

MHC 1964 Fiftieth Reunion

May 15 – 18, 2014

Scribe's Report by Meg Cormeny O'Brien

Pictures by Joan Mead Eaton



Our 50th Reunion was fabulous! Fifty percent of our class attended and we all had a wonderful time. There were a total of 217 people, of whom 158 were classmates and 59 were guests. Following is a summary of events.

Thursday, May 15, 2014

Welcome to the Reunion. Rehearsal for the New Alumnae Welcome Ceremony

Lily Klebanoff Blake, Class President, welcomed us to Reunion mid-afternoon. Mary Lee Warren, who has been developing the Bridges program with the Class of 2014, explained the Scarf event to be held in the Amphitheatre which welcomes the Class of 2014 as new alumnae.

Welcome Ceremony for New Alumnae and Reception Honoring Class of 2014



Mary Lee encouraged 1964s to get to know the talented 2014s and expand the connections going forward. During the ensuing ceremony red figured scarves were bestowed by 1964s on some 600 members of the class of 2014. They were happy and excited. Many wore their scarves for the Alumnae Parade and with their caps and gowns for graduation.

The Reception afterward behind the amphitheater was well-attended. Tables were staffed by 1964s from specified geographic regions to facilitate connections. Members of the Class of 2014 actively sought us out to learn of any help we might be able to offer. They place a lot of confidence in us that we will be able to help them along their careers.

Class of 1964 Thursday Social Hour and Dinner: Festa Italiana - Blanchard

Many classmates attended the MHC '64 Arts and Letters exhibit and enjoyed seeing the artwork of over a dozen class artists and a number of books by 1964s. Post dinner there were greetings from Lily and a weekend overview by Reunion Chair Ellen Nutter. Jane Shilling Emerson reported on the class survey which was responded to by 217 classmates, a very high

percentage.

Class of 1964 Common Read Discussion

We gathered to discuss the book, Flux, by Peggy Orenstein. There was some disappointment in the book as being narrowly focused but thought-generating nonetheless.

Selected Comments:

- Our generation deserves credit for trying to make our way in a man's world.
- We are women trying to add what women do to the world not just trying to have it all the way men do. The book is based on a male concept of success. We're worth more than that.
- A husband suggested that 1964s focus on what makes us special and another husband offered that Mount Holyoke was an incubator for us to develop after college.

Friday, May 16

Class of 1964 Bridges Serenade - Willits-Hallowell to Kendall



We were off to Willits by 7:45am to cheer the Class of 2014 into their class breakfast with a fantastic jazz band from UMass. It was a surprise, so the seniors were a bit uncertain about our aisle of smiles and cheers through which they passed. Next our enthusiastic entourage was off to Kendall with the jazz band to welcome them into their commencement rehearsal there.

Class of 1964 Breakfast – Blanchard



Lynn Pasquerella greeted each of us warmly. It was a joyous and convivial affair.

Back-to-Class



Friday was Back-to-Class day. Our classmates led five of the seventeen offerings:

- **China's Ancient Flagstone Roads: An Unappreciated Treasure : Hope Whitaker Justman**
- **US-Russia Transformation: from Cold War to Cooperation to Uncertainty: Susan Koch**
- **Answering President Kennedy's Call to Service: Creating AmeriCorps: Catherine**

Higgs Milton

- **Metamorphoses in Today's Globalized World - What Used To Be Only Local Is Now an Open International Opportunity: Mary Lee Warren**
- **STEM-U-LATE Your Mind: Women Impacting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics: Priscilla Morse Huston, Panelist**

State-of-the-College Address (President Lynn Pasquerella)

Lynn offered a few remarks about this year at Mount Holyoke, introduced her senior management team members, and then opened up the forum to questions. “Never fear change” is a new theme that expresses the view that a liberal arts education is the best preparation to be adaptable and flexible. The LYNK program is linking liberal arts to career over four years through mentors, preparation for college life experiences, paid internships, and “The Launch”, selling prospective employers on the value of liberal arts, including giving an elevator speech. The student body is 25% international and 25% minority. 70% receive student aid. Curriculum requirements were changed by the faculty this past year.

The \$300 million Campaign goal was exceeded. The European Alumnae Symposium was held in Warsaw; the Asian Alumnae Symposium in China is upcoming. Mount Holyoke is partnering with Smith and Simmons in sponsoring the Women’s Public Service Institute to promote women in positions of political power.

Campus planning processes are in line with changing requirements and with MHC values. Mount Holyoke supports sustainability. The College has two LEED certified buildings, has divested from the top 200 fossil fuel companies, provides grants to faculty and staff to implement their sustainability ideas, and controls invasive species in cooperation with local towns.

In response to questions, Lynn outlined two challenges the College faces:

1. Access to excellence in higher education given rising costs and the two-year tuition freeze
 2. Creating community amidst hidden racism through use of social media and mentoring.
- Mount Holyoke is supporting its smaller depts. by hiring more tenured faculty and relying on fewer contingent faculty, and partnering with other Five-College colleagues to strengthen smaller departments. Mount Holyoke partners with other institutions to fast track students to their aspirations, e.g., Isenberg at UMass for business, Simmons for library science. MHC also offers courses online.

President's Reception for the Class of 1964 and Dinner

President Pasquerella graciously hosted a reception for 1964 at the Art Museum. It was an opportunity to see some of the Art Museum’s collection. Tasty hors d’oeuvres whetted our appetite for the excellent dinner that followed at Willits-Hallowell, courtesy of the Alumnae Association and Office of Advancement.

Saturday, May 17

Alumnae Parade - Abbey-Buckland Circle to Mary Lyon's Grave



We lined up early wearing our royal blue pashminas, our pottery lion's head pendants (hand made by Sally Mowitt), and carrying our bubble wands. With the skirl of bagpipes, we moved forward, falling in behind the antique cars that carried members of the Loyalty Class of 1944. We were showered with applause. At Mary Lyon's grave, we awaited the arrival of the seniors with their Laurel Chain. Many wore the red scarves we had given them on Thursday. The scarves provided pretty accents of red to their white dresses. They wove the Laurel Chain around the gravesite and concluded the ceremony with the singing of "Bread and Roses."



142nd Alumnae Association Annual Meeting



The “Mount Holyoke Alumnae Quarterly” (Summer 2014) provided a summary of this meeting and our alumnae honorees. Lily Klebanoff Blake outlined our class history and Jenna Caputo responded with the history of 2014.

Total alumnae giving was \$7.1 million to the Mount Holyoke Fund this fiscal year. 1964 broke the record for 50th Reunion gifts. Nancy Goff, Head Agent, reported that 1964 gave \$1,399,850 to the Mount Holyoke Fund this year. The comprehensive total for the Class of 1964 including all gifts to all funds over the past five years and future bequests came to over \$10-million.

1964 won the Sphinx Award for total participation in giving for the current fiscal year, the Pegasus Award for most total dollars for immediate use in the current fiscal year, and the Lion Award for the highest total giving (including pledges) to all funds for the previous four years and the Reunion fiscal year. Our classmates Gail Simons Humphreys and Heather Tyrie Wilcauskas won Loyalty Awards for consistent effort and active involvement in one area of service.

1964 captured the Reunion Cup for the largest percentage of living graduates in attendance.

Class of 1964 Discussion Groups: Sharing 50 Years of Personal Journeys and Life Lessons Learned . See Sunday notes for summary.

Class of 1964 Memorial Service (Mary Vic Jones Giersch) -1904 Garden



In this beautiful and poignant service, we gathered to remember our classmates and friends who have left us, with readings, poetry, prayer, and the Rose Ceremony during which classmates come forward to place roses honoring the deceased individuals into a single vase. We concluded with the singing of the Alma Mater.

Class of 1964 Saturday Social Hour and Dinner

The lovely terrace of Rooke Theatre became the setting for our social hour which featured lively conversation. A very good dinner, well served, ensued in the Abbey-Buckland Dining Room.

Dinner Speaker: "What Are We Afraid Of? Transforming the MHC Liberal Arts Curriculum to Meet Career Challenges of Today" (Christopher Benfey, Andrew Mellon Professor of English, Late 19th & 20th C. literature)

Benfey believes that Mount Holyoke is good preparation as students face an uncertain world. The liberal arts education today is in danger because it is not well explained.

Benfey espouses the following rubrics:

- Life is not lived in a straight line. Rich and interesting lives are developed by accident.
- Resilience is the best life skill. Students need to learn how to fail as well as succeed.
- Creativity and flexibility are the 2nd and 3rd life skills.

In tough times, one needs creativity and flexibility, not vocational skills. To increase resilience, Benfey advocates an advising relationship that encourages students to take risk, which includes the risk of failure. In response to questions Benfey offered the following: The most important course that Mount Holyoke now offers, because of recent changes to the

regular MHC faculty, and requires search and discovery, not just research.

The impact of online courses on teachers is not yet known in that we don't know the differential impact of lectures by great professors vs. great classes with student participation.

Sunday, May 18

Class of 1964 Discussion: Sharing 50 Years of Personal Journeys and Life Lessons Learned (Mona Marich Hanford, Moderator)

These discussions, started Saturday and concluded Sunday, allowed us to share what we have learned about how to manage the profound change we have encountered. What activities (new or otherwise) excite our passion? What resources or coping strategies give us meaning and hope? Discussions were conducted on four topics:

Health and Well-Being (Jean Vnenchak, Lurline Purvis Aslanian, F. Chaney Li)

- Health – seek out and use resources online and local support groups
- Wellness – exercise, moderate eating, importance of connections
- Care Giver – take care of yourself, heed family and friends' advice that you are worn down
- Action: Teaching wellness on campus since many students are overweight.
- We can look at a Caring Group that has volunteers similar to Dartmouth's.

Spiritual Journeys (Marilyn Ursu Bauriedel, Sue Salot Gaumer, Mary Wegner Mayer)

- Spiritual well-being is important and it may not be theistic.
- Stepping back and listening is important to letting spirituality enter our lives.
- For some, being in a particular place makes them feel spiritual. Some remain in traditional religion even as/and with some changes to traditional religion.
- Practices that may help: yoga, meditation.

Material Well-Being (Betsy Callaway, Laraine Masters Glidden)

- How should a classmate approach upsizing (rather than downsizing)? Do the math, research what you do not know, such as rental values.
- How much cash should I have on hand? Suzy Orman and others on the Internet will tell you.
- Discussion of income inequality, from McMansions to homelessness and food insecurity.

Leisure and Learning (Beth Schnoll Krugman)

The activities that most engage us are:

- Reading – Book clubs can be social and intellectual and offer reads on topics/themes
- Exercise – Lots of walkers. Lots of hikers
- Travel – dampened by difficulties of air travel
- Music, e.g., piano lessons with grandchild
- Need to keep up with technology
- Gardening
- Volunteering
- Art
- Lectures

- Researching retirement communities
- Explosion of online course opportunities
- MOOCS
- iuniversity
- Khan University
- Getting rid of stuff
- Starting a new business
- Mentoring students
- Grandchildren
- Want to move near them
- Leaving roots behind
- Creating a summer camp for grands
- Downsizing
- Circus school



1964 Class Meeting. Lily Klebanoff Blake called the meeting to order at 10:30 am and thanked the class for her five-year Presidency. Joan Mead Eaton noted that DVDs of the Reunion can be purchased for \$15 by sending a check to her at her address in the Yearbook. Sue Davis thanked classmates for contributions to the memorabilia display. Four 50th Reunion Yearbooks remain and can be ordered from Diane Fenton for \$35.

Secretary's Report. The Secretary's Report could not be located. Therefore, Carol Nagy Theodore moved that we approve the minutes unread. So voted.

Treasurer's Report. Treasurer, Diane Kelley Fenton, indicated that we had \$24,387.03 prior to the 50th Reunion and \$14,342.89 as of this morning with final accounting still to be done.

Class Agents' Report. Nancy Chambers Goff reported that 1964 raised close to \$1.4-million for this year's Annual Fund and over \$10-million for our comprehensive gift.

Mary Lyon Society Report. Nancy Chambers Goff showed a book that contains the names of classmates who have documented bequests to the College.

Reunion Chair Report. Ellen Nutter praised her committee chairs and documented the fantastic jobs they had done.

Old Business. Lily Klebanoff Blake thanked her Class Officers and Bridges Chair.

New Business. The Nominating Committee comprised of Mary Dee Beall, Chair, Gretchen Beck Green, Cathy Higgs Milton, Ellen Freeman Bodow, and Liz Peale Allen reported its slate of Class Officers for the next 5 yrs.

President	Ellen Manfredonia Nutter
Vice President	Anita Corman Weinblatt
Secretary	Caroline Webster Bernard
Scribes	Priscilla Morse Huston, Jean Vnenchak
Treasurer	Diane Kelley Fenton
Reunion Chair	Heather Tyrie Wilcauskas
Bridges Chair	Mary Lee Warren
Head Class Agents	Barbara Flesch Resnek, Mary Vic Jones Giersch, Wendy Lycan Jackson, Carol Nagy Theodore, Gretchen Wuth Hays, Gail Simons Humphreys
Nominating Committee	Lily Klebanoff Blake, Chair, Elizabeth Jones Harris, Marilyn Brainard Hofmann

The slate was approved.

Ellen Nutter assumed the presidency and Chair of the meeting. She thanked Carol Nagy Theodore for contributing extra pashminas and the cookie bakers for their contributions.

Dues. Treasurer, Diane Kelley Fenton recommends keeping the five-year dues at \$50 for the 2014-2019 period. Motion approved. Send checks to Diane endorsed to "MHC Class of 1964."

Website. Anita Corman Weinblatt has agreed to be website mistress for the next five years.

Class Communication over the Next Five Years. Plans are afoot for more mini-reunions.

Adjournment. 11:30 am.

Sunday Brunch

The weekend concluded with a marvelous brunch at the Willits-Hallowell Center amid hugs and farewells.

