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AAVC Election ’99

Ballot is at the back of this magazine. Candidate profiles begin on page 24
Deadlines for submission of Class Notes columns to the VQ

are three months in advance of publication.

Individual postcards to class correspondents must be received in the VQ office by the deadlines listed below to be included in a given issue.

Cards and notes may also be sent directly to the correspondents, whose addresses appear above their respective columns.

The long lead times are to permit the writing, editing, checking of all names, typesetting, proofreading, and layout of the longest section in the magazine. To ensure your news is received in time for a given issue, send it for receipt by your correspondent or the VQ office according to the following schedule: for the fall (August) issue, by May 1; for the winter (November) issue, by August 1; for the spring (February) issue, by November 1; for the summer (May) issue, by February 1.

About the AAVC

AAVC board:
• comprises 22 members, including six AAVC trustees, who serve simultaneously on the Vassar College Board of Trustees.
• manages the affairs of AAVC to promote the interests and secure the future of Vassar College.
• meets at Alumnae House three times a year, in October, February, and May

Candidates for election:
• are selected by the AAVC Nominating Committee after yearlong research and analysis.
• are distributed as much as possible by decade and geographical location to ensure that the AAVC board will continue to represent the changing perspectives of different college generations and parts of the country.
Mission Statement

The Vassar Quarterly is to keep alumnae/i in touch with the living, working Vassar, so that even the most distant alumnae/i know of the changes in equipment, in curriculum, in regulations, in student thought and life, and may thus realize that the college is not static but progressive, meeting new problems as human beings do, and that on its success in solving them depends its value to the coming generations. Its mission is also to give to alumnae/i a meeting place in thought, a place where we may learn of each other’s interests, opinions, and achievements, and through them of the world’s work and thought, and so judge of the dynamic value of the Vassar spirit.

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LETTERS

The Quarterly welcomes letters to the editor, preferably typed, double-spaced, and no longer than 350 words.

Publication will be as space permits. We reserve the right to edit letters for style and length.

Letters reflect the opinions of the writers and not those of the magazine, AAVC, or Vassar College.

To be eligible for publication, letters must be signed and include a current address.

Send letters to: VQ, Alumnae House 61 Raymond Ave. Poughkeepsie, NY 12603 or, e-mail: geweir@vassar.edu

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Thanks for the Mayor Piece

I liked your article about Mayor [Colette] Lafuente '63 [Winter 1998 VQ]. And you told me more about Poughkeepsie than I learned in more than four years living there. Thanks.

Shayne Robinson '92
Winnipeg, Canada

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Re Vassar's Jung Folks

I was delighted to read Professor Beth Darlington’s article, “Vassar’s Jung Folks” [Winter 1998 VQ]. What struck me particularly was her reference to Lauren Van der Post’s statement that “Jung was working ceaselessly to bring back into equal partnership with men all that was feminine in life.”

When I was Executive Director of AAVC (1976–1980) I met many young male students who had matriculated at Vassar during the early years of coeducation. Interested in why they chose a college that had formerly been for women, rather than a college that had formerly been for men, I asked them why they had chosen Vassar. They invariably replied that there was something important and unique to learn from the legacy of women who had studied here. Many of them expressed the opinion that the world as they saw it was too one-sided.

My own life took a turn in an entirely new direction in my fifties. I am now trained as a Jungian imagery guide. Among the issues that my clients deal with is the incorporation of the psychologically ‘contrasexual’ in their lives, the softer ‘feminine’ in the case of a man, and the sharper ‘masculine’ in the case of a woman. If the earth is going to heal, it is going to need combinations of both. It is beautiful to me that many at Vassar have recognized this.

Susan McCabe Gillotti ’60
Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts

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Recalling Another Era’s Ford Foundation

I was thrilled to read about Alison Bernstein ’69 and Susan Berresford ’65 [vice president and president, respectively, of the Ford Foundation] in the Fall 1998 issue. When I finally left the Ford Foundation in 1958, after seven years as a secretary, I was told in my exit interview, “There is no place [as a staff member] for women at the Ford Foundation.”

Sarah Smith Hasbrouck ’49
Orono, Maine

---

Speaking of Mail, E-Mail, That Is

New E-Mail Forwarding Service Inaugurated

AAVC and Vassar College Information Services are pleased to offer an e-mail forwarding service to all Vassar alumnae/i. Provided that you maintain an e-mail account of your own, any mail sent to your @alum Vassar address will automatically be forwarded to your current address. It doesn’t matter how often you change jobs, schools, or Internet providers, just keep your permanent @alum address up to date with your current e-mail address, you’ll never get lost or be out of touch.

If for some reason you go through a period when you are not maintaining your own e-mail account, any e-mail sent to your @alum Vassar address will be returned to sender. Avoid this problem by using any e-mail service, including those offered by Internet companies that offer free e-mail (such as Yahoo or Hotmail). (The Vassar forwarding service is itself free of charge.)

We hope you find this service useful. In addition to the practical benefits of having a consistent e-mail address, we hope you enjoy the ongoing connection to Vassar College that this program provides.

To sign up for this free service, click to the AAVC Website at www.aavc.vassar.edu, then on the What’s New? box at the top of the stack on the left. Scroll the list that pops up to e-mail forwarding, then follow the simple instructions.
**Intercultural Center Gets New Name**

The Vassar College Intercultural Center for students of color has changed its name to ALANA Center. ALANA is an acronym for Asian, Latino, African-American/Black, and Native American, and reflects the various communities that the center seeks to support.

The change comes after years of discussion relating to the term *intercultural* and the cultural-specific mission of the center. "The change will help the community to better understand and appreciate the role of the center for particular communities," said Edward Pittman '82, associate dean of the college for campus community and director of the center since 1990. "There was considerable ambivalence about the previous name. While the center will continue its focus of supporting these communities, it will also continue to create opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue," he said.

The Intercultural Center was established in 1976 on the base floor of Lathrop Residence Hall. In 1990 it relocated to the Blegen House (37 Collegeview Ave.). In the spring of 1993 renovations to a space once associated with the power plant were completed, and the Intercultural Center moved to its present location at the center of campus. Since then, the center has been visible in sponsoring cultural events, lectures, forums, art exhibitions, and academic and career-related seminars for students of color. The center also provides meeting space for student of color organizations, administrative support for academic and personal advising for students of color, and advocacy on college life concerns. The student staff consists of a manager, three program interns, and six program assistants.

**Tiffany and La Farge Windows Get Facelifts**

When Robert Kluzik of Willett Stained Glass Studios in Philadelphia raised hammer and chisel to a Tiffany stained glass window in the Vassar Chapel this past fall, nobody tried to stop him. He was there to take the window, which dates back to 1906, and two windows by John La Farge, to Philadelphia for repairs and relading.

Due to natural expansion and contraction, wind, and movement of the building, sections of the windows had begun to buckle and bulge, according to vice president of Willett Studios Jim Hauser. Although minor repairs were made on site to six of nine chapel windows, three required more extensive repairs and were removed to the Philadelphia studios. Mr. Hauser said every effort was made to maintain the original glass and thus the integrity of the artwork.

"If you start replacing glass, you start changing the work. It's like changing part of the canvas of a Picasso," he said.

The three "evening windows" on the east side of the chapel were designed by John La Farge (1835–1910) and installed in 1905. Three of the "morning windows," including the one pictured, are Tiffany windows (Louis Comfort Tiffany, 1848–1933), and the fourth was designed by a follower of Tiffany and La Farge, Robert Leftwich Dodge. All seven of the windows were gifts to the college, some given in memory of alumnae, others given by classes (the classes of 1877, 1890, 1902, 1904, and 1906 all gave windows as gifts to the college). A total of nine windows, including two Dodge windows on either side of the chapel organ, received repairs and new clear protective coverings.

Tiffany and La Farge were two of the leaders of the late nineteenth-century artistic revolution that resulted in the "American School of Stained Glass." According to John A. Hupcey, a Poughkeepsie resident who has written about the Vassar Chapel, the movement was "a radical break from the contemporary European practice of painting the window's design on large pieces of glass with stain and enamel, thereby interfering with the glass's translucency. Tiffany and La Farge rediscovered and substantially improved fourteenth-century glass manufacturing to produce an amazing array of colors and textures. This glass and new techniques for leading were used to completely define the picture, eliminating the need for painting anything except the faces and hands."

**Emeriti to Show Art in College Center Gallery**

Three emeritus professors will be among a group of four who will exhibit their artwork at the College Center Gallery February 24–March 18. Yin-Lien Chin (Chinese), Thaddeus J. Gesek (drama), and Hsi-Huey Liang (history) will be joined by friend Lillian Manning for the show. The gallery is open Monday through Saturday, 10 A.M. to 9 P.M., and Sunday noon to 9 P.M. For additional information, call 914/437-5370.
And It's Not All Pizza from Napoli's Anymore

The October 30, 1998, Wall Street Journal listed 12604 (Vassar's very own Zip code) as tenth among "the top 10 areas expected to consume the most delivery fast food in 1998, identified by Zip code."

The top 10, all colleges or college towns, were: Auburn University, Alabama; Storrs, Connecticut; Austin, Texas; Northampton, Massachusetts; Tallahassee, Florida; Ames, Iowa; Bozeman, Montana; Amherst, Massachusetts; and Orono, Maine.

Calls to Vassar-area fast food restaurants uncovered seven that deliver to campus: five pizza places and two Chinese restaurants. Napoli's pizza, familiar to Vassar students since 1975, still lays claim to a big slice of the campus appetite. The students at Vassar, said a spokesman, continue to comprise a large part of their business.

College Adopts Sweatshop Policy

The college board of trustees at its May 1998 meeting recognized in an official statement the college's responsibility to not only refrain from doing business with clothing vendors or manufacturers that use sweatshop labor, but also to actively survey and research the companies with which it deals and to promote non-sweatshop alternatives, when necessary.

Vassar spends close to $300,000 per year on uniforms for sports teams, rental uniforms for staff, and clothing for resale in the College Store; and it does business with more than twenty clothing vendors and manufacturers, including companies like Nike, says Vassar business manager Brian Harris.

"We want to be sure that these products are not coming from a sweatshop environment, which means that they [the vendors/manufacturers] should be paying appropriate wages, and they should have appropriate conditions for their workplace," Mr. Harris said.

Questions about the companies with which the college does business were raised by the Student Activist Union and individual students during the 1997/98 academic year. At the students' request, and with their input, the Campus Investor Responsibility Committee (CIRC) researched and then drafted a proposed statement for consideration by the trustees. CIRC is made up of students, faculty, administrators (including Mr. Harris), and alumni, and works closely with the Trustee Investor Responsibility Committee.

Thus far, the college has not ceased doing business with any vendors or manufacturers based on their workplace practices. But Mr. Harris's office, as well as the campus investor committee and students and student groups will continue to monitor these companies, using not only the word of the companies themselves but also information provided by sources such as the White House Apparel Industry Partnership and the Department of Labor.

Roseman Sculpture Commissioned for JFK

A 600-linear-foot sculpture by Harry Roseman, associate professor of art, has been commissioned for a permanent installation at the new international air terminal at Kennedy International Airport. The sculpture, which will span the length of two football fields, is due for completion in the fall of 2000.

Mr. Roseman's piece, which will resemble cloth and drapery, will be carved and then cast in a modified gypsum, polymer, fiberglass material known as Forton MG.

Curtain Wall, as the art is titled, was selected by a panel of eight corporate representatives, an architect, and an arts consultant commissioned by JFK-IAT under the auspices of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

Karin George Moves On

Karin George, vice president for development at Vassar since 1995, accepted a position as chief advancement officer and vice president for development at her alma mater, Smith College, in Northampton, Massachusetts. Ms. George has worked at Vassar since 1991, when she arrived to take on the position of director of the Annual Fund. After a reorganization, she directed Annual and Special Gifts from 1992 to 1995.

"The opportunity to go back to my alma mater after working for my husband's alma mater is irresistible," Ms. George said with her characteristic good humor. Her husband is Rick George '85.

Commented Vassar College President Frances D. Fergusson: "Vassar has been very fortunate indeed to have Karin George as its vice president for development. With wit, charm, hard work, and keen intelligence, she guided us through the completion of our Campaign for Vassar and the successful transition to a modern, effective development office. Karin has helped significantly to build the strong Vassar of today. She has always been a stellar colleague and a wonderful friend, and I shall greatly miss her."

Ms. George was to assume her post at Smith in March. At Vassar, a search committee has begun the work of finding her replacement.
Class Asks: How Much Do Parents Matter?

We are all amateur psychologists, with ideas about what motivates people, how they will respond if we say one thing or another, the influence of parents on children. Sometimes, however, our ideas don't stand up to the data.

In a 300-level seminar on developmental psychology that focuses on parenting, Professor of Psychology Kenneth Livingston watches as data lead his students to some conclusions about parental influence that surprise them.

"Apart from the obvious contributions that biological parents make genetically, the contribution of parents to the formation of personality, as it gets measured by paper and pencil questionnaires in adulthood, seems to be relatively small, if you believe the data," Mr. Livingston says.

Studies using certain broad measures of personality show that twins have similar personalities regardless of whether they grow up in the same house (and with the same parents) or in separate homes. Furthermore, when the studies looked at siblings related only through adoption and living under the same roof, researchers found zero similarities between their personalities.

That's not to say parents don't profoundly influence other aspects of their children, such as their child's beliefs, the skills they acquire, or the kinds of cultural practices they take as their own, he says.

By coincidence, during the first week of fall semester classes the popular press used the release of Judith Rich Harris' book, The Nurture Myth, to ask quite simply, Do parents matter? Ms. Harris argues that peer groups matter more to an individual's development, in terms of personality and transmission of culture, than parents do.

Throughout the semester students read some of the research Ms. Harris used to create her argument and, for the last class, wrote "responses" to her argument.

It was a useful exercise, says the teacher. Regardless of which way the students argued (most were critical of Ms. Harris's thesis), the debate reminded all that parents aren't the only influence on the development of children.

"Their peer groups do matter. Other kinds of environmental factors do make a difference. Their temperamental dispositions, which have a significant genetic component, make a difference. It's very important not to forget all of that," Mr. Livingston said. "It's useful to ask yourself at the end, even if you're convinced parents do matter, in what ways do they matter? With respect to what do they matter?"

Mr. Livingston hopes the students will leave the class able to think in more sophisticated ways about developmental issues and to appreciate "just how complicated these systems are"—that to truly understand the parent-child relationship, one needs carefully designed research and complicated conceptual analysis.

He also hopes his students, many of whom will be parents one day, realize that there's an enormous amount one can learn from the research about which parenting techniques generally are effective or not effective. The word generally should be emphasized, for, as Mr. Livingston—the father of two children—says, parenting "is as much an art as it is a science." Knowing the psychological literature can inform the things one does as a parent, but it can't tell you how to deal with a particular child in a particular situation.

"Any scientific claim comes with a tag line," Mr. Livingston said. "Imagine a scientific claim: 'It's better to avoid physical punishment as a strategy when dealing with children'—the unspoken tag is '...all else being equal.' When you're the parent, on the ground, with this particular kid, all else isn't equal. Because there isn't an 'all else.' There's just [this child] in this situation, with this history and this family. What the scientific principle is telling you is that if you have to make a bet, probabilistically, most of the time, here's the rule."

Mr. Livingston has been happy with the course but disappointed that very few men chose to take it. Only two out of thirteen students enrolled the first time he offered the course in the spring of 1998 were men. This past fall, all eight students enrolled in the course were women.

"My hunch is that young men and women of college age already have certain expectations about parenting, which may not be consciously formulated, about what the kind and level of their involvement might be."

Class Reading

Most readings in the advanced seminar on parenting were journal articles, such as "Parenting Style as Context: An Integrative Model," (Nancy Darling and Laurence Steinberg [74], Psychological Bulletin, 113 [1993]: 487-496) and "Parents' Differential Socialization of Boys and Girls: A Meta-Analysis" (Hugh Lytton and David M. Romney, Psychological Bulletin [1991]: 109, 267–296).

Topics of final papers included: the effect of a mother's employment status on a child's academic achievement, lesbian parents, and the effect of the "empty nest" on parents.
Think twice before you ask that question of Professor of Physical Education and Director of Athletics Andy Jennings. He bristles when he hears the word jock, especially when the discussion is Vassar athletics. Too often the word is used as a pejorative, as in, "Don't worry, Vassar's not turning jock." Professor Jennings finds the stereotypes embedded in the word so offensive and suggestions that Vassar is becoming "too" sports oriented so off base that he's tempted to not even dignify such sentiments with a response.

But then the athletic director also recognizes his responsibility to make sure people have an opportunity to understand and learn about Vassar's athletic program, which is in the midst of major facility improvements, and about the
How Many Are Active?

There are 392 student athletes on 24 varsity teams (this includes the men's and women's rugby teams, which, technically, are considered club sports). This compares to 276 athletes on 18 varsity teams in 1990.

54 percent of these athletes are women.

An estimated 36 percent of students participate in one or more intramural sports.

The number of lifetime fitness classes—yoga, tai chi, aerobics, and such—offered on campus has risen from about 30 to about 50 in just four years. Average class size is 10-12 and includes Vassar staff as well as students.

There has not been a survey of those who exercise on their own, but Chris Parsons, assistant director of athletics for facilities, estimates that each week more than 1,200 people use the Vassar weight room, 30 play on the squash and racquetball courts, and that each day 50 people swim in the pool.

Tirek Gayle '01
Rego Park, New York
Major: Political Science
Activity: Basketball (number 33 below)

"People who see me in the paper for basketball assume I'm just a basketball player. But people in my classes see that academics and sports are at an equal level, if not academics a bit more. Vassar for years and years has been about art and drama and studies. People think it's going to move away from those basic principles. But [a strong sports program is] only just going to add to it, as long as we keep up our standards of who gets in. It won't change; it will just add to the diversity. Every kid from the city wants to go to a Division I [sports] program. But sometimes you have to be realistic. Basketball isn't life for me. I can use my mind to achieve the same amount of success as a pro athlete. Vassar is as good as being D-I. I'm happy. I do what I love to do, and I'm hitting the books and hitting them hard, and getting a good education."

young people he finds to be a diverse and interesting group of student-athletes for whom academics come first.

"For anybody to say that we're becoming a jock school, they don't understand what we're trying to do here," he says. The improvements being made to Vassar's program are not about becoming a Division I school, he says, referring to the most competitive division in collegiate athletics. (Division I schools provide a broad range of financial aid based on athletic skills and participation, while Division III schools, such as Vassar, offer no athletically based financial aid.) The improvements are about giving all students quality facilities with which to stay physically fit and, if they choose, to realize their potential in a sport—just as the Vassar music and art departments aim to help students realize their musical or artistic potential.

"What we're trying to do at Vassar is create a situation where we're marrying the intellectual quality of the institution with an athletic quality," says Mr. Jennings during an interview in the fall. "The two are not incompatible. So many of our peer institutions have quality athletics and superb academics."

The "jock" stereotype is not new; also not new is a concern among some students that Vassar might get carried away with its athletic program. In April 1977, when the college was considering major improvements to its program, the Miscellany News reported that many of the ninety-two students who returned a survey about the college athletics program, while agreeing that offerings and facilities should be improved, feared "that if too many improvements were made, Vassar would become a 'jock school.' "We are not the Ivy League," many pointed out.

Why the concern? 1978 graduate Gregg Bachman's experience might shed some light. Although he had played football at an all-boys military high school, Mr. Bachman was dismayed when, during his student years at Vassar, a group of his peers decided to start a rugby program.

"As a Vassar student I had a formula in my head that equated the violence level of a sport with intimidation both on and off the field," he writes in an e-mail to the Quarterly. "Vassar's rugby team seemed to me ... to be a symptom of sub-
tle change at Vassar, an introduction of this swaggering subculture that threatened the relative collegial status quo.”

In retrospect, Mr. Bachman, who is an instructor in the Communication-Cinema Studies Department at the University of Tampa, says his feelings were “essentially indefensible and unsubstantiated. It was a gut feeling I had... ‘Jock’ carries with it many connotations, but not unlike the unfortunate dumb blonde stereotypes, they hold little credence,” he said.

The stereotypes nevertheless persist. When Mr. Bachman returned to campus in October for an alumnae/i leadership training weekend (he is a class officer), he took advantage of some free time to seek out students for informal conversation in the just-opened student coffee-house in the Aula. (The space, as do several others on campus, itself has a distinguished athletic history, having originally been built to serve as the college’s second gymnasium.) In a letter to his class, Mr. Bachman reported on one conversation with a young woman, a film major. She spoke, he reported, “almost rapturously” about the diversity on campus, the flexibility of academic programming, and the accessibility and enthusiasm of faculty. But she had some concerns: Vassar, she thought, was becoming “more jock-oriented”; she repeated “a vague rumor of football.” It was, to quote former baseball player Yogi Berra, “déjà vu all over again” for Mr. Bachman.

The Quarterly also talked (in person and via e-mail) to a number of students on campus. Many welcomed improvements to the athletics program; why shouldn’t athletics be strong just like other Vassar programs are strong? they asked. Others commented that it seemed like the college was admitting more “athletic types.” One sophomore described an extreme view: “We fear that once sports start becoming this real important part of life, then that is just the first step down the road to a campus full of faceless athletes in white hats and Polartreec, fraternity parties, and date rape.” This is just the kind of nasty caricature that ignites unreasoned argument. But then the same writer goes on:

“When I try not to have such an extreme reaction, I also see that teams do a lot of good: they bring more school spir-

Jessica Houser ’99
Kendallville, Indiana
Major: English/Education
Activity: Rugby (seen below with ball) and basketball

“This year, I look at sports as play, especially with student teaching. When I spend the day with 15-year-olds, I’ll come home and need some sort of release, and it’s often athletics. ... I wouldn’t have survived the academic pressures, and the academic pressure leading to emotional pressure, without sports. I learned how to balance my life... you have to balance sports and academics, and everything else falls into place. ... With the structure of the athletic department and with the personnel, I don’t think [Vassar will] ever be too athletically oriented.”

Once, Daily Exercise Was Required

No doubt, there are students in every era whose idea of exercise is to get up in the morning. But those current students who think attention to physical exercise is something new for Vassar don’t know the history of the place.

Vassar College Historian and Professor Emerita of English Elizabeth Daniels ’41 notes in her book about college buildings, Main to Mudd, that the founder himself conceived the wide, window-lined corridors in Main so that students would have a place to exercise indoors when the weather was bad. (A round-trip, end-to-end walk is said to be about one-fifth of a mile.) Daily exercise was a requirement for all students.

Avery began its many-faceted existence in 1866 as the Calisthenium and Riding Academy. According to Mrs. Daniels’s text, “It included a calisthenics hall with equipment, a riding arena and stalls for horses, a bowling alley, music practice rooms, and a concert hall and stage.”

By 1883, alumnae became concerned that Vassar’s physical education program (“the first of its kind in the country,” according to Mrs. Daniels), was falling behind its new competitors at Smith and Wellesley. The Alumnae Association led the fundraising drive that raised $20,000 to construct the Alumnae Gymnasium (now Ely). It opened in 1890 with an exercise hall, a swimming pool, and dressing rooms and showers. (A running track, to have been suspended above the exercise floor, was abandoned owing to cost considerations.) By 1897, reports Mrs. Daniels, the Alumnae Gymnasium “was too small to meet the college’s athletic needs.”

Kenyon Hall, still in use for athletics, was Vassar’s third athletics building (not counting Main). It opened in 1933 as part of an ambitious vision to “be a laboratory where the art of physical development would be learned thoroughly so as to be practiced throughout life by every alumna,” according to a speaker at the building’s dedication.

The college’s decision in the late ’60s and early ’70s to increase its student population eventually led to the need for yet more facilities for athletics. And so Walker Field House was constructed in 1982 to begin to address those requirements.

The facilities improvements and expansions currently under way include the construction of a 53,000-square-foot addition to the field house to accommodate a new basketball court, fitness center, and, reprising the plan abandoned during the 1888 Alumnae Gymnasium project, a balcony-level running track.
Fall Season Win-Loss

Field Hockey: 10-6
After one of the strongest seasons in recent history, the team qualified for the New York State Championship, but lost to Skidmore, 0-5. At the end of October, the team was ranked 10th in the National College Athletic Association North Atlantic Field Hockey regional rankings.

Cross Country
Individual highlights included qualification for the NCAA National Championships by two runners: James McCowan '99 (his second trip to the nationals) and junior Clodagh Rafferty, the first women to qualify for Vassar since 1990.

Tennis
Vassar's women were among the 16 (out of 50) Division III teams in New York State to qualify for the state Women's Collegiate Athletic Association Championship. Vassar placed fifth in the tournament. The team begins spring season play March 8 in California. The men's team was looking to its spring season with high expectations. The Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) ranked Vassar 10th in the East in its annual spring preseason rankings. The position is the highest ever for a Vassar men's tennis squad. The team's spring schedule commences in March in Hilton Head, SC.

Soccer
Men: 8-8-1
In the Eastern College Athletic Conference playoffs, Vassar lost to Trinity 0-1.

Women: 8-8
The team qualified for the New York State Championship, but lost in overtime to RPI, 1-2.

Rugby
Women: 6-1-1
Men: 5-4

Volleyball
Women: 12-14
The team earned a spot at the state championships, winning against Skidmore in the first round, but losing to SUNY-New Paltz in the second.

Rowing
Season highlights for the men included a first ever victory for the lightweight 4+ crew at the Head of the Fish, and a first ever top-five finish (out of 31) for the club 4+ crew at the Head of the Ohio. Highlights for the women included a second place finish (out of 34) for the club 4+ at the Head of the Ohio, defeating two crews from defending champion Villanova.

If it strikes some that the college has dedicated a lot of attention to athletics and athletic facilities in recent years, there is a reason; according to President Frances Fergusson, Vassar has had some catching up to do. She recalls that when she took on the presidency in 1986 Vassar's athletic program was "very poor"—there wasn't a single field that wasn't pockmarked by rocks and uneven surfaces, and students didn't have satisfactory uniforms or adequate means of transportation to events.

"We also, more importantly, had relatively few full-time coaches, which meant that the coaching experience for the students wasn't up to the standard that we would expect at Vassar," says the president, adding that part-time coaches often didn't understand the academic/athletic balance Vassar tries to achieve. "I realized very quickly that we needed to do something because the experience was not the type of teaching experience that we wanted for our students."

Ms. Fergusson says that today many of the needed operational improvements have been made: "We now have wonderful coaches on a full-time basis, and we have adequate support for equipment and transportation."

The new gymnasium and fitness center, to be completed in the fall, will be a "major statement," she says, adding, "we still have some fields to improve."

The president notes that the upgrades to Vassar's athletic facilities will both support students' athletic interests and improve the college's strategic position in the intercollegiate competition for students.

In the past, "both the all-female colleges and the newly coed colleges had much more to offer than Vassar did. We were frequently losing students of very high academic quality because they also had sports interests that couldn't be supported here." The improvements made thus far, she says, have helped the college "attract some really superb students over
the years. It's also helped to some degree to build a bit of a school spirit and some pride in the college and its achievements."

It's all about a balance of athletics and academics. English major Jessica Houser '98 knows that balancing act very well. The Quarterly met with Ms. Houser this past fall when, in addition to her Vassar classes, she was student teaching at Poughkeepsie High School and playing rugby.

Ms. Houser, who also plays varsity basketball and is a member of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee, credits sports at Vassar with introducing her to upperclassmen, who helped her with her studies and advised her on time management; with giving her a break from the academic pressures at Vassar, without which she "never would have survived"; and with teaching her balance in life.

"Vassar has not just taught me how to read and write, it's taught me how to live a life. In the four years, I've probably learned more about living than about studying," she reports.

Ms. Houser says she often feels as if she has to defend her participation in sports. During her sophomore year, she wrote an article for the Miscellany News about an incident in which one professor made fun of her in front of her class when she had to leave 15 minutes early to attend a game—never mind that she hadn't been late or missed one class the entire semester. There have been other occasions, as well, when she's spoken up in defense of athletics at Vassar.

"I think there's an attitude that Vassar might get carried away and become too focused on sports," she comments. But Ms. Houser doubts, given the structure of the athletic department, that this will ever happen.

"Andy Jennings does a good job focusing on the importance of academics and the development of the athlete," she said. "And my coaches are concerned more about how I'm doing academically than whether I make every practice. . . . I've had so many conversations with coaches; the basketball coach is a huge Civil War buff. I talked Milton with the volleyball coach."

"The administration has always been very concerned about making sure academics are first. I've always gotten the impression that they're sincere," she says. VW

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Vivek Nayar '99
Montclair, New Jersey
Major: Political Science
President of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee
Activity: Squash

"[The Vassar experience] is such a full-bodied experience. No one here is so one dimensional that academics is their whole life or sports is their whole life. There were other schools that had better [sports] programs, but the academics weren't on the same tier. I also looked at very conservative schools that wouldn't have enhanced my development. There are places with better teams, better or worse academics; it's all part of the package. . . . People can't see the difference between a high school jock and an athlete. They have preconceived notions that athletes are misogynous or homophobic. . . . Vassar doesn't attract [the stereotypical jock]; there are no frats. Vassar doesn't reinforce stereotypical jock behavior. If some do come, they might be reformed."

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Jennifer Birnbaum '01
Austin, Texas
Major: American Culture
Activity: Gym workout three times a week, usually starting between 6:50 and 8:20 A.M.

"I started [working out] the summer before my freshman year. You always hear about the freshman 15 [added pounds]. I thought it was important to have a routine so that when I came to Vassar, and there was a gym available, I would use it and know what to do. . . . It's a time to relax. For me, it's time to myself. There's this Zen of exercise. . . . I like the facilities, for the most part, even though they're a little outdated. The only reason I won't work out is if I'm rehearsing [for a drama production] until 2 A.M. I value my health, but sleep is most important."
My Famous Relative

Inez Milholland's 1909 classmates knew her well: "Fascinating—but a trifle dangerous for household use."

by Jean Milholland Shriver '54

In the fall of 1950, I was a seventeen-year-old Vassar freshman running to the gym, late for—you guessed it—my infamous posture picture. Delaying the evil moment when my naked body would be measured against a straight line on the white wall, I paused at the door, scanning the names of women who'd made athletic history at Vassar. To someone from a small school whose only athletic honor was second-team badminton, their accomplishments were awe inspiring.

I read down the list. Nobody of interest until I spotted Milholland, I. 1909. Shot put. Wow. A woman with my last name had hurled a heavy object for a record breaking distance. Plus, she did it back when women wore pounds of clothing for sports. I called home to ask who this I. Milholland was.

"Your father's first cousin. Died years ago," was my mother's succinct reply.

In the self-absorbed fashion of the young, I forgot about the woman who could hurl eight-pound weights farther than other Vassarites. I flunked my posture picture and had to take the remedial 4F class, which didn't help my spine curvature. In the winter, I took diving, which netted me chlorine-tinged hair and a severe ear infection. Vassar had better luck improving my mind than my body.

As for I. Milholland, class of 1909, the next time she surfaced was in the late 1950s when my family bought a house at Westport on Lake Champlain, my father's birthplace. Nearby was a music school called Meadowmount, once owned by my father's Uncle John, who had a son and two

... and charismatic suffragette leader
daughters, Inez and Vida. Aha, I thought, the mys-
terious I. Milholland who broke the Vassar shot-
put record. When I asked Daddy about her, he
spouted tales of rich Uncle John, who invented an
underground mail system and made lots of money.
His lone comment on Inez was that she used to
bring her Vassar friends to Meadowmount. Oh
well, I thought, he was probably too young to
notice girls much.

Hindsight informs me how much my father
would have disapproved of his dashing first cousin,
who broke every one of the social and societal rules
to which he clung for eighty-eight years. Inez was a
rebel, a reformer who alongside her father helped
establish the NAACP, a member of a Greenwich
Village set that endorsed sexual freedom for
women. She was a New York divorce lawyer, a
reporter who sent pacifist dispatches home from
World War I until the Italians sent her home, a
campaigner for women’s suffrage—in short, all her
activities would have scandalized my conservative
father, who scowled whenever my slim mother wore
pants. Maybe in his old age, Daddy would have
mellowed toward Inez. Or maybe Inez’s outspoken
opinions would have been tempered by time. We’ll
never know.

Inez died at age thirty in Los Angeles of aplastic
anemia. She was there as a suffrage volunteer cam-
paigning for Charles Evans Hughes to defeat
Woodrow Wilson. Her letters to her husband tell
how ill she felt as the train rolled west, how hard
she drove herself, and how worried she was that
her mysterious illness might threaten her ability to
bear children.

Recently someone sent me a copy of the 1909
Vassarion. There in her senior picture is a happier
Inez, smiling with one hand coyly tucked under
her chin. The quote under the photo says,
“Fascinating—but a trifle dangerous for household
use.”

I turned to the athletic section of the yearbook
and there was Inez, the captain of the 1909 hockey
team, peering out from beneath a luxurious
poof of dark hair. In the varsity hockey picture,
she’s staring serenely ahead. In the basketball
shot she’s sitting in the front row giggling. For
the track team photo, she wore a long-sleeved
white shirt and narrow tie. The final photograph
of this unique Milholland jock shows her stand-
ing with her hands behind her back, showing off
both her Vassar letter sweater and her ample
front. That record-making shot put was 31 feet,
8½ inches.

My father’s fascinating cousin died sixteen years
before I was born. But studying her papers makes
me regret not knowing my only Vassar relative.
Forget her fantastic athletic achievements. I admire
her more for her belief in women, which she
demonstrated at suffragist parades and strike rallies;
her belief in humanity, proved by working for
prison reform and the NAACP; her exuberant love
of her husband and life in general. For Inez
Milholland Boissevain, sports was only one of many
passions she pursued with all her heart. VQ

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Milholland emerges as a star athlete in the ’09
yearbook, but in Vassar legend she lives on for
leading a 1908 graveyard rally for women’s
suffrage when President Taylor
banned such
meetings from
campus. Her
passion for civil
rights activism
never diminished.
Plotting the Light-Years Between People

by Toni Sciarra Poynter '81

Galileo's Banquet
by Ned Balbo '81

I see the daily motion of the stars
And it is all illusion, all a lie.
How easily we find the human eye
May be deceived. It is the earth that moves,
Revolving on its axis.

—"Aristarchos and His Cosmos" from Galileo's Banquet

The secrets of the cosmos and the family mingle in Galileo's Banquet, a debut collection of poetry by Ned Balbo that was awarded the Towson University Prize for Literature, given annually to a Maryland writer under the age of 40.

In his teens, Mr. Balbo learned that the woman he'd believed was his mother was actually his aunt, and her sister was in fact his biological mother. The tensions of these and other unspoken family issues are the primary underpinning of the poems, in which the narrator, like the astronomer, attempts to see clearly the reality of things and to find the truth of his place in the world. The truth, as it turns out, combines pain and longing with mystery, tenderness, and flashes of transcendent beauty.

"It's a very confusing and difficult series of family issues to carry with you," Mr. Balbo notes in an interview. "I wanted at some point to set things down in a clear way in an attempt perhaps to put them to rest and to come to some sort of understanding of what people went through at that time, in deciding with which family I'd reside."

Images of the elusiveness of clarity run through the poems: the narrator as a boy, submerged in the swimming pool, gaze up through the hazy water at the two women who are his mothers; the same boy peers into the school bus window at a girl (his sister, he later learns), who blows "smoke against the glass"; the boy, now a man, is blinded by the sun striking a drenched garden.

This I deduced, and sought to tell the world—
"The cosmos has more grandeur than we thought;"

Look, here's my diagram."

—"Aristarchos and His Cosmos"

Paradoxically, the fact that Mr. Balbo's adoptive mother is deceased and that he is not in contact with his biological parents offered a larger universe of possibilities to "diagram" in the poems: "In a way, the lack of answers and lack of closure... has encouraged me to more fully imagine these experiences and to tilt them in as sympathetic a fashion as possible," he notes. The poems are like lenses angled on the family constellation from different vantage points.

"It helped me put some things to rest and come to terms with them, especially when I tried to look through the perspective of the women involved. Maybe I needed to be old enough to be able to look through the eyes of the women before I could look at my own responses in a more balanced rather than an anguished or self-centered fashion," Mr. Balbo says.

The intersection of these two universes took shape over time. "I had individual poems lying around and an individual family story to tell that I had told ineptly in previous versions. I'd begun a series of poems with a cosmic focus, mainly to enter a sonnet contest in the spring of 1994. I found that I gravitated toward that kind of imagery, and it became without my realizing it this metaphor for all kinds of distance that couldn't be bridged."

Mr. Balbo has had work published in American Poetry Review, Antioch Review, and elsewhere, and has completed three poetry manuscripts in addition to Galileo's Banquet. He is a Pushcart Prize nominee.
who holds an A.B. in English from Vassar and degrees from the Writing Seminars at Johns Hopkins and the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop. But writing has not always been easy for him. "I was savagely self-critical. I wrote painfully, phrase by phrase. I was never really able to regain the fluency I first enjoyed writing poetry in Nancy Lindbloom's class [at Vassar] until I entered the Hopkins program." There, he was inspired by the quality of his classmates' work and by the instruction of David St. John: "We had a very interesting discussion once about how the placing of lines and phrases runs in relation to the pacing of imagination; [about how] the unfolding of imagery and language had a kind of correlation that one had to allow to happen rather than attempt to control."

Mr. Balbo teaches at Loyola College in Baltimore and is an academic dean for the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth. One of his next manuscripts, entitled Cross-Section of a Honeybee, was a finalist for the New Issues Press Poetry Prize, the National Poetry Series, and for the Gerard Cable Book Award. The poems in this collection are "more experimental with language, and more overtly funny, regardless of a more serious subtext," Mr. Balbo says. Another manuscript, House of Song, comprises poems written in the formal style—usually blank verse, sonnets, a canzone, and others—to which Mr. Balbo has returned over the past three years. This book, Mr. Balbo says, will touch not on family but on relationships as reflected through figures drawn from myth, literature, religion, and film, including a blank verse monologue spoken by Lewis Carroll's Alice and another in the voice of Madeleine Elster, the heroine of Alfred Hitchcock's Vertigo. A third collection, Gorgeous Snow and Scissors, owes debts to poets such as John Ashbery.

As for Galileo's Banquet, we are left with a sense of a world destroyed and yet alive with a clearer sort of promise, as in the final poem, "Discovery," in which the author notes under the title: "Before the Challenger memorial service, September 1988":

First flight after disaster. Nothing moves
Except with grace, weightless beyond
the glass,
Across a blue, bright ocean, Earth
persists . . .

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Stars Visible
Vanderbilt Planetarium, Centerport, Long Island

Banquet of constellations, when you rise
And sweep across the sky, I'll know your stars
From visits to the planetarium:
Knees clenched, head back, I'd gaze up while the gold
Lights broke the darkness, and a man's voice boomed
From speakers wracked with static. Then a flash:
North Pole and Northern Lights, convenient tags
To mark locations at the Arctic's edge,
Ice-cliffs along the sky's circumference
Surrounding us. Gears whirred. And then the fires
That pricked the blue-black ceiling disappeared.
I took a breath; but new configurations—
Stars of another hemisphere, lost gods,
Crustacean-claws, dead heroes—rose instead.

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Toni Sciarra Poynter
is an author and
book editor living in
New York City.
By the Skin of Her Teeth

by Abby Tannenbaum '86

“Project Girl
by Janet McDonald '77
Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1999

“I was a project girl and a Vassar girl...” writes Janet McDonald in her cathartic memoir, Project Girl. Ms. McDonald’s first book pays tribute to her fundamental identity, forged during her growing-up years in a Brooklyn housing project. Yet Vassar played a key role in her bumpy, dramatic road to a law career in Paris. Despite recounting the profound distress of her college years, Ms. McDonald declares, “My life is the way it is because of Vassar. Vassar brought me to France during Junior Year Abroad.” Speaking via telephone from her riverview Paris apartment, Ms. McDonald lowers her voice and pauses for a moment. “I write about the trauma I had at Vassar, but that wasn’t Vassar traumatizing me, that was me adjusting.”

Indeed, although she earned a master’s from Columbia School of Journalism, graduated from NYU Law School, and became a member of Mensa, Ms. McDonald’s path has been punctuated with pain. She took a leave from Vassar after her first semester, reeling from alienation, the effects of experimenting with heroin, and a suicide attempt; at the beginning of her second year at Cornell Law School, she was raped; and, after transferring to law school at NYU, she confessed to setting a series of small fires in her dorm building, a misguided effort to exercise the pain of rape.

Intellectually gifted, Ms. McDonald grew up in a black Brooklyn neighborhood that began to disintegrate during her childhood. Although her southern-born parents championed education, one of Ms. McDonald’s siblings spent time in prison, and another succumbed to drug addiction. Young Janet, a bookworm, thrived in school, skipping a grade before attending Erasmus Hall, then one of Brooklyn’s best high schools. However, disoriented and unsure of her future, she faltered in the mostly white environment and did not start Vassar until she attended a bridging program in Harlem.

Ms. McDonald, who answered questions in long e-mail messages and in a chatty phone conversation, reflected that “going to Vassar was not just going to college, but going from one world to another, one class to another, from one race to another. Every change was a challenge.”

Overwhelmed, she sabotaged her success, retreating into her notion of behavior expected of a project girl. “I no longer wanted to be special; special meant different, and different meant lonely,” Ms. McDonald writes. “I would accept neither special nor different. I would be true to my peers, and if they were tumbling downhill, then I, too, would tumble.” Add the guilt of privilege: “Vassar was such a world of ease and pleasantness, with the trees and so much food available, I felt that I was being spoiled while my family was worrying about who was in the stairwell waiting to hurt them.”

Now she writes, “My choice to live abroad may be a way of opting out of the struggle to belong... I am free to focus my efforts on living who I am...” In fact, it was during a 1995 visit from Vassar acquaintance Mia Goldman ’77 that Ms. McDonald first contemplated writing a memoir. “I’d mentioned that I’d been working on a novel. At one point in our conversation Mia said, ‘I don’t know what your novel is about, but you should be writing...”
Janet McDonald's memoir chronicles her path from Brooklyn project girl to Paris lawyer via Vassar. It's been a harrowing journey.

Excerpt from Project Girl

...The rattle of keys shattered my bliss. Someone else might have dashed over to unlock the door and welcome the new roommate. Not me. I sought refuge at my desk, where I picked up a book and pretended to read. The door banged open against the wall. The sound of bustling footsteps, heavy breathing, and slamming suitcases left no doubt as to who had arrived. I stood up from the desk and contracted my cheek muscles into a fairly decent smile.

She was startled: "Oh! You scared me! I didn't realize anyone was..." I struggled against the urge to run. "Hi, I'm Janet. Need help?" She was black but I could tell instantly that color was about as kindred as we were going to get. It's not that I didn't like her. It's just that she appeared so... un-project. "Hi! I'm Brenda. I just got in this morning from California. Do you know San Diego? It's really pretty! Oh, you're from New York? God, I would love to visit Manhattan and the Empire State Building, but New York's so dangerous! Are you from New York proper?"

I had no idea what she meant by "proper." "Brooklyn." "Oh, God, the Brooklyn Bridge is so beautiful—I mean, from the pictures of it I've seen. You're so lucky! God, I can't believe I'm here! I gotta call my mom!" Mom? Wasn't that a white-girl term? At home, we said "mother."

about your life. That's the real story. I know, I work in Hollywood." Ms. McDonald's initial reaction was incredulity, but Ms. Goldman's passion encouraged her to take the idea seriously.

Snatching time from her job as a corporate lawyer in Paris, Ms. McDonald wrote the first draft of Project Girl fairly quickly—in about six months. During one month-long stretch, she took a leave from work and wrote nonstop for twelve or fourteen hours a day. The process was intense, she says, "because I was writing so much and about such dramatic and emotional experiences in my life. A memoir I thought would be an act of memory, but in fact, it was a reliving for me."

As a counterpoint to the harrowing periods, Ms. McDonald enjoyed writing about Judy Kroll, her favorite English professor. "I have such a profound feeling of gratitude toward her," Ms. McDonald says. "She would let me hang out in her office, ride in her black Mustang, proofread her Sylvia Plath manuscript. I had so little self-confidence and self-esteem, and to have someone as accomplished and brilliant as Judy Kroll pay even the slightest bit of attention to me was an incredibly healthy experience. She told me I had talent as a writer, that I could be a good student, that I was okay. I wanted to thank her for taking the time to help an introverted, disoriented project girl hold on."

Now, as Ms. McDonald takes a sabbatical from law to work on that novel, she hopes that Project Girl inspires others. "When I was writing, I kept thinking I want to write the kind of book I would have wanted to read and would have helped me when I was growing up." She'd like to attract a broad range of readers: people in projects, in inner cities, women making their way in the world, and professionals stuck in unsatisfying careers. "It's not a perfect success story," adds Ms. McDonald. "I have won and have lost big time. I'm just so happy that I made it through."
OMNIUM GATHERUM

Preacher Wilde
Oscar Wilde’s America
Counterculture in the Gilded Age
by Mary Warner Blanchard ’56
Yale University Press, 1998

Sometimes a chance meeting can alter a life. For Mary Warner Blanchard, such a meeting occurred on a golf course in the early 1980s. She and her caddy, a graduate student, discussed their mutual interest in history. He later sent her application materials from the graduate history program at Rutgers University; impressed by the trouble that he had gone to, Ms. Blanchard decided to apply. Almost thirty years after graduating from Vassar, she reentered academic life and embarked upon a new career. The day on the golf course proved fortuitous; Ms. Blanchard has just published her first book, Oscar Wilde’s America: Counterculture in the Gilded Age, a revision of her doctoral dissertation. It is a richly illustrated account, and the reproductions of trade cards, domestic interiors, tapestries, paintings, and women’s clothing make the period come alive.

In her book, Ms. Blanchard examines the impact of a lecture tour taken by Oscar Wilde in 1882. Wilde preached a new religion of beauty and art, and late-nineteenth century America proved fruitful ground for such a faith, known as aestheticism. As Ms. Blanchard argues, the aftermath of the Civil War and the country’s rapid industrialization made some Americans eager to embrace the promise of redemption offered by art and beauty. More than simply a style of art, aestheticism presented a challenge to Victorian American values, especially to accepted ideas of what it meant to be a man and what it meant to be a woman. Male aesthetics, for example, wore androgynous clothing in the style of Oscar Wilde, while women abandoned their restraining but proper corsets. Middle-class women across the country responded to the challenge of art for art’s sake by redesigning their homes, their bodies, and their sense of themselves.

In her account of Wilde’s impact on American culture, Ms. Blanchard combines art history, literary studies, traditional history, and the study of material culture. Ms. Blanchard’s approach to her subject is a broad-based one that she says she first learned at Vassar. She credits her academic training at Vassar with encouraging her to be innovative and to ask new types of historical questions, and she cites particularly Carl Degler’s class in American social history, which introduced her to what was then a new field, the study of everyday life in American history. In her senior history thesis she analyzed the influence of German ideas on New England Transcendentalists.

Ms. Blanchard explains that in the course of researching Oscar Wilde in America, she became very fond of the women who joined the aesthetic movement both to express themselves artistically and as “a way out of the dead ends of conventional domestic life.” She identifies with these women, who did not join a political movement but attempted to construct a new way of life through art, interior design, literature, and clothing. The aesthetic style in interior design, for example, was a “pastiche of unrelated exotic formats,” generally from Asia. Things were not what they appeared to be: walls were divided up to hide the structural frame; fake wallcoverings lined the rooms; stained glass windows masqueraded as pictures. Parlors were deliberately made to look foreign, like stage settings. Ms. Blanchard sees this as a direct challenge to the idea that the home was a controlled domestic space, offering a moral alternative to the competitive male world of commerce and labor.

The aesthetic critique of popular American culture proved short-lived, and it did not succeed in transforming American life, but Ms. Blanchard argues that it is nonetheless far more significant than has been previously acknowledged. In fact, Ms. Blanchard argues that aestheticism can be seen as a prototype of modernism. As she sees it, “The women’s decorative arts movement provided a precedent for the masculine avant garde.” She hints at this in her epilogue, where she traces the influence of the aesthetic movement on Frank Lloyd Wright.

Ms. Blanchard is currently an associate fellow and advisory board member at the Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis and teaches a course on material culture and the imagination. Her newest project is a study of the meanings of colonial revivalism.

—Maureen A. McCarthy ’84

Maureen McCarthy teaches American history at St. Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire.
How to Animate
“A Bug’s Life”

His photo may not grace the pages of People magazine, but Academy Award winner Eben Ostby ’77 attracted his share of autograph seekers when he visited campus in December. Mr. Ostby, supervising technical director of the celebrated feature animation film A Bug’s Life, attracted students, professors, and local computer professionals interested in his lecture, “Computer Animation at Pixar.” Also in attendance were some very young fans of the film eager to get the technical director’s autograph.

Mr. Ostby, who works for Pixar Animation Studios, illustrated through slides and video clips how A Bug’s Life was created, from the initial work on the storyline to the design of characters and use of computers to bring characters and sets to life. The whole production process took four years, he said. He, along with several colleagues, won a 1998 Scientific and Technical Academy Award for the design work on Pixar’s 3-D animation technology.

Traditionally, animated feature films such as Disney’s Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs have been created using the time-consuming and labor-intensive process of two-dimensional, hand-drawn cell animation. A Bug’s Life is the second film produced under a 1991 agreement between Pixar and Walt Disney Pictures that uses Pixar’s advanced, three-dimensional computer and creative team.

“Over the last fifteen years, computer animation has progressed from the production of short demonstration films illustrating the basic technology of computer graphics in animation,” Mr. Ostby said in advance of his formal lecture, “through simple storytelling to the production of full-length films. On the way, we have learned much about computer graphics and more about storytelling and managing big projects.”

Mr. Ostby’s lecture was part of the Winifred Asprey Lecture Series in Computer Science. The 1977 graduate recalled that Ms. Asprey helped him create an independent major in computer science at Vassar at a time when a computer science major wasn’t an option.

“The process of figuring out what that major should be was perhaps the most instructive thing I’d ever done, and maybe one of the most instructive things I’ve done since. She insisted upon a rigorous understanding of what computer science was; what it could mean in a liberal arts college; and what kind of classes we could get out of the offerings that were available on campus to make up something like this. Just figuring out what that major [would be] was a wonderful and extremely valuable experience,” he said.

—R.H.

’74 Classmates on the Federal Bench

Two members of the Vassar class of ’74 faced each other in a Washington, D.C., courtroom in October, one, the Honorable Vicki Miles-LaGrange, United States District Judge in Oklahoma, administering the oath of office to the other, Richard W. Roberts, new United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

Richard Roberts had previously served for three years as the chief of the criminal section in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, the section where he started his legal career as a trial attorney in 1978. In between, he worked as an associate with the law firm Covington & Burling in D.C.; as assistant U.S. attorney in New York, then in D.C.; and as principal assistant United States attorney for the District of Columbia.

Judge Roberts holds an M.A. degree from the School for International Training and a J.D. degree from Columbia Law
School. He is a founding member of the Washington, D.C., chapter of Concerned Black Men, Inc., and is a former member of the Council on Foreign Relations. He has taught trial practice as an adjunct professor at Georgetown University Law Center. Judge Roberts serves, as does Judge Miles-LaGrange, as a trustee of Vassar College; he is also a member of the board of directors of the alumnae/i association of Vassar College.

Vassar classmates, friends, and board colleagues were well represented among the reported several hundred guests at the investiture.

Below: Film producer Deborah Boldt ’69 (pointing up), at work on her upcoming documentary Fresco, to be shown on PBS April 1. At bottom is a detail, Hope, from the fresco.

"Fresco": To Be Shown on PBS in April

Filmmaker Deborah Boldt ’69, perhaps best known for her 1980s documentary Miles To Go, a film about eight women and their two-week adventure in the wilderness, has a new film, Fresco, that is scheduled to be aired nationally by PBS April 1 (check local listings for time).

The film documents the creation of the largest modern fresco in the United States—the St. Thomas Fresco in Minneapolis—from the mixing of paints to the selection of imagery and follows through to capture reactions to the work by viewers. The film, says Ms. Boldt, “is a meditation on the nature of excellence” as well as an exploration of the role of public art in an increasingly multicultural society.

According to advance materials provided by Ms. Boldt, her new documentary “traces the origins of fresco painting to the cave drawings of earliest human history, and shows how frescoes were used by peoples in Asia, the Mediterranean, Europe, and the Americas to express their cultures’ most fundamental beliefs and concerns. The film portrays the St. Thomas Fresco as a continuation of this ancient tradition.

“As it depicts the disciplined, multifaceted work of [artist Mark] Balma and his assistants, the craft of fresco painting becomes a metaphor for work of quality and meaning in any field.”

The artwork, commissioned by the University of St. Thomas, depicts the seven virtues of faith, hope, charity, justice, prudence, temperance, and fortitude. The debate behind the artist’s search for images to express these virtues to viewers of differing cultures is documented, “raising questions about the process of creating public art in an increasingly multicultural society.” The film also shows the responses of diverse members of the community as they reflect on the artwork’s depiction of the seven virtues.

An education and community outreach program has been developed to guide teachers, parents, and other community activists who may wish to pursue the themes explored by the artwork and documentary. Contact your local PBS station for airing times and more information or Toby Levine Communications, at 301/907-6510, <tlevine@tobylevine.com>.

A Passion for Info Leads to an NPR Special

Keep your radios tuned to your local National Public Radio station this spring; 1994 graduate Tracey Barry’s one-hour documentary exploring issues of youth in adult prisons will be available to—and, she hopes, picked up by—local stations across the country.

A drama/film major at Vassar, Ms. Barry moved to New York City after graduation to pursue a career in film direction and production. To get her foot in the door, she took jobs as pro-
duction assistant and worked in sound for film and television. Eventually, with the help of a supportive mentor and with experience, she made a name for herself as a freelance sound recordist, traveling around the country and the world working on projects for the likes of National Geographic Television, the Discovery Channel, and ABC News.

Although freelance sound recording isn't her dream career, it has paid the bills and allowed her the flexibility to pursue other projects, such as her documentary, If I Get Out Alive. The project grew out of outrage—in July 1997 Ms. Barry read about a proposed national legislation that would allow adolescents as young as eighth-graders to be imprisoned with adults for a range of specified violent and drug-related crimes.

"It was the one subject in a long time that really bothered me," she said. "I had to do it [the documentary]."

A documentary film on the subject, she knew, would put her thousands of dollars into debt. So she did some research, and with her sound equipment and about $5,000 in her pocket, proposed a radio documentary to Lichtenstein Creative Media, Inc., a company with eight years of radio production experience on social justice issues. Lichtenstein agreed to executive-produce the program.

Ms. Barry then spent two weeks traveling the country interviewing people on all sides of the juvenile justice debate; she talked with youths behind bars, young people who successfully returned to society through rehabilitation programs, family members of youthful offenders, legal experts, policymakers, and corrections officers.

Soon after she started, tragedies such as the school shootings in Jonesboro, Arkansas, catapulted the juvenile justice system to the forefront of the public's attention. A number of foundations stepped forward to help fund the project.

Ms. Barry has also garnered the support of actresses Diane Keaton, who narrates the documentary, and Susan Sarandon, who sits on an advisory board for the project.

"I'm most interested in starting a dialogue about these issues," Ms. Barry says, adding that she realizes there isn't one quick answer to the problems facing the juvenile justice system, which marks its 100th anniversary this year.

Ms. Barry was particularly moved by an interview with the father of a 15-year-old boy arrested for arson. The boy was tried and sentenced as an adult and was committed to an adult prison in Texas. He allegedly was repeatedly sodomized, raped, and beaten by the other inmates, and seventy-five days after he entered the prison the boy hanged himself in his cell.

"Young people who survive adult prisons come out of them with all the mean, tough survival skills that prison life teaches," Ms. Barry writes in a promotional piece for the program. (The documentary doesn't hesitate to take a point of view.) A young person who goes into prison at 15 years old and comes out at 25 "still has a lengthy criminal career ahead," Mrs. Barry said.

"We're the United States and we've got human rights abuses left and right with children," she said.

Ms. Barry says she has several ideas for her next project, which will probably again focus on our nation's youth. She says she is still working toward a career in film as a producer or director.

"I miss Vassar terribly," Ms. Barry said. "I had an amazing education, and that's probably why I'm interested in documentaries. A liberal arts education creates such a passion for information. I've done work on fires, cats, the mentally ill, kids—it's like taking an extended class."

—R.H.

Creating Opportunities for Public Interest Law

Philadelphia lawyer Franklin Fink '84 is credited with instigating a program of public interest law fellowships in the city of Philadelphia that is of mutual benefit to the area's nonprofits, first-year law associates, and their hiring law firms.

Several years ago, Mr. Fink, with an offer in hand from a Philadelphia law firm, arranged to first spend one year working for a small stipend for the American Civil Liberties Union before starting with his new firm. From that experience eventually developed the Philadelphia Public Interest Fellowship Program, described by the Philadelphia Lawyer magazine as "the nation's first self-funding public interest legal internship program."

Wrote Mr. Fink: "The program allows graduating law students accepting offers at large law firms to defer their start date for a year while they work full time at a public interest organization. The program is based on a self-funding mechanism whereby the firm advances the lawyer one-half of the first year salary during the deferral year. Following the fellowship, the lawyer returns to the firm, where he or she earns the other half of the first-year salary. Thereafter their salary returns to normal. Young lawyers get valuable experience that will accrue to their hiring law firms, and public interest organizations get much-needed legal assistance. Everybody wins.

Franklin Fink '84 found a way to do legal work for the ACLU for a year, even with an offer in his pocket from a law firm. His experience led to the development of a public interest law program for new lawyers in Philadelphia.
Boating with Oliver, Painting by Chatterton

This work, *Boating with Oliver, Ogunquit* (oil on canvas, 20 x 24), by C. K. Chatterton, artist-in-residence at Vassar for thirty-three years, is now in the collection of the Portland Museum of Art in Maine, thanks to a gift from Roger and Katherine Foster Woodman '46 that made the museum purchase possible. Ms. Woodman is a longtime trustee of the Portland Museum.

According to an account by Chatterton's granddaughter, Meg Skidmore, the Oliver in the painting is Oliver Tonks, long-ago chairman of the Vassar Art Department, who interviewed and hired the artist in 1915. The painting, writes Ms. Skidmore, recalled special memories for her mother, Julia Chatterton Van de Water '39 (editor of the Vassar alumnae magazine for 20 years), of a 1929 weekend when "Tonksie" visited "Chatty" at the family's cottage in Ogunquit.

The Nuts and Bolts of a Good Massage Table

Starting a business is a bit like a game at the fair, says Christopher Gleason '95; challenging situations will pop up, and you just have to "whack them down."

About a year ago, the young graduate founded Gleason Tableworks, an enterprise in which he builds, markets, and sells wooden massage tables. His shop in Ithaca, New York, is a renovated nineteenth-century barn heated by a wood stove. Mr. Gleason, owner and sole employee, reports investing 80 to 100 hours a week in the business.

"All the financial figuring is something new for me," he said. "It's not like you just have your own personal finances to manage. You're collecting sales tax, paying sales tax, Social Security... It's a whole new language."

A French major at Vassar, Mr. Gleason has experience in getting things off the ground. With friends he founded Vassar's cycling team after arriving on campus as a freshman and finding, to his astonishment, that none existed.

He has held several different jobs since graduating: He taught preschool for several years and then worked as an administrator for a nonprofit group home for adolescents at risk. Mr. Gleason also began practicing reiki, an ancient form of hands-on healing. The first massage table he built was for himself.

"I wanted a massage table for my private practice, but I wasn't attracted to the factory-made products," he said.

Soon, he began receiving requests for his tables, and in March 1998 he quit his 9-to-5 job at the group home and took up table-making full time. Mr. Gleason says the business is a labor of love.

"There are a lot of statistics out there—that 70 percent of new businesses fail. That's pretty amazing, and I'm sure it's accurate... I feel that I'm doing this with my heart. Whatever happens, happens. I'm planning to be successful. I'm projecting in a positive way," he said.

To check out the Gleason Tableworks Web page go to <www.lightlink.com/cgleason/>. —R.H.

From Vassar to Sotheby's to Vassar

Jiyoung Koo '91, vice president and co-director of the Korean Department at Sotheby's in New York and managing director of Sotheby's Korea, visited campus this past fall to speak on the images and role of women in Korean art. Ms. Koo, an art history major at Vassar, joined the international auction house shortly after graduation and during her career there has specialized in both Chinese and Korean art. Ms. Koo, who has lectured on Korean and Chinese art at museums and schools around the world, was brought to Vassar by the Korean Student Association, the art department, and the women's studies program.

People

Susan Combs '66 was elected commissioner of agriculture for the state of Texas in November. Ms. Combs, a lawyer, fourth-generation ranch owner, and Republican from west Texas, is the first woman to hold the post. Previously, she served as state director for the offices of U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison; as a representative in the Texas House, from 1993 to 1996; and as assistant district attorney for Dallas, handling child-abuse cases.

Composer Jonathan Elliott '84 had two new works premiered by soprano Heidi
Grant Murphy and the chamber ensemble Auréole at the Metropolitan Museum of Art Medieval Sculpture Hall on December 22, 1998. “Hommage à B.B.,” based on a Hungarian folk song, and an arrangement of “The Holly and the Ivy,” both commissioned by Ms. Murphy and Auréole, were praised by Paul Grifiths of the New York Times, who called them “excellent.” “Hommage à B.B.,” he said, was “lusciously scored,” while the traditional holiday carol “was rippling with figuration.”

In 1998 movie critic and contest judge Gene Siskel (whose death was announced just as this issue of the VQ was going to press) selected Art Almquist ’89 to get a shot at movie critic stardom. Mr. Almquist, a high school teacher and aspiring actor, was chosen in a nationwide search to host a national TV show of movie criticism on U.S. Satellite Broadcasting. Check your local listings.

Betsy Peterken McCaughey-Ross ’70, former New York State Lieutenant Governor in the Patask administration and candidate in the Democratic primary for governor in 1998, has returned to the world of think tanks by joining the Hudson Institute as a senior fellow. Before entering politics, Ms. McCaughey-Ross served as a fellow at the Manhattan Institute, where she researched health care policy and constitutional issues. She will return to her study of the health care industry and of Medicare at the Hudson Institute.

Noted

Books

NONFICTION
Impossible Purities
Blackness, Femininity, and Victorian Culture
by Jennifer DeVere Brody ’87
Duke University Press, 1998

Bittersweet Berries
Growing Up Jewish in Minnesota
by Ruth Firestone Brin ’41
Holy Cow! Press, 1999

Henry F. du Pont and Winterthur
A Daughter’s Portrait
by Ruth du Pont Lord ’43
Yale University Press, 1999

Charlotte von Kirschbaum and Karl Barth
A Study in Biography and the History of Theology
by Suzanne Selinger ’60
Penn State University Press, 1998

Guerrilla Diplomacy
The NLF’s Foreign Relations
and the Viet Nam War
by Robert K. Brigham,
associate professor of history
Cornell U. Press, 1998

Experimental Organic Chemistry
A Balanced Approach:
Macroscale and Microscale
by Jerry R. Mohrig, Christina Noring
Hammond (VC M.S. ’63),
Terence C. Morrill, and Douglas C. Neckers
W. H. Freeman and Co., 1998

Dislocating Cultures
Identities, Traditions
and Third World Feminism
by Uma Narayan,
assistant professor of philosophy
Routledge, 1997


Romantic Days and Nights
in Washington, D.C.
Intimate Escapes in the Capital
by Cynthia Hachil and
William S. D. Connor ’80
Globe Pequot Press, 1999

World War II
Letters From Home, 1942–1944
by Frances White Field ’36
Dorrance Publishing Co., Inc., 1998

POETRY
The Lord & The General Din
of the World
by Jane Mead ’82
Sarabande Books
First published in 1995, now in its second printing.

MYSTERY
The “M” Word
by Jane [Siegendorf] Isenberg ’62
Avon, 1999

SCHOOL USE
Language Assessment for Grades 3 & 4
by Priscilla Luke Vail ’53
Modern Learning Press, 1998

PHOTOGRAPHY
Haunter of Ruins
The Photography of Clarence John Laughlin
edited by John H. Lawrence ’75
and Patricia Brady
Bulfinch Press, 1998

Includes an essay by Mr. Lawrence, director of museum programs at the Historic New Orleans Collection.
AAVC Election '99

Please use the ballot postcard enclosed. Ballots must be received in time for the Annual Meeting at Reunion, June 6, 1999.

The Alumnae and Alumni of Vassar College (AAVC) is governed by a twenty-two-member board of directors elected by alumnae/i from candidates nominated by an independently elected nominating committee. This year, six positions on the board and three on the nominating committee are to be decided.

AAVC Trustees
AAVC trustees serve simultaneous terms on the board of directors of AAVC and on the board of trustees of Vassar College. They are nominated by alumnae/i to be members of the Vassar board of trustees and are elected by and to that board. In addition to participating in both boards, AAVC trustees serve as liaison between the college and alumnae/i.

Treasurer
Chief financial and budget officer for AAVC.

Fund Advisory Committee Chair
Responsible for ensuring that the alumnae/i body is well-informed about matters pertaining to the Annual Fund and that Fund volunteers are supported and encouraged in their work.

Directors at large
Provide needed professional or volunteer skills and serve to widen alumnae/i representation on the board.

Nominating committee
Nominates candidates for the AAVC board and the nominating committee.

The AAVC nominating committee actively seeks and solicits potential candidates for AAVC board service. Recommendations from constituents are warmly welcomed. Please send names to the Nominating Committee, Alumnae House, 61 Raymond Ave., Poughkeepsie, NY 12603, or via e-mail to <te osloa@vassar.edu>.

For AAVC Trustee

Todd Mann '75
Atlanta, Georgia

Vassar volunteer experience
On the steering committee of the Atlanta Vassar Club since 1990, serving as president of the club, 1993–94; chair of the club's subcommittee for admissions, 1990–92; and long-time interviewer of prospective students.

Professional experience
Since 1926, executive vice president of Transcend Services, a national health-care company headquartered in Atlanta; from 1996–98, served as president and CEO of a Transcend subsidiary. In the 1980s, Mr. Mann was one of eight to start International Banking Technologies, a company that created the concept of contracting out banks and supermarkets to place full-service branches inside stores. From 1988–93, he was senior vice president at IBT, first for retail sales and marketing, then for product management.

Paula Williams Madison '74
Mount Vernon, New York

Vassar volunteer experience
Active in various roles with Triple AAVC (African American Alumnae/i of Vassar College), including: member of steering committee, since 1989; chair of student life committee, 1990–97; co-host of prospective minority students who participated in Triple AAVC—Admission Office Bus Trip to Vassar (1990–95); co-chair of Triple AAVC, 1988–90. In addition, served as a director-at-large for the New York City Vassar Club, 1991–96, and admission representative for numerous clubs in New York, Texas, and Oklahoma.

Professional experience
Vice president and news director of NBC's NewsChannel 4 in New York City since 1996. Prior to that, the station's assistant news director for seven years; executive news director for KHOU-TV in Houston, Texas; news director for KOTV-TV in Tulsa; news manager for WFAA-TV in Dallas. Ms. Madison is active with the New York and National Associations of Black Journalists and the New York Press Club and has been a board member of the New York State Associated Press Broadcasters Association since 1996.

For Treasurer

Cotton (Margaret) Cobb Hubard '68
Arlington, Virginia

Vassar volunteer experience
Has served class in many roles, including: president, 1993–96; fund committee, 1998; reunion co-chair, 1993; and treasurer, 1973–93. In the mid-'70s, Ms. Hubard worked on the Washington, DC, club's book sale.

Professional experience
Owns an exercise company, Aerobix; gives seminars and classes on leadership skills; has supervised financial investment portfolios; and has served as a professional volunteer by working as treasurer of the National Headquarters of the National Society of The Colonial Dames of America.

For Fund Advisory Committee Chair

Eleanor Mack Rath's '56
Hinsdale, Illinois

Vassar volunteer experience
Member, AAVC Fund Advisory Committee since 1996, and chair, filling an unexpired term, since 1998; on class nominating committee since 1997; class president, 1991–96; and class fund chair, 1981–86. Active with the Chicago Vassar Club in the 1970s, including terms as club president and chair of the prospective students committee.

Professional experience
### FOR DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE

**C. Yolanda Sabio '73**  
Central Islip, New York  

**Vassar volunteer experience**  
Admission interviewer for the Vassar clubs of Long Island, 1995 to present, and New York, 1990–94; nominating committee of the New York Vassar Club, 1992–94; various positions with Triple A/VIC (African American Alumnae/i of Vassar College), including member of steering committee, 1990–96; chair of leadership and career development, 1990–96, with special focus on advising and creating workshops for students; member of triennial conference organizing committee in 1993 and chair of conference in 1996; active with annual commencement and baccalaureate service activities.

**Professional experience**  
Presently, change management consultant with Andersen Consulting. Prior work: management and organizational development in both nonprofit and for-profit companies, including Girl Scouts of the USA, MTA–NYC Transit, and Newsday (a Times Mirror newspaper serving Long Island and Queens). Has been a presenter for World Trade Institute, Women’s Transportation Seminar, New York Institute of Technology, Lever Brothers, and Suffolk Community College Techni-Center’s Entrepreneurial Assistance program on topics of diversity, leadership, team building, time management, and effective communications.

**Alison McCallum May ’52**  
Norwich, Vermont  

**Vassar volunteer experience**  
Class treasurer since 1992, member of the New Hampshire/Vermont Vassar Club since 1994. Prior to that, member of the Washington, DC, Vassar Club.

**Professional experience**  
Mrs. May has also put her professional skills to use as elected auditor of the town of Norwich in Vermont (elected 1997), as treasurer and president of the Norwich Public Library Association board of trustees; and in service on the Alexandria, Virginia, school board from 1971–80, including chairing the board, 1977–80.

### FOR AAVC NOMINATING COMMITTEE

**Carol Rivera Selsey ’77**  
Olathe, Kansas  

**Vassar volunteer experience**  
Presently serves as class vice president. Previous contributions include alumnae/admissions work, service as club Council representative for New Orleans and New York, class reunion and fund chair, and president of the Kansas City Vassar Club.

**Professional experience**  
Presently vice president, DAOU, RHI, Inc., of Kansas City. Has previously worked as a business development consultant and account executive.

**Dave Tobias ’83**  
Rhinebeck, New York  

**Vassar volunteer experience**  
Served on 10th-year reunion committee. As a student, founded and organized the Vassar Triathlon for Oxfam America and worked as graphics editor and contributor for campus newspapers.

**Professional experience**  
Director of Land Acquisition and Stewardship Program for the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, with responsibility for strategic planning, policy development, organization, and implementation of a $270 million land acquisition program in a 2,000-square-mile watershed.

**Amy Gardiner Chanmugam ’90**  
Austin, Texas  

**Vassar volunteer experience**  

**Professional experience**  
Current: Casework supervisor, Turman Halfway House, Texas Youth Commission; also, counselor, Nicholls & Associates, Psychotherapy. Immediate past work: counselor, YWCA Women’s Counseling and Referral Center.

**Amy Gardiner Chanmugam ’90**
Club Scholarship Benefits

CHICAGO
April 17
Auction and dinner, with
Donald Foster, professor of
English, as featured speaker.
Contact: Nancy John,
847/328-3724

NEW YORK CITY
April 22
Dinner and a Broadway show,
the revival of Irving Berlin's
Annie Get Your Gun, starring Bernadette
Peters. Call 212/697-7499
for info or to make
reservations.

NEW HAMPSHIRE
April 24-25
Five-College Book Sale
Hanover

WASHINGTON, DC
April 28–May 2
50th Vassar Book Sale
At the D.C. Convention
Center.
For more info, call
301/299-4855.

BOSTON
May 2
Wine tasting and art
auction from noon–3 P.M.
at the Harvard Club
of Boston.
Contact: Sherry Bingham
Downes '62 at
617/734-9233.

Coming Up

Below is a selection of events from AAVC's calendar. Call AAVC for details and contact persons. For updates, check the online calendar at <www.aavc.vassar.edu>.

Vassar College Showcase
April 8
Jersey Hills
Featuring Professor of
Classics Rachel Kitzinger.
For information, contact
Nancy Purdy '51 at
973/777-0975.

Faculty Visit
April 12
Featuring Benjamin Kohl,
emeritus professor of history
St. Louis Vassar Club

'32 mini-reunion
April 12-14
Alumnae House

LAGAVC Conference
April 16-18
Alumnae House

Evening at the Opera
April 24
Verdi's Rigoletto at the
Bardavon Opera House
Poughkeepsie Vassar Club

Founder's Day
May 1
On campus
Annual festivities. Class of
'98, watch your mail for
details.

Off campus
The Carolinaas Vassar Club
will celebrate Founder's
Day on May 1 with lunch
in downtown Charlotte,
NC, and a stroll to nearby
galleries, including the new
Mint Museum of Craft and
Design. For more info,
contact Eileen Amon '81
at 704/542-9190.

AAVC Board of Directors
May 8-9
Alumnae House

Reunion
June 4-6

PHILADELPHIA
May 8–May 31
Vassar Show House at
Montparnasse
Hours: Monday–Friday,
10 A.M. to 3 P.M.;
Tuesday–Friday evenings,
6–8:30 P.M.; Saturdays and
Sundays, 12 noon–4 P.M.
For more info, call
610/527-9717.

WESTCHESTER
June 11–13
40th Annual Book Sale
At SUNY-Purchase
914/636-7924

AAVC Seminar:
Landscape and
Architectural Preservation
June 11–13
Alumnae House

Volunteer Leadership
Conference
October 8–10
On campus

75th Birthday Celebration
for Alumnae House
October 9
Alumnae House
See page opposite for more
information about pro-
grams throughout the year.

AAVC Board of Directors
October 16–17
Alumnae House
AAVC TRAVEL

1999

Call Marcia Valdatta at 914/437-5438 for details.

Cruising the Russian White Sea and the North Cape
June 16–July 1
with Associate Professor of Mathematics Benjamin Lotto

Alaska: A Family Adventure
Aug. 1–13
with Vassar horticulturist Jeff Horst

Mexico's Valley of Oaxaca: Archaeology, Arts, and Traditions
Oct. 16–23
with Professor of Anthropology Lucy Johnson

Private Estates and Art Splendors of the “Hidden Italy”
Sept. 23–Oct. 1
(cosponsored with the Corcoran Gallery of Art)
Featuring Bergamo, Cremona, Parma, Carrara, Lucca, Prato, and Florence,
the trip will be led by the Corcoran's curator of education Susan Stevenson Badder '63.

Note: AAVC's trip to Easter Island, Tahiti, and Moorea has been canceled.

Vassar Anniversaries in ’99

1999 marks:

75 years since Alumnae House opened, offering Vassar alumnae (and, later, alumni as well) and their families and friends a home at the college and a venue for continuing education programs.

50 years that the Washington, DC, Vassar Club Book Sale has been generating huge amounts of scholarship dollars and publicity for the college with a sale that became a required stop for collectors and book dealers as well as casual readers.

40 years that the Westchester Vassar Club, too, has been selling books to raise scholarship funds.

30 years since Vassar's decision to accept men as students.

25 years since the graduation of the first fully coeducational Vassar class

and

25 years since the founding of the Friends of the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center (formerly the Vassar Art Gallery).

Latino Alumnae/i of Vassar College Needs You

Founded as an AAVC affiliate group in 1995, LAVC needs Latina/o alumnae/i interested in serving as a resource base for undergraduates, participating in recruitment and retention of Latino and other students of color, and gathering at reunion, graduation and other events. If you want to become an officer, member, or just be added to our mailing list, please get in touch: LAVC, 61 Raymond Ave., Poughkeepsie, NY 12603-3116; <LAVC_officers@avvc.vassar.edu>; or 914/437-5441.

Are You an Alumna/us of the Greenhaven Field Work Program?

If so, would you be interested in returning to campus for a Greenhaven alumni event with Vassar alumnae/i, Professors Mamiya and Cladis, and released inmates? To indicate your interest please contact Daniella Ponet '99 at Vassar College, Box 3878, Poughkeepsie, NY 12604-3878. E-mail <daponet@vassar.vassar.edu>. The reunion will be April 17th.

Alumnae House 75th Anniversary Programs Being Scheduled

Seventy-five years ago, Alumnae House opened its doors, welcoming alumnae and their families and guests for overnight stays, programs of continuing education, and social gatherings. It was conceived as an on-campus home to which alumnae, and, later, alumni, could return to reconnect with the college and with one another and from which the AAVC could pursue its work in support of the college.

To celebrate the house's lively history, an AAVC 75th Anniversary Committee chaired by Deborah Macfarlen Enright '82 is planning a yearlong series of events and projects in which all alumnae/i are invited to participate. The schedule of 75th programs includes:

• Seminar on historic preservation and landscape architecture featuring alumnae professionals in the field and Vassar faculty. The Vassar campus will be our primary source. June 11–13. For information, call 914/437-5439.

• A children's concert series at the house in both spring and fall. Call 914/437-5439 for specifics.

• A commemorative quilt, being pieced together by Martha Lingua Whelss '78. Contact her at 757/481-2163 or via e-mail at <Lingua@ccpo.odu.edu>.

The beautiful coast of Norway will be visited when AAvc cruises the Russian White Sea and the North Cape.
PERSON PLACE
AND THING

Vassar faculty, students, alumnae/i, and staff are invited to submit items to P&P&T. There is no charge for this bulletin board service; publication is as space permits. Submissions should be typed and 75 words or less; they may be edited for length and style. Deadlines are three months in advance of each issue. Please note that AAVC cannot verify the terms of ads that are unrelated to AAVC activities.

Join a European garden history tour organized by Marie Stella Byrnes '63. The tour, scheduled for May 21–31, 1999, features the Chelsea Flower Show and Giverny, a small village on the banks of the Seine that was home to Claude Monet. For further information contact Kirin Farm Enterprises Inc. at 413/339-4278. Ms. Byrnes, a landscape designer and historian, has 15 years experience coordinating international touring programs.

Planning a trip to Britain? Why not let a Vassar alumna, resident in London since graduation and a qualified Blue Badge tourist guide, plan a memorable day or days for you. I have a car with a capacity of four persons, insured to take tourists, and can plan tours tailor-made to your interests... whether it's meandering along sleepy roads in Wales, visiting Adam houses, or exploring lesser-known London. Competitive prices. Sara Offutt Hebblethwaite '60, 18 Redgrave Road, London SW15 1PX. Tel: GB-0181-788-6910.


Vassar Voices is a compilation CD involving all eight a cappella singing groups at Vassar. Represented on this CD is a broad range of music including the contemporary sounds of Measure for Measure, the Allegories, and Matthew's Minstrels; the more classic styles sung by the Night Owls, the Axidentals, and the Devils; the Jewish music sung by Zioniah; and the traditional songs of the Renaissance Singers. Please support this project by preordering a copy of Vassar Voices. The CD will be coming out May 23, 1999. To preorder, send your name, mailing address, and a check for $14 (this includes shipping and handling), payable to "Vassar College A Cappella," to Vassar Voices, c/o Rollin Simmons, Box 2820, Vassar College, 124 Raymond Ave., Poughkeepsie, NY 12604.

Nantucket: summer rental. July 30 to Sept. 9, 1999. Bright, well-appointed home with three bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths, up-to-date kitchen with dishwasher, washer/dryer, patio, large yard. Tennis courts, swimming pool available to tenants. Naushop area. Less than a mile to town or to beach. $1,700 a week. Ferry reservations (July 30 return Aug. 12, Aug. 12 return Aug. 26, Aug. 26 return Sept. 9) available with house rental. If desired, must transfer to tenants by April 10, 1999. Contact: Joan Miller Benton '46 at 281/499-2455 or e-mail <amymd@neosoft.com>.

Senior biopsych/premed major seeks year-long, postgrad internship/employment in Washington, DC, area. I am looking for an opportunity in a health/medical field where I complete the med school application process. I'm a certified EMT and have had significant experience in patient care, education, and public relations. Please contact me if you know of any opportunities: <jgreenglaw@vassar.edu> or 914/451-3496 before May 25; 908/497-9140 after May 25. Jennifer Greenlaw '99.

Boothbay Harbor, Maine. Secluded cabin on private, spring-fed lake with sand beach swimming. Two bedrooms, 1/2 baths, large living room with fireplace, and covered porch; 150 feet to Linekin Bay for fishing and boating. Walk to town. Phone 302/652-5849. Patricia Zolper '51.

To mark the start of a new millennium, '80 classmates Karen Cox, Dale Pierce, Elaine Taylor, and Kathy Lee '79 are embarking on a project to bring the extraordinary experience of being a black woman at Vassar to the screen. From what you may know or have heard of our earliest days on campus, through Kendrick House and Townhouse D4, to the graduating class of 1999... your thoughts, analysis, anecdotes, and photographs are welcome. Please contact us by e-mail or telephone/fax: Karen Cox; <KAREN.LCOX@cpmx.saic.com>, or 703/824-7405; Dale Pierce; <featherrock@earthlink.net>, or 718/622-0385 (fax).

Keep up with weekly news at Vassar! Subscribe to the Miscellany News. $35 for a full year; $22.50 for a semester. Send orders to: The Miscellany News, Box 149, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY 12604.

Tuscan villa: Enjoy the rustic charm of this converted fourteenth-century fattoria 30 minutes north of Florence. Perfect for day trips to Tuscany/Umbria, only 2.5 hours to Rome or Venice. Relax at poolside bar overlooking Arno valley. Romantic villas for 2-8 people w/full kitchens, but why not enjoy a glass of house-made grappa or lemoncello after a four-course meal in our own well-appointed dining room? Friendly proprietor (former architect/ vintner) understands the delicate balance of hospitality and privacy. Available April–October and for Giubileo 2000. Contact: Michael Orobona '92 at 718/398-9466.


Charming, beautifully restored private, four-bedroom farmhouse in the Loire Valley, between Blois and Tours. Attached studio in barn. Ideal for sabbaticals and extended holidays. Available all seasons. Very reasonable rates. Website: <http://www.netrunner.net/~srbeste/france.html>. 203/865-1265 or 203/269-6407 or <dbeste@choate.edu>. [Bill Lustenader '79]

The perfect Vermont retreat. Charming eclectically restored 1804 farmhouse on 30+ acres. Beautiful location overlooking 5-acre meadow and private swimming pool. Hike and snowshoe from back door. Trails nearby for excellent cross-country skiing. Close to two large lakes. 30 minute drive to downhill skiing, Hanover, Barre/Montpelier. Week/weekend rentals. Photos available. Contact Amy at 802/439-5990 or e-mail <bbaddld@sover.net>. [Pamela Hatchfield '75]

I am a Vassar student looking for affordable living in New York City for September through December 1999. Either a one-person apartment or a room is all I need, and Brooklyn or Manhattan are preferred. If you can help, please e-mail me at <madudley@vassar.edu> or call 914/471-6899 or 615/352-5469. Mary Dudley '00.


French Provinces: Rent lovely rustic farm-house in southwestern France. Midway between Dordogne and Lot rivers. Quiet picturesque farming village near Figeac, and St. Céré; 45 minutes to Sarlat, capital of the Dordogne Valley; 70 km to Cahors and...
An exhibition of 150 works from the private collections of seven decades of Vassar alumnae/i celebrates Tradition, Collecting, and the Vassar Education and marks the 25th year of the Friends of the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center.

Georgia O'Keeffe
Blue Morning Glories,
New Mexico, II, 1935
Anonymous promised gift, class of 53

On April 23, 1999, Vassar's Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center will open an exhibition of a scale and scope unprecedented in the college's history. Entitled Refining the Imagination: Tradition, Collecting, and the Vassar Education, this exhibition, organized to honor the Friends of the FLLAC's twenty-fifth anniversary, will bring together 150 of the finest works of art from the private collections of seven decades of Vassar graduates as well as a few "friends" of the college. Close to one-third of the works of art in the exhibition have been designated as promised gifts to the collection.

Although many of the works in the show will delight the vis-

James Mundy is the Anne Hendricks Bass Director of the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center.

Ms. McHenry is at work on a study of the New York architecture of James Renwick, Jr., 1818-1895.
Mary Weitzel Gibbons, born late graduate of 1951, began her professional career as an instructor in art history (1976–1980) at Vassar. In 1984 she received a doctorate from Rutgers, and in 1995 she published an important critical study, Giambologna: Narrator of the Catholic Reformation. In college the then Miss Weitzel majored in psychology, but was immediately excited by Art 105 and Leila Barber’s Italian painting course. Miss Barber, who became a lifelong friend, planned to the minute the new alumna’s postgraduation trip to Europe.

During Alan Simpson’s tenure as Vassar president (1964–1977) Dr. Gibbons championed the start of a “Friends” of the Gallery, now Friends of the Loeb Art Center, and today she is a generous patron of the organization. A Pittsburgh native, she divides her time among New York, San Francisco, and research trips to France and Italy.

“I’m not a collector, really,” she said recently, “but I had an interesting initiation.” With her husband, Felton Gibbons, art history professor at Princeton, Saturdays were spent in New York galleries, Durlacher’s among them. Then she was off to London, where she scouted Agnew’s for Old Masters under £300. Later she acquired a few things, she says modestly, including the late-sixteenth-century bronze Mars by the Venetan artist Tiziano Aspetti, in the present exhibition.

Professor Gibbons, having taught at Baruch and Hunter Colleges in New York, is now an independent scholar who publishes regularly. As at Vassar her scholarly enthusiasms range widely, from an early book on the architecture of Princeton to a study of the impact of race and gender on the portrayal of the female nude in Western art, an investigation of the work of Hispanic and African American women artists, and recently a study of late medieval writer and poet Christine de Pisan.

Who is her favorite contemporary artist? Louise Bourgeois.

—B.J.M.

Tiziano Aspetti
Mars, after 1592
Lent by Dr. Mary Weitzel Gibbons ’51

Edvard Munch
The Lonely Ones or Two People, 1908
Lent by Philip and Lynn Gross Straus ’46

itor, the intention of the exhibition goes beyond opening the private treasure chests of alumnae/i collectors and focuses on the strong historical connections between the study of art, particularly original art, at Vassar and the quality and distinction of collectors with Vassar in their backgrounds. Among the 150 works in the exhibition are examples of Chinese ceramics from the Han and Tang dynasties as well as pre-Columbian figures and masks; paintings by Thomas Cole, Frederick Edwin Church, Martin Johnson Heade, William Merritt Chase, Camille Pissarro, Edvard Munch, Henri Matisse, Gabrielle Münter, Georgia O’Keeffe, Arthur Dove, and Ross Bleckner; drawings, watercolors, and pastels by Fra Bartolommeo, Taddeo Zuccaro, Canaletto, G.D. Tiepolo, Jean-Honoré Fragonard, Winslow Homer, Edgar Degas, Paul Cézanne, Paul Klee, Edward Hopper, and Andy Warhol; prints by Jacques Bellange, Hendrick Goltzius, Peter Paul Rubens, Munch, Degas, Pablo Picasso, and Jasper Johns; sculptures by Isamu Noguchi, Jean Arp, Anthony Caro, George Rickey, David Hammons, and Frank Stella; and photographs by Julia Margaret Cameron, Alvin Langdon Coburn, Man Ray,
Imogen Cunningham, and Alexander Rodchenko, to name some of the artists.

The exhibition takes its title from a report written by founding Vassar trustee the Reverend Elias L. Magoon on behalf of the Committee on the Art Gallery to the trustees in 1864. This important document, a highly colorful and quotable rhetorical tour de force, presents the argument for instructing the young women of Vassar with the aid of original works of art to be housed in a space for this purpose. An excerpt (italics are mine):

Art is diviner than science; the latter discovers, this creates. It is the highest sagacity and purest exertion of human nature. The study of it possesses this great and peculiar charm—that it is absolutely detached from the disgraceful contests of sordid ambition. Above and beyond all petty strifes, mankind are most attracted and united by a taste for beautiful art—a taste at once the most engrossing and ennobling, refining the imagination and fortifying the judgement, elevating emotion to the loftiest enthusiasm, and, at the

Marian Phelps Pawlick '48
drew to Vassar knowing that she would major in art history. Interested in art from childhood, Mrs. Pawlick had always wished to draw and to paint. She remembers marvelous parents who introduced her to Chicago’s rich cultural offerings in music, dance, architecture, and the treasures of the Art Institute of Chicago. When she chose a college, it was the art history faculty at Vassar that drew her to Poughkeepsie. Agnes Ringde Clafin and Leila Cook Barber had shaped and strengthened the art department in vitality and number. Distinguished scholars Richard Krautheimer and Adolf Katzenellenbogen arrived to offer intense study in Christian Rome, medieval sculpture, and modern architecture. Mrs. Pawlick found courses enormously exciting.

Although Mrs. Pawlick belonged to an accelerated class (during the war years of 1943 to 1946, students were able to complete Vassar’s degree program in three years), she chose to stay an extra year, to leisurely study philosophy, history, literature, and composition. In 1948 she sailed for Europe and made her first purchase, a painting by Swiss artist Hans Erni, which she had seen in a window. “It was much more thrilling than the Paris dress I’d thought to buy,” she has said.

Mrs. Pawlick is a collector of English furniture, old silver, and books, and has a keen interest in photographs, particularly those of Cartier-Bresson and Imogen Cunningham. A sculpture by contemporary English artist Barry Flanagan adorns the garden of her Lake Bluff home. Major strengths in her collection come from painters of the impressionist period—Degas and Pissarro, and Jean-François Raffaelli, Degas’s friend, whose paintings offer a view of Parisian lower-class life. Mrs. Pawlick’s long association with the Art Institute of Chicago, where she is a trustee, has given her a wide knowledge of the function and mission of art museums. Having seen the elegance of Cesar Pelli’s Loeb Art Center building and its sophisticated facilities for the care of artworks, Mrs. Pawlick has generously promised gifts from her collection to Vassar. —B.J.M.
Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn '89

Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn '89 knew from the start that she would have a professional career in the art world. Ms. Rohatyn, the daughter of gallery owners in St. Louis, was surrounded by paintings and sculpture at home, aware of collectors such as Joseph Pulitzer, and frequented the St. Louis Art Museum. When she looked at college art history programs, she found exactly what she wanted at Vassar. She studied impressionist painters with James Cuno, now head of the Harvard University Art Museums, and twentieth-century artists with Romy Golan, now teaching at Yale. And she remembers one extraordinary guest lecture by sculptor Richard Serra. Special influence came from the classical art courses of Christine Havelock, who, Ms. Rohatyn says, "taught me how to look." Beyond the art history faculty, she chose literature and anthropology studies to amplify her art history curriculum. After presenting a thesis on earthwork art, Ms. Rohatyn moved to the Brooklyn Museum and prepared one of the first museum group shows of installation art. At the same time she enrolled in graduate studies at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts.

Having set up an art advisory service, with clients such as the Royal Academy in London, Ms. Rohatyn is opening a New York gallery this spring. Her personal taste tends to emerging artists such as Kara Walker, an African American artist who makes mural-size cutouts, farcical in tone, of the antebellum South, "superbly executed and rivetingly offensive across the board," said a New York Times review. Also in her collection are sculptures by David Hammons; boldly worked in hair and stone, these achieve a classical look, recalling the works of Brancusi.

In 1996, Ms. Rohatyn organized an exhibit of Peter Halley drawings for the Loeb Art Center. And recently, for a show in Paris, American Artists in the American Ambassador's Residence, she chose classic examples of American artists, including Lichtenstein, O'Keeffe, Hopper, and Cindy Sherman. The catalogue, with Ellsworth Kelly's Fête à Torcy on the cover, is stunning. —B.J.M.

same time, perfecting the critical faculty, under the joint influence of subjugated sense and sovereign reason.

And, later:

Take the gem of your prospective college, under the full sway of legitimate education... lay your material foundation deep and broad; cumulate languages, sciences, and art, in as huge an aggregate as possible; but, in God's name, send to the centre—fire! From at least one chair let positive electricity neutralize the prostrating influences of all the rest. For that purpose, collect an ample and diversified gallery of actualities in artistic elegance—forms, tints, tone, true to every kingdom of nature, and which shall at once illustrate the loftiest principles and refine the most delighted hearts.

The board of trustees heeded Magoon's appeal, and the art gallery in Main building opened with a collection of original paintings, drawings, and prints to complement the core curriculum. Within ten years would be added a large collection of plaster casts of famous sculpture and the first collection of some 2,000 study photographs.
Over the next 130 years, the collection and curriculum grew in tandem and constantly returned to the need for the real to supplement the theoretical; a number of temporary exhibitions were brought to the college, as were artists and historians as lecturers. Thus, a review of the college catalogues and other records document early exhibits of the work of Gustave Courbet (1890), Anton Mauve (1894), Edward Hopper and Diego Rivera (1917), Childe Hassam (1919), members of the Société Anonyme (1923), Henri Matisse (1925), contemporary Russian art (1934), Piet Mondrian (1934), Jacob Lawrence (1942), and Florine Stettheimer (1948). In addition, the students heard from artists such as William Merrit Chase, Kenyon Cox, Le Corbusier, Philip Johnson, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, and Alexander Calder as well as the most accomplished art historical scholars, many, after 1935, refugees from Nazi oppression.

For many Vassar students, this combination of pedagogy, original work, and human exempla made deep and lasting impressions. Among the most important was a continuing emphasis on the relevance of quality, whether in ideas or works of art. The Vassar collectors represented in Refining the

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**THOMAS KRASNE LEVINE '82**

Thomas Krasne Levine '82 comes from an art-collecting Vassar family. His mother's first cousin is Belle Krasne Ribicoff '45, founding co-chairman of Friends of the Art Gallery, now Loeb Art Center. His parents collected art, too, and he grew up surrounded by twentieth-century masters. Now in the movie production business (he was recently named president of SNL Studios, a joint venture between NBC and Paramount Pictures) and resident in both Los Angeles and New York, Mr. Levine holds cherished memories of Vassar days. "It was the library," he remarked, "and the luxury of time to search out any book. All those books on open shelves—it was terrific!" He majored in history and particularly remembers his classes with Donald Olsen and David Schalk; studied English literature; and sought out art history courses with Linda Nochlin and Richard Pomer, concentrating on artists working since 1900.

The shift in focus from contemporary art to photographs, which he now collects, was only a small change for Mr. Levine. "It's marvelous," he says of photography. It is "multidisciplinary, it is about film, and films are where I work, and it is about literary works and publishing, that is, text and illustration, and it is about the out-of-doors. We've got great landscape photographers working right now—Robert Frank, for instance—and we had them in the nineteenth century too."

Mr. Levine's enthusiasm has inspired a project for the Loeb Art Center, the creation of a photography advisory council of graduates and friends. The council will focus on the purchase of photographic works, both those by established photographers such as Paul Caponigro and Irving Penn, and especially those by recently emerged photographers, for instance Hiroshi Sugimoto, Abelardo Morrel, and Richard Misrach. New works will be acquired with an eye to integrating them into the broad curriculum at Vassar. Mr. Levine would like to see photography taught in the studio at Vassar. "An interest in and awareness of photography should be basic to the Vassar education," he says. —B.J.M.

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**EDGAR DEGAS**

_Dancer Tying her Slipper, 1880-1885_  
Lent by Anne Hendricks Bass '63

**RICHARD MISRACH**

_Swimmers, Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation, Nevada, 1987_  
Lent by Thomas Krasne Levine '82 © Richard Misrach, courtesy Robert Mann Gallery
BARBARA DOYLE DUNCAN '43

Barbara Doyle Duncan '43 is, in Loeb Center Director James Mundy's words, "the patron saint of Latin American art." There was little indication of a passion for South America or a profession as an art historian during Mrs. Duncan's years at Vassar during World War II. Music was her major field, and she studied piano and voice. She recalls vividly courses with Professors Clair Leonard and George Sherman Dickinson of the music department.

But she was also absorbed by Art 105. When, after graduation, Mrs. Duncan followed her husband to his army post (she was among the few students who received an exemption to marry while still a student; the couple had married the previous December), she took with her the black-and-white University Prints that had been critical tools in the course. Immediately after the war, her husband's business career took her to Latin America, initially to Peru, where she became engaged with its song, dance, and guitar traditions. These enthusiasms led to associations with artists and the beginnings of her own collection, first of Peruvian objects and then extended to works from throughout the Americas.

Returning to studies during the 1960s, at first under Isabelle Hyman '31 at New York University, then at the Institute of Fine Arts, Mrs. Duncan received a master's degree with a thesis on Viceregal Peru and Uruguayan master Joaquín Torres-García. Moving on to the Museum of Modern Art, she began a register of all objects in MOMA's Latin American collection. In 1977, when Latin American drawings were almost unknown in the United States, Mrs. Duncan organized Lines of Vision, one hundred drawings by one hundred Latin American artists from fifteen Latin American countries. The show traveled to seven venues, including the Vassar College Art Gallery in 1978, its purpose no less ambitious than to present a more accurate insight into the Latin American soul. Since then, Mrs. Duncan has established the Barbara Duncan Collection of Latin American Art at the Huntington Art Gallery in Austin, Texas. She continues to publish and to collect artworks made from Mexico to Tierra del Fuego. Scholars are much in her debt, for Barbara Duncan initiated the studies that placed Latin American art firmly on the international art scene.

—B.J.M.

William Merritt Chase
Boat House, Prospect Park, ca. 1887
Lent by Meg Newhouse Kirkpatrick '74

Paul Cézanne
Teapot and Oranges, also known as The Tablecloth, 1895–1900
Lent by Elizabeth Lewisohn Eisenstein '45-4

Imagination came to collecting in various ways—through inheritance, travel, relationships, buying the soon-to-be-famous artists at opportune moments, or, means permitting, buying at the top of the market. Whatever the individual considerations, the recognition of the ineffable nuances among what is "good," "better," and "best" had been reinforced by a succession of demanding faculty, from the pince-nez and frock-coated Professors Van Ingen and Tonks through émigrés Krausheim and Katzellenbogen to the stately role models of Rindge, Barber, Havelock, and Askew. Each lender to the exhibition will have her or his own interpretation of the configuration of the path that led from the education to the art, but the sheer volume of knowledgeable collectors with Vassar in their pasts represents more than sheer coincidence.

The catalogue for the exhibition will include an abridged chapter of a book-length manuscript on the history of the Vassar art department written by Professor Emerita Pamela Askew, Vassar class of 1946, just before her death in 1997. Entitled "A Galaxy of Stars," this chapter surveys the exciting growth of the Vassar art department during the 1920s and
1930s, when the staid traditions of training in classical art, archaeology, Renaissance art, and interior decoration (!) yielded to a younger generation interested in underexamined subjects such as baroque or Spanish art and in bringing the lively modern art scene in New York to the attention of Vassar scholars. Among that galaxy were the Renaissance and baroque scholar and Professor Askew's father, Arthur McComb; future authority on architectural history Henry Russell Hitchcock; the founding director of the Museum of Modern Art, Alfred Barr; and, of course, the catalyst for much of this change, Agnes Rindge Claflin.

Many of us came to Vassar not necessarily aware of the deep-seated relevance of such a tradition as existed at the institution. When we were sent into the then Art Gallery on the second floor of Taylor Hall to write a description (not an interpretation or appreciation) of an original painting or sculpture, how many of us realized that it was intended to take us beyond the mere apprehension of descriptive prose? How frustrated some of us were with the seeming futility of describing the obvious. The idea that the professor could
grade us on such an exercise was startling. Was the instructor not interested in our insights into the artist's motivations and thoughts? How constrained some of us felt at not being allowed to show off our comprehensive intellects just a bit! Little did we then realize that this was a baptism of sorts for us—the introduction to a method that would place the object first before our eyes in a purposeful manner, thereby making the next such experience a moment relative to this, and so the next and the next. At the end of this concatenation might lie for us comfort instead of intimidation before the work of art, comfort that might later allow us to live among such things and continue to learn from them.

Today, as I welcome the students of my museum studies seminar into the galleries, I am aware of several things. First, that so many of the works of art there once belonged to women and men who started their lifelong love affairs with art in a similar Vassar environment. Second, that so many of the works of art not given by alumnae/i were actually selected and purchased for the art gallery or art center by directors, curators, and faculty who were Vassar trained or trainers. Finally, I'm aware that when I pose whatever question occurs before this or that painting, that I—who was taught by Professors Askew and Nochlin, who themselves studied under Barber and Rindge, who, in turn, learned from Tonks and Chatterton—perpetuate and acknowledge the wisdom of a nineteenth-century visionary who saw a clear means to "refine the imagination" and "at the same time, perfect the critical faculty." The exhibition that will open here in April is intended to honor this concept and lay the foundation for its further growth in the next century. 

Refining the Imagination: Tradition, Collecting, and the Vassar Education will be at the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center April 23–September 19. The art center is open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Sundays, 1–5. Closed Mondays.
Person, Place & Thing

Continued from page 28

its vineyards. Available late September, October, May, June. Well located for those interested in prehistory, medieval history, gastronomy, hiking, and canoeing. For information contact Professor Geoffrey Jehle at 914/437-5210 or visit the Web page at <http://irving.vassar.edu/faculty/gj/nadal/france.htm>.

Le Fever Falls Mansion. Spectacular eight-bedroom, six-bath, 6,000-square-foot, three-story mansion with stonework from the 1840s in Ulster County, NY. Excellent condition with incredible details. Heated studio/barn with bath and office/bedroom; cottage with one bedroom, bath, deck overlooking pond. Ideal setting for a family compound, training center, or B&B. $465,000, or $365,000 if barn sold separately. Call 561/844-1561. Margery Todd Bell ’37.

Spend summer on Nova Scotia. Lovely, restored 19th-century saltbox for rent on four country acres. Water view, four bedrooms, 1½ baths, double parlors, fireplace. $500 per week or $1,550 per month. Ilene Barth ’66. 212/362-8304. <IleneBarth@aol.com>.

House for rent, Montpelier, VT. Four bedrooms, two baths, garage, available for one year, Aug. 22, ’99-Aug. 15, ’00. $750/mo. + utilities, nonsmoking, animal lovers preferred. Security deposit and references required. Contact Christie Sternbach-Feist or Todd Sternbach ’81, 16 Wilson St., Montpelier, VT 05602; or <CFeistOTR@aol.com>; or 802/229-4076.

Are you seeking a house or pet or plant-sitter for the summer? Responsible soon-to-be Vassar graduate (film major ’99) seeks sitter position in New York City starting around May 24. I am reliable, quiet, and can provide references! Contact Califia Suntree at <casuntree@vassar.edu> or 914/451-3956.

Mary McCarthy’s 1950s eleven-page article on Vassar. Copy has many wonderful color photographs. Send $50 to Terry Berger ’54, 100 York St., #5-D, New Haven, CT 06511.

Editing, proofreading, and indexing services offered by Mark Seidl (class of ’87, faculty ’96-98) and John Reisbord (faculty ’97-98). Prompt, professional service, reasonable rates. References available. For more information contact us by phone at 914/473-3929 or e-mail <info@cleancopy.com>; or visit our website: <www.cleancopy.com>.

FACULTY

Dorothy Levens
professor of psychology 1952–1975
director of the nursery school 1953–1975

Nov. 2, 1998

Notification of Death

Please send obituaries or official notification of death to:
AAVC Records,
Alumnae House,
61 Raymond Ave.,
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603-3116
On Her Blindness

by Yona Zeldis McDonough '79

The manners of New Yorkers are forever under fire: we're known for being aggressive, selfish, and rude. In the face of such criticism, it has been important to me to preserve certain minor but essential decencies: giving up my seat on subways and buses to the elderly, frail, pregnant; holding doors for those behind me or encumbered with parcels or strollers; offering to share a cab; taking a moment to give street directions or even the time. And perhaps most important in this canon of small kindnesses is the willingness to help someone who is blind.

But then I had an encounter with a blind woman that has made me reconsider not my impulse to assist but at least, at moments, my ability to effectively do so. It happened like this: I was on my way to meet a friend at Lincoln Center, where we were to see the New York City Ballet. It was a warm spring night, and I was in a festive mood, wearing a new red dress, a favorite silk scarf, and a few drops of Chanel #5 behind my ears. One of my favorite ballets—Balanchine's Concerto Barocco—was on the program, and I quietly hummed some of the Bach score as I rode the cross-town bus along Eighty-sixth Street. I left the bus at the corner of Broadway to make my southbound connection.

Some geography: The cross-town bus stops at the northeast corner of the street; the stop for southbound buses along Broadway is on the southwest corner of the same intersection. I hurried across Broadway just in time to make the light to cross Eighty-sixth when I saw a blind woman standing on the opposite corner, evidently waiting for someone to help her traverse the busy street. I hesitated. She was going in the direction opposite to mine, and I was already late. But several people who were going in her direction passed her by, and so I stopped and asked if she would like me to accompany her.

"Oh yes," she replied, taking my arm. "I'd be afraid to cross here by myself." For a moment I experienced a small self-satisfied glow as I gently guided her. I was a good person, sensitive to the needs of others and willing to go out of my way (okay, only slightly) to accommodate her needs.

I had wanted to help. I had meant to help. I had even tried to help.

But just as we reached the curb, my attention was diverted—unintentionally and only momentarily—by the appearance of the downtown bus. I quickly calculated the possibility of helping the woman onto the curb, then dashing back across the street while I still had the light in time to make the bus. Preoccupied as I was, I failed to see that I was guiding my companion straight for a large lamppost. Before I could change her course she had slammed right into it, her cheek making a loud thwack! as it struck the unyielding metal.

"Sh--!", she said, turning her indignant, sightless face to mine. "That I could have done myself."

Humiliated, I could only mumble, "I'm so sorry," bring her to the curb, and slink away. In the theater shortly thereafter, my own eyes were unseeing as they followed the dancers. Instead of following the beauty of Concerto Barocco, my mind rolled a continuous replay of my clumsy behavior and unwitting betrayal of the woman's truly blind faith in my aid.

In the days and weeks that followed, the incident continued to haunt me. I burned with shame each time I remembered my sanctimonious, self-congratulatory air as I escorted her across the street.

Eventually, though, I was able to discern a lesson, a sobering kernel of knowledge that I can extrapolate from my own good intentions. Although desire to help someone is a fine thing, in and of itself it is not sufficient. Coupled with that desire must be a firm moral commitment to set aside one's own needs and attend without reservation to those of someone else. That was my failure at the bus stop. I had wanted to help. I had meant to help. I had even tried to help. But when I allowed my own concerns—catching the bus, being on time—to intrude, I had ended up hurting, however inadvertently, the very person I purported to aid. Fortunately, the result of my inattention was only a rude smack on another woman's cheek and a clip to my own pride. But that was bad enough.

Since then, I have been more selective about when I choose to assist. I'm not sure I like my caution: it feels withholding, ungenerous, and mean. Yet at the same time, I wonder if the recognition of my own limitations has made me, paradoxically enough, better able to give. I've recognized that in order to do any good, giving must be sustained by potency; altruism bolstered by capability.

I still give my seat to people with canes and hold doors for women with strollers. And I have even tentatively begun helping blind people again. I feel bad about the times when I turn away, but know there will be other moments when I will again be able to offer my help. Until then, I think of Milton—they also serve who only stand and wait—and try to make myself ready.

Yona McDonough is VQ books editor and editor of the The Barbie Chronicles: A Living Doll Turns 40 (Touchstone), to be published in October.
To vote, mark in the voting spaces on this postcard, detach, add 20 cents postage, and mail; or bring the postcard to the annual meeting, June 6. Duplicate ballots may not be obtained.

For AAVC Trustee
Vote for two
☐ Paula Williams Madison '74
☐ Todd Mann '75

For Treasurer
☐ Cotton (Margaret) Cobb Hubard '68

For Fund Advisory Committee Chair
☐ Eleanor Mack Raths '56

For Director at Large
Vote for two
☐ C. Yolanda Sabio '73
☐ Alison McCallum May '52

For Nominating Committee
Vote for three.
☐ Carol Rivera Selvey '77
☐ Dave Tobias '83
☐ Amy Gardiner Chanmugam '90
Voter identification by class. Please check one.

- [ ] 1910-1919
- [ ] 1920-1929
- [ ] 1930-1939
- [ ] 1940-1949
- [ ] 1950-1959
- [ ] 1960-1969
- [ ] 1970-1979
- [ ] 1980-1989
- [ ] 1990-1998

AAVC Election
Alumnae House
61 Raymond Avenue
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

Vassar Quarterly
Alumnae House
61 Raymond Avenue
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603
Annual Giving for the Next Generation

Our life together began at Vassar 25 years ago, so visiting the campus is always a special trip filled with memories. Our children, Stephen and Sarah, love it too — especially sleeping in the dorms and eating at ACDC!

From the very first time we returned to Vassar after graduation, we were struck by how the College lives on, and that our four years on campus were just a blink in Vassar’s history. But Vassar’s many traditions are the common threads that tie together each generation of Vassar graduates. And it is the tradition of annual giving that made Vassar possible for all of us, and will continue to make a Vassar education viable for our children, your children and their children.

Through 25 years, our lives have been enriched on a daily basis by the experiences and the knowledge gained from our time at Vassar. Please join us in supporting the Annual Fund, and in preserving Vassar for our children and future generations.

Nanci Zabatta Kauffman ’78
Scott L. Kauffman ’78

Your gift to the Annual Fund supports Vassar students every day. You can make your gift by check, credit card, or appreciated securities. To continue your tradition of annual giving to Vassar, please contact Ryan L. Hart ’91, director of reunion and class giving, at 1-800-443-8196 or via e-mail: ryhart@vassar.edu.
Reaffirm   Reawaken
Recapitulate
Reconnect
Reconsider  Recreate
Redefine   Redeem
Refashion
Reflect    Reflect
Refractions
Refuel     Regale
Regard     Regenerate
Reinvent    Rejoice
Rejuvenate
Rekindle   Relate
Relax      Relent    Relive
Rematch    Remember
Renew      Reprise    Resolve
Reprise    Resolve
Return     Reunite

Reunion

4-5-6 June 1999
Watch your mail for details