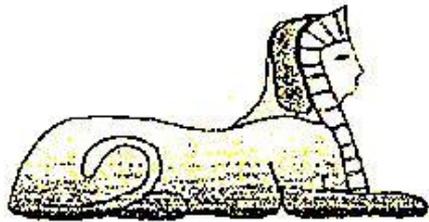


MHC 1983

30th REUNION
BOOKLET



May 2013

ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

How can it be? Our 30th reunion?! We have now been adults out in the world so long, that our post-college adult lives are now over 30 years old. Perhaps we should consider agreeing that from now on, every reunion will be our 29th reunion ... indefinitely ...

But of course we are joking.

What do we have in common? We spent our college years together at Mount Holyoke College and graduated in 1983. What changed our shared experience? We are individual people who came from different families, and different parts of the country and world, and who chose to focus on different courses of study. We are the same essential people as we were when we entered college; and yet we are infinitely changed by our life experiences since then. Who were we then, and who are we now, and how does our shared Mount Holyoke experience continue to shape us?

Gosh, those would be great questions to answer!

But because you and your booklet co-chairs are in that lovely sandwich part of mid-life, we were far too busy to put together the kind of probing, in-depth sociology thesis that would end up being. Instead, we put together a set of questions that we were interested in finding out the answers for, and in a way that allowed respondents to take it online and press SEND within 5-10 minutes!

This is the “greatest hits” summary of the results of THAT class questionnaire. (The full PDF summary file is available on our Class of 1983 website.) Remember also that there are “lies, damn lies, and statistics” – our results reflect who chose to take the survey. 106 people took it, and so these answers represent those 106 people, not necessarily our class as a whole.

Caveats aside, this is what we said. In all of our magnificence!

2013 Booklet Co-Chairs

Pamela Smith

Lisa Hawley Hiley

Sarah James Landise

SNAPSHOT OF THE AVERAGE CURRENT 1983 MHT

Personal life

- Married (68%)
- Has 2.5 children – 1.5 are under 20 and 1 is over 20.
[Children not only make you crazy, they ruin your math skills for life.] Two of us have grandchildren!
- Kid's names are likely Em (Emma or Emily), Nicholas, and if there is a 3rd, either Sarah or Sam.
- FEELS 39 years old, but can swing to 20 or 80, depending on the day!
- Has colored her gray hair at least once (45%; an additional 15% have a tight-lipped hairdresser)
- Overwhelmingly lives on the East Coast – 45% in New England and 24% in the mid-Atlantic region
- Has moved an average of 7 times, to 4 cities in 3 states. 15% have lived in other countries

Career

- Works -- mostly full-time employed (60%) but, interestingly, is almost equally likely to work for a company or be self-employed at this stage of life. [We have one retired and one in school full-time, huzzah to both!]
- Mostly in business (24%) or education (18%). Next runners up are medical field (12%) and homemaker (11%).
- Has had an average of 6 jobs – there were 6 of us who had had 1 job; 1 who had had 24!
- Has a graduate degree (72% have done some sort of learning post-grad): we have 95 post-graduate degrees spread among 76 classmates (out of 106)
- Probably in the field of: MBA (22%)! Close second was law (19%), and – go MHC, sciences (13%) -- and medical (12%). We also have degrees in arts (10%) and education (9%).

Volunteering

- Volunteers (78%)
- Most often In schools/libraries (30%) and in churches/synagogues (22%)
- Most volunteer about 5-6 hours/month (70%); about 1/3 of us volunteer 20-100 hours/month

DETAILS ON HAIR COLORING

27% of us were gray-averse from the first hair; an equal number have NEVER colored their hair. Some (15%) have circumspect hairdressers whose phone numbers others of us would like to get. More (18%) have started coloring recently than have given up recently (7%). Some have been adventurous since college (6%)!

QUOTES ABOUT OUR BEST JOBS

Many of us said our current job is our best ever! Here's a few:

Working PT for a rare book dealer – interesting, low stress, and get to work w/ cat in lap.

DNA Technical Leader at the Montgomery County Crime Lab in Maryland.

Reporter.

Being a mom.

Ski coach in Park City, Utah, right after graduation ... that was the life! Small paycheck, big fun.

Project manager for Catholic Relief Services in West Africa.

Working for myself because I get to do things my own way.

My current position at Girls Incorporated of Worcester — we inspire all girls to be strong (healthy), smart (educated), and bold (independent).

QUOTES ABOUT HOW OLD WE FEEL WE ARE

Depends on the day -- today, I feel 52, my actual age.

Mind and spirit =30s; body aches = 50.

I think it may be time to color -- not sure if I'm going that root (ha ha).

MEMORY LANE

What are our memories of our time at Mount Holyoke?

What did we love, what shaped us?

DORM

Wilder was our favorite dorm (18%), followed closely by Porter (14%), Pearsons (11%), and Mead (10%). In general, the on-campus older dorms were more popular than the more modern, distant ones (8 am classes, anyone?!). Honestly, we were sweet – every single dorm had at least one person who liked it best of all.

FAVORITE MHC TRADITION

This was M&C's by a whopping 83%, but Mountain Day a close second at 78%. Hmm, food and freedom! We have fond memories of picnics on the green (69%) and the Laurel Parade (67%).

MORE food and freedom! Sophomore elfing was also a fond memory (58%). Junior Show and Faculty Show were pretty much tied (25%). Pangynaskeia not so much (just 8%, maybe because it's so hard to spell...).

Milk and cookies, of course. Being "elfed" and being an elf were fun and sweet.

Being able to eat breakfast/dinner at 6:00 in our own dorms! Now that I realize what a hassle having a meal plan is at other colleges, I realize how little we appreciated always having such good food and a table to sit at when we got to the dining room!

Being a small, liberal arts, all-women's college.

Others mentioned family style dining, inviting profs to dinner, tea in the library, winter term parties, movies in Gamble Auditorium, concerts in Chapin (Hall & Oates?!), Asian food festival, trips to Atkins Farm and Steve's Ice Cream (now Herrell's), singing the college "spooof" song, Christmas Vespers, Founder's Day ice cream at Mary Lyons' grave, the Canoe Sing with paper lanterns on Upper Lake, and ... Primal Scream on the Green!

FAVORITE PLACE ON CAMPUS

The clear favorites were the library (a couple of people mentioned napping there) and the Lakes, especially Upper. Nature spots in general ranked high: the amphitheater, Skinner Green, the gardens, the Greenhouse. One person said “my bed in my room.”

Indoors: Blanchard, the main reading room of the library; listening to music in headphones in the Stimson Room; hanging out in the common rooms; a small alcove over the front windows in the library, where you could sit at the window’s opening enjoying the spring air,

Outdoors: the bridge over lower lake to North Mandelle; the lilac bushes outside Carr; sitting under a willow tree by lower lake; running the trails behind Upper Lake in the peace and quiet of nature; the stables; cross-country skiing in the woods by the golf course; the Crew boathouse; walking through the College gate

FAVORITE PLACE OFF CAMPUS

- The Odyssey Bookstore and the College Inn (CI) – pitcher of beer + a bucket of very salty popcorn! And, apparently, you could play “endless hours of Pac Man ... yes, Pac Man.”
- Northampton: Steve’s Ice Cream (now Herrell’s), Fitzwilly’s
- Amherst: Atkins (cider donuts!), Judy’s (popovers!), Alpha Chi (really?)

FAVORITE CLASS

A true reflection of a liberal arts education! A melding of art history, English Lit, religion, genetics, History of Photography, history, psychobiology, Renaissance Dance (for gym), Sex and Politics, organic chemistry, mineralogy . . .

Favorite professors: Penny Gill, Vinnie Ferraro, John Grayson, Jane Crosthwaite, Curtis Smith, Frank DeToma, Peter Viereck, Joe Ellis, Ellie Reese, Joyce Devlin, Paul Staiti, Michael Burns, Shirley Chisolm, Dan Czitrom, Jan Smith, Lee Bowie, and many more . . .

Immunology with Dr. Frank DeToma; even though I never worked with him, can still not forget the cellular slime mold D. discoideum.

Biochem 140 -- DeToma & (brain fart here) Campbell? -- literally changed my life, it changed my major.

FONDEST MEMORY OF MHC

- Friends, friends, friends – hanging out, sharing meals, talking all night, going for walks and talking, dancing, singing, M&C's in our nightgowns, making new friends, discussing everything under the sun at all hours.
- Enjoying the beauty of the campus, especially in green blooming spring and in crisp colorful fall
- Graduation and the Laurel Parade

Returning after junior year abroad and realizing how special it was.

Having a canoe key -- going out on the lake whenever I wanted.

My friends and believing I could do anything.

Making a Loch Ness monster out of snow in the pond across from 1837.

I no longer have a single favorite memory. The entire experience is my fondest memory.

IF WE HAD TO DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN, WE WOULD ...

Probably study more, party more (58%). What multi-tasking ambitions we now have for our slacker teenaged selves ... ! But many of us look back and are happy with their balance, or equally wish they had studied more (20%), or partied more (16%).

WHAT WE WISH WE'D DONE BUT DIDN'T

We wish we had studied abroad, learned or played a sport (riding, tennis, golf, basketball, rugby), taken advantage of cultural opportunities in the area. We wish we had taken courses more outside our majors, like in art history, biology, welding, studio art.

I wish I had relaxed more than I did.

I DID IT ALL!

Visited with friends more who were in different dorms - remember when we thought Prospect was so far away???

WE STILL OWN THESE THINGS!

Fully 65% of us still have a class ring, and almost half still have their yellow MHC logo mug from freshman year! Wow! A distant 3rd and 4th are L.L. Bean tote bags and ... yes ... wait for it ... Lanz nightgowns!

What did we forget to ask about?

1983 yearbooks, dorm T-shirts, MHC sweatshirts (old and much-loved), MHC wine glasses or beer steins, keychains, MHC chairs, Pangynaskeia button, softball caps, ID badge, V-8 albums, CI gift shop mugs, MHC pencil holder & stationery, and TWO of us still have some plants from the greenhouse 34 years later!

OH, MICKEY, YOU'RE SO FINE!

Well, no, actually, not really. Only 20% of us are really, really, really glad when this song comes on the radio. From our Facebook follow-up question, we DO really like the following mash-up of early 80s music:

Rolling Stones, Hall & Oates, Talking Heads, Bruce Springsteen, Queen, B-52s, J. Geils Band, The Human League, The Police, Blondie, ABBA, The Weathersgirls, Steely Dan, Village People, Christopher Cross, Meatloaf, The Clash, Michael Jackson (early stuff!), Dan Fogelberg, The Eurythmics, Little Feat, The Doors, Pointer Sisters, Kool and the Gang, The Cars, Billy Joel, Earth Wind & Fire, the Go-Gos, Aimee Mann, The Ramones, Pousette Dart Band, The Roches, ...

WHAT WAS YOUR LIFE PATH AND HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT IT?

The majority had their children somewhat later in life, at least after graduate degrees and/or starting on a career path. For the most part everyone is pretty satisfied with the way their lives have unfolded, although many have small regrets here and there. Just a very few seemed to strongly wish that their lives had taken a different path.

- Those who had children early tend to describe that time as being very hectic, but are still happy they did it that way.
- Many who had children later expressed some regret that they had not had their children when they were younger (mostly for stamina and energy reasons), but others are glad they waited because they feel they had more time and patience.

- Many have not had children. Those who consciously made that choice think it was the right decision. Those who did not have a choice for one reason or another have come to terms with it and are content.

I would have loved to have married and had children earlier, but I wasn't ready. I think we do what we do when we are ready for it; it's hard to say what kind of mother I would have been without the life experiences I had through my work.

My life has been NOTHING like I planned, but it has turned out well.

I knew I wanted a family and I'm glad I had my kids in my 20's cuz I just don't have that kind of energy now. I never felt I was giving enough time to both kids and work but that's when I felt the most productive. Now I get to relax a bit and ponder the universe while I still have a brain cell left.

I'm evaluating that now, will get back to you... Life remains a work-in-progress.

FAVORITE DECADE

I don't think that many of us, when we graduated at age 21 or so, would have thought that our 50s would be our favorite decade of our life – but 35% of us are happy with exactly where we are in life! Quite of us look back fondly to their 30s (21%), 40s (20%), and even our 20s (14%).

WHAT DID MHC GIVE YOU?

Overwhelmingly the answer to this question was “Confidence.” The second most common answer was Friendships, and the third was Education. But it is truly striking that so many people chose the very same answer. And virtually no one chose an answer outside of these three.

The tag line "The Challenge to Excel" rings in my head whenever I face a tough task, so I'm grateful for confidence, nerve and lifelong friends.

A great education, confidence, and respect for smart women.

WHAT DID WE HAVE THEN, THAT OUR GENERATION'S CHILDREN DON'T HAVE NOW?

We had a lack that we see was also a gift. Many answers focused on the role of technology and social media in this generations' lives, with the constant barrage of communication and information.

Within that answer, there were two themes:

- *Reflection.* We had the ability to spend time being quiet, genuinely alone, slow, focused, private, and introspective. We had less urgency, more patience. It was easier for us.
- *Communication.* We talked face-to-face, in long, engaged, and uninterrupted conversations; with the constant distractions of technology, there is a loss of frequent, deep-level communication with others. Making connections was slower then, and more personal.

Other themes were that we had an innocence and a sense of safety that is lacking today for younger people; and that without constant supervision, there was a sense of adventure and independence that freed us to learn and grow, to discover who we were.

Quiet -- a quiet space to think, contemplate, appreciate.

My kids are always checking something: email, FB, Tweets, voicemail ... there's rarely time for in depth conversation. They are bombarded so much with how they should think that they don't know what to think. This seems to make it more difficult to choose what causes matter.

I think we somehow had a greater sense of respect for our professors and elders.

We had time truly away from our families when we could grow up and be safe doing it "on our own."

LIFE AND LEISURE

We mostly feel that we have free time ... how do we spend it?

MINDLESS COMPUTER GAMES?

We can possibly thank our time well-spent at MHC for the fact that not one of us plays Farmville! The most common response was "I play none, you are all silly people" (51%). Of those who do indulge, the most common were word games (Words with Friends, Scramble, Scrabble), solitaire and puzzle games (Spider Solitaire, Sudoku, regular solitaire, Mahjong, Freecell), and interactive games (Bejeweled, Angry Birds, Fruit Ninja).

READING!

Some of us are still die-hard physical, bound book readers – 46% ALWAYS read this way. Of those who choose other media, 44% occasionally or always use audio books, and 62% occasionally or always use an e-reader. Favorite e-readers are iPad/iPhone (by a slight edge), Kindle, and Nook. Your trusty booklet co-chairs printed up a separate booklet with books and movies we love.

I have read far too many books in the last five years to list 3 best ones!

I can barely remember a book from last month!

MOVIES!

We have a slight preference for watching movies at home (54%). We found out that several of us consider Kill Bill to be a chick flick. We also found out that a few of us found Bridesmaids to be both an excellent chick flick and an amazing movie that changed how we think. Walt Whitman's "I am large, I contain multitudes" seems to be an appropriate response to this information! Your trusty co-chairs printed up a separate booklet with books and movies we love.

That question hurts my brain.

I haven't really watched many movies in the past 20 years.

Looking back, I think I was also subconsciously changed by TV shows like "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" and "That Girl"...helping me to realize I didn't HAVE to be a mother, but could be happy being single

and pursuing a career. And "Charmed" motivated me to feel that I have whatever power I need within me to overcome whatever obstacle I will encounter. I miss that show.

EXERCISE!

We were reasonably active in college – 63% of us say we were physically active, and ALL of us walked all over campus with backpacks and tote bags, climbing stairs, going to lunch in the 5 lunch centers, running to the floor phones. The question about current exercise got majorly messed up, but you all were so nice, you didn't point that out. Thank you. Of the 91 who answered this question, 92% of us exercise 1-2 times a week at least occasionally, and 22% of us ALWAYS exercise 6-7 times a week! Our favorites are traditional gym/weights, yoga, walking/hiking, and aerobics. Some run, swim, boat, do aerobics, and dance.

My work keeps me fit.

Outdoor boot camp – always.

I am a sports official and run at games.

Pick up dirty clothes from floor, ongoing.

VACATIONS!

We like them! We travel (82%)! We visit family (59%)! We have vacation homes (38%)!

Visit family on the prettiest island in Florida. [this person does all 4!]

Go on epic road trips.

It's been awhile since a real vacation... I forget!

Spiritual retreats, workshops and trainings.

Go to conferences on writing or teaching.

... And where do we travel when we travel?

Beaches/ocean; islands; lakes; National Parks; mountains; Europe; big cities; Africa, Greece, Slovenia, India, Mexico, Canada, New Zealand, Japan, the Caribbean...

Dude ranch in Colorado.

Don't travel much but would love to see more of the USA -- visit National Parks.

Anywhere I haven't been!

POLITICAL RANGE

We are mostly liberal on social issues (73%) and personal lifestyle (60%), and mostly moderate (54%) on economic issues. Our top concerns are:

- Locally – education, environment, local budgets
- Nationally -- economy & jobs, dismay over partisan politics, health care, environment & energy
- Internationally -- peace/war, climate change, human rights & social justice, terrorism

IF YOUR LIFE GOES WONDERFULLY IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS, WHAT WILL HAVE HAPPENED?

We are mostly looking ahead to retirement years and to our children being grown and independent. Some are moving onto new careers and are looking for love. As the poet Rumi said, "when all your desires are distilled, you will cast just two votes: to love more, and to be happy." Here are a few sample voices:

I will be healthy, and surrounded by those who love me and whom I love, who will also be healthy.

I will have been able to marry my partner and we will still be living in our current home. I will be working at a job I really like, with my oldest daughter about to graduate from college and my younger daughter enjoying life in high school. My parents will have died or be still living peacefully and with dignity.

I will have published a children's book, lost 20 lbs. and survived another 10 years in the classroom!

It all unfolds over time -- I'll be just where I'm meant to be

I'll have retired from law but have a fun, silly job (Whole Foods? Trader Joes?), and be living somewhere warmer, outside every day.

I'll be welcomed into fellowship with the UUA, be ordained, and get a call to settled ministry in a healthy congregation.

I'll get tenure. I'll publish more. I'll get married again. I'll do lots more traveling.

I will retire, raise honey bees and do volunteer work .

You won't have to ask what I've been doing, because I'll have won at least one Emmy, Grammy, and Oscar. :)

I'll still be working, my husband will be thinking about retiring, our children will have the graduate degrees, careers and partners they love (maybe a baby or two, even), and we'll have been on some kickass adventures in our 50s!

I will keep my farm and children will visit.

My daughter will have grown into a wise and happy woman with a job she loves and a loving partner; I will be happily remarried and living downtown in a house I love; there will be food for all and world peace! I don't ask for much!

TRUISMS WE LIVE BY

Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.

We can have everything we want; we just can't have it all at once.

Don't be afraid to take chances -- easier said than done.

You're never too old.

"The test of the morality of a society is what it does for its children."

-- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

"Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep." -- Scott Adams

It is what it is. Move forward.

Desiderata... "Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even the dull and the ignorant; they too have their story... "

Just get through to the other side and everything will be OK.

If you can dream it, you can do it!

Choose from love, not from fear.

Everything in moderation, including moderation.

Life is what happens while you are making other plans.

"Keep in mind always the present you are constructing. It should be the future you want." -- Alice Walker

Kindness goes far beyond what you can imagine.

Good judgment comes from experience, which comes from bad judgment!

*Always do right, it will gratify some and astonish the rest.
That which can be measured isn't necessarily important; that which is
important may not be able to be measured.
Everything will be all right in the end; If it isn't all right, it must not be
the end.
There is always someone who has it tougher than you.
"There is a special place in hell for women who don't help other
women." -- Madeline Albright
Whether you live to be 50 or 100 makes no difference, if you made no
difference in the world.
Please help me to be the person my dog thinks I am.
A person who is nice to you but not nice to the waiter is not a nice
person.
"No."
No one will love you better than you love yourself, so take the best
care of yourself that you can.
Fake it till you make it!
Murphy was an optimist.
Most people's hearts are in the right place.
One step at a time ... slow and steady wins the race.
"Not to worry" - something my late mother said often.
When my children were still at home and I was working full time my
mantra was "I'm doing the best I can" (I used to sing it to myself).
That which doesn't kill you makes you stronger.
Sometimes the slippery slope is the right choice.
Chocolate helps.
It will work out; it might not work out like you planned, but it will
work out.
Go big or go home!
There is a reason the rear view mirror is smaller than the windshield.
Life is short so live it to the fullest.
"I work simply, not troubling about results. My satisfaction is in
accomplishing the work which is given to me, to my best ability,
and I leave the effects to the cause." -- Hazrat Inayat Khan
Take care of your body, it's the only one you have.
We're all equal scary people.
"When you come to a fork in the road, take it." -- Yogi Berra
Whatevs.
Life is a gift.
Dark chocolate every day.*

*If you are going through hellkeep going. -- Winston Churchill
When one door closes, another opens.*

Take it one day at a time.

*"Don't Panic Yet" (my Mantra!) helps me stay calm while I collect or
wait for the facts of the situation.*

Keep your eyes on the prize.

*"In the meantime, let's just go through the motions" – keeps me
moving in the right direction even if I don't have a specific plan.*

Be Just and Fear Not.

Take a deep breath, and let it go.

*It's not exactly a saying, but the concept of the Gratitude Cafe. It's a
place you go to in your mind when life is hard or stressful, and you
make yourself remember all the things in your life that you have
to be grateful for.*

*It is not that you have to do what you dislike, but that you have to
cease to dislike.*

This too shall pass.

"I see," said Poo, who didn't.

Keep calm and carry on.

*"The moment in between what you once were, and who you are
becoming, is where the dance of life really begins." -- Barbara
Deangeus*

*"Thoughts become things. Choose the good ones." -- Andy Dooley
Love is Life; Life is Love.*

*Life is hard enough, so the worst thing you can do is make it more
difficult for anyone else.*

Never take no for an answer.

All things work together for good.

Everything happens for a reason and it just makes you stronger.

Cowgirl up.

The Good Lord never gives you more than you can handle.

Why not me?

Don't take it personally.

Do my best and accept the outcome.

No pain, no gain!

Try not to put off until tomorrow what you can do today.

Embrace the chaos.

Do something that scares you every day.

The only person who can live your life is you.

Life is just a bowl of cherries, so live and laugh at it all.

Anti-Alma Mater

*Oh, Mount Holyoke, we pay thee tuition,
With the fervor of youth that's gone wrong,
Each year it gets higher and higher,
My God, alma mater, how long?
So from barroom to bedroom we stagger,
And united in free love for all,
Our drinks are too strong and our morals gone,
Mount Holyoke what's happening to me?
Mount Holyoke what's happening to me?*

After days and weeks of tirelessly searching
-- OK, we typed in "MHC "we pay thee tuition" --
we triumphantly unearthed a 2nd verse
that was lost at our time:

*Through the heart of a new night of papers
Breathes the scent of a dinner that died
For what we have written we're thankful
But we wish that our brains were not fried
So when soft in the east the sun rises
And we realize that we're out of time
To classes we run swearing once again
"Earlier!" -- next time you'll see,
Yes, earlier, next time you'll see.*