



# Class News



## Class of 1969

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



*We are living in extraordinary and surreal times. This newsletter started months ago as a tribute to our 50th reunion, an event very special to all who attended. Some of the news seems antiquated in today's circumstances, where many of us have been "sheltering in place" for weeks and all of us are hoping for the good health of those around us. Perhaps memories of our closeness in Northampton less than a year ago will help us weather this storm. Many phone calls with Smith friends have cheered us. Houses have started Zoom teas or cocktail hours to comfort and catch up. We stand together to support each other; please reach out by phone or text/email and go to our class Facebook page to connect in this time of social distancing. Hugs are hard to come by standing six feet apart, much less across the country and world, but they are extended through cyberspace to classmates we hold in our hearts. Be safe. Be well. \**

During this strange time, we look back at our reunion last May and tentatively toward our 55th in 2024. We have a new team in place, many of them veterans of reunion planning and fundraising for Smith. I am very grateful to the old and new members of the team. Please feel free to contact us with ideas for staying in touch over the next four years. If you'd like to volunteer, speak up and we will find a place for you!

For me, the best part of reunion was seeing longtime friends, some I hadn't seen in 50 years. We marched together, talked a lot, and, missing Friendly's, still shared ice cream at night. Visiting with Professors Don Robinson and Marjorie Senechal brought back memories of intellectual challenges and insights, as well as gratitude for our education.

**Roz Zakheim**

*\*Special thanks to Susan Bangs Munro for her editing and to Jodi Fallon Fern, our liaison at Smith, for formatting and publishing the newsletter electronically.*

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## **PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Some of you may remember the sparkly white sneakers that adorned my feet in our 50th reunion parade. With the numbers 69 glued on the tops and 2019 on the sides, they reflected my immense pride in our class of awesome women and the incredible team that invested so much time and energy to make this once-in-a-lifetime occasion such a success. Special thanks to Beth Sweetow and Elissa Getto for their work to make our reunion so much fun and to ensure it ran smoothly. Because of the work of our house reps, our reunion attendance numbers left other classes in the dust. Our fundraisers made sure we won every prize, in money raised and in Grécourt Society members added over the previous five years. Producing our Class Book was a monumental effort. My sparkly shoes are in the closet ready for 2024, with so much pride in the great Class of '69!

**Janet Williams Harrison**



Marguerite Smith, Joyce Moran, Roz Zakheim, and Darlene Brown following Ivy Day parade

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## THOUGHTS ON RETURNING TO SMITH AFTER 50 YEARS

My 50th reunion was one of the most memorable times of my life. Why in the world had I never gone to a Smith reunion before? Distance was surely one of the factors, along with restlessness and rebellion during my college years. Those were not the happiest years of my life, but I didn't blame Smith for that unrest. I knew it was within myself and within the times.

Over the years, not going to the reunion had become a habit. My life in Minnesota was full and busy. Our house was full of our children and the neighbors' children and foster children. Going on a trip by myself just was not something I did. Even when I visited college friends "out East" for my 40th birthday, I didn't consider attending a reunion.

Gradually, my thinking shifted. I went to my high school 40th reunion and 50th elementary school reunion. Both were pure joy. Then, in March 2019 I received the MOST wonderful reunion book (to which I had mistakenly not contributed). Thank you, Kathy Martin and Margi Nareff, for your huge contribution. I pored over that book, reading about dear friends, peripheral friends, and departed friends.

Reunion was delightful. I reconnected with old friends with whom I had kept up over the years and those whom I had lost in the interim. I loved every single moment. One of the most touching events was the Memorial

Service, officiated by our own classmate-pastors, who exuded peace and caring. I have been staunchly anti-church since the '60's, and yet being in that chapel, surrounded by former classmates, touched me deeply. I relish the memories of that weekend and the memories from the '60s that were revisited.

### **Hannah Mary (Ham-e) Edwards Lakin**

Fifty years is a long time to avoid reliving memories of a significant time in one's life, but for several reasons it is what I did. Then, having reconnected with some marvelous Smithie friends through Facebook, I decided to come to my 50th reunion. Like my time at Smith, I had a mixed reaction. Arriving in Northampton I felt like a stranger. The campus was totally unfamiliar. Had I really studied here? The dorm room was barren and felt much smaller than what I remembered. I felt quite alone and an outsider. Slowly, however, I began connecting with the wonderful, warm, brilliant, accomplished women who had been my housemates and classmates. I felt part of something unique and meaningful. And we had fun, talking, debating, marching through the quad, banners in hand to celebrate ourselves and the next generations of students attending this special college, holding the hope and future of our world in their hands. I loved walking around the pond. I loved dancing with the young women partying that night. I was proud of how Smith had evolved. I was proud of its openness and inclusiveness. And most importantly, I was really happy to spend great time with women with whom I had spent four years, and even after all these years to feel real friendship and connection. I am happy I went. I hope we stay in touch sharing our thoughts and concerns.

### **Nina Matis**

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Ziskind House friends at President's reception

## COMMUNICATIONS FROM YOUR TEAM

### **Reunion Co-Chairs, Rosa Leader Smith and Dabney Waters Schmitt**

Our 50th was amazing and I loved catching up with people from my various houses: Hampshire because I lived at home for the first three years; Sessions because they have made me an honorary member; and Chase where I lived senior year! The Poetry Center programming and class Art Show were highlights for me. I am excited and honored to lead the organizing for our 55th reunion. Marcia Schenk Steckler has regrettably stepped down as reunion co-chair due to her husband's health, but I am thrilled that Dabney Waters Schmitt has joined the team as co-chair. **Please be thinking of a theme for our 55th and send your suggestions our way ( [dabneyschmitt@gmail.com](mailto:dabneyschmitt@gmail.com) or [rleadersmi@aol.com](mailto:rleadersmi@aol.com)). – Rosa Leader Smith**

### **Co-secretaries, Jill Judd Witten and JJ Taylor Lisle**

Our reunion was a blast. At almost the last minute, I asked my husband Roger to come along, knowing there would be at least one other husband there. As it turned out, there were at least five husbands, plus a brother, who had a great time together at meals and while we attended the class meeting. Seeing my fellow Baldwinites after 50 years was a profound reminder of what we all experienced together in those formative four years. Our fondness for each other resurfaced and made us wish to meet again soon, which six of us did last fall in New York.

Our class chairs beautifully organized everything so that it flowed

smoothly. At the elegant President's reception, we had a chance to chat with President McCartney and her husband, both of whom are amazing. While wandering through the Illumination at night, I was invited to join the Smiffenpoofs for a song on the Chapin steps. I remembered all the words!

The warmth of renewed and new friendships has stayed with me since last May. I look forward to our 55th. — **Jill Judd Witten**

**Web Chair, Margaret (Margot) Levy**

The amazing turnout at reunion meant I was able to connect and reconnect with so many women, some of whom I had not seen for (too many) years. The blend of memories, traditions, current ideas, and life events was exhilarating and energizing. Let's keep the momentum going and make good on our resolutions to stay in touch!

**Social Media Coordinator, Margie Barkin Searl**

Our [Facebook](#) page is a great way to stay in touch, plan gatherings, and plan for our next reunion. Let's keep our excellent Class of '69 hive mind active and vibrant. Please check in often!



Albright and Tenney Housemates at Saturday's dinner

**House Reps, Joan Meltzer FitzGibbon and Priscilla Carter Fort**

We provide information for the House Reps to share with all of their housemates. Please thank them for keeping you informed and continue to keep them up to date on any changes in email, mailing address, or phone number. We don't want to lose track of anyone.

A special “thank-you” to the tireless 2014-19 House Reps, most of whom have re-upped for the next reunion cycle! Their energy and enthusiasm in contacting every classmate for both the 50th and the incredible Class Book were instrumental in the extraordinary success of our reunion.

**As of this writing, we have two openings for House Reps:**

**Martha Wilson and Gillett.** Interested in joining the fun and staying connected? Check in with Priscilla Carter Fort ([fortmom@gmail.com](mailto:fortmom@gmail.com)) to discuss the workload (lightweight) and the benefits (heavy-duty).

**Memorial Chairs, Lisa Henderson Rosenbloom and Joyce Moran**

I’ve been to many of our reunions, but I found this one remarkable. Our class officers did an especially outstanding job of organizing; the sun shone; the flowers were in bloom; and so many classmates we hadn’t seen for a very long time came back.

More than 20 of us who had been members of the Glee Club also had the opportunity to sing together under the direction of our very own Lisa Getto. The service itself was led by three clergywomen from our class and one of Smith’s female chaplains – something that would have been impossible in 1969. We have reached out to families of our deceased classmates to let them know how well we continue to remember our friends.

Many of us noticed how wonderfully diverse Smith has become. I believe it was noticeably more diverse than it was five years ago, and certainly hugely improved since the years when I served on the Alumnae Fund Committee. I know there is still a substantial way to go and that this will always be a work in progress, but I was proud to see visible evidence of a much more inclusive Smith College. – **Lisa Henderson Rosenbloom**

**Fundraising Team, Susan Bangs Munro, Margi Wittigslager Nareff & Debbie Chase Franczek**

Last May we celebrated our 50th reunion with 70% class giving participation and a remarkable \$18.7 million gift raised in the five years leading to reunion. Now we find ourselves in unprecedented times. Smith, like other institutions of higher learning, has shifted to remote teaching. Students have gone home and are practicing social distancing. For some of them this has meant scrambling to make complicated travel plans, find temporary housing, or quickly acquire needed technology.

The College has established the [Student Emergency Aid Fund](#) to meet the needs of these students. We urge all of you to read President McCartney's [letters](#) about how Smith is meeting the challenges of the pandemic.

Now, as always, Smith is committed to reducing the financial barriers to education that exist for so many of the world's most promising students. When you give to the Student Emergency Aid Fund or the [Annual Fund](#), you express your gratitude for your Smith education by investing in women to achieve excellence, to expand opportunity, and to create and sustain change.



Grécourt Society members from '69 out in force

### **Planned Giving, Edie Dinneen and Mary Goldschmid**

At our 50th reunion, the amazing generosity of classmates helped our class win the prize for the most new members of The Grécourt Society, and caused the total of our various forms of planned gifts to account for 65% of the overall five-year class gift total of \$18.7 million. Heartfelt thanks to all!

As you shelter in place over the next several weeks, we hope you take some time to review your current planned giving intentions to see if some could be realized before the corona dust settles. There is much you can do on your own without a lawyer. Just ask your financial advisor, or IRA or 401(k) custodian, for a copy of your existing beneficiary form and see if it accurately reflects your current situation and intentions. If not, you should be able to request a change-of-beneficiary form and make any desired changes in just a matter of minutes, often online.

If you decide to include Smith as a beneficiary (primary or contingent, in



any amount) please remember to notify Smith's Office of Gift Planning ([gift\\_planning@smith.edu](mailto:gift_planning@smith.edu)) so that you can be welcomed into The Grécourt Society as an alumna who has included Smith in her testamentary plans.

We also strongly recommend [smith.plannedgiving.org](https://smith.plannedgiving.org) for a worthwhile read about other giving opportunities that provide tax advantages and life-income streams.

### Class of 1969 Volunteers

**Rosalyn (Roz or Rozzie) Zakheim**  
President

**Rosa Leader Smith**  
Reunion Co-Chair

**Dabney Waters Schmitt**  
Reunion Co-Chair

**Sandra (Sandy) Fascell Diamond**  
Treasurer

**Jill Judd Witten**  
Co-Secretary

**Janet (JJ) Taylor Lisle**  
Co-Secretary

**Margaret (Margot) Levy**  
Web Chair

**Marjorie (Margie) Barkin Searl**  
Social Media Coordinator

**Susan Bangs Munro**  
Co-Fund Team Coordinator

**Margi Wittigschlager Nareff**  
Co-Fund Team Coordinator

**Debbie Chase Franczek**  
Special Gift Chair

**Mary Seibert Goldschmid**  
Planned Giving Co-Chair

**Edith (Edie) Dinneen**  
Planned Giving Co-Chair

**Joan Meltzer FitzGibbon**  
House Reps Co-Chair

**Priscilla Carter Fort**  
House Reps Co-Chair

**Joyce Moran**  
Memorial Co-Chair

**Lisa Henderson Rosenbloom**  
Memorial Co-Chair

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### Connect With Us

Class of 1969

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