, and most important, was with people. We spent time with former staff member Herby Van Anden and Eleanor Hamilton; in addition, we got together with former students Angela Oliver, Doug and Mitzi Berry, and Pat Jordan. In spending time with all of these people, we shared wonderful Greer memories as well as catching up with the comings and goings of our current lives.

The second "going home" experience was the beauty and tranquility of the campus. The physical changes notwithstanding, so much of the atmosphere of the campus is as we all remember it during the days of our youth. In sum, the "going home" experience was very worthwhile and I give it my highest recommendation to all of you.

Greer Traditions:

As you will read in some of the letters that follow, the holiday traditions at Greer had a lasting impact on many of Greer's staff and students. It has been said that in times of rapid change (and I think that it is fair to say that we are going through such a period), it is the "traditions" in our lives that help us maintain a sense of perspective and stability. These Greer School celebrations are the foundation of our own personal traditions to which we look forward each year. In fact, the one day of the year that I reflect upon

Greer more than any other day is Thanksgiving. I'm not exactly sure as to why this is, I suspect that it's the deep sense of gratitude that comes naturally with this national celebration. I am so grateful for my association with each of you. Our continued friendship means more than words can describe. May you have a wonderful holiday season.

Sincerely, John Hudnor '63



Thanksgiving Baskets, Chapel of the Child

Letters From:

Suzie Murray '47-'58

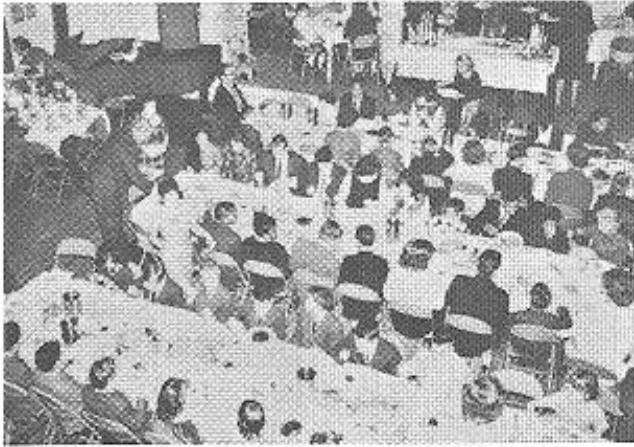
Traditions are always important to society, and I think that they make up some of the thread of our individual blankets. Most families have traditions that are passed on. Greer, like most societies had a number of traditions that were totally unique to such an environment. I was always amazed that the "powers- that- be" went to such efforts to provide these unique memorable events. Perhaps because of their caring involvement, Thanksgiving still remains my favorite



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Thanksgiving Dinner in School Auditorium

holiday.

We always looked forward to Thanksgiving--nothing was unexpected. Each year for the ten years that I was at Greer the routine was always the same, but what excitement that routine generated. After getting ourselves dressed for our Thanksgiving feast, we would assemble and each cottage group would begin their walk to the main school building that housed the auditorium. The staff would have decorated the auditorium. Long tables covered with white butcher paper held individually decorated place settings for two hundred children. On this special occasion, the boys and the girls were allowed to eat together!! Each place setting had a small basket filled with candies and a name card.

As we found our name cards we would stand by our chair--the room buzzing with voices-greeting-laughter. So different was this from our everyday meals in our individual cottages where only 20 plus gathered daily--not 200! The tables were so festive with nuts, cranberry sauce and all of the goodies of the holiday. As the director took the center of the stage a quiet came upon the room. The piano player struck the

first cords of the music we all knew so well. Voices, loud and soft, in tune and out, filled the room with "We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing".

Then the great fun began as each staff member working in the school came into the auditorium baring trays of delicious smelling food. For the next hour the teachers, house-parents, maintenance men, school director and wife etc., went back and forth making sure that each of us had every morsel we could possibly eat. The serving by the entire school staff was done with humor, and caring, and when completed, they sat with us to share this holiday. Those of us that had given them headaches or heartaches in all of the days before were forgiven. All was put aside so this important tradition made each of us feel that we were part of a greater whole. As our feast came to an end we talked of where the afternoon hike would take us.



Ann Meyrowitz '61 and Carolyn Ladeau ' 61

Each Thanksgiving Day after everyone had had more than enough to eat, we would return to our cottages and get ready for a few hours hike into the many fields and woods that surround the school. Again the staff would join us and lead us off into the forest/hills. The destination was unknown



except for the leaders and much anticipation as to whether we might get lost and what we would do? By the end of the day we were weary. We did not question what dedication and caring made these adults go into such efforts to provide this unique Thanksgiving tradition, but we were each filled with a peaceful satisfaction knowing that our small world moved so expectantly and smoothly and had given each of us so much.



Thanksgiving Dinner

Pat Jordan '63

It was so wonderful to see a picture of Chip Fowler in one of your recent letters. It brought back so many memories of life in Greer Cottage when she would come to get us up in the morning and come back to get us ready for bed at night. We all loved her so much---she was the big sister that many of us never had. Her kindness towards us was beyond compare. She taught us such things as how to put pin curls in our hair at night before going to bed and how to comb our hair out in the morning. Didn't we all want to look just like her!!! We were devastated when she was moved to a new assignment. What a wonderful role model she was in helping us on our way to becoming "little women". In our eyes, she was a true Greer

legend.

Alban Richey '40's

Reading the items and memoirs contributed by my peers can draw for me pictures that still seem fresh despite the passage of time.

I came to Greer in the middle of my Sophomore year so I only had a year and a half of the Greer experience. But in that time, Greer's dedicated staff and faculty (who could forget the Finks?) opened my eyes to the possibilities that lay ahead in my future education and service.

Greer also instilled a level of confidence I needed in the teen years, especially in a coed environment. (My infatuation with a certain female student must have given the staff some anxious moments.) After service in W.W. II in the U.S. Navy, I attended college on the G.I. bill and became a teacher. In my current retirement I volunteer as a mentor and "guardian-ad-litem" in family court.

Syd Nesbitt '61

Thanks for sending the newsletters; I enjoy relating to the experiences of others who have shared their memories of Greer.

Since I now live in Minneapolis, Minnesota, it is hard to attend the reunions, but I did return to Greer in the 70's and 80's to see the old school. I was saddened to see Marcy and Daisy and Rap gone.

I later learned from Tony Vaz that Greer was no more a boarding school. Tony filled me in on many, many people who I knew at Greer. He has quite a good memory for people and names. I also remember you



John and glad that you remember me.

I have been working as a handyman for the past 15 years or so, and business is booming. I also play banjo and guitar and am an active member in the local Bluegrass association. We put on indoor and outdoor festivals and host concerts and Jam sessions. It keeps me out of trouble! I would like to hear from any of my school chums if they read this, and thank you for keeping the newsletter going. I feel Greer was a good influence on me at a time when I needed some influence. Here's my dues,---- well worth it I think.



The 'Martin Play'

Jack Miller '51

My Brother Don and I attended Greer from 1945 to 1951. I don't think anyone would recognize me as "John" as I was always called Jack--the nickname "Gimp" stuck for the same time as, following a fracture of some leg bones, I would unconsciously lapse into a limp if I was very tired. This went on for longer than one would expect, but I finally outgrew that nonsense. Keep up the good work--it is very much appreciated

Peggy Matthewson '59

I really enjoy receiving the Alumni newsletters and reading what others have to say.

We became grandparents for the 8th time--a boy--and I am taking care of him 2 days a week--lots of fun.

Edna Denise Foreman '50-'52

My first husband William Bricker and I were at Greer from 1950-1952. I still keep in touch with Gwen Elliott.

Dorothy McMurty (staff)

George and I are both well and enjoying 15 years of retirement--although we are both quite active.

Robert Dorren '43

I attended Greer from 1937 to 1943. I attended the reunion in August of 2006. It would be fun to have another reunion soon. I have a copy of Peggy Matthewson Sparks book; perhaps in the future I can write a letter similar to what I have been reading in the newsletter.

*** Editor's note: Amen to your desire to write to the newsletter! My hope is for each of you to write to us and give us your memories of Greer, and just as important, tell us about your life since Greer, and what you are now doing with your life. That would be a wonderful holiday present to all of your classmates and former staff! Please take a few minutes during this season to give us the gift of hearing from, and about, you.**

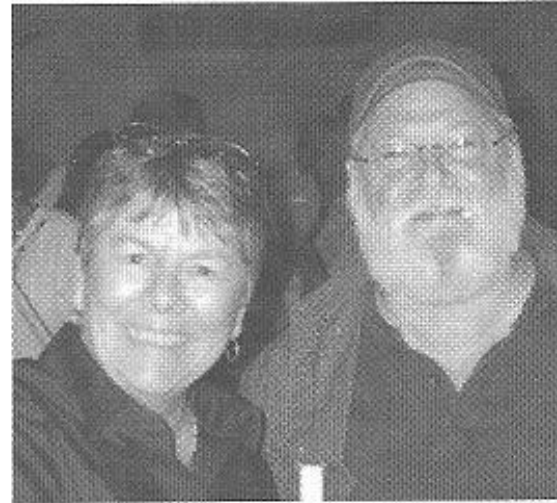


Armin Ali '65

I am still living in New York City and retired 10 years ago as U.S. Probation/Parole officer with 25 years of service. Since 1998, I started my own consulting business while working part time as a special investigator for the FBI. I am married with four grown daughters and seven grandchildren and a recent great granddaughter. In sum, I am happy and healthy and enjoying the golden years. My wife and I will be in Miami for the holiday season as we both like being by the surf, which invigorates us both.

A classmate, Vicky Tuttle relocated from Connecticut three years ago to Florida. She is retired and loves hanging out on the beach with her Siberan Husky. I also have contact with Ed Martin (class of 62), and he retired as an executive systems analyst after 30 years of service. He currently live in Brooklyn, New York and has two daughters and recently, a grandchild.

*** editors note: Armin and some other Greer students have written some stories about life at Millbrook high school after Greer closed its high school in 1963. They are great observations about the changes at Greer, and I will include those letters in an upcoming newsletter.**



Pam Rogers '63 and John Nicholas '62

Pam (Stobbe) Todd '55

I enjoyed Greer so much and even glad I attended more so now. I met so many nice people--students and staff. I loved playing sports of all kinds, enjoyed school and all of the activities. Our vocational jobs were fun too, especially with the girls we

I am especially grateful at this time of year for all of your support of our association. I was especially touched when I received a contribution from Jackie Mountcastle who did it on behalf of the memory of her father, Hoover Mountcastle. **Your** contributions enable us to continue to publish this newsletter and plan for future reunions. It is a pleasure to serve you!



worked with, laughing a lot, etc.

At holiday times, playing and participating in sports were wonderful. I remember going to Chatham, N.Y. for our boys to play football. They had a terrific team; it was my senior year as it was Tom King's also. A great victory over Chatham high school. I graduated in 1955 in a class of 17.

After Greer, I married and had two sons: Kevin and Shaun. Through my sons marriages, I now have grandchildren and see all of them as often as possible. Unfortunately, my good husband died in 1993.

I enjoy the letters in the Greer Alumni newsletter, and appreciate that I have great memories of Greer. I do enjoy keeping in touch with some of the former students and friends. Lastly, I remember that Thanksgiving dinner was exciting and fun. We learned a lot of good traditions such as helping others and the true meaning of Christmas. I hope all of you have a happy and healthy 2008.

P.S. I am still watching Yankee games!

Pauline (Wendt) Kalahela '55

I remember the Chatham football game that was written about in the autumn issue very well. Coach Fischer would not let us cheerleaders ride on the bus to the game fearing that we would upset the team, but he said that we could ride back with them.

What a game that was--playing an undefeated team under the lights was a first time experience for Greer. I remember that it was quite cold, but we cheered our hearts out and won! The girls hockey team was also undefeated that year. We were under the supervision of Hy Wiener, who was a great

PE teacher and coach. For such a small school, we did excel in athletics.

I remember those infamous hay rides being pulled by Vern Ladeau on the tractor and of course the many dances in the assembly. During Thanksgiving, we all wondered who we were going to be seated with and who was going to be our "server" as this was the only time of the year when staff waited on students. Also, one person was elected to give the reason for being thankful on behalf of their group. The dinner was usually funded by Alumni pledging for current students.



Cottage Christmas Tree

Christmas-Preparation for the senior class "Martin Play"--each cottage had a particular carol to sing at the Chapel and we all hung our pledges on the tree during the offering period of the service. We anxiously awaited the arrangements from city house to go home home on the bus for Christmas vacation.

I am enjoying the pictures of alumni that you have put in your newsletters that you took during the 2006 reunion--some 50 years after we left Greer. I especially enjoyed pictures of Dick/Betty Lucas (class of 53) and Jim Matthewson (class of 54) who later married my roommate, Penny Harned. Jim and Peggy's dad used to take all of our athletic team pictures. Ruthann Wichelman's letter reminded me that she was my typing and steno teacher. I enjoyed seeing Gwen



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Elliott at last year's reunion and I remember when I used to "clean" Bittersweet and also serve at the Elliott's dinner parties.

A quick update on my life since leaving Greer: I worked as an executive secretary in Wall Street and venture capital for 45 years and I've been retired for the past 5 years. I am a three time cancer survivor and a volunteer at St. Vincent's Comprehensive Cancer Center in New York City one day a week I lost my husband of 34 1/2 years in May 2004 to lung cancer. No children-currently working 1-2 days a week in New Canaan, Connecticut for the 1 person I worked for 40 + years. I turned 70 years [young] last May!



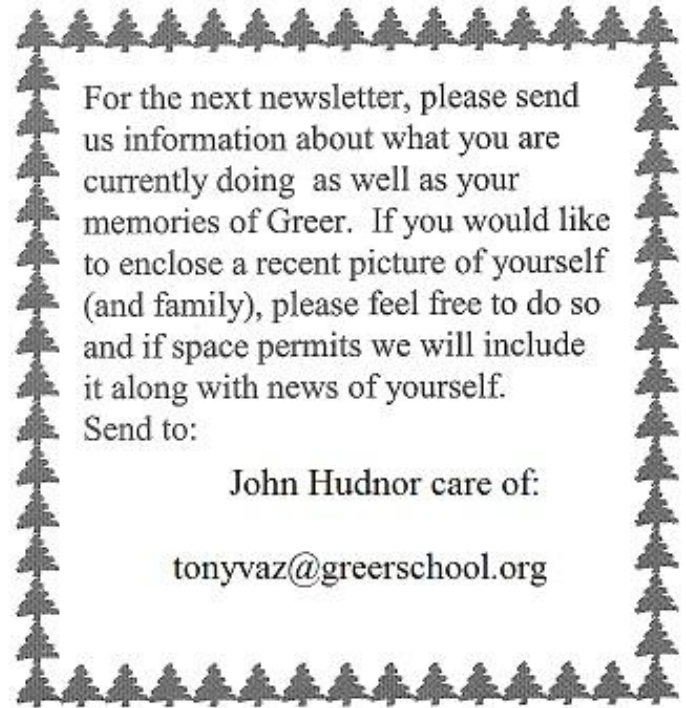
Off to the big city

Edna Vase Dicker '28- '42

My dad (Owen Vase) accepted a job at Hope Farm as a farmer in 1928. In 1932 I started first grade and Jimmy Morton was in my class too. In 1942, we moved from Hope Farm to Pine Plains where I graduated from high school in 1944. During the time that I was at Greer, I never lived in the cottages. However, my mom Ruth came to Hope Farm at age 8 in 1915 with her brother Robert who

lived at Marcy and my mom at Plum. My husband and I moved to Verbank, N.Y. in 1958 and I saw Jimmy Morton often as I became postmaster there and he would stop in to buy stamps and chat. I still see Isabel Morton as we attend the same church in Verbank.

I have fond memories of Hope Farm, living so close to the campus. I often ride there and attend some functions at the "Fountains", which is the retirement community where Greer used to be.



For the next newsletter, please send us information about what you are currently doing as well as your memories of Greer. If you would like to enclose a recent picture of yourself (and family), please feel free to do so and if space permits we will include it along with news of yourself.

Send to:

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