FROM YOUR OFFICERS
(Officers were asked to write about their role and anything else they would like to share.)

Sarah Cross Mills – President
My primary role is to maintain communication with you and hope to inspire you to stay informed about today’s Smith and in touch with classmates. Smith, recently placed #1 on a list of women’s colleges, is where we’ve met dear friends and received the foundation for so much of our long lives. The easiest way to update your contact information is to send an email to: alumnaerecords@smith.edu.

Our team of officers will swing into 55th reunion planning come fall, so it’s not too soon to think about how you would like to participate and ideas you have about what will make another great reunion.

When I moved from CA to ME eight years ago, I imagined living as a retiree: a quiet life with minor volunteer roles, time to read and craft with paper, and outdoor exploring. Hah! I’m busier than I ever was in CA, and there is not one activity that I would give up, especially my latest work with the immigrant community of refugees and asylum seekers.

My two favorite Smith book group reads have been A Constellation of Vital Phenomena and A Gentleman in Moscow.

(Remaining Class Officers on following pages.)

Smith Archives Need Your Donations

Have you kept letters, journals, diaries, scrapbooks, photographs from your time on campus/junior year abroad? Specific items and career-related papers from your years since graduating may be added into Archives’ collection. If you’re downsizing soon or haven’t been able to let go of these items, consider checking with Archives about giving your memorabilia to Smith. If you are not sure your items are appropriate, browse various collections at http://www.smith.edu/libraries/libs/archives/collections and contact Nanci Young, College Archivist, at nyoung@smith.edu before sending your items.
Peggy Chase – Co-Vice President/Reunion Chair
Now living back in Colorado near my youngest daughter and her family (narrowly missing the devastating fires and floods in Southern California), I am going to be partnering happily with Martha McHutchison in planning our next reunion - IF I am functional at all the necessary levels! Actually, I am hoping that some of us might have an opportunity to dance to some of OUR favorite vintage tunes! One of my thoughts would be to solicit our class as to what would create an irresistible “pull” to join us in our celebration of our 55th with our usual panache!

Martha McHutchison – Co-Vice President/Reunion Chair
Still shocked and dismayed (and intimidated) that I accepted this gig, but I’m hoping Peggy and I can pull it off. Must have been a flashback to living with Sarah high above 120th and Amsterdam—Columbia Teachers College interns, with interchangeable boyfriends, Pappagallo heels, and no need for sleep or food! And now Joan Baez is doing a farewell tour—where did the time go? I’m currently wrapping up a second career as a realtor (not nearly as rewarding as my main career as a High School English teacher) and looking forward to totally flexible scheduling. Living in Guilford, CT, with my second husband, and probably staying here, despite no nearby kids.

Great recent reads—Pachinko, Sing, Unburied, and Homegoing. Found Hillary’s What Happened very mixed—quite bitter, but also very interesting about women in politics. And I’d be bitter, too.

Ann Eglin Allen – Secretary
The Secretary’s job is relatively easy: my one continuing responsibility is writing the Class Notes for the Smith Alumnae Quarterly. The magazine sends out a reminder to alumnae each quarter telling them to submit their news to me. I then edit whatever news our classmates send. I depend on all of you for content of the column, so please, please, send in news, stories, book recommendations, travel adventure, anything that you think might be of interest to classmates. Send a picture, too, if it’s of two or more classmates or college friends, and the Alumnae Quarterly editors will try to include it if there is space.

My husband and I are moving out of the house we have lived in for forty years and are selling the house to our son and family. We will move into a smaller house in May just two blocks away. Still, moving “stuff” seems very daunting. If anyone wants to send tips on downsizing, I would welcome them, and will share with classmates! Photo shows me tired and grumpy…. The book I read most recently is Manhattan Beach. I thought it was terrific, but the ending was very disappointing and hard to believe.

Sandy Putnam – Web Chair
My job, which I am pleased to occupy, is to maintain and update the class website at smith66.org or https://alumnae.smith.edu/smithcms/1966/. My main tasks are to monitor the content and functionality of the website and keep postings accurate and current. I log in regularly to see that all links on different pages still work.

Periodically, other officers provide me with updates to pages that pertain to their duties. The Home page has messages from the Class President, which are updated as requested, with the possibility of photos from her visits to Smith; it also includes a link to the class newsletter. I add Class Notes every quarter including photos as available. These are sent to me by the Class Secretary when she submits them to Smith. When they are published in the Alumnae Quarterly, I edit the notes to match the published version, remove those posted previously on the website, then add them to the site. Since this results in the same time delay between “news” made and notes shared (by request of the college), please send any other news and photos my way at any time for immediate posting to our website. The class Facebook page is also a place to post your news, travels, book recommendations, accomplishments, honors, etc. continued
We would like to enhance the website and extend and expand its use by class members well before the run up to our 55th reunion, so look at the site soon and see what you could add now. We're sure there are updates to topics such as classmates' personal or professional websites, books written/published by classmates, etc. We could also have an active and engaging discussion of books recently read. Other areas of the site that are updated are Fundraising, the In Memoriam page, Newsletters/SAQ, and separate pages on the 50th Reunion. Sad news of deceased classmates with links to obituaries and testimonials are posted as soon as received from the President.

Finally, we are considering polling classmates on their use of the class website as well as other social media sites, including Facebook and Instagram. As reunion approaches, we expect to be posting a lot of photos, videos, and other data about the reunion on a new page of the site.

Gail Kern Paster - Fund Team Coordinator
I, along with a team of amazing and loyal '66ers, am your Class Fund Coordinator. In other words, I lead the team that cajoles you, persuades you, inspires you, and thanks you to support the College and its amazing, world-changing mission for the 21st century. I came to the task following the inspirational lead of Elsa Pauley, and having trained in the rewarding art of fundraising after 9 years for the Folger Shakespeare Library as its director. All that is required for the job is passion (which I have) and a tough skin (ditto).

Anne Leventritt Bschorr - Special Gifts Chair
I am one of several members of the Class of 1966 Fund Team led ever so ably by Gail Kern Paster. In analyzing why I undertook this job, I have to go way back to growing up with a father who was an incredibly devoted Princetonian. He served as his class treasurer for 35 years and took great delight in bringing a classmate back into the fold after a period of non-giving. I would guess that his wanting to give back to the school he loved had to have influenced my decision to say yes.

The more I read about the ground-breaking programs and the incredible young women attending Smith, the more I realize how important alumnae giving has become. Without our giving back, many of these students would not be able to afford this amazing education. Now is the time in our lives that we need to support Smith to the maximum level possible.

Susan Werner Thoresen - Planned Giving Chair
When Sarah asked us to write 100 words, I remembered my five-year pledge at our 50th reunion.

Today, I authorized a distribution from my IRA payable to Smith College. As far as I know, the tax law changes still allow direct distributions from our IRAs to non-profit charities and you do not have to pay taxes on the distribution. Most classmates are over 70 1/2, and hence have RMDs (required minimum distributions).

Last August, Bob and I celebrated our 50th anniversary. This year, we finally went to Argentina, Brazil and Chile (ABC) which I had wanted to do ever since I had Ramon Ruiz freshman year, one of my best professors. I also took his ABC course and a South American geography course, but took no Spanish or Portuguese, just more French! I recommend Odysseys Unlimited (or International ??) with great guides and trips.

Caroline Soleliac Carbaugh & Elsa Pottala Pauley - Co-Memorial Gift Chairs
We are very grateful to our classmates who make gifts to the college in memory of classmates or other Smithies. This is a lovely way to honor someone who is special to you. We write thank you notes to those who make memorial gifts and we write condolences to next of kin of classmates who have died.

Caroline keeps busy volunteering for Smith at local and national levels, her church and garden-related organizations, enjoying her delightful grandchildren, and traveling. Elsa also continues to volunteer for Smith at the class, local, and national levels, and loves spending time with her wonderful grandchildren each week. As we both love to travel, we took a fabulous trip together with our husbands last September and hope to do more trips together in the future. We both love this stage of our lives.
Looking Back and LOOKING FORWARD
(More from your President)

I wonder how many of you who attended our fabulous 50th feel as I do - that it was only a few short months ago! Time certainly seems to be speeding up during these years in the final third of life. I haven't even gotten through our whole magnificent reunion book yet! But I will. We are too fascinating a class to skip over a single entry in this treasured tome. What a labor of love on the part of Nancy Thompson Godfrey and Merrill McLoughlin, with support from their editorial team. Such a precious record of the lives of dear friends and other classmates.

The “kaleidoscope” of activities planned and overseen by Reunion Co-Chairs Linda Cornell Weinstein and Darcy Wheeler Bacon proved to us their talents and capabilities in providing a weekend unique to our class, while the events offered by the college complemented their efforts. Vicki Reiter Goldstein as Program Chair planned the two offerings where classmates volunteered to participate as panelists who highlighted their interests, expertise and experiences that made us so proud of being part of this amazing group of women. The reunion program choices open to all classes included Jane Lakes Harman as a speaker, and of course many of us attended that.

Also uniquely ours was the beautiful Service of Remembrance, planned by Holly Harrison Gathright and her team. It was filled with music rehearsed and sung by a large group of our classmates; ecumenical readings and hymns; and the emotional placing of a red rose in a vase as each of our deceased classmates’ names was read.

Of course, the various mini-reunions (some by houses) in places like New York City, Washington DC, Boston, and Los Angeles brought together many classmates before May, and the enthusiasm built by these gatherings helped guarantee attendance at 2016 reunions by a record-breaking 43% of our class! Sally Beck Baker and Nancy Chiswick were the boosters of mini-reunions and house reps, respectively, who played a big part in our being able to reconnect with so many old friends.

Judy Bronstein Milestone was our Parade Chair, challenged to corral a team of writers for the one-liners on our signs and to oversee their production. We can’t forget how effective those signs are to all who line the parade route and to other reunion classes who love seeing each group of signs and placing them in the flow of history. Judy took on other roles as well, such as inviting our Saturday dinner speaker, Susan Bourque, who brilliantly outlined both social and political change over the previous five decades, from her perspective of a Professor of Government (in addition to other faculty roles) and her position as a senior research associate of the Project on Women and Social Change.

Anne Palmbaum Keyser chaired the Class Dinner and facilitated planning with the college and all it now offers and adding our own class touches. Having time for the preview of the film about classmate Molly Ivins and the fascinating presentation by Nancy Kropp Grote who conducted our class survey made the evenings full and satisfying (not to mention the food and wine doing the same.) Our headquarters in Ziskind provided a space for conversation, making music, and appreciating the creativity of many classmates shown through their art and literary talents, all organized and decorated by Ann Shapiro Zartler and friends.

Capably keeping our class website up to date on all reunion details was webmaster Barbara Tuggle Fetting. (Speaking of the website, this is the place to go to see all the photographs of reunion.) Gathering and editing Class Notes for the Alumnae Quarterly the previous five years was Susan Froehly Teich. Both roles were key in our staying connected to classmates and planning our return to campus. Barb posted all the photos from reunion on the website, just as she had added photos and messages during the preceding years.

Nancy Fenn Dietz as Treasurer kept track of class money matters for the five years before reunion and made sure expenses were within budget for reunion. She obviously enjoyed this role enough to agree to repeat it for the current cycle!

Our co-Fund Agents, Elsa Pottala Pauley and Caroline Soleliac Carbaugh, led the 5-year efforts to meet fundraising targets for this benchmark 50th reunion, supported by a team including Lois Hoffman Thompson, Special Gifts Chair; Sue Werner Thorson, Planned Giving Chair; Susie Field Mullens, Memorial gifts Chair; and a slew of Class Gift Agents, Ambassadors and Stewards. This entire Fund Team supported 74% of our class in contributing $2,594,249 in our reunion year (173% of our original goal). We were given awards for 5-year total giving ($6,363,579 and participation in giving; for Smith Stars (those who gave for 5 or more consecutive years); for highest number of Grecourt Society members; and for Friends Participation (the class with the most members in any of the Friends groups – Athletics, Libraries, Botanic Garden, Museum of Art - for the current fiscal year.

We can take pride in our class’s collective financial contribution to Smith and be grateful that we have so many generous and dedicated classmates who show their support for...
Looking Back, continued

Smith and its students now and into the future. Of course, guiding all the above planners and their teams was our past President, Karen Sargent Sirkin. Linda and Darcy, Reunion Co-Chairs, said that Karen “was involved in every aspect of the reunion planning with us. We had a wonderful time doing it together, sharing tasks, bouncing ideas off one another, catching each other’s imperfections. Planning reunion wouldn’t have been nearly as successful without Karen---or nearly as much fun.” There’s a very high bar that’s been set!

The foundation of so much of our reunion experience is built by the generous commitment of our own classmates to “give their time, talent and treasure” to our alma mater. Those highlighted above and other unnamed players contributed to the planning of this memorable weekend, which would not have been as rich and meaningful without their willingness to say “Yes!” when asked to join a team. Soon we’ll be looking for this same level of commitment for our 55th in 2021. We are all grateful to those who have made our reunions such special gatherings over the years. Participating in the planning makes the experience both different and more gratifying than being on the receiving end of others’ efforts. Is it your turn to step up and say “Yes” for 2021?

Reimagining Our Beloved Neilson Library

Did you have a favorite carrel in Neilson? Was it because it was the quietest? Or was it close to the Wright Connector and coffee? Maybe it was near the stacks housing the books you needed most often. Or did you study in a room with lots of windows or favor the comfort of the dark paneled reading room? We all probably have many memories of time spent in Neilson, so it will be with mixed feelings that we explore the new Neilson after its reopening scheduled for fall of 2020.

The impressive and transformative renovation of the building at the heart of the campus became necessary in response to the changing nature of contemporary libraries and the growing technological needs of 21st century students. A rooftop glass reading room with panoramic views from the campus to the valley and the two “jewel box” spaces on each side of the original building will no doubt offer a major “Wow” factor to us older alumnnae. View Maya Lin’s drawings of all elevations at https://www.smith.edu/libraries/about/new-neilson.

From last fall’s groundbreaking ceremony to now, demolition of the original 1909 building’s interior and preparations for the new wings on the east and west sides have created frequent changes in walking and bicycling routes through the central campus along with the sounds of large machinery at work. From an update on the Smith website at the end of April, we learn that the project has been slowed a bit following the collapse of a small part of the cornice at the top of the building.

Precautions were taken to make sure the rest of the building façade was stable and everyone on the site would be safe. (No one was injured by this unfortunate incident.) The decision was made to not resume heavy demolition until right after Commencement. Other work continued, such as planning and procurement of materials and removal of all the debris that had accumulated since the project began. On the Smith site, there are three webcams located with different views of the project if you’re curious to see the process underway.

This is Smith’s largest capital project to date. Keep in mind that we can support it with our designated gifts to the Smith Fund.