

**Mount Holyoke College Class of 1964**  
*After the Middle Ages Comes the Renaissance!*  
**In Memoriam**

*Remembrances from Classmates 2020-2024\**

**Susan Elisabeth Parks**  
**December 22, 1942 - March 22, 2020**

Gail Hunt Reeke, a close friend of Susan's since grade school days, expanded the 150-word tribute that appeared in our Class Notes column for the Fall 2020 Alumnae Quarterly:

Susie was one of a kind, with a perpetual exuberance for life, a wonderfully quirky sense of humor, and a broad range of interests. She was one of my two best friends in grade school and high school, and I remember how excited we felt when Susie and I were both accepted at Mount Holyoke, the only college either of us had applied to. Among other things, in our senior year in high school, Susie was Editor-in-Chief of our high school yearbook, a very demanding and prestigious position. Although she majored in Zoology in college, she became very interested in art at MHC. After working briefly in medical research at Mass General, she earned an MFA at UMass, with a specialty in ceramics, and started a pottery business that morphed into a hand-made tile business, during which she provided tiles for some architects' high-end projects and even had a tile featured in a Horchow catalog.

She met her life partner, Jane Kerstetter, in 1985, and they later married, with Lisa Lansing performing the ceremony. They began raising Nubian goats -- I teased her about having more kids than anyone else in our class -- from whose milk Susie made lovely hand-crafted soaps and related products, and Jane made phenomenal cheeses. After assorted trips abroad and Jane's assignments teaching a UConn-sponsored course for periodic semesters in Italy, both Susie and Jane became full-fledged Italophiles, eventually investing in a villa, run as a B&B, about an hour east of Florence. On each trip to Italy, Jane and Sue put together amazing, short, illustrated photo essays about their experiences to keep their fans and clientele informed. These are accessible until March 2021 on Sue's website, <http://www.susanparks.com>. When Jane retired, they sold the farm in Connecticut and split time between Florida and Italy.

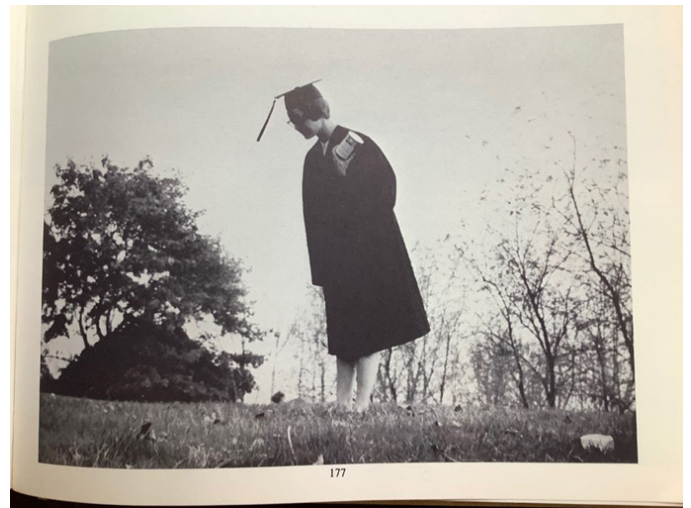
## Classmate Comments:

Mary Jane (Gigi) Higgins

I didn't know Susie in college, but I knew who she was. Everyone did. She was so colorful and interesting! I got to know Susie because she was assigned to me in my role as Class Agent. Thus began years of phone chats funny and philosophical, wherein I became friends with this kind, creative, adventurous classmate. I would hear about Susan's and Jane's entrepreneurial ventures, including their goats and their products, and more recently their exciting years in Florence, Italy. Susie loved her family, and she loved Mt. Holyoke. She was a very loyal classmate in her giving, and she helped the Class of 1964 win two fundraising-related prizes at our 55th reunion. Friendship is a gift, and sometimes it comes in unexpected ways. I was blessed by a long friendship with Susie through our phone conversations, and I am grateful. I will miss her. What was she looking at anyway in that inimitable photo in our yearbook?!



Susan's life-partner Jane sent us this photo to share with the class.



Mary Ann Lytle Anthony

I was so sad to hear that Susie Parks died. She and I became friends through our mutual faculty friend, Susan Mangam, in the art department, though Susie was a zoology major and I was an art major. I stayed in touch with her after college, mostly by Christmas cards. And, Susie worked with me to arrange our class dinner at UMass for our 5th Reunion. Susie eventually bought a farm in Western Mass with her partner, raised goats, made and sold soaps and pottery, and came to some of our reunions. I remember buying some of her wares one year. Susie was a gentle soul, fun to be with, and a true friend. There is a picture of her in our yearbook (p. 177) in her cap and gown, bending over to look at something on the ground, with something in her hand, her tassel flying.

Karen Anderson Chalfen

I re-connected with Sue Parks the year that our reunion was on campus during the

winter break. I

loved that reunion, because it was so intimate. Sue had been in Wilder with me, I believe, sophomore year. I did not know her well at that time, but I remember her sense of humor. When I met her that January at a dinner with wine and candlelight, she told us rich stories about raising goats and making soap at her small farm somewhere quite near South Hadley. She had such a spark--her name [S Parks] suited her perfectly. [ Scribe's note: This was first and last Winter Reunion ever held on campus. The 15th and 30th reunion classes were the participants in this experiment in 1979.]

Gee Gee Barden

Those of us who were Zoology majors spent many hours together in the labs in Clapp. My most vivid memory of that time relates to a clay model that each of us were required to make of the urogenital system of the male frog for Comparative Anatomy, I believe. When finished, we left our models at our places for review by our instructors and lab assistants the next day. Causing much merriment and delight when discovered was Susan's effort, which reflected her lively sense of humor and perhaps foreshadowed her ceramicist career. Topping off her model was a lovely large clay fig leaf, providing modesty with its coverage of her frog's private parts underneath.

Lisa Lansing

I was a devoted collector and user of Susan's goat milk soaps. In fact, I still have a stash in my closet. I visited Susan and her partner Jane Kerstetter at their goat farm in Stafford Springs CT a couple of times and had great fun with these two funny, kind people. As I was leaving, once I said to them "If you ever want to get married I'm a JP in Cornwall." And about a year later they did call, drove over to Cornwall, and got married in a corner of our town Library. I couldn't think of anything to say that they wouldn't think was soppy so I just said "By the power vested in me by the State of Connecticut, I declare that Susan and Jane are married!" They whooped and drove away linked for life. I got another box of soap from Susan for that.

Susan Salot Gaumer

I am saddened to learn of Susie Park's passing. She was probably the most fun person I knew at Mount Holyoke. Although we did not stay in touch, her adventurous life comes as no surprise – a life well-lived as the gift she was.

Susan Wolfe Lauffer

Susie's death saddened me in part because it made me realize that we had been completely out of touch for over 30 years. Susie and I roomed together our junior (in a triple in Pearson with Rae Hoppock Avery) and senior (in a double on the second floor of North Mandelle) years. We had a lot of fun together, as Susie was irrepressible! Much silliness – like jokes about chicken water in undercooked eggs! One of my strongest memories is of shared shock and despair when we learned that President Kennedy had



**Barbara J. Henryson**  
**September 7, 1942 - January 17, 2020**

Barbara was born in Philadelphia and came to Mount Holyoke from Ivyland, PA. She was a religion major who lived in Porter Hall Senior year. After leaving college, Barbara received a Master's degree from New York University. She worked in physical-, occupational- or psycho-therapy for her entire career – first in the New York City area and then in Morgantown, WV. “Sunny” was the description used by Gail Hunt Reeke and Carole Bleyfus-Richardot Enright as they remembered Barbara. Gail adds further, “I met her freshman year at an Outing Club Mountain Day event and liked her instantly. She was quiet and shy but infectiously cheerful.” A co-worker in Morgantown wrote of Barbara, “She was a delight to be around and really cared about her clients.” Barbara suffered from Alzheimer's Disease and died in Morgantown. She is survived by her sister, Virginia Showers; two nieces, Patty (Mike) Ryan, Stephanie (Wes) DeBastiani; three great-nephews; and one great-niece, all of Morgantown. Gail Hunt Reeke notified us of Barbara's death.

**Classmate Memories:**

*Roberta Lee Christianson:* I remember Barbie as tall, slender, generous-hearted, and caring at Mt. Holyoke. When my son was born, she gave him a Scandinavian sweater. It was one of the nicest baby gifts I received for my son, and I held on to the beautiful blue sweater for years. Barbie might have knitted the sweater since I remember her as a good knitter. I lost touch with Barbie for many years, but our friendship was renewed when we sometimes talked on the phone. She spoke fondly of her career and her former clients of whom she spoke so fondly with lots of nostalgia. I shall miss Barbie but am grateful that her Christian beliefs provided her with a spiritual foundation from which she drew comfort and hope.

**Barbara's obituary from The Dominion Post Date: 01/20/20**

Barbara J. Henryson, 77, of Morgantown, died on Friday, Jan. 17, 2020 at Mapleshire Nursing and Rehabilitation Center after living many years with Alzheimer's Disease. She was born in Philadelphia on September 7, 1942 to the late Lennart E. and Alyce Borthwick Henryson.

Barbara was a graduate of Mount Holyoke College and earned a master's degree from New York University. She was an occupational therapist for most of her career in New York City and later moved to Morgantown where she worked for various agencies. Barbara is survived by her sister, Virginia Showers; two nieces, Patty (Mike) Ryan, Stephanie (Wes) DeBastiani; three great-nephews; and one great-niece, all of Morgantown.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to your favorite local nonprofit or the Alzheimer's Association.

*\*Note: These are composites of what several people have contributed.*