

Celebrating Our Stories!

"Stories make us more alive, more human, more courageous, more loving." ~ Madeleine L'Engle '41

Fall/Winter 2015-2016

KEEP THIS LIST HANDY!

At Your Service:

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from the President

Remember our theme "Reflect and Rock On" from our 45th Reunion? The theme of our leadership team meeting last May could be described as "Work Hard, Play Hard." We missed having Carolyn, Edie, Margie, and Sally with us due to other commitments. Priscilla Carter Fort was the most gracious host, assisted by Kathy Martin and Joan Meltzer FitzGibbon. Pam Chamberlain took on the arduous task of note taking for the 2 1/2 day meeting. And thanks to Declan Sheehy whom we knew from his days working for the Smith Fund - and who now works for the Ringling Museum -- we had a private tour of Ca d'Zan, John and Mable Ringling's magnificent Venetian-style mansion on the Sarasota waterfront.

You will see evidence of our team's progress in newsletters and on our class website. We covered lots of ground, including initial planning for our 50th reunion. As one example of our bonding with each other - and reflecting our belief in the value of a Smith education for women of the world - each of us made a commitment to consider joining the Grecourt Society. And we shared stories. You can read some in this issue.

Out of this energy came a list of positions for the 50th reunion, some of which are traditional but a few are new exciting innovations. Please consider becoming part of this fun process of planning for our reunion by volunteering for one of the opportunities that follow. There is much more in this newsletter - and a continuation of my comments in introducing "Our Stories" - but see below how we need your help on our fabulous team which is creating the most fun and engaging 50th in the history of Smith!

Janet



The Leadership Team Meeting, last May.

Mable Ringling's Venetian-Style mansion on the Sarasota waterfront.

REUNION NEWS – AND TALENT SEARCH!

From Reunion Co-Chairs Beth Sweetow and Lisa Getto

"RECONNECTS"

One of the best aspects of Reunion is meeting new people from our class we had not known before. 50th Reunions traditionally draw very large attendance so chances are you will make several new connections in 2019. BUT WHY WAIT UNTIL THEN?



Beth Sweetow & Lisa Getto

The Reunion Committee wants to encourage everyone in our Class to come to the 50th. To enhance our experiences of Reunion and meet some new classmates before then, we are looking for hosts or organizers for local 1969 "RECONNECTS." These Reconnects can be a potluck or a brown-bag lunch, brunch or dinner, a 70th(!) birthday party in 2017, a meeting with local Alumnae Association representatives to learn more about 21st century Smith or perhaps arranging for a faculty member to join you at your RECONNECT. Or you might plan a purely social gathering to reconnect with the fabulous women who define Smith.

The Reunion Committee hopes some of us in the usual geographical suspect locations (NYC, Westchester, Northern New Jersey, Washington DC, Boston, Chicago, LA, SF) will organize one or more RECONNECTS between 2016 and 2019. We are eager to find other areas, including overseas, for more classmates to gather and hope to find hosts in less Smith-populated locales.

Linda Sosnowitz, who is working with me on this project, and I can assist you with ideas, invitations and support. We also have funds in our class budget to help defray expenses. So, if you would like to help host or organize a RECONNECT or want to talk more about doing so, please contact either of us: bethsweetow@yahoo.com or sosnowitz@gmail.com.

The 50th Reunion Committees are taking shape already! Want to help? See below!

Contact for these Opportunities: Elissa Getto at eogae@aol.com

Contact for these Opportunities: Beth Sweetow at bethsweetow@yahoo.com

NEW INITIATIVE FOR THE 50TH!

Call for classmates interested in the Visual and Performing Arts, Literary Arts, Film and Animation

There will be an exciting new dimension to our 50th Reunion, acknowledging the many artistic talents represented in the Class of 1969. Our class has a long legacy of showcasing Visual Artists and for 2019 we are going to add components for Performing Arts (Music, Dance and Theatre), Literary, Film and Animation.

It is expected that the talents of our classmates will be displayed through CD's, videos and films, and written materials. **Amy Scott Finley** has agreed to chair all the arts aspects based on the promise that others will step forward to offer considerable help. **Linda Sicher** is the chair of the Visual Arts and will oversee with her committee the Art Show at Alumnae House, and any other displays on campus. **Pam Chamberlain** will be our muse for film and animation.

We need your help in the following areas:

- A Performing Arts Chair (music, theatre, dance) for the campus display, a classmate who will also be part of a team planning the Memorial service for all classes in 2019 (see below). It has been suggested that Glee Club/Chamber Singer members provide the music for the service.
- A Literary Arts Chair and an Animation Chair.
- Chairs for the Memorial Service and Class Book Memorial Section. The new Class Book will have elements of our traditional book but also include content similar to the Memorial Book from our 45th reunion.

Responsibilities are twofold:

- Solicit and edit memorial tributes for inclusion in the Class Book;
- Coordinate the plan for the Memorial Service with Smith's Dean of Religious Life (as is traditional for 50th Reunion classes) as well as committee members comprised of Reunion Co-Chairs, Arts Chairs, ordained clergy and others from a world perspective of religions. These can be two distinct positions or one.
- A Co-Chair for the Class Book. The 50th reunion Class Book is one of the most important aspects of our 50th reunion. This is truly a major undertaking incorporating all members of the class of '69. Kathy Martin has graciously agreed to chair this committee but we are need of a co-chair. The book costs approximately \$20,000 to produce, provided by Smith. The skills that are needed include writing, editing, graphic design, and the ability to assemble and distribute the book in accordance with some Smith guidelines. Our chairs do not need to have all these skills there is obviously a need for professional graphic design and some editing. We are fortunate to have the Class of '65's excellent detailed blueprint for their very professional Class Book/Memorial Book.

If you are interested in any of the above opportunities or serving on these committees, please contact **Elissa Getto** at **(eogae@aol.com).**

The 50th Reunion Slide Show

Debby Slavitt and Anita Gebhardt did a superb job for our 45th and now Debby needs your help.

Debby says, "The next version can be even better knowing what we do now. Anita will only be a long distance advisor and cheering section this time due to family matters. So, here's what we need:

- **Brainstorming** soon and hands on work winter of 2019. We will have already asked for and received more memorabilia from classmates by then so start digging!
- **Tech help** with the nuts and bolts of putting together a slide show/visual presentation plus some video and music components:
 - Creative help: Brainstorming is welcome on visual production;
- **Research help:** Someone to gather more mementos and photos from our classmates, scan them in, and keep track of them as we use them and then return them to the owner;
 - Team cooperation, creativity and know how, flexibility and good humor.

To offer help, please contact Debby Slavitt at deborahjane@alumnae.smith.edu

ENTERING THE GRÉCOURT GATES ... AGAIN

It all began with some forethought, a determined spirit, and a piece of paper . . . and, thanks to the bequest in Sophia Smith's will, our college was founded. That's just one – albeit spectacular – example of what "estate planning" or "planned giving" can accomplish.

Already, 100% of our class leadership team has pledged Grécourt membership to set the pace. We invite the rest of the Class of '69 to consider joining us. Put the proverbial "pen to paper," and become part of The Grécourt Society by making a planned giving commitment now – in whatever manner and for whatever amount you see fit.



There are many ways for today's Smith alumnae to give, from outright bequests in wills, to beneficiary designations in retirement funds and insurance policies, charitable gift annuities, charitable trusts, and many other creative instruments of planned giving. Smith's excellent Office of Gift Planning has knowledgeable staff and an informative website, and is eager to help you determine which of these strategies fit best: http://smith.plannedgiving.org. Edie Dinneen and Mary Goldschmid, Co-Chairs of Planned Giving for our class, are also ready to help guide potential donors (EdieDinneen@aol.com; MaryGoldschmid@gmail.com), although the ultimate decision-making is obviously up to you, your family, legal and financial advisers.

Over 50 members of our class have already provided for Smith in their estate plans and, as a result, are members of The Grécourt Society, named for the Smith College Relief Unit that helped French villages recover from World War I. Anyone who notifies The Office of Gift Planning that she has included Smith – <u>in any amount</u> - in her will, trust, or other estate plans, is welcomed as a member of Grécourt: http://smith.plannedgiving.org/smith/giving/2.html. It's that simple. One need not provide documentation of the gift or disclose the value; and if your circumstances change, you are free to modify or withdraw the gift.

Besides the obvious benefit for Smith, there are advantages to donors in becoming members of Grécourt. In addition to the special reception during reunions, there is the privilege of wearing a light ("mystic") blue ribbon in the reunion parade (see accompanying cameo of Donna Dempster Gundy). A more serious reason is that, depending on your particular circumstances and the type of gift you select, there can be current and future tax breaks (see accompanying cameo of Priscilla Carter Fort). And, even with something as simple as a contingency percentage allocation of an IRA, you can also help our class win the prize in 2019 for having added the most new Grécourt members since the last reunion!

Sophia would approve.

DONNA'S STORY



Donna Dempster Gundy and her grandaughters

"I want a blue ribbon, too!" That's what Donna Dempster Gundy thought as she marched with classmates in our 45th reunion parade last year. Why did they have a blue ribbon next to the usual yellow one, but she didn't?

For the 50th reunion, Donna will have her own blue ribbon since she joined The Grécourt Society earlier this year. "It was so easy to do," said Donna. "My husband and I were updating our wills so I just slipped something in for Smith and notified the college online." Donna eagerly added that, as a former scholarship student, it gave her great satisfaction to earmark her bequest for future scholarship recipients. Also, the arrival of FIVE granddaughters has left Donna even more enthusiastic about Smith and blue ribbons.

PRISCILLA'S STORY



Priscilla Carter Fort and her daughter

Priscilla Carter Fort is both loyal to Smith and economically savvy. Long before she knew that Grécourt was more than the name of the front gates on Elm Street, she had included Smith in her will. In her own words: "I know that I could not have enjoyed those formative years in Northampton without the financial support of others who appreciated what they found at Smith. Could I turn down this simple opportunity to pay it forward as well as pay back? Even in small amounts, the gifts we leave to the college help make the Smith experience possible for countless students to come."

Recently, Priscilla supplemented the bequest in her will with the establishment of a deferred payment gift annuity, on the advice of her tax adviser. She funded it in 2012 and deferred the first payment to 2018. As a result, she locked in a 7.3% annual rate. That rate continues to be available today for most Class of 1969 donors willing to wait about eight years for their first payment (versus about 4.9% for immediate payout).

Gift annuities like this continue to be the most popular life income gift at Smith. Charitable gift annuities also provide significant tax advantages. There is an immediate income tax deduction for a portion of the contribution and part of the annuity payment is tax-free. Charitable gift annuities are usually a win-win situation for both donors and Smith.

IF YOUR TESTAMENTARY GIFT TO SMITH IS OVER \$10,000 ...

Current and future members of Grécourt, please take note: Your generosity and foresight can help our class win the 2019 Reunion prize for the five-year comprehensive giving total. For our 50th Reunion, Smith will count 50% of the current value of bequests over \$10,000 as long as you also make a gift of at least \$500 to the Smith Fund in our reunion year (July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019). Charitable gift annuities and other life income gifts are other ways to support Smith and are counted at full face value since Smith receives the money immediately when the gift is funded.

Visit this website to learn more about it.

http://smith.plannedgiving.org/clients/691/forms/reunion_bequest_intention_policy_and_counting_form_updated_03_20_15.pdf.

Please contact The Office of Gift Planning to confirm that your intended gift will qualify, and that our class will get reunion credit.

Email gift planning@smith.edu, or call 413-585-2035.

Give to the Smith Fund!

Smith is a vibrant institution where women are finding their voices and writing their stories. Though they seem so much more sophisticated than we did at 18, they probably suffer some of the same insecurities. They need our support.

An important way to support Smith women today is by giving to the Smith Fund. Your contribution supports the College's current operating expenses, as well as financial aid for Smith students. Alumnae participation in Smith Fund giving is also one factor in determining college rankings in national media. Your gift will increase the value of a Smith education!

Giving is easy: Go to <u>www.</u> <u>smith.edu/future/giving/giftform.php</u> or send a check to:

The Smith Fund 33 Elm Street, Northampton, MA 01063.

Thank you! Margi Wittigschlager Nareff, Susan Bangs Munro

1969 Class Fund Co-Chairs

CLASS DUES ARE THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR FINANCIAL FOUNDATION FOR REUNION

Your class dues are only \$75 for five years. Please make your check payable to the "Smith Class of 1969" and mail it to your Class Treasurer:

Harriet Cook McGuire 3007 Russell Road Alexandria, VA 22305-1719.

This amount covers all five years 2014-2019.

If you prefer to send annual dues, that fee is \$20 per year. Your dues plus any additional monies you give to support our class are tax deductible.

Let's gather as many dues payments as possible in 2016 so our 50th Reunion planning team will have a strong foundation to make our reunion the best ever!

OUR HATS ARE OFF TO THE FUND TEAM!

Mary McCulloch Baker (2014-15) Ann (Nancy) Weathers Callender Dorothea (Thea) Dodge Cardamone Jane Slocum Deland Edith (Edie) Dinneen Cynthia Greenleaf Fanton Joan Meltzer FitzGibbon Suzanne (Sue) Herrick Foley April Hoxie Foley Deborah (Debbie) Chase Franczek Mary Seibert Goldschmid Priscilla (Sally) Winkler Kenaston Janet Taylor Lisle Iean Merrill Joyce Moran Susan Bangs Munro Margaret (Margi) Wittigschlager Nareff Katherine Reuter Lisa Henderson Rosenbloom Sue Ann Levin Schiff Marjorie (Margie) Barkin Searl Linda Sosnowitz (2014-15) Marcia Schenk Steckler Laura D'Andrea Tyson Virginia Pugh Wiggen

Ida Offenbach Abbott

Tyler House Albright House Wilson House Chase House Scales House Lawrence House Albright House Ziskind House Hubbard House Albright House Scales House Wilson House Baldwin House Iordan House Tyler House Wilder House Albright House Wilder House Talbot House Chapin House Cushing House Chase House King House Ziskind House Comstock House

Hubbard House

A CLASS PRESIDENT'S STORY

I'm beginning to catch on that life is really all about stories. Madeleine L'Engle '41 (1918-2007) realized this earlier, gracing us with dozens and dozens of marvelous tales. One of her wonderful characters in "A Wrinkle in Time" is oddball Meg Murry. Young Meg is worth rediscovering in your spare time. Meg reminded me of my own adolescent quirkiness as I arrived at Smith.

At age 17, I brought a weird and wonderful Pandora's box of interests and life experiences to Smith. Those experiences – those stories - bonded me to some classmates in the first week and we are still friends fifty years later. Yet certain parts of my life experience or story left me feeling that I might not truly belong at Smith. And this was despite the fact that I came to Smith with eleven high school classmates and a sister was Smith '68. Still it was very hard sometimes to find my way. I picked an oddball major – Russian Language and Literature. I spent a lot of Saturday nights huddled over books trying to keep up with brainiacs who seemed to play bridge more than study. I never played sports. I was in the minority by choosing to attend Chapel on Sunday mornings rather than sleep in.



Perhaps for some of you, finding your "place" - connecting with others at Smith through your own stories - was also challenging. We've asked class leadership team members and other classmates to share some of their own stories. I feel so lucky that at age 67 (soon age 68) I am still writing chapters of my Smith story through my work with the class and as I try to nurture decades-long friendships and build new ones. Sometimes it seems my time on campus walking the halls of Lamont was so long ago that it was a wrinkle in time, a weird and wondrous imaginary trip through a space-time continuum. But it wasn't imaginary. It was as seminal an experience as any in my life - and a wondrous one.

I hope all of you will commit, no matter what your Smith story, to connect and reconnect as we head toward our 50th reunion year. We are an awesome group of women. We can encourage each other on our journeys as we share our individual stories. What is yours? Has it made you, as Madeleine suggests, more alive, more human, more courageous?

CELEBRATING MORE STORIES....FROM 50 YEARS AGO

Freshman year exists in my memory as a mélange of the sublime and the ridiculous. One evening early in September my dad "dropped in" to Chapin from five hours away to take me to dinner at Wiggins Tavern. Dressing up for the evening, dining on not-dorm food, and enjoying an adult beverage contributed to the sublime. The ridiculous arrived at 7:30 p.m. when my father left me at the gym for the fire rope test. Shedding the heels, I climbed over the railing and in stockings and dress, rappelled down the faux house front, collected my shoes, and walked back to Chapin. What strikes me now - fifty years later - is that I didn't think to ask how a ten-foot rope would help me escape from a fourth floor room.



-Barbara Van Iderstine Holden

I grew up as a sparkling fish in a very small pond – a village of 1,700 people in a rural area of northern New York. No one from my high school had gone to an Ivy or a Seven Sisters. Going to Smith was like being thrown into the ocean. I was out of my depth academically and socially. Freshman year, spurred on by the fear of losing my scholarship, I studied hard enough to excel and win awards, which made me even more terrified of being uncovered as a fraud – a dumb girl who studied but couldn't



master bridge. Eventually I got the hang of the academics; in fact, courses in sociology, art history, and of course English Lit opened up the world to me. I found my niche in student government, but my social life centered on a boy at Union College in Schenectady, my high school love, whom I married senior year. Looking back, I realize with some regret how much that limited my fun and relationships. The best thing about Smith is the afterlife – the many Smith friendships I've made since graduation. Those just get better with age.

-Susan Bangs Munro

I was thrilled to be at Smith. I remember hugging a pillar at Helen Hills Hills Chapel on my way to Alpha Choir practice. I struggled freshman year, both academically and socially. I discovered soon enough that I was no longer at the top of my class as I had been in high school, and my self-confidence took a beating. Although I really enjoyed labs in Physics 11, I never could seem to get the right answer in problem sets! I switched away from sciences, and started getting better grades, but I still retain a deep interest in the natural world. The greenhouse, right below my window, became my refuge.

It didn't take long to notice there were so many students who had money and spent it easily. They bought clothes on Green Street; they went out to eat whenever they felt like it; they traveled a lot, especially to visit boys. And most infuriating, they didn't seem to notice their privilege. I had to stretch the \$400 income from my summer job to last the school year. I wondered how I would fit in. It took me until junior year to find my stride.

Chapin House and a major in American Studies gave me a home and a family. Tutoring in Springfield and organizing on campus against racism and the war nurtured my social conscience. When W.I.T.C.H. (Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell) visited campus with a feminist vengeance, I recoiled, but I thank them now for setting me on a lifelong path of working on women's issues. I'm not one to regret, but I wish I had studied economics (to help me figure out current affairs), and I wish I had learned about the then-taboo subject of lesbianism (to help me figure out about myself). In class I learned to love research and analysis, tools that have since served me well. Smith was no bed of roses for me, but I proudly carried mine on Ivy Day.



-Pam Chamberlain

Who remembers the 30 mile rule? And blanket permission? I arrived at Smith with my parents, who had driven the couple of hours down the Mass Pike and up Route 5 to drop me off, my childhood rocking chair tied to the top of the car. When it came time to sign off on "blanket permission" (a poorly-titled document for any parent to consider in 1965), my parents said "absolutely not!" They wanted to know and give permission if I was going to spend the night away from Cushing House. Mrs. Woods, our housemother, wise in the ways of anxious first-time parents of freshmen, calmed their fears and suggested that it was time for me to be able to make these decisions (and I suspect it was a nuisance for her to have to keep track!). As it happened, they would NEVER have given permission for me to spend the night in a number of spots in which I turned up. One of those spots was a bed in Mrs. Trainor's boarding house in Amherst during sophomore year. Perhaps anticipating the fact that students were going to spend the night where they darn well wanted to, Smith lifted the ban on overnights within 30 miles of campus.

Ann Eberly and I were dating two guys – roommates - who were dorm proctors at Amherst, and we reveled in the idea that we could avoid the Route 9 rush to get back to Smith by 1 AM on Saturday night. We boldly signed out to Mrs. Trainor's, and headed over to Amherst on Saturday with our overnight things. As we had no need to get back by cur-



few, the four of us thought that it would be an adventure to stay in James Hall later than the rule allowed. The freshmen, observing that the only car in the Quad belonged to their dorm proctor, and realizing that their dorm proctors had not left the premises with their dates, camped out by the door with glee. The only exit was out the window of their room - so out the four of us tumbled. We ran to the car hoping to avoid the circling Amherst security vehicle, drove like a flash to Mrs. Trainor's, where Ann and I dashed up the stairs and fell into bed fully clothed. We convinced ourselves that Miss Russell, Dean of Students, was waiting for us at the top of the stairs - and absent that, that she had already done a bed check, had called our parents to tell them that we were AWOL, and that we would be expelled the following morning. We were such 'fraidy cats…and such innocents. Miss Russell had bigger fish to fry. Anti-Vietnam protests, shifting sexual politics, and increasing numbers of issues-of-the-day would quickly replace the paternalism that tried to keep us all in line.

And, dear reader, Ann and I married them!

-Marjorie Barkin Searl

HOUSE REPS – A BIG THANK YOU!

Ziskind

Gini Erck

Margot Levy

A big thank you to the classmates who have agreed to serve as House Reps between now and our 50th! They play a vital role in keeping us all in touch and, most recently, updating everyone's information. If you have not heard from your House Rep or have not responded to her yet, please make sure you send her your current contact information (name, address, phone, e-mail.) We don't want to lose touch with anyone.

| House Rep Co-Chairs: | Priscilla Carter Fort Joan Meltzer FitzGibbon | fortmom@gmail.com or (931) 841-0408 joanfitz@comcast.net or (317) 545-1752 |
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DID YOU KNOW?

- More and more of our class communications will be by email it's simpler, speedier and saves \$\$\$. If we and the College -don't have your current email address, we will miss being in touch with you. Please take a minute to go to the alumnaerecords@smith.edu or contact anyone on the class leadership team and we will forward your info to Alumnae Records. Also try to ensure your Smith '69 emails are not headed for your spam folder!
- We have a new link in our chain to keep in touch with one another! The Class Notes section of the Smith Alumnae Quarterly publishes a scant 750 words about our class every 3 months. That's a little like "All the news that fits, we print." We always have more information than can fit in that space. So to coincide with the winter 2016 edition of the Quarterly (arriving soon), you can see the complete listing on our Facebook page, Smith College Class of 1969.

Fewer than half our classmates are members. Here is how to find the Smith College Class of 1969 Facebook page and request to join if you are not already a member of the group. Join 120+ of us:

- Go to http://www.facebook.com. Fill in your full name and a valid email address.
- Then choose a password, at least 6 characters. Add your date of birth.
- Continue to work your way through the pages of the signup process.
- Log onto Facebook and go to the "Search for People Places and Things",
- Write Smith College Class of 1969 in the upper right hand corner of the page.
- Click "Join Group". This will automatically send a request to our class administrators Margie Barkin Searl and Linda Sicher to approve your request. You're done!
- Check out our Smith '69 Website. Just click http://alumnae.smith.edu/smithcms/1969/ If you need a password, it is our gym suit color and who could forget that?