

## Class of '69 Renga: A Wellness Meander



Smith students celebrate Mountain Day 1953 on the summit of Mount Holyoke (photo by D.I. Crossley '50). Courtesy of the Smith Archives

A renga is a collaborative, linked poem of alternating couplets and haikus with a very general theme. For the class of '69 renga, classmates have come together to create a poem on **wellness**. Each stanza incorporates “well,” but how that is done has been left up to the writer. The theme has inspired serious musings about aging, friendships, and commitment. We share it here to encourage joy and connection.

### A Wellness Meander

By Jean Merrill, Margot Levy, Margie Barkin Searl, Margi Nareff, Jill Zifkin, Jan Kornbluth, Rosa Leader Smith, Lisa Rosenbloom, Beth Sweetow, Joyce Moran, Gale Eaton, Susan Bangs Munro, Jill Metcoff Jahns, Pam Chamberlain, Laurie Kramer, Nina Matis, Susan Hall Mygatt

Let us begin to  
work for a future when we  
welcome brazen change.

We're well-aged to perfection I'd say,  
Smith prepared us for life, come what may.

Life's path both love-laced  
and grief-filled, joy and sorrow,  
well-traveled with friends.

Joined by our wellspring of memories, we ask,  
What's next?...

Mountain Day wisdom:  
Welcome wide-eyed walks, pack snacks,  
say "Cheers!" to what's next.

Hop a random current. Freewheel like a gull. Catch air, swell  
and sail into a pink horizon, feathers plumped and full.

On the beach at dawn.  
After noon the waves drift in.  
Wellness rules the day.

And as night's approach gentles welling breeze, fold wings, descend.  
Toes, transmuted, spread to better purchase earthy equilibrium.

As we slowly walk  
to the Quad we well recall  
sixty-nines' same steps

What is the bond that makes us know each other so well?  
Time-erasing reunion chats with friends old and new will tell.

And how well we see  
each other's faces through time's  
bright ripples and Zoom

boxes. Let us think outside the box about well-being.  
Commit ourselves to healing our communities, our earth.

Cultivate friendships  
while rewilding the earth.  
In tandem, a rebirth

We follow the well-worn path,  
on the lookout for unused trails

And all we can see  
is the beauty of wellness,

inside us and out

From the force and power of the language of theater  
we find a deep well of connection to the world and humanity

Dahlias bloom well  
in the warm October sun,  
as do we,

Nurturing our wellness through art, nature,  
Smith friendships, and commitment to the future.