

Mount Holyoke College Class of 1964 *After the Middle Ages Comes the Renaissance!* Reunion 2019

MOUNT HOLYOKE CLASS OF 1964 55TH REUNION SCRIBE REPORT

Our class on the steps of Abbey Chapel shortly before the Alumnae Parade.

Friday, May 24, 2019

Under bright blue and sunny skies 61 classmates plus guests registered for the weekend and were met at Mead Hall by undergraduates who helped us with our luggage and boxes.



State of the College

President Sonya Stephens shared many charts and diagrams to address various topics of interest. 75% of graduates will go on to receive advanced degrees within 10 years. The number of graduates getting PhDs in the life sciences puts MHC in the top 75 schools. The College is ranked 30th in the annual U S News and World Report, which shows that we are quite competitive given our smaller endowment. New facilities include the Community Center (a large extension of Blanchard); the largest solar array in Massachusetts on Kendade; expansion of the coffee area in the Library (christened "Francis Perk"). There is a new major offered in Data Science. Half of the faculty members will be new to MHC by 2020 because of a high number of retirements. The College is committed to making diversity an objective in new hires. The incoming freshman class in 2018-2019 was the largest in College history (over 600), of which 40% were Early Decision acceptances.

The College's finances are healthy, due in large part to the extraordinary support from the alumnae. A Strategic Plan is being formulated to build a greater feeling of community among the students while recognizing and allowing for the diverse population. Successful innovations include the creative laboratory which gives students the chance to try out innovative ideas; the Semester in DC program; the PAGE program, dedicated to Master of Arts and professional training for both students and surrounding communities. The College has a goal of being carbon neutral by 2030's and supports environmental sustainability in all areas. A new office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion has been created and staffed. The LYNK program guarantees every student at least one

paid internship before leaving campus. There is recognition of the need to support the mental health of the student body, so the College has been working to create spaces to relax in as well as to study and work.

Back-to-Class

After lunch, and a sometimes bewildering introduction to the new cafeteria area affording many choices of cuisine, there were many Back-to-Class talks available. While at the last reunion some classes were given by alumnae and classmates, this year the College scheduled faculty and staff on a wide variety of topics.

- The State of Liberal Education in a Changing World - Dean of Faculty Jon Western
- Documenting Mount Holyoke Student Activism in the Archives - Leslie Fields, Archivist
- Ill-Fated Heroines and their Quest for Jewelry in 19th Century Italian Short Stories
- A Case for Transitioning from Fossil Fuels; Climate Change Update
- Using Virtual Reality to Study Racial Bias in Police Use of Lethal Force
- Examining Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in a Liberal Arts Institution
- Campus Sustainability and our Progress
- Transform/Transcribe - Mount Holyoke History being converted to computerized records
- Jean Sammet Was Ahead of Her Time - Introductory Computer Science
- Window into the World of Preschool Children and the Research Projects They Inspire
- Entrepreneurship and Business in this Century
- Campus Sustainability and Living Lab Tour

Art Museum Tours

Reunion Chair Heather Wilcauskas had arranged for our class to have private tours of the Art Museum. Tricia Paik, Director of the Museum, greeted us and outlined how the museum is used as a teaching tool for many different courses from sciences to literature to art itself. The Museum is eleventh in the US for the extent of the collection and how it is used by the faculty. She then intro-



duced the current exhibit of the performance art of Joan Jonas, '59. The artist used mirrors and film to examine nature and women's dawning empowerment in the world.

PIC 1: Heather Tyrie Wilcauskas introducing Tricia Paik, director of the art museum, as she begins her tour. [Photo from Jean Vnenchak]

PIC 2: Jane Shilling Emerson, Karen Anderson Chalfen, Hope Whitaker Justman, Caroline Webster Bernard, Susan Salot Gaumer, Kate Shockey LaFrance, Mary Ann Lytle Anthony, and Heather Tyrie Wilcauskas listening to Tricia Paik's tour. [Photo from Jean Vnenchak]



Friday Social Hour

Back at the dorm before dinner, refreshments were set up in the living room as classmates continued to arrive and mingle. Our costume and Reunion Book were handed out. Pat Slodden Fleischauer had bright blue feather boas for us to twirl and wrap and fling. Mary Ann Lytle Anthony had edited a book with many interesting submissions from classmates, up-to-date email addresses and a list of where we live by state zip code.

A table of archives and samples of classmates' creative efforts had been set up. Betsy Beatty Gable had brought two scrapbooks filled with souvenirs of our four years. Kathy Pfeiffer Mack still has her blueberry gym suit. Yearbooks, copies of Mount Holyoke News, Junior Show playbill, the Freshman Handbook, classmates' memories of the weekend of the Kennedy assassination were among the memorabilia. Artwork from Alice Ullman Dustin, books authored by Lady Borden (on Vietnam), by Mary Lynn Bayliss (Dooley's of Richmond), by Karen Anderson Chalfin (Fair Weather by Noon), by Susan Salot Gaumer (Reflections on Katrina) and by Jane English (poetry and stories) were on display.

Saturday, May 25, 2019 Alumnae Parade

We assembled on the Abbey Chapel steps for our class picture since Skinner Hall was under repair. The parade began at Mary Lyon's Grave with a new tradition for Reunion II classes. The president and reunion chair from each class wove a rose into the Laurel Chain left from the previous graduation weekend. The traditional song of

Bread and Roses was sung and the bagpipes led us away toward Mary Woolley Hall. Classes represented were from 2014 to 1944. We were in awe of the two '44 alums who had come-pitcher and catcher of an undefeated softball team!

PIC: Our class along the parade route. From the left: Caroline Webster Bernard, Priscilla Morse Huston, Heather Tyrie Wilcauskas, Ellen Manfredonia Nutter, Mary Lee Warren, and Diane Kelley Fenton. Diane's hat is from our 45th reunion! [Photo sent in by Ellen Manfredonia Nutter]



Heather Tyrie Wilcauskas, Ellen Manfredonia Nutter, Edie Prentice Mendez, Mary Ann Lytle Anthony, and Betsy Wadt Mulcare with banner as we wait for "older" classes to march by. [Photo from Hope Whitaker Justman]



Mary Ann Lytle Anthony, Betsy Wadt Mulcare, Liliane [Lil] Menzi Barry, Pat Slodden Fleischauer, Susan Salot Gaumer, Mary Wegner Mayer, Deborah Newcomb Nightingale, Patricia Altman Falkenberg, Katherine Paranya Ogle, Beth Schnoll Krugman with the sign, and Ellen Rice. [Photo from Hope Whitaker Justman]



147th Alumnae Association Annual Meeting

We were welcomed by Maria Mossaides, President of the Association. She recognized the oldest class (1944) and noted that Congresswoman Nita Lowey, '59 was also present. Then Sonya Stephens thanked the alumnae for our commitment to the College in all ways, and noted the energy that reunions bring to campus. It is a chance to link the past with the future. Various awards were given by the Association. Mary Lee Warren and Susan Koch were both recognized with the Achievement Award for outstanding achievements and service to society that exemplify the values and virtues set forth by the College. Patricia Altman Falkenberg was recognized with the Medal of Honor for her long-term service and significant leadership in promoting the effectiveness of the College. In addition, it was announced that the Class of 1964 received the Pegasus Award for raising the most total dollars for the Mount Holyoke Fund in the past fiscal year (\$219,000).

Pegasus and Lions award reunion bowl and flowers In entry way at Mead. [Photo from Jean Vnenchak]

Our class also was cited with the Lion Award for the highest total giving to all funds for previous four years and reunion year (\$3+million). Interspersed with the awards were interesting and humorous class histories given by each class president. The years were paired to show contrasts and similarities: 1954 & 2004; 1959 & 1984; 1974 & 1989. 1964 was paired with 2014 (our bridges class) and Ellen Nutter spoke of the effect of "in loco parentis" on our lives citing house mothers, Friday tea, gracious living. But current events penetrated our campus life from the beginning: the Cold War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Kennedy assassination, the Feminist movement. We still enjoyed playing bridge, coffee at Glessies' and biking. The meeting concluded with the Alma Mater.

Lunch with the Class of 2014

Mary Lee Warren had arranged for a private dining area for the two classes to mingle during luncheon. Young and old alums alike enjoyed the exchange of ideas, renewing old friendships and hearing how the younger class had been doing these past five years.

Ellen Manfredonia Nutter on the right with Kate and Meggie Lasher of 2014



Kate now runs a Montessori School in Portland ME, and Meggie is the librarian at Davidson College, Charlotte NC. [Photo from Ellen Manfredonia Nutter]

Memorial Service - 1904 Memorial Garden

Mary Vic Jones Giersch was not able to attend the traditional service, but had put together a ceremony honoring those classmates no longer with us. Ellen Nutter, Jean Vnenchak, Mary Mayer and Sue Gaumer led the gathering in readings and poetry. As in years past,



the name of each person was called and classmates came forward to place a pink rose in a vase in her honor. A moment of silence was observed for all our loved ones who are deceased. We concluded by singing the Alma Mater.

Mary Wegner Mayer reading at the service with Ellen Manfredonia Nutter at her right. [Photo from Jean Vnenchak]

The vase of roses at the Memorial service. [Photo from Vicki Diez-Canseco]

Saturday Social Hour and Awards

We gathered once more at Mead to hear Nancy Perez, Executive Director, honor three classmates with the Alumnae Association Loyalty Award for consistent efforts and active involvement over an extended period of time for the College, the class or local club. Diane Kelley Fenton has been Class Treasurer for 30 years, keeping the class solvent and managing our Library and Scholarship



Funds. Priscilla Morse Huston has worked tirelessly for our class as well as her local MHC club, acting for many years as Class Scribe and supporting new students in her area. Ellen Manfredonia Nutter used her diplomatic and organizational skills as 50th Reunion Chair and Class President to promote cohesion in our class and sustain class enthusiasm.

From the left: Diane Kelley Fenton, Ellen Manfredonia Nutter, Nancy Bellows Perez, and Priscilla Morse Huston after Nancy presented the Loyalty Awards. [Photo from Jean Vnenchak]

Saturday Dinner and Speakers

We were served in a private dining area by a patient student staff and introduced to our speakers for the evening. Mary Lee Warren had recruited two Semester in DC interns to talk about their experiences. Sarah Bloomgarden, class of 2020, had worked at the Brady Center for Prevention of Gun Violence since she was interested in learning about public policy in regard to the environment and gun reform. Her experience in DC had given her a view of how lobbyists and legislators can work together. She had done research for legislation on gun control and come to realize how the intern program gives a student confidence, teaches skills needed past graduation, and how powerful an education Holyoke provides.

Melissa Carney, who had graduated the weekend before, had worked for the National Council for Independent Living. Melissa, who is blind, had already been involved deeply as spokesperson and mentor in Connecticut's Association of the Blind. In her DC studies she learned how politics can affect reform efforts. She advocated in Congress for increased home-based services, instead of nursing homes, to prevent marginalization of disabled persons. She recognized that MHC had given her the ability to speak and write persuasively and to navigate new situations, describing how she and her guide dog learned to deal with DC's Metro system. Melissa stated that an internship forces a person out of the comfort zone while giving one confidence when superiors come to trust you and see what you are capable of doing.

The class appreciated having Sarah and Melissa share their experiences, and all of us came away very impressed with their poise, insights, and accomplishments.

At the Class Dinner Saturday, facing from the left: Mary Ann Lytle Anthony; Georgia Smith Regnault; Mary Lee Warren; Melissa Carney,



one of our intern speakers; and Nancy Chambers Goff. [Photo from Priscilla Morse Huston]

The evening concluded back at Mead with our faithful bartenders, good treats and Gail Hunt Reeke's wonderful talent at the piano. Singers came and went while we belted out songs from the 30's to the 60's.

1964 Class Meeting - Sunday May 26th

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am by Ellen Nutter. Minutes from the previous meeting were accepted unanimously.

Class meeting in Mead on Sunday morning. Diane Kelley Fenton is at the microphone at the far right of the photo reading the treasurer's report. Seated to Diane's right is Caroline Webster Bernard our reunion scribe taking notes, and outgoing president Ellen Manfredonia Nutter stands to Caroline's right. [Photo from Jean Vnenchak]



Ellen explained that the Alumnae Office suggested that our bylaws be changed to allow for electronic voting (as well as regular mail-in) on questions initiated by the Executive Committee. The AA also recommended that class officers be voted on by email, but the current Executive Committee had decided not to allow that since the slate of nominees is circulated to the class well in advance, and because the Nominating Committee consults many classmates during its deliberations. The proposed bylaw change was approved.

Diane Fenton gave the Treasurer's report. The balance in the treasury before 55th reunion expenses was \$17,425.70. She said that by our 65th reunion our treasury would revert to the Alumnae Association to pay our class expenses into the future. Totaling class expenses until that time, Diane suggested that there were sufficient funds in hand to cover them all without having to collect any more class dues. Expenses include Library memorials, mailings, website, and activities with Bridges and Lynx. It was agreed that the class would discontinue collecting dues.

Gail Humphrey and Gretchen Hays, on behalf of all the class agents, gave a presentation on the Green Purse program that has been started by the class. After our 50th success the agents looked for a way to continue giving to the College through planned bequests. The internship program is very important to the College and to the students, so it was decided to set up a Class of 1964 Green Purse Internship. It takes \$100,000 to fund one internship, and even before the effort was launched, two classmates each

offered that amount allowing two students to benefit already from the program. As Gail explained it, since many classmates are not in a position to make large bequests, the Green Purse idea will allow many smaller bequests to be collected to achieve the necessary goal. There are several ways to do it, and the process and forms are available on our website, or by contacting any class agent. Gail noted the name "Green Purse" comes from our founding president, Mary Lyon, who solicited funds for establishing the college by carrying a green purse and urging donations into it. In addition, Gail noted that our class has 142 members in the Laurel Chain Society and 52 Mary Lyon donors.

Ellen Nutter thanked all the retiring class officers for their work and support during the past five years. She noted that VP Anita Weinblatt had worked on our website and with the class scribes on the memorial tributes. Classmates are urged to send in their particular memories of any classmate who has died for our memorials. Ellen thanked the class agents for their hard work on both fund raising and the inauguration of the Green Purse program.

The Nominating Committee consisting of Lily Klebanoff, Gretchen Green, Gail Hanson, Mary Dee Beall, and Marilyn Hoffman, presented the slate for new officers to serve from 2019 to 2024. Heather Wilcaukas seconded the motion and the slate was approved unanimously.

New Officers are:

- President - Betsy Wadt Mulcare
- Vice-President - Anita Corman Weinblatt
- Reunion Chair - Mary Ann Lytle Anthony
- Secretary - Deborah Newcomb Nightingale
- Treasurer - Diane Kelley Fenton
- Class Scribes - Priscilla Morse Huston and Jean Vnenchak
- Bridges - Mary Lee Warren
- Head Class Agents - Nancy Albrecht August (Mary Lyon Society), Mary Victor Jones Giersch, Nancy Chambers Goff, Gretchen Wuth Hays, Gail Simons Humphreys, Wendy Lycan Jackson, Barbara Flesch Resnek, Carol Nagy Theodore
- Nominating Committee - Gretchen Beck Green, Gail Welch Hanson, Marilyn Brainard Hofmann

Ellen then handed over the meeting to the new president, Betsy Mulcare who thanked the outgoing board for their hard work and the class agents for their consistent efforts. She plans to continue the idea of mini-reunions and hopes to see us all again at our 60th reunion.

Jean Vnenchak asked for attendees to send in their favorite memories of the weekend

for inclusion on the website. Wendy Jackson suggested that photos from the weekend be sent to Heather Wilcauskas who will make them available on line.

Georgia Regnault suggested that the class send copies of the memorial service to the families of the deceased. She went on to urge attendance at the symposium in Athens in October which is attended by all classes and professors from College.

Heather mentioned that she had given a 50th reunion medallion on behalf of the class to Sonja Stephens who had admired it.

It was also suggested that all mini-reunions be publicized to the whole class so that anyone who may be visiting in the area can also plan to attend

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 am. And with that the reunion ended with all agreeing that it was a happy, fun and interesting occasion. We look forward to 2024.

Respectfully submitted

Caroline Webster Bernard, Reunion scribe [Jean Vnenchak selected the photos that are interspersed in the text from those sent in by several classmates.]

(Submitted 7/8/19)