



**“... GRAVEN ON EACH STUDENT'S  
HEART ...”**

But graven on each student's heart  
There shall unsullied dwell,  
While of this world he is a part,  
Thy own good name Cornell.

From “Cornell,” by George Kingsley Birge, Class of 1872

## **The “Histories” of the Cornell Class of 1954**

(a collective memoir and a work in progress)

If you have any comments, corrections or additions,  
please  
write them down, noting the entry to which  
reference is made, add your name and, at least the first time,  
add your address, telephone and e-mail address, and forward it  
to the editor at 317 West 89<sup>th</sup> Street -- 1FE, New York, New  
York 10024-2137, or [irvine812@aol.com](mailto:irvine812@aol.com).]

Compiled and edited by Robert Frederic Martin  
Class Historian

## Class History Contents & Contributors

### EDITOR'S PREFACE

.....	5
<b>“THERE SIT THE FRESHMEN WITH WILD, FRIGHTENED LOOKS”</b> .....	7

Gerald “Jerry” Ackerman .....	7
Gerald “Jerry” Ackerman .....	8
Barbara Johnson Gottling .....	8
Susan Herrick Bosworth .....	8
Deborah Kroker Ineich .....	9
Mimi Cohen Levine .....	9
Hugh Schwartz.....	9
James M. Symons .....	10
John Kacandes .....	11
Bernat Rosner.....	17
Mason Colby.....	24
Robert Frederic Martin .....	25
Betty Wagler Striso.....	27
Robert Francis Morrison .....	27
Robert Frederic Martin .....	28
Allen L. Smith.....	29
Robert D. Kennedy .....	30
Martin L. (“Marty”) Rosenzweig.....	31
Susan Herrick Bosworth .....	33
Daniel Nadler .....	34
Rosemary Seelbinder Jung .....	34

<b>“WE’VE LEARNED HOW TO MINGLE OUR STUDIES WITH PLAY” (From the women’s version of “The Song of the Classes,” Ferdinanda Legare Waring, '22)</b> .....	<b>35</b>
---	-----------

Betty Wagler Striso.....	35
Paul Nemiroff.....	37
Paul Nemiroff.....	37
Allen C. Hale .....	38
Paul R. Nemiroff.....	38
Hugh Schwartz.....	39
Allen M. Rowe, Jr.....	39
Hugh Schwartz.....	40
Diana Heywood Calby.....	41
Allen M. Rowe, Jr.....	41

Betty Wagler Striso.....	42
Gerald “Jerry” Ackerman .....	43
Elisavietta Artamonoff Ritchie Farnsworth .....	43
Deborah Kroker Ineich .....	44
Mimi Cohen Levine .....	45
Duane Neil .....	45
Martin L. (“Marty”) Rosenzweig.....	45
Mason Colby.....	46
Bertram Rosen .....	48
Paul Nemiroff.....	49
Deborah Kroker Ineich .....	51
Robert Francis Morrison .....	52
Martin L. (“Marty”) Rosenzweig.....	52
James M. Symons .....	54
Paul Nemiroff.....	54
John Eisele .....	55
Allen C. Hale .....	56
William B. Webber .....	56
John F. “Jim” Settel .....	57
Charles H. Bibbins .....	57
Allen C. Hale .....	58
R. Warren “Breck” Breckenridge, Jr. ....	58
Edwin B. Fessenden and A. Dale Button.....	59
Allen C. Hale .....	60
Paul Nemiroff.....	60
Allen C. Hale .....	60
Allen C. Hale .....	61
Allen C. Hale .....	62

**“TO THE TUNE OF OUR PROFS WE MUST ALWAYS KEEP TIME” (From the Refrain of “Song of the Classes,” Frank A. Abbott, 1890) ..... 63**

Daniel Nadler .....	63
---------------------	----

**“I want to have girls educated in the University as well as boys, so they may have the same opportunity to become wise and useful to the society that boys have.” .....Ezra Cornell ..... 64**

Ruth Bader Ginsburg .....	65
Mimi Cohen Levine .....	66
Rosemary Seelbinder Jung.....	66
Hugh Schwartz.....	67
Margaret R. Polson .....	68
Allen C. Hale .....	68

Vincent S. Rospond .....	69
Barbara Johnson Gottling .....	69
Allen C. Hale .....	70
Charles H. Bibbins .....	70
Deborah Kroker Ineich .....	71
Paul Nemiroff.....	71
Allen C. Hale .....	72
Charles H. Bibbins .....	73
Allen C. Hale .....	73
Unknown Person.....	73
Robert Francis Morrison .....	79
Elisavietta Artamonoff Ritchie Farnsworth .....	80
Susan Herrick Bosworth .....	80
Unknown Person.....	81
Allen C. Hale .....	81
Sheldon Lee Glashow .....	82
Steven Weinberg.....	83
Karen Wylie Pryor .....	84
<b>“BACK TO MY CORNELL . . .”(From “My Old Cornell,” Will A. Dillon).....</b>	<b>85</b>
Dan Nadler .....	85
Betty Wagler Striso.....	85
Robert Frederic Martin .....	86
John H. Eisele, Jr. ....	87
Unknown Person.....	87
Paul Nemiroff.....	88
<b>“WE WANT TO FIND HUSBANDS WHO COOK, CLEAN, AND SEW, AND TAKE CARE OF THE CHILDREN . . .” (From an alternative verse of the “Song of the Classes” by the Cornell Chorus) .....</b>	<b>89</b>
Patricia Jerome Colby and Mason Colby .....	93
Barbara Johnson Gottling .....	93
William B. Webber .....	93
Jane Wight Bailey .....	94
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>109</b>

## EDITOR'S PREFACE

On the occasion of our forty-fifth reunion I made the mistake of riding up to Ithaca from Manhattan with my classmate Bert Rosen. Now, understand that Bert is delightful company and an excellent driver and had a darn good car; my mistake had only to do with acceding to his insistence that we stay for the class business meeting on Sunday morning, a parliamentary formality I had never before even momentarily considered required my presence. Before finishing my first cup of coffee at the pre-meeting continental breakfast in the dining room of Prudence Risley Hall, our then President, Bob Levitan, publicly embarrassed me into agreeing to be Class Historian. Then I discovered that that is a responsibility without an established definition. Nobody seems to know what a Class Historian is supposed to do, which is understandable -- how could anything as amorphous as a class of over 2000 people who attended classes in more than a dozen different academic settings, lived for four or five years in a kaleidoscope of varying living arrangements and lifestyles, worked or didn't work part-time to survive, and pursued an almost infinite number of social arrangements and extracurricular activities have A History? Two thousand plus histories with a bit of intertwining and overlapping would be a more realistic analysis. Well, says I to myself says I, so be it; let's have multiple histories and let everyone who will contribute, your Class Historian undertaking the responsibility of being primarily an editor and arranger, and, when necessary, a re-write man. What I proposed we *all* do is that *all of us* tell *all* of our best stories. After a number of mailings, e-mailings, telephone calls and personally buttonholing any number of classmates, we have a product which, even though incomplete, I think you will find is well worth all the effort. But, interestingly, it can only get better.

Indeed, I am pleasantly surprised at how interesting it is. We have participation from two Nobel prize winners, a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, one of the youngest survivors of Auschwitz-Birkenau, one who struggled through the hardships of the German occupation of Greece and became a combat veteran at age fifteen, a number of talented poets and distinguished academics, physicians, lawyers, and other professionals, famous CEOs, any number of us counting as part of our success being parents and grandparents, and all this with only something over fifty contributors. As life is, we have the sublime and the ridiculous, the profound and the trivial, the joyous and the sad and melancholy. All, however, good stories. If you haven't sent in your favorite tale, there is still time to do it. Read what we already have, then tell us what we missed and left out. Let us share your triumphs or disappointments. It won't take too many more contributions and participants for us to have something publishable as a book, and when that happens, you don't want to be explaining to your children, grandchildren and friends and maybe even your enemies why you aren't in the book like everyone else. Then, too, some of our classmates have alas died. If their stories are going to be shared some one of us must step up and fill the

void. The subjects originally suggested have worked for many and have not been exhausted: Why Cornell? How did you get there? Revive the academic victories and defeats, soaring to the top or just scraping by. Favorite or least favorite courses, classes or professors. And all of those other things you did that you enjoyed or hated, parties, dances, dates, games, all kinds of play . . . Going back and forth and vacations have also proven to be sources of stories.

We studied with some truly great minds and it would add some balance to the mix if they were to appear, such as Hans Bethe, Dale Corson, Milton Konvitz, Mario Einaudi, Victor Lange, and others whose names I can't even guess at since I took all of my courses in Arts and Sciences. In our senior year the football team and the basketball team each won an Ivy League championship. And there were other teams (a discourse on track and cross-country is in the works, but I'll accept any suggestions). Someone must think those achievements are worth noting with some kind of a story. I don't know enough about women's athletics to even know how to research the subject, but it is surely a potential source of some great tales. You know what your favorite activities were; what did you do that was interesting, fun, or painful? Nobody can tell it better than you. But do it now.

In any case, read on, and enjoy.

Robert Frederic Martin  
Historian, Cornell Class of 1954

317 West 89<sup>th</sup> Street – 1FE  
New York, New York 10024-2137  
(212) 580-7782; (212) 686-4401  
(212) 686-7515 (facsimile)  
[irvine812@aol.com](mailto:irvine812@aol.com)

## **“THERE SIT THE FRESHMEN WITH WILD, FRIGHTENED LOOKS”**

**“ . . . an institution where any person can find instruction . . . ”**

Ezra Cornell

*Gerald “Jerry” Ackerman*

The community where I began life was “back of beyond” in Eastern Ontario, ten miles back from the nearest store on a little dirt road essentially impassable during the Spring thaw. One could hardly call it a community, given that there were only a few families within five miles of us. People survived by subsistence farming, the land having been deforested by clear-cutting in the 1880’s. We looked at the world beyond with awe and wonder, and few ever got to experience it.

Because my parents had experienced “cross-country” careers before deciding to “pioneer,” I was provided with a wider and more useful understanding. My “less than humble” home had a dozen books, more than all the others in the community combined. And my mother’s siblings encouraged me to read and calculate numbers before I entered the one-room school.

In 1931, the year I was born, Herb Haight, a plumber from Trumansburg [a few miles North and West of Ithaca and Cornell across Lake Cayuga] discovered our good fishing and found my mother’s cooking to his liking. He became an annual member of our household for the rest of his life, even flying in once and coming at the end in a wheelchair. Early on, he brought a banker and a Cornell professor from T-burg. Later he brought more Cornell professors, including Bob Holland of Dairy Science whose son Bob became a fishing buddy, Cornell classmate and friend, and an agricultural salesman from Ithaca. I earned a few coins from them for cleaning and storing their fish on the sawdust-covered ice, and a few more from my mother for helping her prepare first-class meals with minimum ingredients. She had been a waitress at some of Canada’s finest resorts and her sister had taught her cooking when she married my dad. The money these fishermen left was instrumental in my brother and me being the only persons from our community to go to high school. We were boarded out twelve miles away for \$3 a week, \$4 if over the weekend as well. The latter was never affordable for us

**“ . . . it’s work like a Turk till your eyes ache like hell, In this grand institution, this school of Cornell.”** (From “Song of the Classes” by Frank A. Abbott 1890)

*Gerald “Jerry” Ackerman*

How did I get to Cornell? Amazing! Especially when I learned that only one in six of the qualified applicants were admitted and that most of the other students came with 95 percent high school GPA's. In my school in Ontario teachers marked on a scale ending in 80, not 100, and I had never heard of a grade that high! One of my Cornell references must have explained this, because I was admitted and even given non-resident tuition scholarship. On top of that, the Grange League Federation salesman and his wife, Joe and Ellen Whetzel, offered to include me in their family on a farm on German Road near Slaterville outside of Ithaca in exchange for 28 hours weekly of household chores, and I had saved enough for books and fees. This meant that I had to commute -- hitchhike -- eight miles daily into classes and I soon realized that I had little time to experience any of the normal undergraduate social life. By "summering" at the Cornell Dairy, "gold-bricking" in Alaska (mostly construction work), and construction laboring in Rochester, I managed to save enough money to afford to spend my senior year on campus, at Algonquin Lodge on Stewart Avenue. Finally, I had some time to really study, and by then I knew I wanted to study. The economics of farming with Stanley Warren, Howard Conklin and Herrell DeGraff inspired me. It is no surprise that I continued to study, earning a Ph.D. from Purdue and then pursuing a twenty-five-year career working with farmers and "profing" at the University of Manitoba.

***Barbara Johnson Gottling***

I won a Cornell National Scholarship, which afforded me a great education on the Hill, for which I am eternally grateful. (Had I attended Radcliffe, I would have been a "day-hop" from my parents' home in Belmont, Massachusetts.)

***Susan Herrick Bosworth***

Despite [father] Marvin's and [mother] Nigel's concerted efforts to get Susan to enroll in a small, Eastern, "good," girls college, Susan held her ground and went to the college of her choice -- Cornell. Mostly because she loved Ithaca and its gorges and woods and hills. She had always hoped to go there, she knew it well from years of Summer visits to [paternal grandparents] Nannie and Glenn [Herrick, Class of 1896, a retired professor]. Marvin [Class of 1922] cashed in war bonds to pay for it.

***Deborah Kroker Ineich***

I went to Cornell for several reasons: first and foremost because of its reputation and the fact that it was close, one hour away from home. Secondly, I had to work my way and could go tuition-free to the College of Home Economics. Thirdly, I was favorably influenced by relatives who had attended Cornell.

***Mimi Cohen Levine***

My Mother encouraged me to apply to Smith and Radcliffe as well as Cornell and I was accepted at each of these colleges. I chose Cornell because I planned to major in a science and math. I wanted to have a college background that was competitive with both men and women. I feared the women's colleges would not give me as good grounding in the scientific areas I hoped to pursue. I have never regretted my choice.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Editor's Note...***The application of the late Robert W. Benzinger recited that he had visited the campus the previous Summer and Cornell "impressed [him] as being well-equipped to handle the course [he] planned to follow [chemical engineering]. Additionally, friends of his father's who were "Cornell graduates" had "spoken of [it] as one of the best." However, recognizing that he needed to be "better acquainted as to the possibilities in Chemical Engineering [he had] merely chosen it in a general sense. [He had] enjoyed Chemistry and Physics and the field seem[ed] to have unlimited possibilities. Because of [his] age [he felt] that [he could] give all the time that is necessary to it."*

\* \* \* \* \*

***Hugh Schwartz***

I had long heard so much about Cornell from one of my uncles (Pres Beyer, Class of 1934) that Cornell had always been my first choice. The pre-school introduction to Cornell camp (I've forgotten the exact name) was a wonderful experience, and set me up for what was to come.

My first few weeks didn't feature anything unusual, but, after that, yes, there were a few things worth mentioning. The first is my trip home for Thanksgiving that first year. Still a little over-impressed with the need to study, I lugged two suitcases full of books onto the bus on my way to the Lehigh Valley Railroad Station. When the bus driver saw that spectacle, he just burst out laughing at the idea that I planned to do that much school work during those few days home. After that, my habits changed, indeed, a little too much. Later that first year, when I returned in January after a brief illness, I delayed handing in the essay due for my English class -- and delayed and delayed until 11:30 PM of the final day a full year after it was due. The professor, clearly

rather irate, asked the Faculty Senate to change the late hand-in date from a year to one semester, and the Senate was happy to acquiesce.

***James M. Symons***

In the Spring of 1949 my parents took me to several schools to help me decide where I wanted to try to get in. We went to the University of Illinois, which my mother and father had attended (I had been born in Champaign just a few months before my father obtained his Ph. D. there), Purdue and State College in Pennsylvania. For some reason I cannot articulate, I was uncomfortable at those places. Then we went to Cornell. I can clearly remember standing alone -- my parents were off somewhere -- on the sidewalk, just across from Willard Straight and thinking, this place feels good to me.

Back home I applied and, much to the surprise of my friends (I was only a B+ student in high school), was accepted. How I wound up in Sage as my freshman dorm I can't remember, but I do remember that I did want to live alone, I was very shy. Because I hadn't known what field I was interested in in high school I took a liberal arts program, not an engineering one. Therefore, I entered Cornell as a civil engineering student without any physics, mechanical drawing or calculus (I had had a course in chemistry). I vividly remember my first class was a Wednesday physics lab in Rockefeller Hall (we hadn't had any lectures yet) and I had no idea what was going on, just copied down what my lab partner wrote. The next morning my first class was calculus (taught by a graduate student). I often look back and marvel that I didn't just pack up and go home I was so depressed.

I worked very hard my freshman year, did nothing but eat, sleep (a little), study and go to class. Engineering students went to class from 8 to 5 Monday through Friday and 8 to noon on Saturday, so I didn't seem to have much time for extracurricular activities. I did try out to manage the baseball team one Spring, but I was generally in a lab during practices, so I had to drop that. One evening, one of my friends dragged me to a movie (I don't remember if it was the near, the far, the far-far, or the armpit) and I discovered this did not cause me to bust out. This helped me lighten up a little. I did persevere to receive a BCE (with distinction, yet), and later worked through a Masters and a Doctorate at MIT, followed by a career of teaching and public service, so I did finally get the hang of it.

**"There is many a boy . . . who looks on war as all glory, but, boys,  
it is all hell."                      *William Tecumseh Sherman***

**Editor's Note...***All of us in the Class of 1954 were affected in some degree by the Great Depression and World War II. The Korean War started within days after most of us graduated from high school, and some of us were to be directly impacted by the occasionally hot so-called "Cold War" -- as Anne Drotning*

*and Thomas Armstrong wrote in the "Class History" in the 1954 yearbook, "we [we]re a generation which ha[d] never known world peace."*

The father of the Class Historian was the only man among close relations on both sides of his family who always had a well-paying job, so during the hardest Depression years until we moved from Indianapolis to New York in the Summer of 1936 my mother made a Sunday dinner for fourteen or fifteen people -- for some of our relatives it was often the one really full meal they had all week. My father, a Navy veteran of the First World War, was too old for military service in World War II but like many people on the home front his hours got much longer and vacations could not be managed. For weeks at a time I almost never saw him -- he left early and came home late six and seven days a week. My older sister's boy friends always showed up at the house in uniform, and we learned to cope with meat and gasoline rationing and the necessity to re-tread tires rather than buy new ones.

My father and I built extra coal bins (using scrap lumber from which we pulled and straightened all the nails, the only such materials available) so we could accommodate deliveries of entire truck loads of anthracite enabling the supplier to save gasoline. The newspapers and radio news were, of course, always full of the war. But by and large our day-to-day lives were only modestly affected. However, some of our classmates experienced the war in much more direct and dramatic ways. Take John Kacandes, for a most significant example:

### ***John Kacandes***

I was born in December 1929 in Newark, New Jersey, the first of five American born children of Greek immigrant parents. For reasons that have mystified my family for a long time, when I was six years old, my mother left rather suddenly to return to Greece with me and my three surviving younger siblings, but without her husband, our father. Reasons given at the time included that she missed her parents and wanted us to meet them, that I and my siblings needed to learn Greek better, and even that she and my dad weren't getting along that well -- or contrarily, were getting along too well and needed a separation as birth control. My daughter Irene has uncovered a paper trail that indicated quite different reasons: the family house in Greece which secured a large loan that my father could not really afford to make to his in-laws and that was never repaid -- but that he had made nonetheless several years earlier -- was threatened; my mother was to investigate rumors that the house was being given to her younger sister as a dowry.

Once in Greece I was put in a fancy private school in a suburb of Athens while my mother lived with my siblings in Itea, then a small village, just south of the famous ancient city of Delphi. From the photographic record, but not from my memory, I see that we lived a pretty grand life. We were always well dressed and our mother took us on all kinds of excursions with money my father was sending from the States. [The editor wonders if restraints on his father's income imposed by the depression and the greater purchasing power of that income in Greece may not have been another factor in the move to Greece.] War didn't come to Greece until late 1940, but it changed

my life dramatically. For one thing, my school closed, and my mother came to take me back to Itea. For another, the money my father was sending stopped arriving.

The first phase of the war involved the Greeks fighting the Italian fascists at the Greek-Albanian border. It went pretty well at first, with the Greeks inflicting one of very few military victories against the Axis during the war's initial phase, pushing the much better equipped and more numerous Italians back over the border and even occupying a few towns on the other side. However, a severe winter set in, and there was a kind of stalemate with both sides losing huge numbers of men. Hitler couldn't afford to have the British allies of the Greeks in range of the Romanian oil fields he needed so much for the secret, but already planned attack on the Soviet Union, so he came to Mussolini's aid. On April 6, 1941, the Wehrmacht simultaneously attacked Yugoslavia and Greece. I am eyewitness to that rapid takeover of Greece. At some point my mother tried to get us to Piraeus to leave the country. But in the vicinity of mythic Thebes, we encountered the invaders' onslaught, and my mother fled with us back to the Delphi area. To escape the Stukas dive-bombing Itea we scrambled to the tiny mountain village of my paternal family, Kolopetinitsa (a name which always amused Greeks from other parts of the country because it is the equivalent of "Podunk" in American English).

The German victors created a tripartite occupation -- Bulgarian, Italian, German -- in which the Italians were in charge of our area. This next period in my life was consumed by only one task: working at any available employment to help feed my family. I would assist local fishermen and barter with the fish I would receive as recompense for the bread my family needed even more. I broke rocks for a road the Italian occupiers were building between Itea and the regional capital, Amphissa. We didn't have any tools, we broke the rocks by hammering two rocks together, one in each hand. My mother and I crossed the Corinthian gulf to work the grape harvest on the other side. I gleaned fallen olives with my brother Harry. I have a lot of bitterness from this period. The Italians were dreadful and cheap taskmasters. For that brutal road work I was paid a few olives and a piece of bread per day. The raisins my mother and I were given as pay were stolen from us by Greek resisters. And one night Greek collaborators caught Harry and me in the olive grove, and I was tossed in the local collaborationist jail. I was only twelve at the time. A few, very few people tried to help. Someone gave my mother a small plot of land to try to cultivate. There were so many rocks in it, we couldn't get anything to grow.

My own personal effort to help my family survive the war then moved to the metropolitan area. I'd heard that the Swedish Red Cross was helping people. While they would give me food -- I was a really skinny kid at that point -- they could do nothing for my family back in the village. So, I searched for work again. My mother had some cousins near the famed Papastratou cigarette factory in Piraeus. I and dozens of other desperate kids would buy allotments of 100 cigarettes and then sell them one by one in the streets of Athens. At some point during that period, I was trying to find a ship to send the almost worthless inflated paper money I had earned to my mother and siblings back in the village when I was spotted by a man named Petros Tsardakas whom I'd known before the war. He told me I could earn better money on a caique he owned, but

which the Germans had commandeered. I worked as a "moutsos," a ship's boy, for about seven months. That must have been 1943; I would have been thirteen. Whenever the Germans weren't supervising us, Tsardakas would deliver the ammunition which was in the ship's cargo to the resistance instead. I remember that the hunger was so great on the island of Kerkyra (Corfu) that brothers would sometimes come to our caique and try to bargain with the Germans on board: their sisters for foodstuffs; I was outraged, but helpless to do anything about it. That adventuresome time came to an even more dramatic end when the Allies dropped a bomb on a big ship near ours once when we were docked in Piraeus. The force of the blast knocked me off the caique and something hit my foot as I was flying off the boat. I was a strong swimmer and managed to get to shore, but then I had to walk ten kilometers to get to a hospital, where I had a toe amputated. I recuperated at Tsardakas's house and his mother used me as a kind of gofer, a personal servant is what it felt like.

At some point in that same period I worked guarding a German villa or depot; not sure I can remember. But I do remember that they fed me enough food that I sent for my brother Harry; I could take care of him for a while and relieve my mother of at least some of her burden. I would park him at the Rosie Claire cinema and tell him not to move until I got back. Those were the days when you could pay one admission and stay all day. At some point one of us came down with malaria; that put that job to an end and we returned to the village. My mother also got very sick with pleurisy in this period. She almost died, and I was very angry that my uncle, my mother's brother, refused to pay for the medicine she needed. My maternal grandparents had already died from starvation. Luckily, a neighbor, a distant cousin by American standards, but not by Greek ones, nursed my mother back to health, and I returned to Athens and my cigarette peddling. I can't recall: had I found him or he found me? In any case, the uncle of a girl I'd been in school with before the war was the captain of a police precinct near Omonoia Square. He was surprised to find out I hadn't got out of the country and arranged for me to wash pots in the police precinct canteen. I roomed with two brothers, Leonidas and Pantelis Manousos. They were from the same island, Andros, as Lucie, the woman I was to marry years later.

I experienced the end phase of the war with the brothers. I don't remember too much about the withdrawal of the now German occupiers (Italy had capitulated) in early fall 1944. But I do remember clearly the festive atmosphere and parades of the return of the Greek government from exile. I was selling cigarettes to the crowds and I saw a limo go by and realized that I recognized someone in it: it was my pre-war school buddy and fellow mischiefmaker George Papandreou, a son of the man who would be made prime minister of that first postwar government. He had the limo stopped, and I got to ride around in it with him for a while!

What I recall about the next period are the strange intrusions to our dorm: one night the Greek communists; the next nationalists. They didn't bother us, really; mainly, they just asked us where they were. I don't think we boys realized at first that war was once again raging around us until the night when some British soldiers knocked at the building door so hard we got scared and hid under the beds. When the

soldiers burst into our room and pointed their guns at us shouting in English, I guess I sensed it was a do or die situation. I jumped out from under the bed and threw up my hands yelling: don't shoot, I'm American. I surprised even myself that I could speak the language, it had been so long. I don't remember anything about the next set of events, but I must have convinced them we weren't Communists. For the next three months, I worked on their side, providing intelligence of various kinds, like about the stash of Molotov cocktails the Communists had hidden in the Alhambra Theater across the way from us. Next thing we knew they rolled in some Sherman tanks they had gotten from the Americans and blew up the building. Only problem was that the blast was so ferocious, it destroyed our building too. My daughter Irene Kacandes, a professor at Dartmouth, found a book about that outfit, the 50th Royal Tank Regiment of the British Eighth Army, as well as a description of some of those episodes which I no longer remember. I still have a handwritten pass they gave me to get through the streets of Athens, and a character testimony from the captain dated February 1945 after we chased the Communists to the Patras area, recommending me for any odd job. I have some pretty dramatic photos of me with the A Squadron. And I did eventually work as a batman (valet) for some officers and also ran the elevator in British HQ in Athens. This was spring 1945 while we were trying to reestablish contact with our father, get a new American passport for us kids and a new Greek one for our mother (it turns out she was in the process of getting naturalized when we had left the States for Greece back in 1937). Richard W. Caldwell, a Vice Consul at the American Embassy and a Cornell alumnus [Class of 1940], I later found out -- at that time I don't think I had a clue what Cornell was! -- was very helpful to us. For a little while, anyway, we stayed in touch.

There were more twists and turns before we actually made it back to the USA on the Swedish liner *Gripsholm*. But on October 9, 1945, we docked in New York harbor and were reunited with our father after a separation of more than eight years. None of us really remembered him, especially not my youngest brother Nick who had been a baby when we'd left. He'd achieved mythic stature in our minds, and I suppose the reality of any actual mere human being together with my deep-seated but erroneous belief that this man had abandoned us combined to produce a strained relationship with all of his children, but especially between me and him, for a long time.

My siblings and I were pretty overwhelmed with the luxuries around us, things other people took for granted like cars or silverware. For instance, we got agitated when we saw people throwing away the clippings from mowing the lawn. So, my siblings and I gathered up the grass and were storing it in potato sacks I copped from the local diner in Neptune, New Jersey. It started to rot, and luckily our mother got a whiff before our father did. She told us to get rid of it. We took it down to the local post office and in my broken English I explained that we wanted to send it to the starving sheep in our village in Greece. I guess the postman got a kick out of that. He called a friend at *The Asbury Park Press*, and I was interviewed about my war experiences. For decades a framed copy of that article hung on a wall of my parents' home and now for decades in my own. However many readers it might have had at the time, one of them changed my life. A rich widow from Ocean Grove contacted my father and offered to put me through school.

That's how I became a student at Pennington Prep where private tutoring, peer teasing, a sympathetic roommate in the person of Dave Brashears, and my own work ethic propelled me to prepare for college. I had only gotten through the fourth grade in Greece and had not attended any school regularly since early fall 1940. It took me five years to learn English and my subjects well enough to apply and get into Cornell. My parents weren't against me, but they weren't really behind me either. Though our father seemed wealthy to us after the hardships of Greece and was actually making a decent living, he liked to bet on the horses, and in any case, he didn't really see the need for a college education. But I did. After what I'd been through, I knew that the only thing people can't take away from you is what you have in your head. And I also knew that manual labor is grueling and if you don't want to be forced to work with your hands all your life, you have to be educated. I did do lots of manual work even after my return from Greece. At Pennington I would shine fellow students' shoes; I don't remember how I set it up, but I also sold little personal items and Coca Cola for a small profit. During the summers I worked at various jobs as a delivery boy, at the Jersey boardwalk making salt water taffy -- all kinds of things.

At Cornell, I earned money to support my car and pay for other incidental expenses by washing dishes and waiting on tables at the College Spa, which was managed by a guy named George Katsikis. He had a nephew Alex Psomas who also worked there. Alex became my best friend. He brought over his sister Lucie, whom I married and with whom I raised six children in White Plains, New York. I have worked mainly as a high school teacher, but also in adult education. I coached and officiated in many different sports, especially track and field and wrestling. And, I continued to do all kinds of odd jobs to earn money, especially when my kids were young, and then to put them through college. I taught them my work ethic too -- and my love of education. They hold among them more than a dozen undergraduate and graduate degrees.

I loved Cornell. It was the time of my life. I loved the chance to just learn. What a luxury! I loved going to lectures. I particularly liked the fact that you could go to classes in other colleges. I remember Vladimir Nabokov. I remember Claude Levi-Strauss. I remember with particular fondness and clarity Hans Bethe. I earned both a bachelor's degree and a masters in education.

A funny incident: I told a classics professor that I knew Greek. I think he said: oh, you do, do you? I didn't have a clue before that of how different the Greek I knew was from the one he studied and taught.

When my parents came to visit me, my father fell in love with the library bells. I think those bells reconciled him a bit to the choices I had made for myself.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note: Not surprisingly a good deal of John's war experience was fairly traumatic and his memory of it consequently confused and incomplete. His story*

*owes a great deal of its detail to the masterful research of his daughter Irene Kacandes, a professor at Dartmouth, as described in Daddy's War (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London, 2009). John's memorials of his eight years in Greece include a character testimonial from Captain U. E. Bond of the 50th Royal Tank Regiment dated 15 February 1945 which records the fact that "[i]n ATHENS during the troubles [the earliest phase of the Greek civil war in December 1944 and early 1945 when John was just fifteen years old], he risked his life on several occasions in the forward positions occupied by British troops." I don't know anyone else among my contemporaries who was a combat veteran at fifteen.*

\* \* \* \* \*

**“Judah is gone into captivity . . behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, . there is none to comfort me: .”**  
from The Lamentations of Jeremiah, chapter 1

## *Bernat Rosner*

Bernat Rosner writes that “[o]ne theme of the Kacandes’ story that resonates strongly with me is his constant battle against hunger. Other horrors, miseries and privations vary and may be intermittent, but hunger is ever present and dominates all of your waking hours (and even your dreams).” Cornellians who knew Bernie as an undergraduate or even in subsequent decades may very well be surprised to learn that he is among the youngest of those who managed to survive imprisonment in the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp during World War II. For years, he disclosed this traumatic phase of his life to almost no one, and even then seldom in much detail. In major part, this silence, this suppression, was a defense mechanism to prevent the sheer horror of that experience from interfering with his new life in America, “to pretend that all th[at] horror of the past had happened to someone else.” However, as he grew older, he realized that “time is running out,” “the realization became clear that the past is an integral part of one’s life . . . and that the human experience cannot be fully lived and appreciated without fitting the past into the mosaic of the whole. I realized I had some obligations to discharge. First and foremost was an obligation to my children. As they grew up, they had heard bits and pieces of the story, but never in a coherent and systematic way. More importantly, I had subconsciously kept the pain and emotion out of whatever information I had conveyed to them. I now realize that this was not so much to protect them as to protect myself. I also felt an obligation to the family I had lost, my mother, my father, my kid brother, and my extended family. The story of what happened in the Holocaust, of how millions were murdered, has been told many times. But *their* story has never been told. I felt that they deserved that this be done and that it was up to me to do it. I also felt that my story was a good and fascinating yarn that was worth telling.”

Even then, Bernie at first proceeded somewhat indirectly. He arranged to tell his story to his friend Frederic C. (or Fritz) Tubach, a professor of German culture and literature at Berkeley, so that it would be presented in the third person, a step removed from the author whose story was being recorded by his friend. Each of them had been bereaved by losing a much loved first wife to cancer while their children were still teenagers, and each had then in the course of time remarried. By happy chance their second wives, Susan Optner Rosner and Sally Patterson Tubach, who had been high school friends, met again after some twenty years and initiated a sharing of social occasions that led to their husbands also becoming friends. Although born in the United States, when Fritz’s mother died when he was three his father took him back to his family home in Germany. As Bernie notes, Fritz’s “background and history could not have been more different from mine. While I was a Jew and a survivor of Auschwitz, Fritz had been raised in war-time Germany. His father was a Nazi and Fritz himself had been a member of the Jungvolk, a Nazi organization for those too young yet for the Hitler Youth. By the time we met in the early 1980’s, about forty years following the end of World War II, we had both become Americans. We both accepted the principle that you are responsible for your own actions and not for those of your father or other members of your race and nation. As we formed our friendship, we discovered that we both had fascinating stories to tell and decided to tell our stories together. The result was a book called *An Uncommon Friendship*” (University of California Press, Berkeley, Los

Angeles, London, 2001, recently reissued with an Epilogue concerning the impact on the authors of the publication of their stories). This marvelous work (which has been translated into German, Italian and Dutch) has a series of Bernie's descriptions of discrete periods of his youth in generally chronological order written down by Fritz, who then adds to each chapter a description of his own experience during the same period, the end product having been then reviewed for editorial comments and suggested revisions by Fritz's wife, Sally Patterson Tubach. As we continue, quotations from the book by Bernie, Fritz and Sally will be set forth in *italics*. Bernie Rosner writes:

I was born in 1932 in a smallish town named Tab in rural Hungary (I didn't wear shoes from April to September (except on holidays)). For the first twelve years of my life I had a basically happy and normal childhood. *[H]is parents cultivated and sold fruit and walnuts*. An important part of my personality and makeup was shaped by the rigor and discipline of a Jewish Orthodox upbringing and a sensitive and literate mother. Both of these influences imbued me with an abiding love and respect for books and learning.

Anti-Semitism was certainly not unknown in Hungary, and it existed in good measure in our village going back as far as I can remember. It was institutional, in terms of laws that restricted the freedom of Jews to practice certain professions or own land, and limiting the number of Jews who could be admitted to law, medical and other professional schools. It was also personal, in terms of Jews being bullied and held up to contempt and hostility – not by any means by all of the non-Jewish population, but by a substantial segment of the community, many of whom were members or followers of the Hungarian version of the Nazi or other far right-wing parties. But this was not the virulent and deadly doctrine of racism and extermination preached and practiced by Hitler and his thugs, and the anti-Semitic currents running through Hungarian political and cultural life did not significantly affect our everyday life and my basically happy and tranquil childhood.

All this changed with dramatic suddenness on a very specific date, March 19, 1944, relatively late in the course of World War II. I was on my way home from a study session in preparation for my upcoming Bar Mitzvah, when a neighbor woman asked me if I had heard the news. When I asked what news, she told me the Germans had taken over the country and the government. The effects of the Nazi takeover on the Jews of Hungary were immediate and disastrous.

Our classmate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg described the Hungarian bloodbath of 1944 in some detail in a speech at the Holocaust Memorial Museum on the Day of Remembrance in 2004:

*“Although 63,000 Hungarian Jews lost their lives before the German occupation – most of them during forced service, under dreadful conditions, in labor battalions – Hungary's leaders stayed off German*

*demands to carry out the Final Solution until March 19, 1944, when Hitler's troops occupied the country.*

*“Then, overnight, everything changed. Within three and a half months of the occupation, 437,000 Jews were deported. Four trains a day, each transporting up to 3,000 people packed together like freight, left Hungary for Auschwitz, where most of the passengers were methodically murdered.”*

\* \* \* \* \*

***Editor's Note:*** *Bernat Rosner has limited his] account to what happened to him, to his family and to the Jewish community of Tab:*

\* \* \* \* \*

Within days following the takeover, the stream of anti-Jewish edicts began. Jews could not travel without specific permission, soon, they could not travel at all. Prominent families in the community as well as those suspected of “subversive” activities or associations began to disappear [including] *close friends of the Rosner family . . . When Bernie heard this news, he went to the synagogue and sobbed..* By mid-April all Jews had to wear a prominent yellow star on their outer clothing *with the result that the price of yellow cloth went up. The six-pointed stars were the last items Bernie's mother sewed for her sons, herself, and her husband.* By mid-May all Jews were herded into a ghetto. My family was lucky in this respect; our home was within the area that was designated as part of the ghetto. But our three-room home, instead of just housing my immediate family, also became home for numerous relatives whose homes had been outside the ghetto boundaries, as I recall between sixteen to eighteen persons in all.

A bright boy of twelve, quick on his feet and adept at languages, Bernie was chosen as as a runner to carry messages from the town hall to the Jewish council and various organizations involved in administering the slow destruction of the Jewish community. . . . As a messenger, Bernie still retained more mobility than most inhabitants of the ghetto. . . . On the main street of Tab one day, an assembly of high-ranking German SS officers arrived in their military vehicles . . . . It was clear to Bernie which of these high-ranking officers was in command . . . . At one point this commanding SS officer turned toward the young ghetto messenger, patted him on the head, and said, “Kleiner Bube” (little boy). His picture was unmistakable; Bernie saw it in newspapers after the war. The officer with whom he had come face-to-face was Adolph Eichmann, chief transporter and executioner of the European Jews.

The end of the Jewish community in Tab came during the latter part of June, 1944. On twenty-four hours' notice we were ordered to be ready for departure in front of our homes with no more than one suitcase per person. Three images stand out for me from the day on which we were marched down the main street of Tab to the unused brickyard next to the railroad station[, which had been] the starting point for the most exciting events of his childhood – the annual visits to his [maternal]

grandparents in Kiskunhalas. But in contrast to those earlier exciting adventures, at [this] later stage in his life the station came to connote something sinister . . . . The first of these three images was the attitude and behavior of the non-Jewish inhabitants. A relatively small number of them stood on the sidewalk as we were herded by and made jeering comments like, “You Jews are finally getting what's coming to you.” The great majority of the town people simply retired into their homes, closed the shutters and shut out the sight of their fellow citizens being driven down the street like cattle. The second image was at the Catholic school on the way to the station where I witnessed my mother's humiliation at being stripped naked in a crowded room and hand-searched by Nazi thugs. The third image was at the brickyard, with only a bare earthen floor for accommodations, where an elderly woman, standing up to recite her Sabbath prayers, was clubbed bloody and unconscious by one of the guards. From Tab we were shipped to a collection point about fifty miles away, where we were unloaded onto a large open field, to be joined by seven to ten thousand others collected from other ghettos in that part of Hungary. From there during the first week of July, 1944, we were loaded into cattle cars – between fifty and sixty men, women and children per car [each marked “Suitable for twelve cattle”] – headed for Auschwitz. There was little food or water, minimal space to move one's limbs, and only a couple of buckets to serve as toilets. While the train was temporarily stopped at Budapest, a woman handed an orange to Bernie through the barbed wire, saying it was from “someone who cared.” [This was one of only two occasions during Bernie's ten-month concentration camp experience when any outside person showed any concern for his situation.]

We arrived at Auschwitz-Birkenau on approximately July 7 (I remember it was a Friday). By the time the sliding door of the freight car, which had remained locked throughout the five-day journey, was opened, there were at least a half-dozen corpses in the car, and many more whose minds had become unhinged. On the train platform at Auschwitz there was chaos, brutality and confusion. But my immediate family, my mother, my father and my younger brother, was still together. The first thing that happened as we stood there dazed was an order on the loudspeaker that those in charge of each cattle car, and my father had been so designated, were to report to the authorities. So my father left us forever. Next, was an announcement that males and females should separate, because showers would be given. By now my mother was quite frightened, and told my brother and me to stay with her. I told her I was not about to take a shower with a bunch of women. My mother did not argue with me but left me with the admonition: “Whatever you do, make sure that you stay with your brother.” With these words she left us forever. Next all males were ordered to line up in a single file to be inspected by two SS officers. The SS officers looked at each person as he reached the head of the line, and those who looked able-bodied and fit to work were sent to the right. Those who looked too young or too old, or otherwise unfit to work were sent to the left. My brother, who was just over ten years old, was in front of me in the line, and the SS officer, without hesitation, sent him to the left. Harking back to my mother's admonition, and without realizing the consequences of my action, I followed my brother to the left without being told to do so. I was about two steps past the SS officer when he reached over, grabbed me by the scruff of the neck, and shoved me over to the right. To this day I do not know whether the Nazi thought I just might be fit and old enough to be put to

work, or whether he was simply irritated at my having made my own decision. In any case, that shove from the left to the right made the difference on that day between my ending up in the gas chamber within the hour, and my surviving at least that initial screening process.

My ordeal obviously did not end with that fateful shove. Every day for the next ten months until my liberation by the Americans during the first week of May, 1945, was a battle for survival. That battle took several forms. At first, in Auschwitz, it was a matter of trying to avoid being sent to the gas chambers, because, even though I had survived that initial screening process, I kept flunking the physicals to which the prisoners were subjected in order to qualify for a permanent work assignment. By mid-September of 1944, I realized that most of those remaining in my barracks consisted of the old, the sick, and, those like me, too young to be selected for work. At that point, in a desperate move I managed to get into transport out of Auschwitz to the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria.

At Auschwitz, Bernat Rosner was assigned to Lager E, next to Lager F, which bore the official euphemism Hospital-Lager, where Josef Mengele performed his barbaric medical experiments on living human beings. . . . The facilities used for the selection [of inmates deemed suitable for work] were located in Lager E. They consisted of large, elongated blockhouses that were divided lengthwise into two sections by a four-foot high wall. These barracks were originally constructed as stables . . . . The process of selection consisted of gathering the inmates outside the barracks and then herding those selected for transport into the righthand side of the divide. As time passed, Bernie noticed that the pool of inmates left behind – the group not designated for transfer – was made up of older and sicker persons and of young boys who were less fit for work. It gradually dawned on him that it would be dangerous to remain behind indefinitely with this group.

One day, when a new selection was under way, and Bernie again had not been chosen, he took his chances and decided to jump over the wall to join the inmates on the right side. A guard, positioned to prevent any such crossovers, pinned Bernie's arm to the wall he was attempting to cross with his boot. For a brief moment the guard looked at him while he held him there. Then he shrugged his shoulders and lifted his boot, allowing Bernie to join the group selected for transport. Bernie's desperate decision and the Nazi guard's random act of forbearance removed him for the moment from the immediate grip of the death machine. And because of this leap, a correction needs to be made in the official record of the number of inmates put on a transport on September 17, [1944,] from Auschwitz to Mauthausen . . . . The entry in question . . . lists 1,824 prisoners, among them 1,396 Poles. With Bernie's self-selection, the number of prisoners was actually 1,825. [At Mauthausen he] change[d] his year of birth (1932) on the record to 1927 in order to make himself appear five years older than he was [which] gave him a chance to be counted among the the work-

qualified adults rather than among the younger teenage boys who would almost automatically be eliminated from consideration as laborers.

From then on, my battle for survival was mostly a matter of fighting to survive hunger, cold, brutal beatings, overcrowding, unsanitary conditions, and almost every other privation known to man[, which became worse as the war wore on with the German army losing, the Allied forces approaching, an unusually cold winter – Bernie remembers it snowed on May 1, and the German economy reeling]. I suspect most people have seen pictures of the cadaver-like creatures that emerged from the concentration camps upon liberation by the Allies. Well, I was one of them. Very shortly after liberation, I fell gravely ill from the after effects of the life in the camps. Among other things, I contracted typhus from the filthy conditions and the lice that covered every inch of our bodies. I lost consciousness and woke up, I don't know how many days later, in an American field hospital. They put me on a scale, which showed I weighed 26 kilos (about 56 pounds) at the age of thirteen and a half. I truly believe I would not have lasted another day if I had not been liberated on May 5, 1945.

\* \* \* \* \*

***Editor's Note:** Bernie and the others were moved again, this time to Modena, where they were housed in the Palazzo Ducale. Most of the huge building in the central square of this northern Italian town was occupied by the Jewish refugees, but one wing was used by the American army. . . . Bernie tried his luck with the Americans. He hung around with some other boys near the American gate to the Ducal Palace. . . . Several days went by during which Bernie advanced to the self-appointed post of unofficial doorman for the GIs. One day, a staff car drove up with four Americans inside. They turned out to be a team from the 88<sup>th</sup> Division, Fifth Army . . . . As he had so many times before, Bernie approached one of these strangers and offered to carry his duffel bag. Entrusted with the bag, Bernie preceded the soldier into the interior of the American quarters. All the owner of the bag could see – as he was to tell Bernie later – was the heavy bag over the small shoulders and bare feet underneath. This encounter would change Bernie's life forever. For the next five days, after he finished his debriefing work, the twenty-four-year-old soldier, whose name was Charles Merrill, Jr., son of the founder of the renowned New York brokerage and banking house, spent several hours talking with the thirteen-year-old orphan. They spoke in broken German together, the one language they had in common. Bernie poured out the story of his life to Merrill, who was deeply moved. On two visits to Hungry before the outbreak of World War II, the young Merrill had developed a liking for its people. He now gave the Hungarian boy food, bought him ice cream, invited him to restaurants, and took him to a boxing match. . . . What impressed [Merrill] about the teenage Bernie was his energy, upbeat personality, and courtesy . . . a youngster ready to take on the world, if only it gave him a chance . . . . For the first time "since he left home," as Bernie puts it, he experienced a human bond that provided him with warmth and support. But Charles Merrill was transferred in the line of duty, so he and Bernie exchanged addresses and bade each other farewell. [They commenced a correspondence.] In the autumn Bernie received the most important single document of his life – a letter dated November 4, 1945, from Charles Merrill, Jr., now discharged from the military and living in the United States. Already a*

*married family man at twenty-four, the former GI now offered the Jewish-Hungarian concentration camp survivor a different alternative and a new opportunity: . . . [translated from Merrill's imperfect German:] "If I can arrange for travel and a visa for you, would you than want to come to America to live with us as our son?"*

[It was a hard decision to make, but Bernie] *wanted to have a family again.* [The paper work took two years in which Bernie was still in detention camps and orphanages. In the fall of 1947, Merrill arranged to house him more comfortably with an Italian family. *In November 1947, two years after Bernie received Charlie's letter offering to sponsor him, papers were finally approved and Bernie made his way to Genoa to pick them up.* [On January 17, 1948, he flew from Rome on his way to New York. The initial effort to include him in the Merrill family in St. Louis, Merrill, his wife and two daughters, involved some awkwardness, and] *after a few weeks, arrangements were made for Bernie to live in a dormitory of the Thomas Jefferson School in St. Louis, a prep school founded by Charles Merrill in 1946.* From there he went on to Cornell where *literature and history were his favorite subjects to begin with, but as time went by he was more and more attracted to courses in business administration.* [Why Cornell? Bernie writes:]

When I was ready to enter college in 1950, I had been only 1 ½ years in this country. Before coming to the United States I had been in an orphanage run by Palestinian Zionists, and I still held to the "kibbutz" idea. I saw myself as a potential farmer either here or in Israel. From my research, I discovered that Cornell offered a program where in four years you could get both a liberal arts and an ag degree. I might add, my ag ambitions were abandoned rather quickly. Just one train trip through the hard-scrabble country of upstate New York would discourage anyone from being a farmer. In addition, in my fraternity there were a fair number of ag majors whose ultimate ambition was to become agricultural agents. That idea also did not square with my illusions of straddling a horse over a rolling spread. Cornell. I consider my four years at Cornell as by far the most formative period of my life. It is there that I acquired life-long friendships and had the first belated opportunity to become a "teenager" and then a young man. Cornell represents the joys (and the heartaches) associated with one's youth. The setting, the teachers, were all life-long influences. It was not just Cornell, it was Cornell of the 50's. That is a permanent stamp on my personality.

[Bernie went on to Harvard Law School, in a class which included his Cornell classmate Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and then to the law department of the Safeway shopping center organization, where he ultimately became Vice President and General Counsel, an expert on anti-trust law and master of a successful resistance to a hostile takeover. He married and became a father, and then, unhappily, a widower father of teenagers. His second marriage led to his being able to finally tell the story of his early years with some help from Fritz Tubach and his wife, Sally Patterson Tubach, his wife's childhood friend.]

[Bernie never fails to mention] what Charles Merrill has meant to my life and me. There is no way I could ever begin to repay him for his generosity,

kindness, and, above all, courage for taking into his home and family a homeless urchin wandering the by-ways of post-war Europe who could have been a totally damaged human being. By what he did for me and for so many others he has demonstrated to all skeptics that a single human being *can* make a difference.

Written with the support of Frederic C. Tubach and Sally Patterson  
Tubach

**“ . . . when the blast of war blows in our ears . . . .”**  
William Shakespeare

***Mason Colby***

My family had moved to the island of Aruba in 1937 with my father Whitney Coffin Colby (who had attended Cornell two years around 1915 then dropped out during World War I). We traveled on oil tankers to Aruba from Bayonne, New Jersey. My father was Personnel Manager at the ESSO refinery on Aruba, the "largest refinery in the world" I was told. We lived in a nice house on the top of a cliff from which could be seen the mountains of Venezuela about 20 miles away. The foreigner "concession" was like a transplanted American town with good schools, commissary, hospital, club, etc. Two older brothers graduated from Aruba High School. After school, I would go to the lagoon and beach below our house and pretend to navigate the model oil tankers through the canals I had dug in the sand. The refinery made high octane aviation gasoline for the Battle of Britain and of course would be a prime target for the Germans. After the Battle of Dunkirk in France, a troop called "The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders" who had survived Dunkirk, were sent to Aruba to guard the refinery. I remember the kilted bagpipe parades and their commander, Colonel Barber, marching in their parades. The Colonel gave me one of their plaid banded tams since he knew my father. To this day I get excited whenever I hear a bagpipe. The British had a cave in the cliff below our house with an iron door where they stored their artillery shells. The cave and iron door were still there hidden by bushes when I visited Aruba 35 years after I left.

On December 7, 1941, the U.S.A. entered the war. On February 16, 1942, the U.S. Army was taking over the refinery protection. That night I was awakened by a big explosion in front of our house. I got up in time to see a second oil tanker explode just the other side of the reef in front of our house and miles of burning crude oil floating toward the refinery - fortunately the wind shifted and carried it out to sea. I could see tracer shells from the German U-Boat (U-156) heading toward the refinery, but apparently there were no damaging hits. My brother Whitney, Jr. (seven years older), took pictures of the burning sea. From that night on we had severe blackout rules. A bomb shelter was built across from our house (which I used to play around). The U.S. soldiers had a searchlight on top of the cliff in front of a neighbor's house. I remember one night they let me climb on the seat and turn the wheels to move the beam across the sea "looking for enemy submarines." I hung around their tent, collected souvenirs and occasionally my family would invite soldiers to the house for dinner. I had

a U.S. soldier as my Sunday school teacher.

The story of U-boat 156 came out years later in an episode titled "The Day Hitler Lost the War". The night of the above attack, the U-boat attempted to shell the refinery with its deck gun. When they fired it, apparently they had not removed the cap off the muzzle and the gun exploded, taking a foot off the officer on deck. The U-Boat captain deposited the injured officer on the island of Martinique which was then part of Vichy France. U-156 then went on to sink a lot of ships before it was sunk near Barbados. All this is from recovered logs. Years later, a tourist who had lived in the refinery complex in Aruba was traveling in Germany by car and stopped for gas. The attendant came limping out of the service station and the topic of Aruba arose. It was the deck officer from U-156 who put the pieces together for the writer of the tale.

My brother Whitney, Jr., flew back to the United States (no more tanker travel) to finish high school in Montclair, New Jersey. I and my parents returned to our old home there in 1943. My brother Whitney, Jr., nicknamed "the brain" by his Aruba high school friends, was drafted out of MIT. He was put in the infantry and killed on January 5, 1945 at age 19, when the Germans surprised his outfit in a last ditch crossing of the Rhine at Gamsheim, France, after the Battle of the Bulge. War stories can be interesting but they are a kind of reality that is not fun.

I returned from Aruba, with my mom and dad, in April 1943 at age eleven to the home in Montclair, New Jersey, that I was born in. My father was also born in that house built by his father in the late 1800's. I was in the fifth grade at the time and continued in Hillside School where I originally started in as a kindergartner. I graduated from Montclair High School in 1950. Along with about eight others from my Montclair 1950 class, I entered Cornell that fall. My first journey to Ithaca was by train to Binghamton, then bus to Ithaca. I moved in to Mennen Hall at the bottom of the libe slope and began the five-year Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering pursuit.

**“War loves to prey upon the young.”** Sophocles

The Usual, Once-in-a-Lifetime, Boring, Anxiety-producing Routine

***Robert Frederic Martin***

A feature of the high school senior year for many, many of us is the nerve-wracking business of deciding what to do about a college education and assembling all of the paperwork, including SAT's and other irritations, necessary to perfect one or more applications to colleges. I obtained applications to three, Cornell, Yale and one other which I shall not name because I am sure sixty years later that the reason I decided not to send in the application would no longer be applicable. An alumnus neighbor of ours drove me up to Cornell and I loved the place and submitted an application. My father and I then went off to Yale, the alma mater of a local lawyer who had once briefly been my Sunday school teacher and which put on quite a show for my

old man, perhaps, even more than for me, and I promptly applied. In due course I was accepted by both. (So innocent was I, it had never occurred to me that I might not be accepted.) I also got the application from the college whose very attractive campus had been the site of the American Legion Boys' State which I had been privileged to attend the previous Summer, but the form I discovered had questions about the names and lives of my grandparents. I am not a bit ashamed of my so very hard-working grandparents and would be proud and happy to tell anyone with a reason to ask, maybe even a frivolous reason, almost anything they want to know about them that I am in a position to tell them, but I asked myself why does a college admissions official need to know this in order to do his (or her) job? I couldn't think of an answer because, although I didn't know it then, there is no honorable answer. Such questions were a device for keeping "undesirables" out of the college. Who were these "undesirables"? If you can't guess go to your nearest adult continuing educational institution and sign up for one of the courses in American history. The answer to the question will make up a good part of the program. I was much too naïve at age seventeen to know *why* these questions were wrong but I did sense they *were* wrong, and I threw the application out, an infinitely miniscule but genuine blow for Right.

Other, possibly, than the fact that Yale is so creakingly old (founded 1701) as compared to Cornell (founded 1865), I doubt that at the time I could have articulated reasons why I had a slight initial preference for Yale and I can't think of any now, but I must record it as a fact. However, scholarship decisions were not to be announced by Yale until well into the Summer. In late June I received a notice from the New York State Board of Regents that I had been awarded two State Scholarships based upon my New York Regents course examinations throughout my high school career as well as a special scholarship examination initiated, I think, that year. The scholarships only covered part of the tuition and fees but they were big enough that I could not reject them out of hand. However, they could only be used at colleges in New York State or, in my case, Cornell rather than Yale, and there was a calendar element somewhere in the picture -- whether it had to do with the Regents rules or some policy of Cornell I have forgotten -- that required I fish or cut bait well before the Yale scholarship decision was to be announced. My father, whom I believe had already had one mild heart attack, said that as long as he could continue working I could go to either, but also pointed out that if something were to happen to him the Regents funds would cover enough of the cost that if I had to I could hope to work over vacations and part-time at school and complete the course. He left it up to me but I had no doubt as to what he wanted me to do and I couldn't say he was wrong, so after a couple of days of stewing, Cornell it was, and I have never been sorry. He and I went off to Ithaca to find a place for me to live in late June or the first few days of July. I was too late to get into a dormitory, and I ended up in a genuine garret with the roof slanting down over my bed on the third floor of a rather crummy rooming house which no longer exists near the intersection of College Avenue and Dryden Road in Collegetown, maybe a quarter mile from the campus. It had a bed, a desk with a lamp, a chair, a little chest of drawers, a coat rack with wire hangers, and a bookcase, so, though absolutely minimal, it served to get me through the year.

## **Pancho Villa's Revenge**

*Betty Wagler Striso*

I had been planning on an art school until a friend of my Mother's suggested Cornell and put my name in for a scholarship. It all seemed so far-fetched until a big, fat envelope came. I had to go into the City for an interview at the Sherry Netherland on Fifth Avenue and 60th Street. There were ten of us in the room and the interviewer told us that only one in ten would be accepted. One girl spoke up, saying, "My name is P . . . Cornell and I'm going to be the one." Well, that was it, forget Cornell. You cannot begin to imagine the glee with which we greeted one another in the Fall; five of us matriculated, Elinor Yavelow Yuter, Lucille Fein Saunders, Diana Skaletsky Herman, Elinor Schroeder Price Hueston, and me -- but not P . . . Cornell.

However, my start at Cornell was inauspicious. The Summer before I had spent traveling in some of the wildest parts of Mexico where I got deathly sick. After a relapse on the way home, I seemed recovered, but I had been at Cornell only a few days when I relapsed again. My roommate and best friend, Elinor Schroeder, together with Brandy Lopez and Rita and Zelda Simen, bundled me onto the bus and took me to the infirmary. Not knowing what to do with tropical diseases, the infirmary staff put me in isolation. I only saw masked doctors and nurses. I watched the injured football players come and go every weekend. I spent my seventeenth birthday there. Finally, my parents were called in to take me home I wept and begged -- they relented. I had to appear before the Ithaca Board of Health -- they finally let me go. When I got back to Campus I was totally disoriented -- everyone was deep into school work -- I hadn't even begun. Boy, did I work! And I had to learn to deal with the cold -- I was a city girl who had always gone to school in ballet flats and nylons -- another learning experience, but I survived. The remaining years were hard work and sheer joy. I finally found myself as a person in the following years -- the wonderful professors I had, the challenging courses. I'm eternally grateful to that friend of my Mother who thought Cornell would be a good match for me and who put my name in for a scholarship. We all come to that fork in the road, and I'm glad I took the right one.

### **I stumbled and fell right into Cornell**

*Robert Francis Morrison*

My father was not a college graduate. He was a very good mechanic who assembled, tested and flew warplanes during World War One, and later became Chief Engineer of the Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla, New York. Early on, my father had decided that he wanted me to become a professional engineer, and while a senior at Pleasantville High with classmate Mary Gentry Call, I began applying to engineering schools. All required as a prerequisite four years of high school math, and since I would have only three years at graduation I was universally rejected. Pop said, you gotta go to college now, so what could I do? Most timely, a friend, Frank Keenan, a

high school classmate, said, “you’re in the woods all the time, fishing, hunting and trapping. Why don’t you go to Cornell and study wildlife conservation and management?” What an idea! I practically shouted. I applied, was accepted immediately, told my father the tuition was free, and he smiled for the first time since the first rejection letter. Two days before high school graduation in June 1950, my dad was even more pleased when the Korean War started and I told him I was going to be in ROTC and therefore not subject to the draft.

And so I went to Ithaca, and never missed engineering school for one minute. As things turned out, I soon learned that conservation jobs paid miserably low salaries. After graduation and service in the Army, I looked for something more lucrative, and wound up buying and selling large items of hospital equipment. Together with this activity, I had the good fortune to spend a number of years as a hospital facilities planning consultant, and this “unqualified” former engineering school candidate has had many opportunities to enjoy telling engineers what to do

### **What I most needed to learn at Cornell I learned in the first three months**

#### ***Robert Frederic Martin***

In late August or the beginning of September 1950 I attended a pre-orientation retreat for freshman at a camp somewhere just outside of Ithaca -- the only thing I remember about it is a stray and orphaned image of a gorgeous female athlete named Nancy in a form-fitting bathing suit diving into the swimming pool. I then returned for the orientation at Cornell. An important element of my entire college education occurred the very first morning when I went up to Schoellkopf Stadium to inquire about participation in the freshman cross-country team. Within an hour or so some eight or nine of us had gathered. In the course of our idle chit-chat it developed that every single one of us had been captain of our high school cross-country team or track team or both, and two, if I recall correctly, had made the final in the half-mile at the New York State public high school championship meet the preceding June. The message was clear: you have arrived at a new level of competition; if you are not very, very serious about really working on it, don’t expect much of a return. By the Spring of our sophomore year it was already clear that the young men still out for track were not necessarily those who had shown the most raw athletic talent in freshman year -- when people ask me what I ran in college I usually answer, “Rather slowly,” mindful of Red Smith’s ironic insight, “The older a man gets, the faster he ran as a boy.” Those who stuck it out were the ones able to organize their lives to have two hours or so a day for training forty or so weeks a year. Indeed, of some fourteen, if I remember correctly, of our class who earned the “C” in track in 1954, nine of us were also elected to academic honoraries, ΦBK, ΦKΦ, Ho-nun-de-ka, etc.) I sometimes think my “C” in track was

mostly earned by two years of writing with a year of also editing the track and field newsletter sent to alumni. (Success in track came later for me as an assistant track coach while I was briefly in graduate school and then for three years in Cornell Law School.)

The other very important element of my education that occurred that first term was my first chemistry preliminary exam on which I received the bell-ringing grade of 61. I ultimately managed an A in the course, but only as a result of a considerable change in both attitude and work habits from which it is likely I still benefit.

**“. . . the secret of your looks Lives with the beaver in  
[Adirondack] brooks;. . .”** Oliver Wendell Holmes (adapted)

### *Allen L. Smith*

One of the most important events of my life occurred during the Spring break of freshman year in 1951. The Cornell track team, of which I was a member, went South for some warm weather training. There was no way I could go with the team. My grades were poor and I was broke!

Consequently, I went to our family home located five miles East of Watertown, New York State. I rode home with my good friend and classmate Charles “Chick” Sherman. This was a most stressful trip for me as I just knew that I would not be returning to Cornell. Soon after arriving home, I went to my room and sort of sobbed to myself. Matter of fact, my eyes are tearing as I write this sentence. Mother and Dad quickly sensed something was wrong! I told them that I would not be going back to college, that I had done poorly in my subjects and I was broke. My Dad, Herbert L. Smith, quickly said, “No Smith in this family has ever been a quitter. We will figure it out. You will go back, and we will discuss it further come Summer recess.”

It so happens that Dad had taught me to trap fur-bearing animals when I was a very young boy. He was extremely proficient at it himself. The very next day we received permission to trap muskrats and beaver on several farms nearby. Getting permission was quite easy as I had worked for most of the farmers during summers gone by.

A brief description is in order as to what muskrats and beavers are. One might think they are related -- both are rodents -- as they look similar and both build most of their homes out of sticks, mud and grass. The homes are usually surrounded by water. A few dig burrows into mud banks bordering on the water and live there. Beaver are exceptional engineers and easily can build a dam three feet high and a quarter mile long to create a small lake covering several acres. Beaver are much the larger, weighing up to sixty pounds and may be up to three and a half feet long. Beaver have been known to live twenty years, but most live seven to ten years. They have one family per year, usually two to four young, born early in the Summer. Muskrats are very

prolific, weigh two and a half to four pounds, are about two feet long, and have a flat ten-inch scaly rudder-like tail. Young muskrats numbering four to eight per litter are born in the Spring and early Summer. A mature mother muskrat can have up to three families a year. The fur of both animals was quite valuable in the fur trade where it was used for fine fur coats and hats. An excellent, large beaver pelt was worth \$35 and good muskrat pelts averaged \$1.35.

I worked the trap line from daylight to dark each day for just over a week. Dad helped me as much as he could and allowed me to use the family car. We properly took care of the fur each evening. As I recall, we caught eight beaver and over two hundred muskrats which netted me well over \$400. That was just about enough cash to pay for my room and board for the rest of the school year. I ate breakfast in my room, lunch at one of the college cafeterias, and evening dinner at Johnny's Big Red Grill in Collegetown. The owner of Johnny's let me work in his restaurant for my dinners. In the Spring break of each of the remaining three years of college, I ran a trap line very much as I had in my freshman year, thereby providing a goodly share of my room and board money in each of those years.

The freshman year at Cornell was a very trying year for me. I was almost down and out! I could easily have been a failure! However, I did successfully complete my freshman year and graduated with my class in 1954. I am one of the luckiest fellows on earth. My mother and father gave me their support, encouragement and good advice when I needed it most, allowing me to move on with my life. I am also grateful to the many classmates who helped me, particularly, Charles "Chick" Sherman, Dave Pratt, Don Marion, Bruce Marion, Dave Call and Charlie Saul. Thirty some years later I became President of Key Bank Central, Northern New York Region, responsible for thirty-one offices.

**"We're proud of these students that didn't bust out."** (From the women's version of the "Song of the Classes," Ferdinanda Legare Waring '22)

### ***Robert D. Kennedy***

I was a student in Mechanical Engineering, sociable, and graduated in the prescribed term, nothing fancy, except for the sudden and unexpected death of my father in August of 1952 -- the Summer between my sophomore and junior years, and its consequences. I wrote at once to Harry Loberg, Dean of the School of Mechanical Engineering, and told him my sad news. I said I needed some kind of financial aid or a loan, a job in addition to my fraternity dishwashing job which gave me half of my meals, and that I couldn't go to summer school to make up the two critical courses I had busted because I needed the Summer to work; and, oh, by the way, please ignore the fact that I am already on academic probation.

I don't think ol' Harry lost a beat. I had a response back in a couple of days saying come ahead and meet with our faculty Committee on Student Aid chaired by Bart Conta, Professor of Thermodynamics, whom I had not yet met in an academic setting.

Well, I went up to Sibley first day back with shaky knees and not much to offer by way of a Cornell undergraduate track record. It was not a very long meeting. I remember only that Bart Conta and his two associates were very sympathetic and kind. I came out of there with a grant to cover half of my tuition, a loan for the other half, and a recommendation for Foster Coffin, manager of Willard Straight Hall, the student union, to give me a job at the Straight front desk -- a prize sinecure for campus gossip and bird watching. There was only one condition to all of this generosity: that I get off of academic probation and stay off -- this meant a grade average better than 70 -- that was it. That's all.

So I got off of pro, made up my failed courses, graduated in time (in the top 80 percent of my class). Most significantly, I had a *Cornell* degree in Mechanical Engineering. That is something.. And Bart Conta, bless his soul, became one of those legendary professors at Cornell who bet on a dumb kid, beat the odds, and had a winner. I owe him quite a bit.

### **Leaving Queens Behind**

#### ***Martin L. ("Marty") Rosenzweig***

In January of 1950 I graduated from Brooklyn Tech. I had applied to several colleges and universities, including Cornell and MIT. I chose these because of the excellent reputations of their engineering schools and also because I knew two students from Tech who had been a term ahead of me and were going there. I had not visited either school and my image of Cornell was formed mostly from listening to radio broadcasts of football games on Saturday afternoons in the Fall. Since the college year began in September, I had an eight-month hiatus before I could go to either school. My father wanted me to go to work for him but I opted to seek a "real" job instead. Using the classified section of *The New York Times* I applied for a few jobs that looked interesting. Invariably, when the interviewer learned of my plans to go to college in the Fall his interest disappeared. I then decided to tell prospective employers that I did not intend to go to college. On the basis of this deception I was able to obtain a job as an office boy in a Wall Street firm. It wasn't long, however, before they realized that someone with my intelligence was obviously heading off to college come September. My brief career on Wall Street ended within two weeks of its beginning. After this frustrating experience I decided to accept my father's offer of employment, even though the wages were rather meager.

The next few months brought word of my acceptance at Cornell, while MIT put me on the waiting list. My choice was effectively made for me, if now my father would agree to foot the bill for the rather steep costs associated with an Ivy League university. If my memory has not deceived me in the intervening years, I believe that the

annual tuition was \$600, a far cry from today's astronomical levels of \$35,000 or more! I was determined to attend an out-of-town school if at all possible. (I'm not sure whether I had informed my parents that I had applied to Cooper Union, a relatively low-cost engineering college located in Manhattan, as a backup just in case.) To my most pleasant surprise my father willingly agreed to send me off to Cornell with nary a protest

The Summer passed uneventfully. My anticipation heightened as Labor Day approached. Finally, one day in early September, my parents drove me down to Penn Station to put me on the Lehigh Valley Railroad train bound for Ithaca. Freshmen had to report a week ahead of the rest of the students for an orientation program. I didn't have a lot of clothes or other belongings and I might have had about a hundred dollars in my pocket with which to begin my new life as a college man. Before he put me on the train, my father admonished me to "not do anything that I wouldn't do." I had no idea what this meant at the time, but later came to realize that this was the closest that either of my parents ever came to telling me the "facts of life."

My mental image of a Cornell student consisted of a tall, good-looking guy with a blond crew cut, wearing a white sweater with a big red "C" on it. Imagine my surprise when I looked around me on the train at my fellow freshmen-to-be. Most of them looked a lot like me, short, smart Jewish kids from New York. It didn't take me very long to feel right at home with this bunch. We all shared a common trepidation about the experiences that lay ahead, especially the freshman hazing that was prevalent in those days and about which we had been briefed by our friends. After a seemingly slow and bumpy ride (we would later learn that the Lehigh Valley had a reputation for square wheels) we arrived in Ithaca. It was already dark and it was raining. We had discovered on the train that we were all going to 300 West Avenue, in what seemed like an incredible coincidence. We should have had some inkling at this point that all incoming male freshmen were assigned to the temporary cardboard-like buildings that had been erected during World War II to house the resident naval officers' training program. In our ignorance, we pooled together to share cabs to our common destination. When we arrived at the West Avenue dorms we were greeted by upperclassmen and assigned to our sparsely furnished cubicles. I had not eaten for quite a while and was in dire need of some food. There was none to be had in the dorm, so I wandered outside in the darkness and began to trudge up the hill above West Avenue in hopes of finding a restaurant, my collar turned up against the rain. I asked a fellow coming down the hill for directions and he pointed me to Johnny's Big Red Grill on Dryden Road in Collegetown, where I had my first meal as a college man.

In spite of the rather inauspicious beginning that rainy September evening, Cornell soon proved to be a most wonderful and stimulating environment. I was enrolled in the School of Civil Engineering, which was the smallest of the five schools that comprised the College of Engineering. Our entering class had some 40 to 45 students from all over the world. Civil Engineering was housed in its own building, Lincoln Hall, on a corner of the main quadrangle. The University at the time had about 10,000 students altogether, most from Upstate New York and other states in the northeast, though there was a fair representation of foreign students, many of them in

Civil Engineering. My small class included students from Honduras, Egypt, Afghanistan and Israel. This international flavor would prove to be one of the many enlightening aspects of the Cornell experience. As a Civil Engineering student, I had the best of both worlds: the familiarity and personal treatment of a small college, together with the diversity and resources of a large university.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note...Marty's description of his arrival at the temporary World War II military barracks serving as dormitories reminds the editor of his experience as a freshman orientation counselor in the Fall of 1952. For the week, I was asked to sleep on a cot in one of those truly dinky barracks rooms so that I could fulfill my duties as an aid to the inhabitants of that floor (I think). The assigned occupants were an ill-matched pair, a short, rather chubby Jewish lad from New York and a tall, athletic Wasp who was to star as an end on the football team. We got through the week all right, but I heard that on a Saturday night or early Sunday morning later that Fall after they both, perhaps, had had an exposure to some grain alcohol, they had a difference of opinion which ended when the little guy was thrown by the football player through the wall of a single sheet of half-inch plasterboard into the next room. They both lived through it and graduated. On another occasion, an occupant engaged in teasing his roommate rolled the roommate's bowling ball down the hall from whence it reached the stairs and started to bounce down, with each bounce tearing out a stair one-by-one in a process which wrecked the whole staircase all the way to the ground floor.*

\* \* \* \* \*

## **Freshman Blues**

### ***Susan Herrick Bosworth***

Dormitory living and being away from home was a terrific shock and Susan was very homesick that year. Luckily she had a wonderful, cheerful, supportive roommate, Liz Weiss (later Crossky), who did a lot to help her survive the year. Liz remained a good friend and Susan's roommate throughout her years at Cornell (Fall of 1950 to mid-January of 1953). Susan also met other girls she liked while living in Risley Hall in freshman year, including the stunningly beautiful and brilliant Audrey Gullen (who later married writer Peter Maas and who worked with TV writing and producing with David Susskind and who was largely responsible for getting the movie *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore* made). Audrey used Susan's prolific class notes to study for exams and then made high A's, which frustrated Susan who had to study long and hard for *her* grades. Susan made friends with three other girls who were to be her roommates in her sophomore year -- Helen Pease, Peg Lurton and Mary Tilley.

By the end of the school year, the homesickness had subsided and Susan was well into the swing of college life. Although she had gone through the sorority rush in the Fall, and had been invited to join Kappa Kappa Gamma, Susan couldn't go through with joining any sorority, it just wasn't her style. Nigel [her mother] was furious at this decision and didn't kiss Susan for two years as a result. Odd,

considering that Nigel herself had decided against joining a sorority in college. But Nigel had *always* worried unduly about Susan's shyness and wanted to have her social life expanded. (Susan did quite well, anyway, better than Nigel could realiz

### ***Daniel Nadler***

Many years before sending me off to Cornell, my parents were frustrated that I could not decide on a career for myself. So they took me to a testing service for a battery of tests. The results were puzzling to say the least, since they showed that I had an equal aptitude for both the conceptual and the verbal. This lack of preference is what made me choose engineering, and civil engineering in particular, since it offered the widest range of career options. I suppose it is this facility with both sides of my brain which has let me zig and zag throughout my professional career . . . and after it.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note....Dan has been or is a civil engineer with an international reputation, photographer, world traveler, author and collector and well-recognized expert on antique silver – he his wife Serga not long ago donated some 800 pieces of silver jewelry to the Museum of Arts and Design.*

\* \* \* \* \*

### **“Love Will Guide Us” (Hymn by Sally Rogers)**

### **Rosemary Seelbinder Jung**

As the youngest of four kids, very close in age, and with a brother and sister at other schools, I had to work a year before college. I had intended to go to Alfred and major in ceramics and my acceptance was deferred. With my “college prep” high school course, the only job I could get was as a salesgirl at McCurdy's in Rochester. I couldn't even type. During that year, I decided that I wanted to go to a bigger school with more social life, Alfred, New York, being a Seventh Day Adventist town. I applied and was accepted at Michigan State as a Fine Arts major and had been assigned my roommate when I had a blind date with a smooth Cornell sophomore who, with a fraternity brother, was visiting my sister for the weekend at Brockport State. These guys lauded Cornell to the skies and said I should come, and I said who wouldn't love to go to Cornell but there was no way I could afford such an expensive school. They said that I could go to the Home Ec school because there was no tuition for New York State resident students. When I said I wanted to be an artist they said that there were lots of art courses at Cornell. Plus, I was now in love. So, knowing nothing about it, I applied to the Home Ec school and the rest is history. I took all the art courses that were available to a Home Ec student and became a French cooking teacher. Go figure. The valuable lesson I learned was that sometimes for the most capricious reasons we make the best decisions of our lives.

out.)  
(When I arrived at Cornell, the smooth sophomore had busted

**“WE’VE LEARNED HOW TO MINGLE OUR STUDIES WITH PLAY”** (*From the women’s version of “The Song of the Classes,” Ferdinanda Legare Waring, ’22*)

***Betty Wagler Striso***

In the midst of the hard work were moments of sheer joy:

- ^ Sleigh rides in a horse-drawn hay wagon with hot cider and doughnuts afterward;
- ^ Working on decorations for the big dances in Barton Hall -- and going to the dances;
- ^ Spring Weekend Parades -- the Tridelts built a circus wagon for one of them and we painted some of the girls gold to look like the statues on the wagon (the only gold-painted Tridelt I can remember for sure was the lovely and exotic Brandy [Brenda L.] Lopez, but another may have been Candy [Kathleen D.] Scholl, who, coincidentally, married Tommy Irwin whose doctor father had delivered me);
- ^ Canoe races on Beebe Lake -- one of the boats had a piano on it and a brass band -- they played until the boat totally sank;
- ^ Swimming in warm weather in the pools under the falls in Beebe Dam. (In senior year, we used to sneak out of the Tridelt House at night for some midnight swims.)
- ^ A group of us used to party in the squash court at Psi U. We called ourselves the Beta Epsilons (“Bitter Enders”); the only BE other than myself who comes to mind was Carol Louise Reid.

One Saturday night the guys at one of the fraternities closed Triphammer Bridge. They stole police barricades and put them across the entrance to the bridge, then took brooms and were sweeping the bridge. My date and I got as far as Collegetown when the traffic jam completely stopped everything. I think it may have started to snow or drizzle, but I know my date couldn’t put the top of his car up. At one moment, you could hear car doors slamming all over and the sound of running feet. There was some indignation when we finally got to the bridge, but mostly laughter. [Rosemary Seelbinder Jung’s future husband, Hal Jung ’53, was one of the ringleaders who ransacked the steward’s closet in a fraternity for the cleaning materials and the white

coats. She recalls that the stunt “was timed perfectly to strand all the girls so they would get minutes for being late, and five minutes or a little more before curfew all the car doors flung open and the girls ran across the bridge. Their dates who chastised the perpetrators (‘OK guys, this isn’t funny anymore’) got special attention to make sure their windshields were spotless.”]

One of my dates, Doug Merkle ’53, borrowed a car to drive down to the crew races. When we were going down Buffalo Street and had to stop at the first Stop sign, the hood of the car didn’t stop. It slid off of the car and slid down Buffalo Street with my date racing pell-mell after it. He caught up to it about three blocks away and dragged it back. We didn’t get to the races.

It must have been during Deke’s traditional milk Punch party on Spring Weekend in senior year that Nate Pond announced he could fly, and fly he did from a second-floor window of the house, much to the surprise of all of us lounging on the grass. You can guess the reason he wasn’t hurt.

After I moved to Glen Cove with my family, I ran into another Cornellian who lived nearby, Leslie Plump ‘55. He recruited me to do alumni interviews of candidates for admission and we became friends. Talking one night about some of the crazy things that had happened in our undergraduate days, I mentioned an incident in which some student had fallen into the gorge behind Cascadilla Hall and expressed my wonderment as to why he had been walking there in the middle of the night. My new friend started to laugh. He said that the lucky survivor of this nasty fall had been his roommate and that the story that he had been taking a shortcut on his way to his room was false. In truth, he had been coming there at night to climb a tree behind Cascadilla, then a girl’s dorm, to watch the girls get undressed. That night he had watched until the light went out. But when it went out he had seen a light on one floor higher up. Not one to miss such another opportunity which seemed to have been arranged just for his convenience, he had climbed higher to be able to peep in, but a branch he was climbing on broke and tumbled him into the Gorge. Obviously, he lived through this misfortune, but he had a few broken bones and I guess he got his just desserts.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note...* Shutting down Triphammer Bridge, playing at peeping Tom, not every memory is of an admirable activity. Betty Striso “remembers the panty raids during sophomore year. Some guys found an open door to the back of Balch 2 and ravaged the rooms of a couple of girls on the ground floor.” She also “remembers all the rolls of toilet paper we threw out the window.” [Twas nothing new. On June 1, 1878, the laundry of the women’s residence, Sage College, had been “forcibly entered, and items of underclothing were plucked from the tubs and flown from the steeple of Sage Chapel.”<sup>1</sup>] Allen Rowe also remembers one of several “panty raids” on the girls’ dormitories, and recalls that he “fully expected the powers that be to install a draw bridge -- guarded by Campus Police in medieval armor, axes and all,” but he “was disappointed -- it never happened.” We were, after all, still teenagers not yet possessed of the

---

<sup>1</sup> Morris Bishop, *A History of Cornell* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1962), page 209.

judgment one hopes adults will demonstrate. Perhaps the silliest and strangest nutty activity was a practice recalled by Paul Nemiroff, a thoroughly frivolous and potentially dangerous indulgence I had heard of but never observed:

\* \* \* \* \*

***Paul Nemiroff***

My first roommate in Founders Hall liked to light his farts. He stripped naked, then held a lit match near his anus as he passed wind. A long, blue flame issued which smelled as you would expect, plus add the impact of burning. He demonstrated this “talent” to some of us several times, until the time a long, blue flame issued which extended several feet across the room -- it looked like a World War II flame thrower! He yelled in pain and fright! The hair on his butt and the backs of his legs all burned off, leaving a red burn scar. That was his last such demonstration. He shall remain nameless since I don’t want to embarrass him. I haven’t had any contact with him in years but understand he ultimately became a full professor of engineering at a leading university.

\* \* \* \* \*

***Editor's Note...***Paul’s other memories are more seemly:

\* \* \* \* \*

***Paul Nemiroff***

Some of the streets of Ithaca were lined with apple trees instead of the usual elms, maples or oaks. Many times, walking along the street on the way to class I picked a good one, examined it for worms, wiped it clean, and enjoyed a healthy lunch. I liked the Macintoshes or Cortlands, and they were free!

I remember “midnight runs” to Johnny’s Big Red in Collegetown for a snack. I particularly loved their Italian meatball heroes. There was an all-night coffee shop whose name I’ve forgotten down at the Leaky Valley train station in Ithaca, and whenever we had “all-nighters” we would break and go there for a bite if anyone had a car. They served the greasiest hamburgers I ever experienced!

At eleven o’clock every evening, a man selling snacks came to our dorm and blew a whistle to summon us. He had sandwiches and fruit -- I remember I liked his navel oranges which served to keep me awake to study for prelims.

On Friday nights there were beer parties at the fraternity houses. No girls, just guys, singing dirty ditties and drinking, and I never liked beer!

Oh, how I remember the big proms, and how we looked in our tuxes and the girls in their gowns. By my sophomore year, I started always importing my girl friend (not a Cornellian), now my wife of almost fifty-five years, to come up from New York and spend the weekend. One time, she brought shoes no human could wear, and we danced not one single dance. Just sat on chairs and watched the others dance. I remember thinking I had spent a fortune on this prom and never got to dance.

My fraternity house had two toboggans, and a group of us one night took them out and tobogganned down the libe slope. I was with the lucky group. The other bunch had crashed, resulting in two fellows having broken legs and ending up in the infirmary.

I remember swimming in Beebe Lake in Spring. I remember how I hated eight-o'clock labs (I took a number of sciences). I remember trying to get up the libe slope in the morning after a snow storm when the paved paths had not yet been shoveled and the snow had been packed down by other pedestrians. There I was, taking one step up slope and sliding two steps down slope! By the time I got to the lab, I was exhausted!

**“the stars come out, And twinkle down . . . .”**  
“The Hill,” Alexander W. Smith, Class of 1878

*Allen C. Hale*

One of the joyous memories I have of Cornell's infamous winters is of joining in the “traying” on the snow-covered slope between the Library and Willard Straight Hall. With my fraternity, Triangle, at One Campus Road just below Central Avenue, we were relatively close to these revelries and festivities. Fortunately, one of the Brothers worked in the dining rooms of Willard Straight Hall and was able to “borrow” the additional large, oval metal serving trays we needed and return them in the morning before the Straight staff discovered they had been missing. What fun it was to careen down the slope on the trays and attempt to stop by rolling off the tray before becoming airborne from the snow pile created by the plowing of West Avenue.

**“So take down your service flag, Mother,  
Your son's in the ROTC;  
ROTC, it sounded like bullshit to me, to me,  
ROTC, it's bullshit it turned out to be.”**  
*Anonymus, from the songbook of the 49<sup>th</sup> Field  
Artillery Battalion in Korea in 1956, to the tune of  
“My Bonny Lies Over the Ocean”*

*Paul R. Nemirow*

I remember Field Artillery ROTC summer camp at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and remember thinking the Cherokees must be laughing at us for actually fighting them for the God-forsaken state. It was a miserable six weeks and I wish I could not remember it!

*Editor's Note....The editor has more charitable feelings about Fort Sill. It was almost unrelievedly hot in the Summer and often icy cold and blizzardy in the Winter -- indeed, some of the storms were magnificent to see marching toward us a mile high across the plains, but the adjacent Wichita Mountain Wildlife Preserve had the second largest herd of bison in the United States and a delightful prairie dog village, as well as some other magnificent and extraordinary wildlife, and the natural history nuts in our group like me loved the place. Some of the Saturday morning massive demonstrations of artillery were spectacular and have had the effect that I have not since seen a fireworks display that I found particularly impressive or exciting. The present status of ROTC reflects one of the ways the Cornell experience has changed drastically. In our era the enrollment in Army, Air Force and Navy ROTC was in the thousands, and included (it was compulsory until June 16, 1960) most male undergraduates who were not exempt from service for physical reasons or as conscientious objectors, plus a few veterans not subject to the draft. In June 2009, I was told by one of the Navy ROTC faculty that under the strictly voluntary regime the grand total for all services and all classes was something like 176. I personally think the present military system is drastically undemocratic. If the use of military force is to be an element of national policy, the burden must be shared. As it is, Congressman and executive branch officials and officers of major defense contractors rarely have the burden of knowing someone close to them has been sent to war.*

### ***Hugh Schwartz***

In December, 1951, as things took a turn for the worse in Korea and we were offered the opportunity to sign up in advance for senior ROTC, I joined many others in doing so. I spent my years at Cornell in Army Quartermaster ROTC, but ended up serving in the Field Artillery and Guided Missiles. When my commission came along with an indication that I was to report for duty April 6<sup>th</sup> the following year, 1955, I tried to get it changed to June 1955 or even June 1954, but to no avail. I appealed, also to no avail. Finally, as a student at Columbia Law School, on learning in early January 1955 that the GI Bill was about to end, I ventured down to Governor's Island, and some sergeant signed a paper authorizing a Yale football player and me to go to Fort Sill at the end of January, qualifying me for the GI Bill.

### ***Allen M. Rowe, Jr***

In ROTC, we had to take tests on physical conditioning. I was in reasonably good shape at the time. I got through the chin ups and the sit ups OK, and also did the required number of push ups. But the instructor said my back was slightly

bent and gave me twenty-four more! I thought to myself, My God. Cornell has hired Army drill sergeants. However, I damn near jumped off the end of the mat on the standing broad jump. All told, I actually enjoyed it. Then, at the end of the spring semester, on one hell of a hot day, we were ordered to stand at attention – and then stood there, in silence. Finally, cadets started passing out – one here, one there, – admittedly it was starting to get to me also. After a number were lying on the ground, we were dismissed. That comes close to boot camp if you ask me. I wondered if any of those who passed out suffered from heat stroke.

### *Hugh Schwartz*

I may have been more active in extracurricular activities than studies at Cornell, but I still remember a well-known philosophy professor commenting to me on a letter to the editor I wrote to the Cornell Daily Sun. Other professors proved to be quite accessible, too; I regret that I didn't seek more of them out.

Many of my courses stimulated me greatly -- in one case, so much so that I just sat there spellbound and didn't take notes -- with terrible consequences, from the point-of-view of grades.

The extracurricular activities took their toll, and I suffered a sophomore slump. One pleasant recollection from these activities, though, was that Clinton Rossiter mentioned in his classes the Presidential Preference Poll I organized in 1952.

The most memorable “put down” I experienced was in my senior year. The Labor Youth League (the successor to Young Communist League) invited the leadership of all the campus political organizations to a luncheon at which Corliss Lamont, a prominent professor at Columbia and the candidate of the American Labor Party for United States Senator from New York, was to give a talk. The Cornell Young Democrats were too frightened to send anyone, but I went on behalf of the Young Republicans. During the Question and Answer period, seeking to embarrass Lamont, I observed that Izvestia (or Pravda) had just backed him for the Senate, and asked if he had any reaction. He replied, “That just shows the Russians are not always wrong.”

Politically, I was a Dewey Republican, but very much appreciated the wide array of political figures that came to Cornell in those McCarthy days. It certainly added to our education, and, in that respect, there were very few other universities that provided opportunities that were comparable. That brings to mind a most memorable experience. In my senior year, I was Program Chairman of the Cornell Young Republicans, and we invited an extraordinary number of prominent individuals to Cornell to give talks. In November or December, I received a letter from a former Cornell instructor who was an aide to Senator Joseph McCarthy, saying that he had heard of our program, and suggested that we invite Senator McCarthy to Cornell. He added that since we might be low on funds by that time, no fee would be required, and even

travel and lodging expenses could be taken care of by other sources. I decided to shelve the letter for a while, particularly since McCarthy and others from the far right had been attacking several Cornell professors, even two conservatives. But, in mid-January, with club elections in the offing, I made the letter public and urged the election of a slate pledged not to invite Senator McCarthy. That slate lost and the club decided to invite him to Cornell. I informed our faculty adviser, who resigned immediately -- but was replaced by a Nobel Prize laureate. I contacted Cliff White, a former Cornell instructor who was Tompkins County Republican Chairman, an official of the Dewey Administration, and soon to be an adviser to an aspiring California politician named Ronald Reagan. Cliff commented that I should let him know the date that McCarthy was coming to Ithaca because he planned to be out of town that day. The Student Council, concerned that there might be demonstrations, etc., invited me to a meeting to discuss the matter. However, within a few days, the famous Army McCarthy Hearings began, and that ended the career of Joseph McCarthy.

Two years in the Army gave me time to think things over, and I decided not to return to Columbia Law School, but to become an economist instead. I'm still writing and teaching -- the latter in an MA program in Uruguay and in the Fairfax County, Virginia jails.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note...Hugh's professional output includes A Guide to Behavioral Economics (Higher Education Publications, Inc., Falls Church, Virginia, 2008), which may help you to gain some separation from the idea that markets are always rational.*

\* \* \* \* \*

### ***Diana Heywood Calby***

Spring weekend our sophomore year a group of us were transporting a large, well-endowed paper mache figure of a woman designed to be the bow sprit of the ΣAE entry in the Beebe Lake race. We had her in the rumble seat of Tom Armstrong's car, an old blue Ford, as I recall. As we went by Bailey Hall she knocked down an electric wire (she was rather tall). Being very responsible sophomores, we called the Campus Patrol. They must have been waiting for our calamity because an officer appeared almost immediately. He sized up the situation and sent us on our way. We left the poor guy holding up the wire with a pole. I don't remember who won the race.

### ***Allen M. Rowe, Jr.***

Through my friends Ken Zinn and, I believe, Bob Pollak, I learned to appreciate the music of Benny Goodman, especially "Sing, Sing, Sing." I frequently listen to his band in the evening -- really early morning -- and THAT does bring back a flood of pleasant memories. Especially the memory of the girl.

I will never forget the infatuation I had with a beautiful girl who had given her best to teach me the “Charleston.” I will never forget the eye-to-eye contact -- I thought she was reading my soul.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note...Dates were not limited to attending dances, parties, shows and movies or taking afternoon walks in the woods. Jack D. Vail, Jr., now Class President, insists that he had three or four dates on which upon conferring with the young lady who, as had he, had already eaten dinner, they had decided none of the available films appealed to both of them and that there was no other show or party which offered an alternative,. At this point Jack had gone to his room and procured his .22 caliber rifle, a box of cartridges and a powerful flashlight which they took off to the university's dump, located in a deep declivity with steep sides so that when seated on the edge one was rather removed from the waste matter. There they proceeded to spend some part of the evening shooting rats. If the flashlight, a powerful spotlight type rather than a flood lamp with more diffused beam, were strapped to the barrel properly the focus of the light and the aiming point of the rifle would nearly coincide. If while shining the light around the accumulated detritus in the dump something were seen to move it was almost certainly a rat and if the trigger were pulled the poor rat was history. The very idea of this particular type of romantic tryst astonished and even appalled me. I had never heard of anyone pursuing any such strange adventure and initially was convinced he was just making it up, but several other classmates have assured me that Jack was not the sole generator of rat-shooting dates and Merrill M. Hessel insists he had gone on such a varmint hunt on which not he but the young lady had furnished the gun, cartridges and flashlight.*

On a related note, Leslie Papenfus Reed's husband Tom Reed had once gone to bed rather early while it was still daylight for some desperately needed shuteye, perhaps following an all-nighter of study. However, his sleep was disturbed by a couple of crows calling insistently. His Alpha Delt roommate, Richard D. Gifford, watched in amazement as Tom, seemingly still in a state of sleep although his eyes were open, got out of his upper bunk, went to the closet for his rifle, loaded it, went to the window, raised the sash, shot the two crows, closed the window, cleared the weapon, put it back in the closet, returned to bed and fell immediately asleep.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Betty Wagler Striso**

Betty Wagler Striso reports that her “family and friends still find it hard to believe that we had waiters at Saturday and Sunday dinner in the women's dorms, and [she] gets sentimental thinking of singing *The Evening Song* and *Alma Mater* after dinner (holding hands).” She also “remember[s] the Sunday afternoons at Balch -- after dinner we had to show up for afternoon tea. I asked the house mother why -- she said, ‘My dear, you girls will be married to the captains of industry. You will need to know how to pour.’ I still know how to pour.”

## **“Grisly Risley” -- 1950-51**

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note...One of our classmates recalls living during her freshman year in Prudence Risley Hall (named for the mother of the donor, Mrs. Russell Sage) with its pseudo-medieval décor. Risley was presided over by a medieval horror of a housemother, RFM Note...Mrs. Winney, who was universally detested and feared. Every girl dreaded her tours of being assigned to Mrs. Winney's head table in the dining hall, which, fortunately were only occasional and of short duration. Mrs. Winney made it her practice to personally scan each girl for tell-tale signs of any decadence at sign-in after Saturday night dates. She was not a woman in whom one would confide or go to with problems.*

\* \* \* \* \*

### ***Gerald “Jerry” Ackerman***

Being a foreign student [from Canada] served me very well. (Bob Briggs, who borrowed a Cadillac from his uncle's dealership for my one big Barton Hall dance date, used to call me “the Canadian wetback.”) I met students from other countries and while living at Algonquin shared a daily meal with a Greek (still one of my most loved friends) and served as President of the fledging International Student Council. What a privilege! And what an eye-opener and mind-broadener! When a group of us visited Washington for a “meet your government” seminar, we would ask top officials some crucial questions about United States foreign policies. I still enjoy very special memories of these student friends -- Tony Trimis from Greece with whom I rotated the cooking and kitchen police duties for suppers the one year I lived on campus in Algonquin Lodge, Tawab Assifi from Afghanistan who coached me in the one game of chess I ever played (his father was a chess champion at home), Layla Faloun from Iraq (not “a rock,” as she explained), George Boateng from Ghana, Wei Lee from China ( a chemistry major known to make his own booze), and Dietrich Meyerhoff from Switzerland.

### ***Elisavietta Artamonoff Ritchie Farnsworth***

Dietrich Meyerhoff was a good friend, not a beau but a great companion. He was president of the Cosmopolitan Club while I was vice-president (and we had an Iraqi treasurer who didn't like women holding any office, and was quite disagreeable). Dietrich and I worked together closely in looking after foreign students both before and after they reached Ithaca, planning events and home hospitality with foreign and American students, organizing monthly luncheons with interesting speakers, etc.

Dietrich and two of his pals and I drove toward Canada for skiing, but he had forgotten his passport, so we waited in some snowy border town in New York. All four of us slept in whoever's car, whether in sleeping bags or warmed by each other I don't recall, until one of Dietrich's friends delivered the passport. In the Laurentians, Dietrich skied like a Swiss, while I struggled to survive the ski lift and my first trials on those two skinny wood slats in ski boots which rubbed my ankles raw until Dietrich took a knife and pared away the offending leather. I believe he married his Cornell girlfriend, but I am not sure.

George Boateng from Ghana became a warm friend. At that time one of the very few African students on campus, he was a fine trail-blazer with a future that surely included great achievements. He visited me later in my parents' house in Washington, and in this era when the Capitol was still very much a Southern city, delighted my parents' African-American housekeeper. George married an African American named Dorothy, whom my husband later met in Ghana — where she seemed to be subtly chafing in the role of a traditional African wife. In 1976, in transit with my twelve-year-old Alexander, I spent a few days in Ghana, which included giving a very small poetry reading and meeting a Ghanaian poet, I looked for George but he was elsewhere.

### ***Deborah Kroker Ineich***

Two favorite memories: The chimes playing “The Evening Song” (which always makes me cry) and the steps by Bailey Hall which I traversed hundreds of times on my way to Martha Van especially those steps in Winter with sparkly snow covering bushes and trees in either side. I still have that scene vividly in my mind.

One thing about Cornell -- social life was never lacking. When my kids were in college and wanted to come home for the weekend because “there's nothin' to do at school,” I was non-plussed. Never could Cornell have been accused of that! I still am very close with many of my sorority sisters and have wonderful memories of fraternity parties and houseparty weekends.

\* \* \* \* \*

***Editor's Note...*** Rosemary Seelbinder Jung adds that her “daughter said once that her whole generation thinks that our whole generation had a lot more fun than they did,” and Rosemary “can't find an argument with that.” The editor's experience while attending three parents' weekends at Theta Delt during the undergraduate career of son James Robert Martin '81 may provide some additional support. About eight of the assembled fathers on each occasion were Cornellians who invariably eventually ended up around the piano in the bar in the basement singing one old Cornell song after another from memory, some of us on at least on some of the songs singing the harmony, also from memory, while

our current student sons stood around amazed that we still knew this stuff they had never learned -- the more sophisticated among them were those who actually knew the words of the second verse of the "Alma Mater."

\* \* \* \* \*

***Mimi Cohen Levine***

I loved being a student at Cornell. I sat in on lectures by [Vladimir] Nabokov and [Mario] Einaudi and other bright lights recommended by my friends. We played bridge in the Ivy Room between classes and in the dorm before dinner. I worked very hard in my studies but always had time for fun on campus. I felt so lucky to be there.

***Duane Neil***

For many of us the nonacademic aspects of our Cornell experience were mixed. Duane Neil rowed on the crew for four years, lived on Thurston Avenue with three other students and played chess with them to see who would do the dishes. He remembers picking apples in the Fall in the orchard and having fun at the Barton Hall dances -- he misses the big bands. He drove a yellow '48 Ford convertible, which was cold, but girls loved it. But he also worked at Willard Straight Hall cafeteria for three of the four years as a short order lunch cook and graded papers as an assistant to Professor Stanley Warren in Agricultural Economics in senior year.

***Martin L. ("Marty") Rosenzweig***

Of Cornell's many attributes, the one I enjoyed the most was the natural beauty of its campus and the grandeur of its setting. It is no wonder that John Gunther, in his book *Inside USA*, declared Cornell's campus was one of the two most beautiful in the country. As a kid who grew up in the drab, crowded, mundane and ironically named neighborhood of Sunnyside, Queens, I enjoyed the view from West Hill, overlooking the town of Ithaca and Cayuga Lake. I enjoyed the splendor of the Finger Lakes region of Upstate New York, which offers perhaps the finest scenery East of the Rockies. I marveled at the deep gorges that bounded the campus on the North and South. Fall Creek and lovely Beebe Lake seemed an idyllic jewel surrounded by dense trees providing beautiful, secluded paths and rocks on which to study in solitude or enjoy a romantic interlude, while experiencing the best that Mother Nature has to offer.

The only thing that detracted from an otherwise perfect locale was the weather. Ithaca suffered then as now from an abnormally low number of sunny days each year. Leaden skies and long, dreary rainy periods are the norm in the Fall, while Winter brings biting cold and frequent snowstorms. Spring is usually the nicest time of the year, but is also often wet, while Summers can be hot and quite humid. In the eight years that I made Ithaca my principal residence I got fairly well adjusted to the poor climate, except for the snow. I never did learn to appreciate snow, which is probably one

of the factors that led to my decision to move to Southern California upon my departure. When the weather was nice, however, it was very nice. One learned to really appreciate the grand and invigorating feeling associated with a crisp, clear Fall day, especially if it fell on a football weekend. Nothing quite matches the abundantly colorful foliage of an Ithaca Autumn. All and all it was, and still is, a wonderful place to get a higher education.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note...The editor again joins the loyal opposition. I like cold weather and snow -- my biggest regret in not being a Scoutmaster anymore is missing going camping in the Winter). I also don't mind wet weather and my one experience of an Ithaca Summer I found delightful. However, I have to agree that Marty has most of the details right. My friend, classmate and track teammate David Pratt was the son of an Ag College professor and lived on Maple Grove Place, a short dent in the South side of Dryden Road at the East end of Collegetown. I frequently walked back and forth with Dave to and from Schoellkopf, and had occasion from time-to-time to stop briefly in his house. In early March 1951 I had happened to skim the front page of The Ithaca Journal lying on a table in his living room and noted the news that in the month of February 1951 there had been four hours of sunshine in Ithaca, which startled me, because I didn't remember any.*

Rosemary Seelbinder Jung is on my side; Rosemary "had never been on the Cornell campus till my father dropped me off at Balch for freshman camp on a gray, drizzly day, and to this day I miss Cornell most on days like that, not when the sun's out." In those days we practiced for Winter track on a 160-yard eleven-laps-to-the-mile board track just like the one in Madison Square Garden except that ours was erected outdoors so that not infrequently we had to shovel off the snow before we could train. It was rarely possible to regard the weather with indifference.

\* \* \* \* \*

**"... and set the campus ringing with our singing . . . ."**(From "Strike Up a Song for Cornell," by Richard H. Lee 1941)

### ***Mason Colby***

I auditioned and got into the Cornell Men's Glee Club in my sophomore year, about 1952. We rehearsed in the large room at the top of Willard

Straight Hall - the student union. Tom Tracy was the director and a stickler for precision and learning your music. You had to have it memorized after about one or two rehearsals. (That doesn't work for me anymore!!) The Glee Club was a great experience for many reasons. We got to sing a wide variety of music. One was surrounded by "live wire" type of men who would become long time friends. We took a midyear tour each year. These included in my era, eastern towns and cities, the Midwest (by train and bus). In 1954 we toured the country from east to west coast and Mexico City, in a chartered Pan American Airways DC-4. We took turns "flying" the plane, (on autopilot, I suspect). The Cayuga's Waiters were a subset of the Glee Club and I looked up to them as a bunch of great guys who sang songs I really liked -- close harmony.

I auditioned for the Cayuga's Waiters in about the end of my sophomore (or was it junior - third year?) I was a five-year Mechanical Engineering student. We practiced for a while in the basement of what was then the Architecture school with huge, big-busted plaster statuary. Of course we sang at Men's Glee Club events and on the tours. We also would gather around campus from time to time to enthrall the coeds by singing "Good Night Little Girl" to some usually cute girl near the front of the crowd. Long-playing 33RPM vinyl records were the leading technology at the time. While I was a Waiter we made two LPs to sell and earn enough money to pay our airfare to Bermuda over Christmas break. We had gigs at the Castle Harbor Hotel that gave us free room. In turn we did two shows each night and sang in the bar with free cocktails in the afternoon (tough life!) One year we had the penthouse on the roof, I suspect because they didn't have another paying customer for it. Days were on the beach and surviving the motor bikes and wrong way roads. My wife of 56 years, Pat Jerome, had graduated in June 1954. We got engaged just before Christmas 1954 and she went along on the Waiters' Bermuda trip, staying at a nearby guest house to lend an air of respectability to the experience!

About eight years ago, the Waiters from my era in the middle 1950's started to have reunions, thanks to the initial efforts of Charlie Wolf, 1955. We met at resorts (Basin Harbor and Trapp Family Lodge, New Hampshire) at first. Along with partners who came along, it was a very congenial experience. Then followed gigs during reunion week on campus. This is a really unique experience. We don't have to learn new songs, but need to brush up a lot. I was fascinated by the fact the music and subtle nuances came back quickly, but not so the words - left brain - right brain thing I guess. We get to sing to our "old" fans of 56 years ago who really appreciate the nostalgic experience. We stay in the dorms and enjoy the reunion activities - and being with each other.

My singing experiences at Cornell led to a life long amateur singing career. I have sung in church choirs in the many towns I've lived in moving around the country with Procter & Gamble Co. I sang with the Cincinnati Symphony (May Festival Chorus) for over fifteen years with the best soloists and conductors there are. My Glee Club and Waiters experience at Cornell is as valuable to me as any other educational experience I had on campus.

**“ . . . the well-educated man will be able to both sing and dance well.”**

Plato (Laws II, translated by Trevor J. Saunders; John M. Cooper, ed.,  
Plato: Complete Works, Hackett Publishing Co., Inc., Indianapolis,  
Cambridge, 1997, p. 1345.)

### ***Bertram Rosen***

The Octagon club had only one function: to put on a Broadway-type musical comedy on Spring Weekend. That was a big thing. More than 100 people were involved. I think there were 20 dancers and some number of people were involved to make the costumes. In addition the sets were made by a different student group: YASNY (YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHING YET).

The show played two or three nights in addition to I can't remember, how many dress rehearsals, at Bailey Hall. That meant we had to sell 6000 seats. At least we did not have much competition. There was the Drama Club play at the Willard Straight Theatre and the big Barton Hall dance, which by arrangement, did not begin until the Octagon show was over. Saturday night was a great night for dates and afterwards there were all the Fraternity parties.

How I got into this was indirect: someone who lived in the Collegetown boarding house was one of the dancers and he said I could come to the dance rehearsals which were held in the Old Armory which was next to the Kappa Alpha house, close to Collegetown. He said the dancers were very pretty and showed a lot of leg. Also, two of them were the Simen twins [Rita and Zelda], and "They had great legs." So, one cold evening I went to the rehearsal with him. He introduced me as being on the lighting squad and I was going to figure out how to light them. To give credence to this tale I made sketches. I must have been believed because I wasn't thrown out.

All I can remember of those nights was that all of the woman had great legs. I joined the stage crew of Octagon which was headed by Richard Thayer. The crew raised the curtain, set up the lights in a long rectangular box which was very unwieldy and had to be raised thirty feet above the stage. The stage crew did everything back stage and, because I was a chemistry major, I was assigned to set up and operate an explosive device coupled with a camera flashbulb, that would create a flash of light and a large puff of smoke through which the devil would emerge. This was accomplished by putting a teaspoonful of black powder in a shallow white porcelain bowl and setting it off with a primitive electrical igniter. It never failed. All I had to do was to plug the wire into a wall outlet. All went well until the first show. The director said the smoke was paltry, insufficient. So the next night I used two teaspoons of black powder. This made an impressive volume of smoke and the director and others complimented me. Thayer said I was going to be promoted to be a spotlight operator. The actor who played the devil had

another opinion. He said he feared that it might blow his pants off or cause them to catch fire. I cut down the powder to a teaspoon and a half for all subsequent performances.

This promotion meant I would be in the balcony operating a carbon arc spotlight -- there were no computer driven spotlights in those days. (I think the only computers on campus were in the Treasurer's office. Remember those punch cards?) It was all done by hand but I had to wear a suit, tie and a jacket. The illumination was made by two carbon arcs kept the correct distance apart. It was very hot. Further I had to wear a pair of earphones that soon hurt my ears, and the show was almost three hours long. And Thayer kept yelling at me. Mostly about keeping the spotlight on the actor, which was quite evident. So I took off the earphones and really made him mad. So angry that he demoted me back to the stage crew, the best thing that ever happened that weekend. It meant I could talk to people and be comfortably cool for all that was required was that I had to wear a t-shirt.

*JOAN OF ARKANSAS* was a takeoff of George Bernard Shaw's *Joan of Ark* and a Preston Sturges film, *The Lady Eve* and *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*. Like the films, the show was a romance and a political satire. The music and lyrics were good, topical and funny. I have an LP and a copy of the script but no photographs.

I did not have any back stage romances. This was Cornell and all of the woman had dates for the weekend and I was a freshman.

Thursday night, after the show, we all assembled on the stage while the director told us that what we had done was wrong. I was sitting next to the star of the show, Joan, and I discerned that she did not have a date for Saturday afternoon. She not only had a great voice, she was a very sweet person. We arranged a date for the following afternoon. I was perhaps too impressed by having a date with the coed who was the star of the show but I never told anyone about it until now.

The high point of first show was the party by the Sigma Chi swimming pool. It was a few weeks later when the weather would likely be pleasant. This was the reward for the months of work we and I had put into this show.

So that was the Octagon I remembered. I was involved in the next two productions, both of which were written by Karen Wylie [Pryor]. Delight Dixon [Omohundro] and I submitted a script for a show but the faculty advisor recognized that we had nowhere to progress to. He liked the scene we had written but he saw that we had nothing to say. You might remember the *SUN* review of the 1953 show. Robert Gutwillig '53 started his review with, "I may be a churl and a misanthrope . . ."

**"The theatre is irresistible; organize the theatre!"**

Matthew Arnold

*Paul Nemiroff*

The editor and I were both active in the Cornell Dramatic Club, and worked at the theatre even when we were not included in the cast of a show. I remember playing a bum in a one-act play called *Hope Is a Thing with Feathers*. I don't recall the playwright or even who directed the show, although it may have been Dr. McCalmon, an Associate Professor in the English Department, I am not at all sure. Since I was to play a homeless bum living in a city park, I decided to grow a scrubby beard, for realism. But I was an upperclassman, and I had to inspect underclassmen in ROTC drills. My director managed to get permission from the Professor of Military Science and Tactics (a bird colonel, as I recall), but I will always remember (and cherish) the indignant looks on the faces of the frosh and sophs as I trooped the line in full uniform, delivering "gigs" for minor infractions while looking like a slob, and, in fact, breaking Army regulations concerning no beards (or, perhaps, no ill-trimmed beards) in uniform.

I remember acting in a two-character play with a very young Sandy Dennis. She was not a Cornellian, but, somehow, strings were pulled to cast her in the young girl's role and I was the young boy. I even have a photo of us both in costume, on set, acting together. I don't know how the whole episode happened, but I enjoyed the experience. Of course, none of us knew of the fame she would later earn, or that, tragically, she would die very young.

I remember playing young Nicholas in Christopher Fry's *The Lady's Not for Burning*. He was a very immature adolescent, and my entrance was an actor's dream. I came running onto the set screaming and yelling (I don't remember why). Running up a ramp to the doorway entrance, I clobbered my head, and, reeling, backed onto the set with blood streaming, and staggering. Somehow I got through the first act and repaired my makeup (very stylized) during intermission.

We had a theatre professor at that time named Albright, who wrote a book (surprise!) on theatre art. In it there is a picture of me in my very stylized Nicholas makeup and costume.

\* \* \* \* \*

**"Don't make book if you cannot cover bets"**  
(Tom Lehrer, "The Boy Scouts Marching Song")

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note...One of the highlights of the sophomore year of the Class of 1954 was the unexpected victory at Schoellkopf Field of the Cornell football team over the highly touted team of the defending Big Ten Champion, the University of Michigan. Linda Stagg Long recalls that her then steady date who was in the fullness of time to be her husband, Gary Long, who was from Grosse Point, Michigan, was so full of the home state propaganda about "the Champions of the West" (as their fight song so modestly calls them) that, Linda recalls, he was going about "bragging about Big Ten football and telling everyone who would*

*listen that no Ivy League team could possibly beat any Big Ten team. (Having grown up in Ithaca, [Linda] didn't even know there were any other leagues).*

*“Anyway, Gary made bets with everyone he knew for months before the game.” The crowd, some 35,300, broke the record, which still stands, for attendance at a Cornell home game. The half ended with Michigan holding a 7 to 0 lead, seemingly confirming Gary’s opinion although disappointing him slightly that Michigan was not farther ahead, but in the second half Cornell put together 20 unanswered points. Michigan managed to grind out only 39 yards rushing, and just 16 in the second half, and the game ended with Cornell on top, 20 to 7. Linda writes, “[a]s the game drew to a close, people were standing up all over the stadium, shouting ‘Where’s Gary Long? -- I want my money!’” Needless to say, [Linda remembers, Gary and Linda] didn’t go on any expensive dates for the rest of that year!*

In 1952 at Ann Arbor, Michigan got its revenge, 49 to 7.

\* \* \* \* \*

### ***Deborah Kroker Ineich***

I loved Linda Long’s story about the Michigan game our sophomore year. I was there, screaming and hollering, much to the annoyance of my less avid friends. Why were they there, if not to cheer the Big Red on?

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note...Gerald "Jerry" Ackerman, who came to Cornell from a bump in the road in Eastern Ontario miles from even most of those who were thought of as neighbors, "still appreciates Linda Stagg's account of our Big Red victory over Michigan, but not because we won. It was my first experience with 20,000 people [actually more like 35,300] in one place at one time. Wow!"*

\* \* \* \* \*

***Robert Francis Morrison***

I remember only a few things about that day in 1951 when Ann Arbor came to Ithaca. I was playing 150-pound football that year, we were not having a good season, and badly needed an ego boost. We would play our home games on Lower Alumni Field [of sainted memory] on Saturday morning, after which we would head for Schoellkopf to live vicariously through the Varsity. How we all rejoiced when our favorite team, which could lose to teams like Lafayette and Colgate, knocked off a Big Ten team that had won the Rose Bowl on New Year's Day of that same year. We were on Cloud nine until Christmas.

***Martin L. ("Marty") Rosenzweig***

My assigned roommate in my freshman year was a short, wiry senior by the name of Alex Pleskach '51. Alex was one of a number of veterans of World War II who had returned to college to complete their education. There were several of them in my dorm who were quite the hell raisers. Fortunately, Alex was not one of them. He was from a small town in Upstate New York and was studying pomology (apples) in the Ag School and was engaged to a cute little gal from his hometown who came to visit him now and again. We got along well, despite the differences in our ages, backgrounds, and degree of worldly experience. I, a Jewish teenager from New York City, learned much from Alex but his most endearing attribute by far was his car. Freshmen were not permitted to have cars in those days and they were in short supply. With Alex's encouragement, I enrolled in a local driving school as soon as I turned eighteen and got my driver's license. After that, Alex would let me borrow his car from time-to-time, which enhanced my status among my fellow freshmen, and also provided a degree of freedom in dating some of the local town girls.

In 1950 the male-female ratio at Cornell was four to one. It was well nigh impossible for a freshman to ever get a date with a coed. Besides, it seemed the Cornell women were either not too attractive or incredibly conceited or both. Thus most Cornell men were dependent upon "imports" of either girls they knew from home or

students at one of the several women's colleges nearby, including Keuka, Wells, and Elmira Colleges, as well as Cortland State Teachers College, all located within a radius of twenty-five or thirty miles from Ithaca. But since even the freshman girls at these institutions preferred to date upperclassmen, which were in plentiful supply, the Cornell freshman had only his hometown girlfriend, if any, or "townies" to draw from. It was this latter category that provided all my social life in that first year.

My friends that year were mostly from my Civil Engineering class, and included Jack Felt, Bob Nordenholz, and Rhaeto (known as "Rat") Pfitzer. Jack was, like me, also from Brooklyn Tech, though I hadn't known him there. He and Bob were roommates and lived in a small rooming house on Eddy Street in Collegetown. We were in most of our classes together. Jack had a great sense of humor, played the ukulele left-handed, and loved jazz and the music of the Twenties and Thirties. We were destined to become close friends and roommates for the last three years of our undergraduate careers. We joined the Charleston Club and went to a number of jazz-oriented functions together.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Editor's Note...**Again the editor, having at various times loved three Cornell coeds with passion (one of them when I was a freshman), must take issue with Marty. The "Song of the Classes" records the fact that so many of us male students "ma[de] frequent calls on the coeds at Sage" or Risley, Dixon, Balch, Comstock, Tridelt, KKG, or wherever. Marty's argument as to the unattractiveness of Cornell coeds may go back to the first admission of women students in 1875, and certainly is old enough to have been refuted in an essay by the historical novelist Kenneth Roberts, Class of 1908:

*"A casual inspection of passing coeds . . . in residence at Cornell, reveals that that their average age seems to be about 20, that in weight they run about eighteen to the long ton, and that in garb, complexion, carriage, size of feet, and general deportment they do not differ noticeably from the young things encountered on Park Avenue, Commonwealth Avenue, or any other resort of youth and beauty."*

\* \* \* \* \*

**“ . . . it is all Greek to her [or him] . . . ”**

*Cornellian of nineteen fifty-four*

***James M. Symons***

I was crushed when I didn't get any bids during my first fraternity rush week, but the next year I was invited to join Acacia. One of my fraternity brothers and I roomed together when we were in engineering graduate school at MIT and he introduced me to the woman I married in 1958. He is the one Cornellian with whom I have remained in touch.

***Paul Nemiroff***

As a freshman, I pledged Phi Sigma Delta, a fraternity no longer in existence on any campus, I believe. Pledges were required to provide chewing gum to any brother who asked for it at any time. Just a little harmless hazing . . . I quickly got tired of stopping whatever I was doing to fish out the gum to offer the elder. So, I bought Chicklets, and emptied out the box. Into it I put Feenamints, a laxative in a gum base which looked just like Chicklets, in substitution. One brother, just a little piggish, demanded more than one. I offered him all I had, and he took three and began to chew. No one saw him for over two days, and we heard that he had “Stomach problems” that caused him to skip classes for the entire two days. Surprisingly, when the other brothers heard what I had done, they were not angry with me; they congratulated me for the spunk and feistiness I had shown.

One night the brothers came to each pledge's living quarters individually, grabbed us, made sure that we had no money in our pockets, but also assured that we were dressed warmly (it was a winter night in Ithaca). Having kidnapped us, they took each of us to a different destination and dumped us there. I found myself down by Cayuga Lake. There was no public transportation at that hour (and none of us had any money). So we all walked. I walked up the long hill to my dorm room in Founders Hall and arrived “home” about three a.m. Other pledges had similar stories.

We pledges met the next day to plot revenge. We managed to borrow a full-grown pig from a local farmer who was given all the edible garbage from our fraternity house to feed his pigs. One of the pledges volunteered to house the pig in his dorm room until we were ready to strike. At about three a.m. when we were reasonably sure that the resident brothers were asleep we sneaked into the house. Some of us went to the basement to take out the fuse plugs in the electric box (no circuit breakers in those days), then we joined the rest of the pledges, nineteen in all, and, of course, the full-grown pig. We made a lot of noise with bugles, drums, banging pots and shouting, driving the pig before us in the darkness. Most of the brothers were rather frightened. None knew what was happening. One actually panicked and tore his bed apart, wielding blindly the bed slats, swinging wildly. Luckily, he did not hit his

roommate or any of us, but he did do a major job on his bed and the other furniture in his room.

We retreated laughing and howling over the “victory” we had won that night. The next day, as every day, we were scheduled to lunch at the fraternity house. We were rather nervous about how we would be received, so we all met together first, to march down the libe slope together for mutual protection just in case the brothers planned corporal punishment. To our delight and surprise we were greeted as heroes, with much back-slapping, “hail-fellow,” congratulating, and the like, for our feistiness and creativity. The brothers all bragged of their great pledge class to their friends in other houses. There was other footnote to this adventure. The pledge who had “harbored” the pig in his dorm room until we were ready to strike, Al Romm, if I recall, got into trouble with the University because Res Halls complained about the smell of pig offal in his dorm room. We feared he might be going to be expelled, but finally he got away with it. I guess the “powers that be” realized that “boys will be boys” or perhaps they heard the whole story and were suitably amused by the hi-jinks of their undergraduates . . . .

***John Eisele***

Now, after aging and reflecting or *vice versa*, I regard all fraternities as little gangs for better or for worse, some quite elite and some not quite so elite, but all reflections of the social needs of many youths in transition.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note...The editor, having declined an invitation to join a fraternity for reasons which I would have had difficulty articulating then and am now fairly sure were probably indefensible, declines to take a position in that discussion except to note that there have been occasions when the atmosphere of the fraternity made a major contribution to members' educations:*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Allen C. Hale*

In the 1955 Fall Term I was back for my final year at Cornell. Classes had begun, and while I was not living at my Triangle fraternity house, I was taking my evening meals there to maintain my connection with my brothers.

As was typical after the evening meal, we retired to the living room for general conversation until it was time to go to our rooms to study. On this particular evening, one of our waiters joined us as I was talking about my past seven-month sojourn to California and Wisconsin. As some of the brothers left to begin their evening studies, this waiter, a sociology major, started asking questions about my experiences.

Whereas I had simply looked upon my seven months of experiences as experiences, he looked at them from a sociological perspective.

We explored the geographically differing social values among the areas I had lived in: my rural northern New Jersey hometown of 10,000, the more cosmopolitan west coast cities of San Francisco, Oakland and Berkeley, and the small rural mill town of 2,000 in northern Wisconsin.

The cultural beliefs and values of those with whom I had come in contact were similarly reviewed. The rodeo circuit rider who took us to the gas station and back when our car ran out of gas, the driver I rode with from California to Wisconsin, the hitchhiker picked up en route who then robbed the driver, the Berkeley grandmother in whose home I had taken a room and her son's blended family of six children from three different sets of parents, the Wisconsin family who opened the spare room for me, the restaurant cook who often would prepare specifically what I wanted, and even my parents who were both from small towns in southwestern Indiana.

Finding this fascinating myself, as did many of my brothers who continued to come and go as our conversation continued late into the night, I gained new insights and understanding of my experiences that I didn't appreciate then, but do now.

It was one of the most enjoyable and informative evenings I spent while I was in college, and one, in retrospect, that I believe shaped my later ability to easily and quickly adapt to, and merge into, various groups and organizations of people.

*William B. Webber*

I roomed with Boyce Thompson and Tom Morell in the Baker dorms during our freshman year. We all joined DU for only one reason, Russ Schuh '51, a DU member who had been a big football hero in our high school in Bronxville. We were totally confused by the rushing process and figured that if Russ belonged to that fraternity it must be OK.

*John F. "Jim" Settel*

During my junior year, I was president of my fraternity, and therefore a member of the Interfraternity Council. As I recall, it seemed that the IFC was concerned about some wildness that might go on during one of those weekends when fraternities had female sleepover guests for a two- or three-day bash. So the IFC formed a committee made up of IFC member "inspectors" to go around to the fraternity houses to make sure everything would be ok. As I recall, we drew lots as to which house(s) we would "inspect." As luck would have it, I drew my own fraternity to inspect. Since I was also part of the party I was supposed to "inspect," I made my inspection rounds a number of times that weekend, closing bedroom doors whenever I thought that what was going on inside the rooms might embarrass someone. It worked like a charm. I was voted the best fraternity inspector by, guess who . . . my fraternity brothers.

**"O Cornell of the kindly heart,  
The friendly hand"**

(from the chorus of "The Hill," by Albert W. Smith 1878)

*Charles H. Bibbins*

I joined ATΩ as a freshman. The house president the previous year had done away with Hell Week as demeaning. The actives in our year experimented with an alternative -- HELP WEEK. They arranged with the county welfare department for our pledge class to paint and wallpaper a large room, a living and dining room combo, in each of two houses on the outskirts of Ithaca (we split into two groups of about eight each). The owner of the house where my group worked was a crippled farmer with a wife and three children. We spent all day on Saturday and Sunday for two weekends doing the project, starting with scraping off four layers of old wallpaper. Since I was the only member of our pledge class who had ever wallpapered before, I coordinated the wallpapering part on the second weekend. The success of this effort led to the creation the following year of the Interfraternity Council's Community Service Committee on which I served. This activity stimulated me to become involved in many community service projects and committees after I left Cornell.

**"Cayuga's waters, with its waves of blue"**

(From the "Alma Mater," Archibald C. Weeks 1872)

*“Believe me, my young friend, there is nothing  
absolutely nothing -- half so much worth  
doing as simply messing around in boats.”*  
(Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows* (1908))

*Allen C. Hale*

When the November 1951 Fall weekend arrived during my second year at Cornell and I didn't have a date, one of my Triangle fraternity brothers, Don Powers, invited me to join him and his date for a sail on Lake Cayuga. Always open to new adventures, I said, “Yes,” not knowing that the reason he had asked me was that it was a windy day and he needed extra ballast on the sixteen-foot Snipe we would be using.

It was a beautiful day, warm and sunny with a pleasant breeze from the South, not at all like what one would expect in November. So, off we went, sailing North on Lake Cayuga from the Inlet. Since the wind was from the South, and therefore behind us, it was a very pleasant sail up the Lake. But then it was time to return.

Now the strength of the wind was apparent and as we tacked back and forth across the Lake, we made very little progress toward the Inlet. As the wind strengthened, we got wet, then soaked, especially me sitting forward as ballast. The sun disappeared behind a heavy cloud layer and we were all now both wet and cold. Somehow, we made it back before dark, and, in retrospect, I believe we were all three suffering from hypothermia. Don even apologized to me for putting me through that ordeal.

But not knowing any different, I had loved it and wanted more. It was to be six years before I was to sail again, but in the ensuing fifty years since then, I have learned to sail, owned three sailboats, chartered thirty-eight sailboats on various waters, and led a Sea Scout unit of high-school- and college-age sailors, all as a result of that first sail in November 1951 on Lake Cayuga.

**“Steady now, let no distraction  
Slow the speed of oar or shell”**  
(From verse 2 of the “Crew Song” by Robert James Kellogg 1891)

*R. Warren “Breck” Breckenridge, Jr.*

As I participated in the reunion row at the boathouse during our recent Reunion [55th -- June 4-7, 2009], I was reminded of things past. During either our junior or senior year, the lightweight crews rowed against Columbia and, I think, Dartmouth and one other crew, at Columbia. The Columbia boathouse is on the northern tip of Manhattan, on the Hudson River side of the island. To get to the race course on the East River we had to row around the northern tip of Manhattan down to the Upper East Side. You cannot imagine the stuff that was floating on those two rivers. I can assure you that the Manhattanites were practicing safe sex. And the smell! To compound our difficulty, during the middle of the race a garbage scow passed upwind, close to the shells, nearly stopping the race. Our JV crew won the JV race, and, after returning to the boathouse we prepared to throw our coxswain, Mike Lehrman, off the end of the dock, as was and is the practice if we won a race. So picture Mike, on his knees at the end of the dock, praying for us not to toss him. "Please fellows, don't throw me into all that stuff." After due consideration, we took mercy on him and held back. Of course, we threw him in the Inlet upon returning to Cornell – clothes and all. I think we may have let him take off his shoes.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note...A Manhattan resident for over four decades, the editor is pleased to report that its neighboring waterways, although perhaps not yet pristine, are much pleasanter than Breck's experience fifty-five or more years ago.*

\* \* \* \* \*

**"What's on second?"**  
(Bud Abbott and Lou Costello)

***Edwin B. Fessenden and A. Dale Button***

As a freshman at Cornell in the spring of 1951, Ed Fessenden decided to try out for the position of second baseman on the freshman baseball team. His desire to make the team faded during the first week of practice due to the long hours and, more significantly, because the other guy trying out to play second seemed more qualified than he. Consequently, he resigned his quest for second base and moved on to other interests.

Now, as Paul Harvey would say, the rest of the story. After finishing Cornell, Ed returned to his hometown to operate the family dairy farm. Three or four years later the young family of Dale Button, also, by happy coincidence, Cornell '54, although Ed and Dale did not recall knowing one another as undergraduates, moved into the neighborhood. The Buttons and the Fessendens soon became friends because of family similarities, common interests and reliving days at Cornell, many hours of sharing experiences and recalling memories. During one of those discussions it came to light that as a freshman Dale had also tried out for the second base position on the freshman

baseball team and, like Ed, had given up during the first week because -- YOU GUESSED IT -- he became convinced that Ed was more qualified to play second base than he.

***Allen C. Hale***

At a banquet at Statler on November 5, 2010, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the CALS Alumni Association recognized Edwin Fessenden, the fourth generation to operate his family farm in King Ferry, New York, which now is a progressive, sustainable 120-milker dairy and 700-acre crop farm. Ed has over the years served with a variety of organizations supportive of agriculture and agricultural education including hosting scores of Cornell students for field research at his farm.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note...The editor recalls that sooner or later everyone in the class made at least one trip across the original suspension bridge over Fall Creek (replaced with another suspension bridge not long ago). The bridge supposedly would fall into the gorge if a young man crossed it with a young woman and didn't kiss her, which was as good an excuse as any, that is, if you needed an excuse. Paul Nemiroff also remembers:*

\* \* \* \* \*

***Paul Nemiroff***

Many groups of guys (I never heard of girls doing it) would march in lock-step across the suspension bridge, getting it to really sway back and forth, from side to side. We later learned that this was quite dangerous (there was a legend that the engineer who designed it had refused to walk on it because it had not been constructed in accordance with his plans). Of course, at the age we then were we thought we were immortal, nothing could happen to us, and we did this little trick quite often, defying fate.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note...Not every memory of suspension bridge is joyous. This one fortunately manages to have a happy ending:*

\* \* \* \* \*

***Allen C. Hale***

So there I was for the second time. Standing in the middle of the suspension bridge in the early hours of a 1954-1955 winter morning contemplating whether to jump or not. As I looked down into the gorge, I remember thinking that the gorge didn't seem that foreboding because of the reflected light from the previously fallen, and currently falling snow. Somehow I was still able to notice how beautiful the scene was.

As the debate went on in my head, like the rest of my life at that time, I couldn't make a decision. I wasn't doing well academically and I had recently broken up with my girl friend. After probably an hour, the cold, the inability to make a decision, and my exhaustion got the best of me and I walked off the bridge and returned to my room. Days later I summoned enough courage to take myself to the Health Center. Over the remainder of the term, Dr. John Summerkill was able to calm me down enough so that I never considered jumping again and eventually graduated with a BME degree.

Years later, after having worked as a volunteer with high school age youth, and remembering that period, I left my twenty-six-year career as an engineer to obtain a Ph.D. In Counseling Psychology, specifically to work in university counseling centers. And that I did until my retirement in 1998.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note....Cornell has gotten a somewhat unfair press on the subject of student suicides, especially those that involve jumping off one of the bridges into a gorge. Statistically, Cornell does not vary in this dismal way from the general pattern of universities across the country, but there is something visually dramatic about a jump from a bridge into a gorge, even in the absence of an actual photograph, that makes such an event news compared to a lonely death in one's room from poison or use of a firearm. Recognizing that the mere opportunity is sometimes the final impetus to such a tragic event, a few years ago Cornell erected fencing over the rails and parapets of all the bridges and has been in the course of replacing the unaesthetic initial chain link obstacles with more attractive protection against unfortunate impulses designed by architects. Allen's story will not be repeated.*

\* \* \* \* \*

**“ . . . just how I busted lapping up the high, high ball . . . ”**  
(From “Give My Regards to Davy,” by Charles E. Tourison 1905)

***Allen C. Hale***

As an entering freshman in 1950, with no rooms left in the dorms, I found a rooming house on Oak Lane in Collegetown. I took the first floor corner bedroom, which already had a roommate, though I hadn't met him. This roommate was a sophomore and seemed to me then like a BMOC. We managed to get along reasonably well, probably because he was never in the room studying, using the room primarily to sleep and to recover from his drinking binges.

When apple cider became available, he decided to make hootch. As the naïve freshman, I watched with fascination as he added yeast and raisins and what else I don't remember, to the cider. He lightly capped it and placed the jug in our closet formed by a curtain in a corner of the room. He dutifully checked it, vented it, and nurtured it along. Because our room was next to our landlady's living room, and she cleaned our room occasionally, the jug was hidden under clothes in that makeshift closet. On Easter Sunday morning, as I was standing at my dresser adjacent to the closet, tying

my tie to go to Sage Chapel, there was a sudden and very loud bang, followed by a very strong order of alcohol. The cider had exploded, pushing the cap off and filling our room with very alcoholic smelling fumes. We immediately opened both corner windows and frantically fanned the room to try to eradicate the odor in a panic that the landlady had heard the boom and would soon be knocking on our door and immediately terminate our leases.

But that didn't happen; she never said anything to us if she was even aware of what had taken place. We were the talk of the other students in the house who had heard the boom and my roommate was in full glory the rest of the term. I went on to live the following year in the fraternity I had pledged, and I heard that my freshman roommate had not been permitted to continue at Cornell due to his poor grade average.

In 2000, I came to reunion and one day stopped to take pictures of that rooming house. A woman stopped to ask why. When I explained that I had lived in the house 50 some years ago, she introduced herself as Dean of the Cascadilla School next door and said that they had bought the house to house students, and asked if I would like to have a tour. Excitedly saying yes, I was introduced to the dorm's husband-wife counselors who showed me the house. It hadn't changed much; even my old room on the ground floor, now being used as a bedroom for the couple's daughter. The curtain closet had been replaced with an armoire.

### ***“ PLACE IN THE SUN ”***

***Allen C. Hale***

Movies were a major diversion during the 1950s with two major movie houses on either side of State Street. These were theaters built in the 1930s with balconies, elaborate themed interiors and decorated ceilings sometime lighted to look like the night sky. On a particular Saturday evening in the Fall of 1951, I had gone with some fraternity brothers to see *A Place in the Sun* with Montgomery Clift and Elizabeth Taylor, both rising major actors. The reviews had been good, so we were looking forward to this show. As was typical then, the movie house was packed, but we were able to find seats reasonably together in the balcony of the Moorish-styled theater with starlit blue ceiling.

Prior to the movie, and as is still typical today, the theater showed trailers for upcoming movies as well as several cartoons. During these preliminaries, and precipitated by their content, humorous comments and wisecracks started emanating from downstairs and were responded to in kind by the those in the balcony audience. The entire theater began laughing. Spurred onward by this acceptance of their spontaneous, offhand remarks, the humorous repartee continued into the beginning of the feature film. As I attempted to lose myself in the story, the humorous repartee, however, did not cease. It somehow found fuel from the movie itself, turning this grim, dark, heavy drama into a

comedy. Yet there was no way I, or any of us, were able to stop laughing. The humorous repartee never ceased during the entire movie, rising and falling during the story line until I finally just gave into it. When the movie was over, I, and others also I am sure, left with no sense of the drama of the movie. And ever since, I have not been able to see this movie with any appreciation of its drama, instead always remembering the hilarity of that evening. Now, as then, I marvel at the creativity of those making the comments. I am sure alcohol contributed greatly, but it was still a unique experience of turning a tragic drama into a comedy.

**“TO THE TUNE OF OUR PROFS WE MUST ALWAYS KEEP TIME”** (From the Refrain of “Song of the Classes,” Frank A. Abbott, 1890)

*Daniel Nadler*

As Civil Engineering freshmen we all had to take surveying, and even attend a Summer session of Surveying Camp on Lake Keuka. I remember the laboratory where we assembled to reduce our notes, using ten-place logarithms. On one of those tables was this fantastic new device with which you could crank numbers with your right hand and change from ones, to tens, to hundreds, with a crank in your left hand. Eventually these machines were motorized, but now the little \$10 credit-card-sized computer I carry around in my shirt pocket can do infinitely more powerful operations. We all take this in stride and have grown to accept surveying instruments that do their own geometry and satellites that can be used in lieu of celestial operations and invar tapes.

One of the great pleasures I had at the fiftieth reunion was to find in attendance at a breakfast meeting one of my old professors, Bill McGuire 1947, looking trim and only a bit more weatherworn than I remembered him. Another current professor was Bill Loucks who had graduated with me from the George School and it was great to see him back from Iran. Ken Hershey, one of my ancient cronies, told me that the design for a suspension bridge he and I had collaborated on as our Senior Project actually was used to replace the old bridge across Triphammer Gorge. Evidently, the engineers awarded the structural work had used our basic calculations for their working drawings. I forgot to verify this with Bill McGuire, but if he confirms this tale, I shall have to carve my initials on the bridge and revise my CV accordingly.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note....Dan has a file drawer full of engineer's war stories, such as this anecdote about the demolition of Manhattan's Penn Station:*

\* \* \* \* \*

The demolition of Pennsylvania Station in New York and organizing the substructure work is one of my most notorious projects. When I was offered a job as Project Engineer by Turner, and that job turned out to be the demolition

of Pennsylvania Station, I asked for a day to think it over. I betook myself to the station and inspected it for several hours, before concluding that the place was a disaster beyond redemption, and not much of a station, despite romantic photographs and notions to the contrary. I accepted the assignment, and spent several months trying to find out what actually existed in the bowels of the station, for since 1906 any number of renovations and additions had been made.

My office was somewhere in the nether regions of the station above a subway tunnel, and there I amassed all the information for the two square block area. Eventually I was joined by an extremely competent draftsman I had known previously. One day, a little man arrived carrying a large roll of drawings. He introduced himself as the structural engineer for the new Madison Square Garden project and stated that these were the drawings for the new structure. Fascinated, I started leafing through the drawings with increasing disbelief. Finally, in my characteristically diplomatic way, I confirmed the fact that we were talking about the same project. Then I asked him whether it were to be built in the wheat fields of Kansas? He gasped, and assured me it was not. I then called to his attention that we were dealing with a station moving half of the commuter population of the City in the morning and the evening, that nobody was about to tear the station down for a five-year period, that all the construction had to be done in phases so that the movement of trains and of people could be maintained at all times, and that a large part of the existing structure had to be incorporated into the new work. When he said that this was impossible, my friend and I explained how the new loads could be brought down with laced columns.

While this did not make us popular, we later explained that the columns for the double bents around the periphery of the circular Garden could not be placed in the middle of railroad tracks, since trains are generically allergic to such interferences.

The coordination of the new work in and above Pennsylvania Station turned out to be one of the most complicated jobs anywhere in the world. Some of the transfer girders are the largest structural elements I have ever seen, with cover plates thick enough to boggle the imagination. How foundations were excavated between tracks, shutting down the 47,000-volt catenaries, and how demolition proceeded without disrupting commuter traffic is one of the greatest unsung marvels of New York.

**“I want to have girls educated in the University as well as boys, so they may have the same opportunity to become wise and useful to the society that boys have.”.....Ezra Cornell**

**Will Rogers:**... “You know women are getting into more things that are embarrassing to men. You see, the first idea of giving them the vote was just to use the vote. But the women, contrary like they are, they wasn’t satisfied with

that. They started to take this equality thing serious. They began to think they really was somebody.”

### ***Ruth Bader Ginsburg***

Will Rogers made that wry commentary on our national ambivalence about the role or roles of women in 1928. Not much was different over twenty years later:

In my college years at Cornell, 1950-1954, it was widely thought that women were not suited for many of life’s occupations -- lawyering and bartending, banking and brokering, military service, foreign service, piloting airplanes, jury service, tenured positions at universities, even professional chefs, to take just a few of many examples that now seem ancient.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note....Justice Ginsburg likes to quote the excerpt set forth as a caption just above from Ezra Cornell's letter to his granddaughter Eunice on February 17, 1867.*

\* \* \* \* \*

A classmate remembers that when she joined some friends in Balch for a coffee klatsch during a break in studying, it would often happen that Ruth Bader would walk by with a stack of books in her arms. Someone would say, “There goes ‘Kiki’ again, always working,” and “Kiki” Bader would smile and keep right on going. “Time will tell,” the old adage advises us, and in this case it surely has.

To Justice Ginsburg’s list of supposedly unwomanly activities we may add Karen Wylie Prior’s being told that a woman could not major in ornithology because of the lack of plumbing in the woods (Karen’s comment on her academic career appears below). One wonders how our race survived those countless generations when there was no plumbing in the woods or anywhere else. Karen also remembers that her roommate, Mimi Powell, desperately wanted to enroll in the Veterinary College, but Mimi’s inquiries were emphatically discouraged. Finally, she persuaded the veterinary powers that be to give her a summer job to prove herself, and she spent two hot months in a lab on the top floor under the black tar paper roof of an unairconditioned building analyzing pig feces for parasites, but in vain. Her application was *still not* to be entertained. (Of course, we are told that today a majority of veterinarians are women, and the program of the Veterinary College’s 2010 graduation makes it clear that a majority of the graduates were women.)

A classics teacher who apparently rejected Ezra Cornell's proposed policy expressed in his letter to his granddaughter quoted above told Rosemary Jung she didn't belong in college at all but should be home tending babies. Similarly a microbiology teacher, who had, as I recall, five children, told my first wife, Barbara Leyson Martin '57, B.S. '59, who gave birth to our first child six weeks before the end of her senior year, that she couldn't be given a makeup exam on a later date if the delivery occurred as the obstetrician had erroneously predicted on the day scheduled for the lab practical because "an absence because of a pregnancy is a deliberate absence which may not be excused." Later this professor was concerned; she hadn't missed a class, and he was worried that she had miscarried since she obviously was no longer pregnant, but she reassured him that the baby had been born on a day *he* had felt entitled to miss to attend a conference in Washington.

Mimi Cohen Levine's experience with future Cornell President Dale Corson echoes this same theme:

### ***Mimi Cohen Levine***

I started out as a chemistry major and quickly moved over to Physics. That was a very difficult course. Shelley [Sheldon] Glashow and Steve [Steven] Weinberg were my classmates in Freshman and Sophomore Physics classes. They each won a Nobel Prize in 1979 for their work in quarks. At the end of my soph class I spoke to Professor Dale Corson, the teacher of my class [and later to be President of Cornell], about my future as a physics major. He said that if I thought I was Madame Curie I should give it up. But if I realized that I could make a contribution and that I could work well in the field, then I should continue. He ended the conversation: "If you plan to use a Cornell degree in Physics to boil potatoes after graduation, then perhaps another choice would be better." About twenty years later, when I told him my memory of that conversation he was at first appalled. He then said he could never make that statement again.

Our three sons are Cornell graduates. When Steve '83, our third child, returned home on Winter break his senior year he told me his English professor was on campus when I was a student. Professor Ephraim Fogel had been my Freshman English instructor thirty-three years prior to that time. Steve returned to campus and chatted with Professor Fogel. When he heard I had been his student he immediately asked, "Does she still have red hair?" He then took out his class book and showed Steve my grades! He had thirty-five years of class books in his office at that time.

### ***Rosemary Seelbinder Jung***

I decided to take an elective in Ancient Greek History my first term, giving me seventeen hours, but I thought I was so smart and the course looked interesting as described in the catalog. Well, I was lost in Ancient Greece big time, what with all my Home Ec classes having three lectures and a lab, freshman English sitting three times and an added no-credit mandatory speed reading class three times a week. I

had six eight o'clocks. On the advice of my freshman advisor, I went to speak to my professor, whose response when I told him I was having trouble in his class was, "Girls shouldn't be in college. They should be home raising babies." I flunked his course but take pleasure in the fact that he would be fired today. It was second semester before I learned that I could have dropped the course for an incomplete.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Editor's Note...That learned teacher of things ancient and Greek seemingly missed Socrates' recommendation that "all occupations . . . should be common to both men and women," and that of Plato's "Athenian" that "in education and everything else, the female sex should be on the same footing as the male." (From Plato's Timaeus, translated by Donald J. Zeyl, and Laws VII, translated by Trevor J. Saunders; John M. Cooper, ed., Plato: Complete Works, Hackett Publishing Co., Inc., Indianapolis, Cambridge, 1997, pp. 1226, 1473.)*

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Hugh Schwartz**

For years I had always imagined that I was going to be a lawyer. That was certainly the main reason why I took Latin in high school (thinking that Latin was necessary for the law), and, indeed, I even began law school after Cornell, before my two year tour of duty in the Army. But I had time to think things over while in the Army, and decided instead to become an economist.

I began at Cornell with a major in Government, and while I also took a number of courses in history, it seemed to make sense to study some economics as well. After my first course, interestingly taught by Lester Levy [A.M. '52, Ph.D. '56], who was finishing his Ph.D. at Cornell, I felt that I already knew enough to straighten out whatever economic problems that might present themselves. Even so, I went on. I took a course in Money and Banking, taught by Harold Reed, who had been president of a bank that had survived financial crises during the Great Depression, which impressed me, and courses on price theory and the history of economic thought with Professor Adams. What changed my view of economics, though, was a course in Industrial Organization offered by Alfred Kahn, later head of New York State's Public Service Commission, and then, under President Carter, the man who ended the life of the commission that regulated airline fares. His energy and enthusiasm were contagious, and, in the process, I came to see that economic problems were more difficult to resolve than I had imagined. A seminar with Douglas Dowd underscored this. Dowd was left-leaning, perhaps Marxist, but had quite a following (even among the sororities) because he opened our eyes to things we had never much thought about, and with a delightfully engaging and low-key manner. And that was it! I had talks with Chandler Morse on international trade, mistakenly neglected courses in several areas, most notably, the one on national income taught by Morris Copeland, who had been President of the American Economic Association and had done important work in establishing the national income accounts, but I was well on my way to becoming a convert.

Ultimately, I took graduate work in economics (at Yale), with courses given by two who would win Nobel Prizes, and listened to lectures by several other Nobel laureates-to-be and other very distinguished figures, but the change in my outlook came at Cornell, and I will always be grateful to the professors there who helped introduce me to what became my life's work. For years I had always imagined that I was going to be a lawyer. That was certainly the main reason why I took Latin in high school (thinking that Latin was necessary for the law), and, indeed, I even began law school after Cornell, before my two year tour of duty in the Army. But I had time to think things over while in the Army, and decided instead to become an economist.

## **Lilac Mandala**

*Margaret R. Polson*

A vivid recollection and an intense aesthetic one: I had been up all night studying for an exam. As the new day dawned, I gulped down a quick breakfast, then dozed for a few fatigued minutes on the floor of my Cascadilla dorm room.

Suddenly, I realized I needed to get going. Somehow making my way downstairs, I opened the front door. As I stepped outside, the sunlight dazzled my sleep-deprived eyes. Breathing in the brisk Spring air, I walked past the lilac bushes lining the pathway along Cascadilla Creek.

The buds were unfurling in the morning light, revealing leaflets clustered around the floral heart of tiny, curled buds nestled in the center. I looked deep into the center of the leafy mandala. Surrounded by the glistening dew, the budding took on an ethereal glow; the shimmering loveliness drew me deeply within its aura of scintillating beauty.

I hold no memory of how I did on the exam. There is simply a lingering vision of an enchanted moment, walking to class on the Cornell University campus in Spring.

Unknown to me at the time, this experience would embody a life-long fascination with flowers that still provides a wellspring for my own art work.

**“I wake at night and think I hear remembered chimes . . . .”**

*“The Hill,” Albert W. Smith, Class of 1878*

*Allen C. Hale*

It was Fall Saturday and I had spent the afternoon studying in the Mechanical Engineering Library then housed under the dome of Sibley Hall. As I exited

Sibley in the late afternoon and started across the Quad toward Willard Straight Hall, I chose to walk directly across the Quad, not on any of the walkways. The late afternoon sun was low in the sky and created a warm glow. The blanket of fallen leaves from the oak trees crunched and crackled as I walked through them. And then, part way across the Quad, the Chimes began playing in celebration of Cornell's win of the day's football game. There is no way I can describe the warm feeling of all's well with the world that I experienced as I continued to walk across the Quad in the fading light of afternoon. The Canine Critic

***Vincent S. Rospond***

I remember the dogs of Cornell -- no matter where you went, they were there. One day, as I was attending a lecture on some European novel being given by Vladimir Nabokov, a distinguished professor, author of major novels in Russian and in English (most famously *Lolita*), a major critic and also a famous lepidopterist, in walked a dog who climbed up the stairway to the stage and then curled up next to the lectern. Halfway through the lecture, the dog got up, looked at Nabokov, yawned in his face, and then left the hall. Nabokov was dumbfounded by this apparent critique of his effort and started to laugh, commenting that it was the first time that a dog had found one of his lectures boring. We all roared with glee with smiles on our faces for the rest of the hour.

***Barbara Johnson Gottling***

For Geology 101 in the Fall of 1950, I was assigned to sit next to a tall, handsome classmate, George Gardner "Moose" McKay, subsequently to become famous as an actor and writer including starring in the three-year run of the TV series "Adventures in Paradise." He mentioned being the great-great-grandson of Donald McKay, who had designed and built ships in the nineteenth century, and he showed more enthusiasm for writing than for geology. The night before the final exam, I was initially flattered to get a telephone call from Moose McKay, until I realized he wanted to sit behind me at the exam. Dumbfounded, I agreed, but placed myself to block his view of my exam book. When the grades were posted, I noted that he did not pass. By the next year, he had dropped or busted out. Wikipedia claims he was editor of the *Cornell Widow* which seems most unlikely, and *LIFE* magazine stated that he was freshman class president, although in fact he had been a candidate for the class council but was not elected. An obituary in 2001 said he graduated from Cornell, but long before graduation time he had long since been gone. Oh, well, his *forte* was story telling.

\* \* \* \* \*

***Editor's Note....Betty Wagler Striso adds that "Moose" "was infamous for stuffing the ballot boxes in an effort to win the Presidency of the Freshman Class." Beverly Billinger Shaver remembers meeting McKay at the Freshman Orientation Open House at Willard Straight and then being the subject of a***

*McKay charm offensive day and night for about a week. Then he dropped her as if she had disappeared and went off after another girl.*

Changing the subject, Betty Wagler Striso offers this:

To get a Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics you had to take a full load of science courses. My friends are always amused to find out that my Physics course included dismantling and reassembling a car engine and a refrigerator and learning how to do plumbing and electrical wiring. Some girls also lived in the “Practice House” for six months, where they had to learn how to care for a house and also had a small baby they had to “Mother.”

**“behold a ladder set up on the earth . . . .”**  
*Genesis 28:12*

***Allen C. Hale***

My first term at Cornell included a Mechanics course in the Physics Department. The once weekly lecture was given at 8 AM by a distinguished and slightly portly professor who was always well-dressed in suit, vest and tie. This professor was also wont to provide dramatic demonstrations, not only to keep us awake, but also to teach the lessons of that week. On this particular morning, the topic was friction, and, as usual, his large lab counter was covered with various objects he used to demonstrate various types of friction. When he started talking about sliding friction, he leaned down behind his lab counter, pulled out an extension ladder, and leaned it against the front wall of the classroom between the blackboards. He then began to climb the ladder, stopping on each step to continue his lecture. As he climbed higher and higher, we all began to gasp in anticipation of what was about to happen. Then, BANG! The ladder slid down the wall, with the professor hanging on, until it stopped when the bottom of its feet hit the base of the lab counter. The professor then simply stepped off the ladder and nonchalantly continued the lesson, making the point just demonstrated that the ladder will slip when the downward force from his weight exceeded the force of friction with the floor and the wall. I don't remember whether as a class we cheered, but I certainly acquired much respect for this professor and his methods of engaging us in his lessons.

***Charles H. Bibbins***

My first term calculus course was taught by Professor Bertram Yood in a large lecture. He was likely a fine teacher of advanced students, but I hadn't a clue what he was talking about and was just totally lost as to the calculus concepts. A half dozen of my fraternity brothers had the same problem. One of our sophomore brothers, Bob Lynch '53, came to the rescue and started a tutoring session to catch us up

to the rest of the class. He did a wonderful job and as a result took a job for the rest of his time at Cornell as an aide in the math department and received rave reviews from younger students.

### ***Deborah Kroker Ineich***

I *hated* any science, but, as a Home Ec student, I had to take nine credit hours. Knowing nothing, or little, about most sciences, I picked Botany out of the Cornell bulletin and was assigned to a first semester freshman year class -- your typical three lectures and one lab per week science course. Most unfortunately, my lab was Saturday morning in a building which was on the route to Schoellkopf Field! Being much more a football fan than a scientist, it was pure agony to see and hear, through the open lab windows, groups of laughing, happy people on their way to the game.

I also took Sociology 101 in my freshman year, which was almost as painful as Botany. The graduate assistant was so boring, he was dreadful! A girl I knew slightly leaned over and whispered something about "*Homo sapiens*." I nodded wisely and smiled, not having the slightest notion what a "*Homo sapiens*" was. Obviously, I had not learnt it in high school.

I certainly had more classroom near disasters. But what made it all worthwhile were the classes which "broadened my scope." One of my electives was Figure Construction in the Fine Arts School. We sketched live models (some nude) which was fascinating. I improved so much over one semester. Then there was European Lit with Vladimir Nabokov. He was an excellent teacher and I learned so much. And for pure, unadulterated fun there was Folk Music in the Arts College, with Professor Thompson. I also remember a class (but not the name of the course) in I&LR [School of Industrial and Labor Relations] with Milton Konvitz which had been truly a learning experience.

### ***Paul Nemiroff***

The four years I spent at Cornell were not all pleasant. All Cornellians excelled in high school -- that's how we got there. But I, at least, was not prepared for the intense competition. Cornell's reputation as an Ivy is well-deserved! The all-nighters, the around-the-clock cramming for exams, the callous disregard of any one instructor when we begged for an extension or asked for a delay or rescheduling of an exam because we already had two or three exams scheduled for the same day, does not sit well. In short, I hated a lot about Cornell when I was a student there. Only afterward, when I was building my life with my family and pursuing my career have I thought back and remembered good times. I have attended every reunion since the twenty-fifth, and look forward at each to meeting with old chums and reminiscing, including renewing my friendship with my roommate of my first two years, Merrill Hessell, a chemical engineering student. Although we had met through family prior to our first year and had socialized a lot and visited one another's homes, we had drifted apart over many years

and he did not come to reunions until the fifty-fifth. But he e-mailed me to say he was coming and it was a delight to see him again.

**“Fluid Dynamics”**  
**or**  
**The Unique Professor**

*Allen C. Hale*

In the Fall of 1952 I was in my fifth term of the Engineering Physics curriculum. I was not doing well and decided to transfer to Mechanical Engineering. However, in order to be admitted to that program, and to continue at Cornell, I needed to pass that current term. I felt confident that I could pass all courses I was taking except one which I remember was called “Fluid Dynamics” but, on reviewing my transcript, I see it was instead “Classical Thermodynamics,” perhaps symbolizing my difficulties in understanding what was going on. It was considered a difficult course, my first course in the Engineering Physics curriculum (as contrasted to basic core courses required of all engineering students) and I had struggled during the entire term. But I had to pass the final exam or I was out of Cornell.

The final exam was difficult and I struggled with the many problems we were given. But the formulas I needed to solve the problems I could not remember. I was about to give up and turn in a blank exam paper, as embarrassing -- and disastrous -- as that would be, when I realized that I understood the exam problems, I just didn’t remember the formulas. So, figuring that I had nothing to lose, I wrote out the process I would use to solve each problem, referencing the formulas I would have used if I had remembered them. I handed in this collection of essays completely lacking in formulas and calculations and left the exam in despair, believing I had failed the exam and thus my chances to continue at Cornell.

But I passed! In my amazement, I sought out the teacher, Professor Arthur R. Kantrowitz, to inquire as to why he had passed me since I had not “solved” any of the problems in the traditional sense of that word. He explained that in the real world, I would be able to look up the formulas and, that for him, the important criterion was that I knew how to approach and solve each problem. The actual application of the formulas, which I could not remember, was the only step I could not provide, but not worthy of failure since I had, in fact, unconventionally conveyed by essays rather than by math the fact that I did know how to solve the problems.

Interestingly, having thus squeezed out a pass in the Engineering Physics course in Thermodynamics, when I took the Mechanical Engineering version, “Engineering Thermodynamics,” in the Summer of 1953 I got 90, suggesting that I had indeed learned something from Doctor Kantrowitz.

I have always remembered this incident and that professor’s ability to see beyond the conventional answers to an individual’s inherent capabilities. That is something I took

with me in later years when I myself was teaching. As a result of his insight, I was able to continue and graduate with a BME degree, and then, some 32 years later, obtain a PhD in counseling psychology.

*Charles H. Bibbins*

Professor Robert Cushing taught an excellent basic accounting course in the Business and Public Administration school. On one exam he wrote on my paper

"Both the Supreme Court and I disagree with your conclusion, but I like your reasoning," and gave me a good grade. The grade was of no lasting importance, but the message he taught me has lasted me in good stead.

**Frank Lloyd Wright**

*Allen C. Hale*

Frank Lloyd Wright was a visiting lecturer at the College of Architecture in 1953. I decided to forgo studying for the next days' engineering exam to attend his open seminar at Bailey Hall the evening before. After his initial presentation, Mr. Wright took questions in writing from those of us in the audience. With his sardonic wit[he remarked that the saving grace of Cornell's architecture was the ivy that hid it], he was great fun to listen to and all of us in the audience were, I believe, captured in his spell. When the University host suggested to Mr. Wright that it might be time to end, to the delight of those of us in the audience he stated that he was enjoying himself and wasn't ready to stop. To the shouts of approval from the audience, he then continued to answer questions until he decided to conclude the seminar. After all these years, I have no memory of that next day's exam or my grade, yet I retain the vivid memory of that evening to this day.

*Unknown Person*

Susan Herrick Bosworth and I were fortunate to have been assigned to the section of the one-term alternative Freshman Composition course taught on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday of the 1950 Fall Term at 8 a.m. by Ferris Cronkhite. Ferris, later to be an assistant professor and several times an assistant dean at Cornell and at the end of his career a professor at Ithaca College, was teaching his first college class. Years later told me it had been in many respects the best group of students he had ever had. Since the requirement for admission to the one-term alternative course was a very high score on either the English SAT or the New York State Regents four-year English exam, the students were not only as bright as one would expect of Cornell freshmen but also unusually, perhaps at times excessively, articulate. Ferris said he was sometimes

amazed at how well-prepared and combative we all were even on Saturday mornings when he was sure more than one of us had walked in with a hangover.

When Susan and I went on in 1951 Spring Term to start the general introductory English literature survey course in which most of the two lectures per week were taught by Professor Meyer H. Abrams, in major part through Ferris's influence we were assigned to the once-a-week small group seminar taught by Mike Abrams himself, which was always a special treat. Susan says that Mike taught her how to read poetry -- poetry is an oral art form -- if a poem gives you any trouble try reading it aloud -- and Mike's poetry reading was always uniquely skillful and at times inspiring. It undoubtedly still is. When Bert Rosen and I went to see him during Reunion in June 2009, he was preparing lectures about poetry to be given later in the year, and Bert and I, at least two others from our class, Teresa Acker and Dr. Aaron Coleman, and additional former students heard his lecture in April 2010 at Columbia on "The Fourth Dimension of a Poem.

Susan and I both remember the seminar in the Fall of 1952 on an afternoon when Mike had had a lunch most likely accompanied by some pleasant and distinguished vintages with I. A. Richards, one of Abrams own mentors, a leading English scholar and critic then visiting Cornell, when Mike's reading of Robert Browning's "The Bishop Orders His Tomb at St. Praxed's Church" was even more animated than his usual performance. Browning's bishop was lying on his deathbed conversing with his "nephews," more accurately his illegitimate sons. His mind stressed by his rapidly failing health, his discourse is a rambling commentary, referring, for one, to the bishop's predecessor, Gandolf, who had been jealous of him because of his very attractive mistress, the mother of his sons, while Gandolf was in turn envied by the dying bishop for his success in securing a prime location in the church for his own tomb. The long past competition with Gandolf was coupled with the bishop's occasional fits of anxiety lest his sons, whom he has already enriched, might stint on the elaborate plan the bishop had for his own tomb. These the bishop lovingly details, most importantly, his grandiose bill of materials of black basalt, peach blossom marble and elaborate sculptural and architectural features which he ardently itemizes even while muttering the Preacher's scriptural injunction against vanity. At the point where the bishop tells his sons where to find an element of his planned tomb buried:

"Some lump, ah God, of *lapis lazuli*,  
Big as a Jew's head cut off at the nape,  
Blue as a vein o'er the Madonna's breast . . ."

Mike asked us what we thought the bishop then did. We were silent, so he said, "Why not this?" and, his face beaming with a grin, extended his index finger along the tip of his nose. Yes, he made poetry live.

Ferris and Mike were no doubt responsible for my election to Book and Bowl in the Spring of 1954. Book and Bowl had forty members in a spoof on the French Academy, twenty from the faculty and administration and twenty students. All were

male. The group assembled once a month in a room on campus or in one of the professor's homes, someone read a paper on some often esoteric subject (the "Book") and we would all discuss the subject of the paper while partaking of some wine or beer (the "Bowl") and a few nibblies. Just as examples, David Novar introduced us to the English translation of Scholem Aleichim's Tevya stories decades before *Fiddler on the Roof*, Victor Lange reported on the republication of Darby's *Arabia* which had, among other important impacts, heavily influenced Colonel Lawrence, he who was to be known as "Lawrence of Arabia," and I informed the group about Frank McKinney Hubbard, a humorist who had for some decades conducted a column illustrated with little cartoons in *The Indianapolis News* about the strange doings in Brown County, Indiana, which my father loved enough to have bought books in which many of these columns had been collected. Members included Professor Paul Olum who had taught my freshman course in analytic geometry and a senior officer of the library who carried the heavy responsibility of Treasurer. My favorite memory of this wonderful distraction was Mike Abrams' address to an annual Book and Bowl banquet about "The Striptease as a Literary Motif," including even, surprisingly, a reading from Book IV of Milton's *Paradise Lost* in which the innocently naked Eve has a head of hair running down to her waist which provided Milton with an opportunity to describe a "now-you-see-it-now-you-don't" striptease effect:

"She, as a veil down to the slender waist,  
Her unadornéd golden tresses wore  
Disheveled, but in wanton ringlets waved  
As the vine curled her tendrils, which implied  
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,  
And by her yielded, by him best received,  
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,  
And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay."

Mike concluded with the last chapter of Mickey Spillane's *I, the Jury* (E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1947), one of six mystery novels by Spillane featuring his ultimate tough guy detective, Mike Hammer. There was and presumably still is a debate as to whether such works are to be considered literature, but Mike knew that it was a good yarn well-told and a then brand-new book which provided the perfect ending for his essay on the literary striptease. In the thirteenth and final chapter, Hammer had let himself into the apartment of Charlotte Manning, the beautiful and brilliant psychiatrist with whom he had nearly fallen in love. When she came in Hammer began reciting the resolution, his explanation, of the six disparate murders all performed with the same .45 caliber pistol which Spillane interrupts occasionally by inserting brief descriptions in indented italics of what Hammer sees, Charlotte's step-by-step removal of her clothes, as "*Her hands . . . slowly ran under her breasts, cupping them. Her fingers fumbled with the buttons of her blouse, but not for long. They came open -- one by one.*" He describes the first murder, the killing of his dear friend Jack. Then, "*Now there were no more buttons. . . . She wore no bra . . . Breasts that were firm and inviting. Soft, yet so strong. She was so pretty. . .*" Hammer continued with the next three murders necessary to cover up the first, followed by "*Her fingers were sliding the zipper of her skirt. The zipper and a button. Then the skirt fell in a heap around her legs. . . . Long, graceful, tanned legs.*

*All that was left were the transparent panties. And she was a real blonde.*” Then Hammer described the last two murders and summed up:

“No, Charlotte, no jury would ever convict you . . ., would they? Much too circumstantial. Your alibis were too perfect. . .

“But I would, Charlotte. . . .

“No, Charlotte, I’m the jury now, and the judge, and I have a promise to keep. Beautiful as you are, as much as I almost loved you, I sentence you to death.’

*“(Her thumbs hooked in the fragile silk of her panties and pulled them down. She stepped out of them as delicately as one coming from a bathtub. She was completely naked now. . . . With arms outstretched she walked toward me. Lightly her tongue ran over her lips, making them glisten with passion. The smell of her was like an exhilarating perfume. Slowly a sigh escaped her, making the hemispheres of her breasts quiver. She leaned forward to kiss me, her arms going out to encircle my neck.)”*

“The roar of the .45 shook the room. Charlotte staggered back a step. Her eyes were a symphony of incredulity, an unbelieving witness to the truth. Slowly, she looked down at the ugly swelling in her naked belly where the bullet went in. A thin trickle of blood welled out.

“I stood up in front of her and shoved the gun into my pocket. I turned and looked at the rubber plant behind me. There on the table was the gun, with the safety catch off and the silencer still attached. Those loving arms would have reached it nicely. A face that was waiting to be kissed was really waiting to be splattered with blood when she blew my head off. My blood. When I heard her fall I turned around. Her eyes had pain in them now, the pain preceding death. Pain and disbelief.

“How could you?’ she gasped.

“I had only a moment before talking to a corpse., but I got it in.

“It was easy,’ I said.”

Book and Bowl’s assembled “cousins” (rather than “brothers,” another element of spoof) applauded delightedly and laughed.

At the Arts College reception following graduation in June 1954, my father had an extended conversation with Mike Abrams. At one point my father, who had never finished college, asked whether it were not a rather ho-hum experience to attend such ritual encounters with strangers year after year, but Mike said, “No, not at all, Mr. Martin. I am always interested in the parents who produced the young people we have been teaching all these years, and I am happy to report there almost always seems to have been an improvement.” My father, bless his resilient sense of humor, replied, “Touché!” and laughed.

One of the happier results of my undergraduate days were life-long friendships with Ferris Cronkhite and Mike Abrams. My first Christmas vacation in 1950 I took a bus to Syracuse and went home to Westchester on a New York Central Railroad passenger train, a low-budget means of travel since I had had a system-wide New York Central pass since I had been about twelve, a perk of my father’s employment as a senior executive. Ferris was waiting for the same train to travel to Schenectady or Albany to spend the holidays with his brother who lived in the Capital Region as it is now called. He of course knew me from his freshman English composition class, so we ended up sharing a seat. Our conversation was quite lively since he was a railroad buff, having the previous Summer taken the famous ride through the Rockies in open gondola cars with seats run for tourists by the Denver and Rio Grand Western on its narrow gauge line which had once serviced some mines (decades later Ferris was to be the author of the history of railroading in Tompkins County, Ithaca and its environs), while I am of the fourth generation in my father’s family to work for railroads (in my case briefly during three Summer vacations) and had been traveling on trains over about a third of the country since before I could remember. We were regularly in touch until his death a few years ago and I had several times stayed in his home when visiting Ithaca.

My acquaintance with Mike Abrams began in the freshman Spring Term in 1951, when I was enrolled in his general English literature survey course including the small group seminar he himself taught. He was one of a number of professors I had in both college and law school who were open to drop-in visits from students most times they were in their offices, and I learned to take advantage of this opportunity. Probably by the end of the term and certainly before the end of the next term we were on a first-name basis, and Mike has remained a friend right up to a visit with him Bert Rosen and I enjoyed at our fifty-fifth reunion in June 2009 and his Columbia lecture in the Spring of 2010. It is quite possible that our friendship arose as much from the fact I was on the track team and knew many particulars about track athletes and football players as from the fact I became an English major. Mike has no facility at any sports, at least none that he has ever mentioned to me, but he loves athletics. In 2007 he was elected an honorary captain of the Cornell football team in recognition of his having never missed a home football game in his more than sixty years at Cornell, and went out on the field for the coin toss at the opening game of the season against Harvard.

I doubt that many of us who took Mike's English literature survey course fully appreciated his exceptional gifts. His doctoral thesis, much revised, *The Mirror and the Lamp; Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 1953), has been included in the Modern Library collection of the 100 best non-fiction books in English of the twentieth century, and is but one of his distinguished scholarly works, and the list of honors and prizes he has received runs more than half a page. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* of which he was the general editor for the first, 1962, edition through the seventh in 2000, the main tool of introductory survey courses all over the world, ran to nearly nine million copies during his leadership. But his greatest gift is his ability to convey both the particular and unique artistry of a poem and its place in the human experience out of which it grew as that relates to our own experience; as he has written about William Wordsworth's "Tintern Abby," "it speaks now as it has for almost two centuries, and will continue to speak in the future." He also taught us how to make that happen. From his July 16, 2008 lecture "Reading Poems Aloud,"

"The thing I most want to emphasize is that poems like all art forms have a physical medium, a material body which conveys the non-material meaning. That medium is not as we are apt to say these days *écriture* or a printed text, the physical medium is the act of utterance by the human voice, as it produces the speech sounds that make up the words of a poem.

"Amen," says this poet.

Despite his three degrees from Harvard, Mike Abrams may be the quintessential Cornellian. As he summarized his experience for an interviewer (I have omitted the interviewer's brief interpolations):

"When the war ended I was offered a job at Cornell. I came up here -- I still had an appointment at Harvard and I could have stayed on in the English department there; but I was captivated by the atmosphere and the natural environment of Cornell. I had no intention of joining the faculty when I was invited to visit, but came out of politeness. When they offered me the job I took it. Ithaca was a very attractive small town then, and the campus of Cornell was much more like that of a college than a university. There were wooden faculty houses right on campus. It was very pleasant in those days, little traffic and no parking problems.

(If somebody had told me then that there'd be parking problems, I would have been incredulous.) I liked the place the first time I saw it. Cornell's natural location is incomparable, and I love the open country. Cornell put together more of the things I value than any university I know of, so I was never tempted by offers elsewhere. I just didn't like the way some people used universities and colleges and departments as though they were telephone wires from which to fly to the next higher wire when the opportunity arose. I didn't approve of that. I believe in striking roots, and feeling loyalty

to the place where I am. Cornell instills in its faculty, and in its students, a sense of belonging, community, and loyalty.

“It’s common among American alumni to feel close to their university; but that is especially the case at Cornell. I think that’s partly because of Cornell’s special history, being the youngest of the Ivy League colleges -- after all it was only started in 1865, with the famous motto, ‘any person can find instruction in any subject.’ ‘Any person.’ Right from the beginning that meant male and female, and without respect to race, gender, or religion. It was a revolutionary institution when it started; it was often attacked as a godless university. People felt loyalty to it early on, because it was innovative and under attack. It was rather a strange anomaly, because the university is partly state, partly private. In all these respects, Cornell is more American than any other university I know of. It’s partly Midwest, it’s partly East; it’s Ivy League and yet it’s not like other colleges in the League; it’s private yet a land-grant college; and it’s a liberal arts college with an ag school -- or what they used to call an ag school. So it’s very American.

“A main attraction, finally, is the charm of the landscape here and the outdoor life it makes possible. It’s a big university in a very rural environment, so the tendency is inward. You can’t spread out into the environing city for your cultural and other enterprises; you turn inward to the university. All these things seem to inspire great affection and loyalty in most of its alumni.”

What a privilege to have had him as a teacher and a friend!

### ***Robert Francis Morrison***

After ROTC camp in the Summer of 1953, I returned to Ithaca to face a conundrum. I needed fourteen field work practice credits to register for my senior year in the College of Agriculture, and had lost my Summer working time to the good old U. S. Army. Consequently, I was required to spend the Fall semester working for the Ithaca office of the New York State Conservation Department, earning one credit per week. After twelve weeks of a variety of work activity, most of it with a pick and shovel, the Department closed up its field work for the year. I was out in the cold and four credits short. In a meeting with my adviser, Professor Oliver Hewitt, he said, “I see by your file that did a lot of trapping while in high school. I need a skeletal specimen of a mink for an exhibit of mammals that I’m putting together. Could you catch a mink for me? If you do, I’ll give you those four credits that you need.” I answered that I could do it, though with some trepidation. I called my father, and he sent me my traps and other equipment. I did some scouting, and soon found the tracks of a large mink in the snow along Fall Creek near Varna, just East of the Ag Campus. I put out the traps, checked them daily, and a week later had my mink. It was handsome, big male, with the characteristic white spot on the throat. Professor Hewitt got his skeletal specimen, and I got to keep the pelt along with receiving those four credits needed for senior year

registration. Today, when I'm out on the trout stream, I occasionally see a mink going by on his hunting rounds. As he runs off into the distance, my memory takes me back to Fall Creek, and I breathe a silent "Thank you" to his possible ancestor.

### *Elisavietta Artamonoff Ritchie Farnsworth*

Memorable professors: Vladimir Nabokov [European novel], Delmore Schwartz [creative writing], Mario Einaudi [government], Baxter Hathaway [creative writing] . . . Arthur Mizener [English literature] was a visiting lecturer one day, speaking on [F. Scott] Fitzgerald, and I wrote a sonnet to Mizener -- "Ode to the Automobile" -- which was published in the *Cornell Sun*. I heard that he was apparently touched and impressed -- but I was too shy to sign more than my initials "E.Y.A." so he never knew. In 1967 *Epoch*, the Cornell literary journal, was one of the first literary journals to publish a poem of mine.

"Time is the school in which we learn, time is the fire in which we burn," said Delmore Schwartz, the short-story writer who taught us creative writing and I bless him for liking one of my riskier pieces of fiction (which has, surely fortunately, been lost). He had recently published not only poems but his second collection of short stories, *In Dreams Begin Responsibilities*. Though we all liked him, I sensed he did not feel at ease teaching us, (any more than I did my first year of standing up before a class at American University). Delmore Schwartz introduced us to several contemporary American writers, whereas I had read more British, French and Russian authors, to the detriment of my own countrymen.

Stimulated by this exercise of research in memory, I also Googled Schwartz, which led me to me to reading some of his poems. Ironically, his impressive but sad biography mentions other colleges where he taught, but not Cornell. It also mentioned he won the Bollingen Prize for Poetry, and that Saul Bellow had modeled *Humbolt's Gift* on Schwartz. Later I read that without guessing

## **Betrayed**

### *Susan Herrick Bosworth*

On that last day of the term he seemed especially focused, almost excited. As usual he steered his data through the hour, carefully building the lecture toward a climax until right before the bell he dropped a bomb. As he leaned forward over the front row, reaching the whole room with his laserbeam blue eyes, he announced, "We ARE going to the moon!" No one moved. Seconds of dead silence. Then the bell's ringing set off a hurried gathering up of notebooks and winter coats to make it to one o'clock lunch. By the time I reached Triphammer Bridge I was seething. My initial shock at the man's betrayal of my trust in his intelligence and expertise had turned really

angry. In a few words this traitor to rational science had exposed himself as nothing more than a Buck Rogers groupie. How he had caved in to the crazies was inexplicable. I tried thinking it was maybe one of the dumb things smart people can do, but it didn't help. I grabbed a place at one of the round tables in the Balch Hall dining room and vented to my table mates. Nearly all were sympathetically horrified. I remember being grateful to one girl in particular who reacted earnestly, "Well, I am disgusted. When you consider all the money they charge us to go to this institution, they ought to be a whole lot more careful about whom they pick to be on the faculty."

### ***Unknown Person***

The teacher was virtually certainly Professor Robert William Shaw, chair of the Astronomy Department, which had been spun off from the Physics Department as a separate department only a few years earlier (the days of Carl Sagan and astrophysics and the huge Arecibo radio telescope operated by Cornell were well off -- a dozen or more years -- in the future). Although the volume of 1952-53 Cornell bulletins in the Rare Book Room of the library through some mistake contains an Arts and Sciences catalog for 1953-54 rather than 1952-53, it does list Professor Shaw as the teacher of the introductory astronomy course in that later year, which is persuasive although not conclusive. The university's public affairs photograph of him was helpful but not conclusive because it was taken years before 1953, but Susan feels 96 percent sure he was the one. Moreover, his file contains a clipping from *The Ithaca Journal* which shows that Professor Shaw had made a speech to the local chapter of The American Association of University Women in June 1951 in which he said that only the distraction of the war had prevented humans from getting to the moon already at that time, that rockets had already reached 250 miles in altitude and that the main technological need not yet fulfilled was a system for navigation in space for which astronomers would be needed since there is no up or down out there. It clearly was a favorite subject of his. The basic idea was not original to Shaw. In 1920, the great rocket pioneer Robert H. Goddard had announced that rockets could function in a vacuum and might even make it to the moon. Susan, had she then been around to read it, would have approved of *The New York Times* 1920 editorial commenting on Goddard's statement, which asserted that "He only seems to lack knowledge ladled out daily in high schools," an editorial publicly recanted in another editorial on July 17, 1969 [*The New York Times* 7/21/2009, p. 15, col. 1]. The live television broadcast seen by some 450 million people on July 20, 1959, in which Neil Armstrong spoke of "one small step for a man, one great leap for mankind," occurred sixteen years and 179 days after the lecture on January 22, 1953, recorded by Susan.

### **Hale and Hearty**

#### ***Allen C. Hale***

Many of my engineering classes were structured around a huge lecture class followed by two smaller classes each week. Only a few professors and instructors took roll of who was in attendance. However, one instructor

not only called the roll at every sitting of the class, but also had us sit in alphabetical order within the classroom. Under this arrangement a fellow student with the last name of Hardy was seated next to me. At the first roll call, the instructor immediately realized just what had happened and could not restrain himself from emphasizing the obvious pun. From then on through the end of the semester, much to our shared, continuing embarrassment, as he called the roll, it was always, “Hale and Hardy,” followed by laughter.

### **The Nobel Prize in Physics -- 1979**

“for . . . contributions to the theory of the unified weak and electromagnetic interaction between elementary particles, including . . . the prediction of the weak neutral current.”

(The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences press release of October 15, 1979)

#### ***Sheldon Lee Glashow***

My parents, Lewis Glashow and Bella *nee* Rubin, immigrated to New York City from Bobruisk in the early years of . . . [the twentieth] century. Here they found freedom and opportunity denied to Jews in Czarist Russia. After years of struggle, my father became a successful plumber [in an interview published in *The Boston Globe* of December 10, 1982, Professor Glashow said, “My father was a plumber, so I was exposed early to strange problems”], and his family could then enjoy the comforts of the middle class. While my parents never had the time or money to secure university education themselves, they were adamant that their children should. In comfort and in love, we were taught the joys of knowledge and work well done. I only regret that neither my mother nor my father could live to see the day I would accept the Nobel Prize.

When I was born in Manhattan in 1932, my brothers Samuel and Jules were eighteen and fourteen years old. They chose careers of dentistry and medicine, to my parents’ satisfaction. From an early age, I knew I would become a scientist. It may have been my brother Sam’s doing. He interested me in the laws of falling bodies when I was ten, and helped my father equip a basement chemistry lab for me when I was fifteen. I became skilled in the synthesis of selenium halides. Never again would I do such dangerous research. Except for the occasional suggestion that I should become a physician and do science in my spare time, my parents always encouraged my scientific inclinations.

Among my chums at the Bronx High School of Science were Gary Feinberg [later to be a professor of physics at Columbia University] and Steven Weinberg. We spurred one another to learn physics while commuting on the New York subway. Another classmate, Dan Greenberger [later a professor of physics at the College of the City of New York], taught me calculus in the school lunchroom. High-school

mathematics then terminated with solid geometry. At Cornell University, I again had the good fortune to join a talented class. It included the mathematician Daniel Kleitman who was to become my brother-in-law [and a professor of mathematics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology], my old classmate Steven Weinberg, and many others who were to become prominent scientists. Throughout my formal education, I would learn as much from my peers as from my teachers. So it is today among our graduate students.

### ***Steven Weinberg***

The first thing freshman should know is that college is never what one expects. The summer of 1950, before I went to Cornell, I was working as a bellhop at a hotel in the Adirondacks. One day the mail brought me a Cornell course catalog. Reading it between carrying guests' bags was for me like reading the menu of a good restaurant would be for a starving man. The philosophy and humanities departments were offering courses that I was sure would make me wise. The physics department had courses given by famous physicists. The mathematics department was offering a course in Hilbert Space. Who knew that there were different kinds of space?

It didn't work out quite as I had expected. I didn't know enough to participate in the exciting physics research that was going on at Cornell. I took German, in which the main thing I learned is that I have no head for foreign languages. My courses in philosophy left me puzzled how ideas of Plato and Descartes that seemed to me absurd could have been so influential. I did not become wise.

But I did graduate, and took with me the memories of several inspiring professors, of walks with friends under beautiful old elms, and of hours spent reading in the music room of the student union. I discovered that I loved chamber music and history and Shakespeare. I married my college sweetheart. And I did learn about Hilbert Space.

*Editor's Note...Professor Weinberg is married to his college sweetheart, our classmate Louse Goldwasser Weinberg, a law professor at the University of Texas. Hilbert Space is infinite dimensional space important in quantum mechanics and mathematical analysis, and is one of the creations of the German mathematician David Hilbert (1862-1943). In 1900 Hilbert had proposed 20 then-unsolved mathematical problems which has been a significant stimulus to subsequent mathematical research. Alas, the elms we so fondly remember are long gone, victims of Dutch elm disease. Steven Weinberg and Sheldon Glashow shared the 1979 Nobel Prize in Physics with Abdus Salam. Professor Weinberg's contribution above appeared in The New York Times on September 6, 2009, while that of Professor Glashow was extracted from his "Autobiography" found in readings related to the 1979 Nobel Prize in physics on the internet.*

**“I'd Like to Start a School Where Anybody  
Can Study Anything He's a Mind to”**

*Ezra Cornell*<sup>2</sup>

**The Underpinnings of a Maverick Career in Science**

*Karen Wylie Pryor*

As soon as I was old enough to be allowed to play outdoors by myself I started spending a lot of time in the pond and brook across the road from my house, catching water bugs and putting minnows in jam jars. At age ten or eleven I became obsessed with collecting, asphyxiating, mounting, and framing at least one each of every species of butterfly and moth in my Connecticut neighborhood. Someone gave me Roger Tory Peterson's first *Field Guide to the Birds*, which I cherished, carried everywhere, dropped in puddles, and marked up thoroughly, penciling a circle around each new bird I thought I saw.

I chose Cornell for its wide variety of courses, its distance from all parents however cherished, and its excellent boy-girl ratio, 4-1 in my favor. I chose Arts and Sciences because those two words summed up my life so far. Nevertheless, when I got there, in 1950, it was apparent to me that the educational system really didn't support my interest in the natural world.

A person of my bent might have studied biology, I suppose. But at Cornell at that time, a biology major focused on preparing one for medical school. It required, among other dreary topics, embryology, comparative anatomy, quantitative and qualitative analysis (whatever that may have been), and organic and inorganic chemistry. Imagine semester after semester of mind-bendingly dull and difficult classes involving glassware, memorization, and long days indoors, with not a living animal in sight. Not suitable for one who'd already spent large parts of her school career fidgeting, doodling, and staring out the window in case a bird flew by. And, outside of medicine, the only employment biology seemed to offer was teaching. I definitely did not want to become a teacher or professor, obliged to get up on time and go on being in a schoolroom for the rest of my life, ghastly thought.

One thing that had drawn me to Cornell was the huge Agriculture School. There were the courses I coveted. Entomology (a whole year of insects, yay!) Botany, lots of choices there. Cornell even had an entire department of ornithology! In my sophomore year, after acing my ornithology final, I inquired about majoring in birds.

---

<sup>2</sup> Professor Morris Bishop, Class of 1914, one-time University Historian, thought that Ezra Cornell's great dictum which stands as the university's motto, "I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any subject," is a result of the first President, Andrew Dickson White's recasting more elegantly what Ezra had actually said, which was probably more like that shown above. *A History of Cornell University* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1962), page 74.

The head of the department turned me down flat, and here's what he told me: girls could not major in ornithology because there was no place for them to go to the bathroom in the woods.

So I majored in English literature. I was a fast reader. I came from a family of writers. Writing was easy, in fact it was already a sort of nervous habit. I could toss off a thousand-word paper on the edda vs. the saga, or floral imagery in the works of D.H. Laurence, about as fast as I could type. This gave me enough free time to take a year or more each of ornithology, entomology, paleontology, anthropology, geology, horticulture, botany, and scientific illustration.

Almost anything (except all of the above) counted toward an English major, so I also had time for history, art, architecture, music, and an inordinate amount of theater. I acted in at least one play a semester (always the ingénue, never the lead, darn it: always the Bianca, never the Shrew.) I wrote or co-wrote plays which were performed (terrible plays, in retrospect); and I took every drama course the English Department offered.

Thus, from Cornell, I stole my scientific education, tucking it into an apparently normal liberal arts experience. And I learned quite a few other useful things besides, including how to be comfortable on stage and in public, which would come in handy often during my subsequent working life as a writer and a scientist too.

**“BACK TO MY CORNELL . . .”**(From “My Old Cornell,” Will A. Dillon)

*Editor's Note*...Let us set the stage with Dan Nadler's description of traveling to our fiftieth reunion in 2004:

*Dan Nadler*

On a dull June Thursday, Serga and I drove up to Ithaca, through the Catskills and along New York's Southern Tier. The weather was threatening all along, and a front, stationary over our heads, kept shedding raindrops. Past Binghamton and Owego we turned Northward and headed through the greenery into Ithaca. The short haul over the terminal moraine is very pretty. To the South of it, water flows down into the Delaware or Susquehanna basins, but over the hump everything flows Northward into the Great Lakes and the Saint Lawrence. Below the road suddenly appears the very blue Cayuga Lake, nestled at the bottom of its steep-sided glacial valley. Ithaca lies at the Southernmost tip of the Lake. . . .

### **The Charms of Car-Pooling**

*Betty Wagler Striso*

After Spring Vacation in our senior year, I was planning to drive back to school with Fred Wood and Jane Barber who by this time were engaged, I met them in Cos Cob with my boy friend of that time and we piled into Fred's car with all our stuff. We had just gone through the toll booth on the Merritt Parkway when Jane said, "Fred, I forgot my pocketbook." Fred turned around, went back through the toll booth, back to her house, and we picked up the pocketbook. Back on the road, back to the Merritt, through the toll booth, and Jane said, "Fred, I forgot my coat." Fred turned around, back through the toll booth, back to her house, picked up the coat. Fred said, "Jane, go through the house, look for everything of yours, I'm not coming back." We got on the road, but we were now leaving rather late. Fred had arranged to pick up a girl named Julia from Argentina at the Red Apple Rest on Route 17, and he was worried. After we had been driving for some time, Jane decided she needed an ice cream, so we stopped again. She ate a few bites of a strawberry sundae and tossed it out the window. Unfortunately, the rear window was open and the sundae which had exited the front re-entered the rear. The back of the car was a mess. We thought it was the end of the engagement, but Fred was such a sweet and gentle guy -- he only yelled a little. Of course, we missed Julia. Someone told us there had been a girl who didn't speak English who had gotten on a bus to Syracuse. We got Cornell in the wee hours. I can't remember where we slept.

### **The Distinct Advantages of Public Transportation**

***Robert Frederic Martin***

In the first of my letters written to members of the Class of 1954 in my capacity as Class Historian in which I solicited contributions to the effort reflected in this collection, I had suggested that among other topics which might be considered for recording for posterity was the various interesting things that can happen in the process of getting back and forth to and from Ithaca, and briefly referred to my experience of "spending the night in a Pullman berth with a fellow student whom I deeply loved," not having any intention of actually writing anything about it because as I recalled it didn't amount to very much. In those far off days before the so-called "sexual revolution" I was appallingly uptight. Nothing adventurous ever even came up for discussion. The actual story *as I remembered it* was really rather dull and anticlimactic and not worth a lot of ink. However, a copy of that letter made its way to my friend whose Pullman berth I had briefly invaded that night and she soon educated me that our rather innocent romantic idyll had soon been very rudely interrupted. Some busybody had become aware of my gymnastic vault into her upper berth, and this nosy parker had called the conductor, who came along and addressed two questions to my companion: first, "Are you alright?" to which she readily answered "Yes," and then, "Are you alone?" to which, swallowing hard, she had also managed to squeeze out a "Yes." His official curiosity thus satisfied, the conductor went away, and shortly thereafter I climbed down and went back to my own berth.

Now to the more interesting part of the story. I had and still have no recollection whatever of this interaction with the conductor although there is not the slightest doubt that it happened as she has described it. I had and still have completely blocked any memory of this little embarrassment and reading and re-reading my friend's brief but eloquent description over and over has done nothing to refresh my vanished recollection. I am reasonably sure as to why I have blocked all recall of this much too exciting experience. I was traveling on railroad passes, a system-wide pass good on all of the passenger trains of that railroad, the New York Central, which I had had since I was about twelve and trip passes which entitled me to free Pullman upper berths going-and-coming on that little tour to my friend's hometown and back, available to me only because my father was an executive of that railroad. I am sure I had been terrified by the immediate realization that, perhaps even before we had gotten to Ithaca, my father was quite likely to get a full report of any misadventure I might have had on one of the company's highly advertised passenger trains which the conductor felt obliged to officially report, and that if such a horror were to occur, I might have found that I had committed the one sin he could never forgive. So I blocked the memory, erased the whole scene, apparently permanently. So much for the reliability of my memory.

*John H. Eisele, Jr.*

On one of my experiences of the Lehigh Valley Railroad (also known as "square-wheeled Leaky Valley Railroad" [alas, no longer with us, it for generations provided Cornell students with a means to travel from the station at the foot of Buffalo Street near the Narrows South and East toward New York and West to Buffalo]), a Cornellian who sat next to me in the same seat spotted a cutie, an Ithaca College dance major, across the aisle making constant eye contact with him. Before long, he was in her seat or her lap, I don't recall the details, and then was into the bathroom with her for an extended private conference, while I was the one being educated.

*Editor's Note...* Betty Wagler Striso remembers "[o]ne Spring vacation, coming home on the 'Leaky Valley' with my roommate, carrying a huge suitcase, two winter coats, a large framed picture and a potted plant -- arriving late in New Jersey -- PATH train to Manhattan, subway to Queens, bus to nearly home, then the last walk up fifty-six steps to the house -- 3 a.m. -- collapsing."

### **Do-It-Yourself Airline**

*Unknown Person*

As a freshman I had the chutzpah to actually contract with Mohawk Airlines to charter one of their DC-3's to fly back to New York for the first holiday, Thanksgiving 1950. Since I was the Charterer, I had the choice of airports. The plane was to fly us to LaGuardia, drop us there, then dead-head to another airport. At the end of the holiday, we met at LaGuardia where the plane had arrived (another dead-head flight) to take us back to Ithaca. I put an ad in *The Cornell Sun* for passengers, and was overwhelmed with applicants. I was naïve enough to ask only for just enough money to cover my own fare with no profit. A week later, I decided to make money, so I called Mohawk to ask for another airplane for a Thanksgiving trip, but they were out of planes, so I settled for my free trip without a profit. In December, I called again for planes for the Christmas vacation, but other people had stolen my idea and booked all of the available planes so I was out of luck. So young, so naïve. But I learned my lesson. In retrospect, I realize that it took a lot of courage for an eighteen-year-old to contract with a major business corporation to pay almost \$500 for a service without any guarantee that I could cover that expense.

### **Living by Rule of Thumb**

*Paul Nemiroff*

I remember hitch-hiking down one holiday from Ithaca to New York City. I dressed in my seersucker suit and straw hat and, armed with a hand-held sign saying "Cornell Man to New York," I was picked up by an ex-soldier with a large German Shepherd. The dog continually whined while we drove and conversed. The owner ignored his dog's whining until we smelled a terrible odor. Yes, the dog had been whining because he had needed to be let out until he could no longer contain himself. We discovered his "deposit" on my raincoat in the back seat. The owner apologized and I of course accepted his apology. After all, I didn't want to be kicked out of his car as long as he was headed in my direction.

**"STRIKE UP A SONG TO CORNELL" (Title and first line of  
the song by Richard H. Lee '41)**

#### **Leaders of Us All**

(Tune: Irish traditional song, "Roddy McCorley")

All around the world Cornellians go

To do what we do best.

We teach, we build, we serve, we fix,

We earn our keep and rest.

We've caught the pass of knowledge,

And we're running with the ball.  
And it can't be denied, we're our people's pride,  
The Leaders of Us All.

Wherever we Cornellians meet,  
It brings a smile and tear.  
We've got a bond of friendship  
That cannot disappear.  
We tell of days and nights we shared,  
When we were growing still,  
And we feel a little warmer when  
We think of our days on the Hill.

We remember the Straight, the statues on the Quad,  
The Gorges and the Lake,  
Teagle, the Taylors, Sage and the Libe,  
All these our memories wake.  
Engineers, Hotelies, Aggies and Arts,  
HumEcs, ILRs stand tall --  
'cause it can't be denied, we're our people's pride,  
The Leaders of Us All.

*Allan L. Griff*

**“WE WANT TO FIND HUSBANDS WHO COOK, CLEAN, AND SEW, AND  
TAKE CARE OF THE CHILDREN . . .”** (From an alternative verse of the “Song of  
the Classes” by the Cornell Chorus)

***Ruth Bader Ginsburg***

Marty [Martin David Ginsburg 1953, a tax lawyer and a professor at Georgetown Law School] and I met in my first year, his second, in the Arts College. We were married just after I graduated and have survived [over] fifty-five years in each other's company -- thanks in considerable measure to advice given me by his mother on our wedding day. In every good marriage, that sage woman said, it helps, sometimes, to be a little hard of hearing. It is important to be a good listener if you are to work with others effectively, but it also pays, sometimes, not to hear.

**.Martin David Ginsburg's Wife's Good Job**

**Editor's Note...** *Alas, all good things come to an end, and a few days after their fifty-sixth wedding anniversary, Marty died. The New York Times report noted Justice Ginsburg's acknowledgment "that without the strong personal and political support of her husband, she might never have risen so far" (June 28, 2010, page B8, column 5). As Marty has said, "It's not sacrifice; it's family." But his death had been uniquely untimely in that he had committed to make a speech at the Tenth Circuit Judicial Conference in August. However, he had written the speech well in advance, so Ruth stuck the text in her bag and flew off to Colorado to fulfill the obligation he had made. Dahlia Lithwick, reporting on this event in the e-zine Slate, thought her appearance under the circumstances showed Ruth "to be fashioned of pure steel," but I suspect in her view it's just "family," as Marty would have said. Here is Marty's text which Ruth delivered, with occasional interpolations not included here:*

---

### How the 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals Got My Wife Her Good Job

As you have heard, my field is tax law. When Chief Judge [Robert H.] Henry asked me to speak today and hinted it might be on my favorite subject, naturally I prepared a long paper addressing the Supreme Court's performance in tax cases. Sadly, the Chief Judge reacted with surprising hostility and so I am going to speak instead about the only significant thing I have ever done in my long life with Honorable Ruth. I shall recall for you the one case in which we served as co-counsel. It was also the one occasion either of us was privileged to argue in the 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit. Nonetheless, fascinating as you will surely find this reminiscence, all of you are the losers, for I promise you, the Supreme Court's performance in tax cases is an extremely funny subject.

In the 1960's I practiced law, mainly tax law, in New York City, and Ruth began her law teaching career at Rutgers Law School in Newark. One of the courses she taught was Constitutional Law and, toward the end of the decade, she started looking into equal protection issues that might be presented by statutes that differentiate on the basis of sex. A dismal academic undertaking because, back then, the United States Supreme Court had never invalidated any legislative classification on the basis of sex.

Then as now, at home Ruth and I worked evenings in adjacent rooms. Her room is bigger. In my little room one evening in Fall 1970 I was reading Tax Court advance sheets and came upon a *pro se* litigant, one Charles E. Moritz, who, on a stipulated record, was denied a \$600 dependent care deduction under old Section 214 of the Internal Revenue Code, even though, the Tax Court found, the operative facts – save one – fit the statute perfectly. Mr Moritz was an editor and traveling salesman for a book company. His 89-year-old dependent mother lived with him. In order to be gainfully employed without neglecting his mother or packing her off to an old-age home, Charles paid an unrelated individual at least \$600 – in fact, a good deal more than that – to take care of his mother when he was away at work.

There was one small problem, and in the Tax Court it served to do him in. The statute awarded its up-to-\$600 deduction to a taxpayer who was a woman of any classification (divorced, widowed, or single), a married couple, a widowed man, or a divorced man. But not to a single man who has never been married. Mr. Moritz was a single man who had never been married. “Deductions are a matter of legislative grace,” the Tax Court quoted, and added that if the taxpayer were raising a constitutional question, forget about it: everyone knows, the Tax Court confidently asserted, that the Internal Revenue Code is immune from constitutional attack.

Let me digress a moment to tell you that in the Tax Court Mr. Moritz, although not a lawyer, had a written brief. It was one page in length and said: “If I were a dutiful daughter instead of a dutiful son, I would have received the deduction. This makes no sense.” It was from that brief the Tax Court gleaned the taxpayer might be raising a constitutional objection. Mr. Moritz's one-page submission remains in my mind as the most persuasive brief I ever read.

Well, I went to the big room next door, handed the Tax Court advance sheets to my spouse, and said, “Read this.” Ruth replied with a warm and friendly snarl, “I don't read tax cases.” I said, “Read this one,” and returned to my little room.

No more than 5 minutes later – it was a short opinion – Ruth stepped into my little room and, with the broadest smile you can imagine, said, “Let's take it.” And we did.

Ruth and I took the *Moritz* appeal *pro bono*, of course, but since the taxpayer was not indigent we needed a *pro bono* organization. We thought of the American Civil Liberties Union. Mel Wulf, the ACLU's then legal director, naturally wished to review our proposed 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit brief, which in truth was 90 percent Ruth's Tenth Circuit brief. When Mel read the brief, he was greatly persuaded.

A few months later, the ACLU had its first sex discrimination/equal protection case in the United States Supreme Court. As many of you will recall, it was titled *Reed v. Reed*. Remembering *Moritz*, Mel asked Ruth if she would take the lead in writing the ACLU's Supreme Court brief on behalf of appellant Sally Reed. Ruth did, and, reversing the decision of the Idaho Supreme Court, the U. S. Supreme Court unanimously held for Sally.

Good for Sally Reed and good for Ruth, who decided thereafter to hold down two jobs, one as a tenured professor at Columbia Law School where she moved from Rutgers, the other as head of the ACLU's newly created Women's Rights Project.

Now back to *Moritz*. The 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit – Judge [William Judson] Holloway[, Jr.,] writing for the panel – found Mr. Moritz to have been denied the law's equal protection, reversed the Tax Court, and allowed Mr. Moritz his \$600 deduction.

Amazingly, the Government petitioned for certiorari [a writ permitting a further appeal to the United States Supreme Court]. The 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit's decision, the Government asserted, cast a cloud of unconstitutionality over literally hundreds of Federal statutes – laws like old Section 214 of the Tax Code, differentiated solely on the basis of sex.

In those pre-personal computer days, there was no easy way for us to test the Government's assertion. But Solicitor General [Erwin N.] Griswold took care of that by attaching to his petition a list – generated by the Department of Defense's mainframe computer – of those hundreds of suspect Federal statutes. Cert was denied in *Moritz*, and the computer list proved a gift beyond price. Over the balance of the decade, in Congress, the Supreme Court, and many other courts, Ruth successfully urged the unconstitutionality of those statutes.

So our trip to the 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit mattered a lot. First, it fueled Ruth's early 1970's career shift from diligent academic to enormously skilled and successful appellate advocate – which in turn led to her next career on the higher side of the bench. Second, with Dean Griswold's help, Mr. Moritz's case furnished the litigation agenda Ruth actively pursued until she joined the D.C. Circuit in 1980. All in all, great achievements from a tax case with an amount in controversy that totaled exactly \$296.70.

As you can see, in bringing those Tax Court advance sheets to Ruth's big room forty years ago, I changed history. For the better. And, I shall claim, thereby rendered a significant service to the nation. I have decided to believe it is the significant service that led to my being invited to speak to you today. And even if you had in mind a topic a little less cosmically significant and substantially more humorous, such as the Supreme Court's performance in tax cases, Ruth and I are delighted to be back with you in the 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit once again.

Martin David Ginsburg, Class of 1953,  
delivered on August 27, 2010, by Ruth Bader Ginsburg

***Editor's Note***...Martin Ginsburg's informal biographical note which he used to the dismay of some of his law firm colleagues leads off with his Cornell connection:

“Martin Ginsburg, Professor of Law at Georgetown University Law Center, attended Cornell University, stood very low in his class, and played on the golf team. He graduated *magna cum laude* from Harvard Law School which, in those years, did not field a golf team.”

### ***Patricia Jerome Colby and Mason Colby***

We, Mason Colby (ME) and Pat Jerome Colby (HEc), married on November 11, 1955, and have been together ever since then -- 55 years. We met in the Spring of 1952, sophomore year. It was Spring Weekend and fraternity parties were in full swing. The setting was Theta Xi fraternity amidst the women's dorms on Thurston Avenue -- right across from Risley and next to Comstock. Pat was the date of another Theta Xi whom she had met in speech class, while Mason's date was also a coed. These were the days of the 4:1 ratio of guys to gals at Cornell. We two first met at the cocktail party before dinner on Friday night. Then, on Saturday afternoon our respective dates had to leave us to participate in the annual float parade -- Pat's date was driving the jeep under Theta Xi's float while Mason's date was twirling a baton atop another float. The two of us sat on the front lawn of Theta Xi sharing a blanket and a bottle of champagne, watching our dates drive by and falling in love, love which has thus far lasted 58 years.

### ***Barbara Johnson Gottling***

I married Phil Gottling, BME '52, who had been head chimesmaster and created for our home a door bell which rings the hour strike of the Cornell chimes. While working for Procter & Gamble in Cincinnati and after retirement before his death in 2007 he spent twenty years recording concerts, recitals and auditions for students, faculty and ensembles in Cincinnati. I have taken headshots for musicians and have also been a strong support for classical music including long service as a board member and a six-year stint as president of the Chamber Music Society. Our son plays contrabassoon in the Honolulu Symphony, one daughter is a veterinarian in Monument, Colorado, and another daughter is a free-lance cellist in Philadelphia.

### ***William B. Webber***

After I was accepted at Cornell in 1950, my high school sweetheart, Elaine Russell, who was nine months older and academically a year ahead of me, transferred to Cornell from Stephen's College in Columbia, Missouri, and we were thinking of getting married. My folks got wind of it and freaked out, telling me that I was too young, would never make it as a premed and told me to break up with Elaine immediately or else my financial support from them would be terminated. We were both crushed, but it was 1950, we accepted this draconic decree, buried our feelings and went our separate ways. Elaine graduated in 1953 and went on to marry Chuck [Charles P., DVM '51], Captain of the Cornell polo team, from whom she was divorced a few years ago. I finished in 1954 and never saw her again while at Cornell. I worked my butt off at the premed grind, but did have a few minutes of fun as the Art Editor of the *Cornell Widow* in 1953 and playing on the football team that had to go to Ann Arbor for the second game with Michigan which nobody talks about [1952: UM 49, CU 7]. I was on the "rinky dink" squad that had to simulate "the enemy" each week to prepare the varsity for our next opponent. What a great bunch of guys they were!

Following two years of active naval service on a repair ship stationed in Norfolk, Virginia, I entered Cornell Medical School in Manhattan, graduating in 1960. While there I married Mary Savage '58, who was president of her nursing class and helped me through years of internship and surgical residencies. She shared with me the burdens and joys of twenty-six years of practice in St. Louis including service as an Associate Professor in St. Louis University, as well as raising three children. We retired, first to Ithaca, then to Tucson, Arizona, to be closer to children and grandchildren. Unfortunately, Mary developed nonsmoker's lung cancer and died in 2004 after 45 years of marriage. I was devastated and depressed for about a year when, as if by a miracle, I traced down my old high school girl friend, Elaine. We rekindled after 55 years and were married in September 1955. We finally have found the happiness that was denied us back at Cornell in 1950 and have been on a honeymoon ever since. We feel incredibly lucky and blest.

### ***Jane Wight Bailey***

Being a little late for my Food Chemistry lab and wearing the required white uniform labeling me "Home Economics," I was hurrying toward campus when a car slowed beside me. The driver, a woman, asked if I would like a ride. My answer was, "Yes" -- it was in the 1950's and she looked harmless, in fact very pleasant. When in the car, she told me she had just brought her son back from a weekend at home just ten miles away in Dryden. She asked if I knew her son, Bill Bailey, who lived in a fraternity across the street from my sorority. My answer was, "No." Two months later I got a call. It was Bill Bailey! The rest is history. After my graduation, we were married, on July 3, 1954.

Now, almost 55 years later, although in the wintertime you can find us in the warmer clime of Naples, Florida, we still call Dryden our home, as do all three of our children. My mother-in-law, one of my best friends, lived in her home in Dryden until she was almost 100! Thank you, Cornell, for this happy memory and many, many more.

**“ . . . wherefore art thou . . . ?”**

William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, Scene 2

**Editor's Note...***Some of our classmates' marriages reflect love affairs which span decades, but there was at least one which was loving, tragic and brief, and, yet, not brief. Beverly Anne "Bo Bo" Billinger and Jim Deane had found one another already in freshman year, but they did not marry until she had completed two years of Cornell Medical College and he had completed his Navy pilot training in 1956. Beverly's daughter Katherine Shaver of the staff of The Washington Post has written their story published under the title "Truth and Lies" in The Washington Post Magazine of Sunday, May 7, 2006:FM...*

On her way to the gym one afternoon in 1992, my mother stopped by a

Phoenix bookstore to check out a new book titled *Soldiers of Misfortune: Washington's Secret Betrayal of American POWs in the Soviet Union*. Perched in an aisle, she scanned the index under "China" and, upon flipping to page 185, read two paragraphs that almost brought her to her knees.

They were an account of a U.S. Navy plane that had been shot down off the coast of Shanghai during a Cold War spy mission in 1956. My mother already knew plenty about the incident. Of the 16 men aboard, the Navy said, only four mangled bodies had been recovered. The other 12 crew members were never found. One year later, the Navy declared them dead. No one, it concluded, could have survived such a crash.

The crew's families believed their government. They included my mother, then named Beverly Billinger Deane. Her college sweetheart, Lt. j.g. James Brayton Deane Jr., 24, had been one of the lost plane's pilots. At the age of 24 and married just three months, my mother had suddenly found herself a widow.

Yet, here she was, nearly four decades later, reading a far different story. "American intelligence knew that two of the crewmen had survived the shoot-down," my mother read, feeling the shock pour over her. The two Americans had been rescued by a Chinese patrol boat, the book said, and were taken to an army hospital. The book -- by journalists James D. Sanders, Mark A. Sauter and R. Cort Kirkwood -- quoted a declassified U.S. Navy report dated almost two months after the crash. The unnamed crewmen had recovered and were being imprisoned in China, the report said. Their existence was so secret, the book said, "that the U.S. government never asked the Chinese to return the Americans."

My mother bought the book, slipped it into her purse and continued on to the gym. After working out in stunned disbelief, she read over the two paragraphs again, then stepped into a locker room shower and cried. It had been 36 years since the morning she had awakened to another Navy wife tapping urgently on the screen of her open bedroom window. She was living in a cramped rental house near Iwakuni Naval Air Station in Japan. "There's been a little trouble with the plane," her friend said. My mother searched for her robe. The squadron's executive officer and a chaplain were at her front door.

Over the next several days, my mother would learn only that the crew of her husband's Martin Mercator P4M-1Q had sent one emergency message saying it was under attack. Then the radio cut out. Nothing had been heard from the crew since.

Within a week, my mother found herself headed back to the States on a Navy transport plane. Three weeks after that, she returned to her third year of studies at Cornell University medical school deep in a fog of grief. It took two more years before she gave up hope of ever seeing her vibrant, handsome husband again.

When a surgical resident asked her out on a date three years after the shoot down, my mother, by then a pediatric resident in New Orleans, accepted. He made her laugh for the first time she could remember. One year later, she agreed to marry him, removed her first wedding ring and took down the framed military portrait of the man she had vowed to love for life. Her second husband, Jim Shaver, would become my father.

After returning home from the gym that night in 1992, my mother showed my father her bookstore purchase. Look at this, she said. As my father read, my mother recalls, he looked stricken.

“You never buried him,” was all he said, looking up.

“I never had anyone to bury,” she said.

“Do you think he's alive?” my father asked.

After 32 years of marriage, she knew what he was thinking. "Even if Jim Deane were found alive," she recalls telling him, "you're my husband. I'd never go back to a previous marriage."

Her lost husband had never been an issue between my father and her. Still, my mother could feel the grief filling a void she thought had closed decades earlier. "Jim Deane was dead," my mother says. "The government said he was dead."

But at 60 years old with four grown children, she suddenly wasn't so sure. Had two crewmen from the plane actually survived? If so, which two, and what had happened to them? Why hadn't the U.S. government ever told her or the other wives and families?

In 1993, one year into her search for answers, my mother made another startling discovery. A newly declassified U.S. report citing an intelligence source described the two surviving crew members. One was well-built and tall. He had slightly raised cheekbones and thin lips. "This description," the intelligence officer wrote, "appears to fit that of Lt. j.g. James Brayton Deane, Jr."

I never heard the name Jim Deane until I was 7. My mother had taken my two sisters, my brother and me on a 1976 summer trip through California. My father, a surgeon with limited vacation time, had stayed behind in Phoenix. At a Japanese restaurant in Los Angeles, my mother ordered sukiyaki, with a raw egg in which to dip her slices of meat. The waitress seemed surprised at her request and commented how few Americans knew the Japanese custom of the raw egg.

"Don't you wonder why I know how to eat this?" my mother asked us. "It's because I used to live in Japan." It was then that she told us about her first

marriage. My oldest sister, Anne, then 14, asked what I immediately wanted to know: "Is he our dad?" No, my mother assured us. Daddy is your father. After that dinner, my mother rarely mentioned her first husband, and we didn't ask much about him.

While I was home for Christmas in 1992, however, that would change. As our family gathered for lunch by the backyard pool, my mother raised the subject as suddenly as she had in that Japanese restaurant. She told us about the book she'd found. My brother, Jos, remembers my father staring quietly at his shoes.

"You don't think he's alive, do you?" my brother recalls asking. "Oh, no, no, no" my mother said. We didn't know, however, that the search for this previous husband had already begun to consume my mother's life.

Unlike some military widows and family members, my mother had not spent much time trying to learn Deane's fate. For about a year after the crash, she wrote letters to the military and U.S. government asking for details about the investigation. The Navy repeatedly told her that all information was classified and that everyone had likely died in the crash.

After her husband was declared dead one year later, she says, she compartmentalized her grief enough to move on with her life for 35 years. However, she had always promised herself that someday she would find out what he had been doing when he vanished. He had been secretive about his missions, saying they were highly classified.

After reading about the two reported survivors, she hunted down former Navy pilots and intelligence officers. Some were long dead. Others, then in their eighties and nineties, didn't remember the shootdown or were too feeble to talk. She filed Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, seeking records from more than 25 U.S. military and government agencies. Often, she says, she felt like she was battling her own government to get 40-year-old answers.

From other pilots in her husband's squadron, my mother learned that Deane had been part of a U.S. program of "ferret flights," a highly secretive piece of the Cold War. In missions far riskier than my mother had ever imagined, Navy and Air Force planes searched out the land-based radar systems of Communist bloc countries. Their goal was to get caught. Only then, when the enemy had picked up a plane on radar, could the technicians in the rear of the U.S. plane detect that radar's location. Sometimes, if the Americans strayed too close, they got shot down. The

Pentagon office charged with investigating missing and imprisoned military personnel lists 126 Americans missing from such Cold War shoot downs. When the U.S. government couldn't give her answers, my mother took her search to China. On a visit to Beijing in 2000, she sought help from Li Xiaolin, vice president of the Chinese

People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. The association, with ties to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, had helped other Americans with MIA cases. But Li told my mother that China's defense agencies still considered all records about Deane to be "highly classified." If he'd gone down with the plane, my mother reasoned, why would the Chinese government have any records on him?

My mother also was surprised by the about-face of a retired top Chinese Air Defense official. In 1999, he told a mutual acquaintance in great detail how the Chinese had arrested "two pilots" from the shoot down amid great celebration. However, a year later, the official said his memory wasn't so clear. Moreover, his family didn't want him interviewed again unless someone from the Chinese government was present. My mother's conclusion, "Someone got to him."

In the beginning, I figured my intelligent mother, who had practiced pediatrics before her second child was born, merely needed a project now that she was an empty nester. She had never given up on anything easily. She also never did anything halfway.

I sometimes wondered whether she was merely romanticizing a man who now had the JFK effect -- gone but forever young in her mind, not the 73-year-old man he would be today. I never considered that what drove her might be a sense of guilt or loyalty, even love. . . . [S]he couldn't stop picturing the awful possibilities. While she had gone on with her life, her first husband might have been imprisoned or even tortured. What if, she'd often think, he was still alive and waiting to be found?

After a couple of years, my mother's search began to exact a physical and emotional toll. She mentioned trouble sleeping. "I'd lie in bed all night and think of whom I was going to FOIA next," she recalls. She needed medication for high blood pressure. She looked drawn, tired, older than her age. I often wondered how my father put up with it. I chalked it up to his kind, giving nature -- the traits that made nurses and patients rave about his gentle bedside manner. I never doubted the strength of my parents' marriage. Still, my siblings and I sometimes discussed our fears that my mother's quest would cause a strain. When she would talk about her research, my father often would look toward the floor and sigh.

"Sometimes I would tell her, 'This is too much,'" my father says. But he knew she wouldn't quit. "It was something she was going to do and something she had to do. That was my job as her husband, to support her." What upset him most was the toll the search took, he says. He asked medical colleagues and grief recovery experts for advice. He urged her to seek counseling. "Nobody would understand," she told him.

Through it all, my mother believed she had an important ally: Donald Rumsfeld. He and Deane had become close friends in 1954 while attending Navy flight training together in Pensacola, Fla.

After her husband's shoot down, my mother and Rumsfeld stayed in touch, mostly through Christmas cards. She addressed her letters to him as "Rummy." He wrote back to "Bo Bo," her college nickname. She hoped he might tap his connections from his days as President Gerald Ford's defense secretary. He lined up letters from Ford and former secretary of state Henry Kissinger, asking the Chinese government to assist my mother. After Rumsfeld became defense secretary under President Bush, one of his aides followed up on my mother's inquiries.

"He feels a certain debt about all this," the former aide, Rich Haver, says of Rumsfeld's interest in Deane's case. "This is very personal." "You should make a movie out of this, Rumsfeld suggested . . . in 2000. "I can't," she said, "It wouldn't have an ending."

While I was visiting my parents in spring of last year [2005], my mother, now 73, confided to me that she'd exhausted her search, and she still didn't know what had happened to Deane. "Maybe a reporter would dig up something she couldn't," she said. "Would I help?" "I think you'll open any doors that can still be opened," my mother told me, "and close any doors that need to be closed. This is my swan song."

They met at a Freshman mixer at Cornell University, introduced by a friend who told my mother, "He'd be perfect for you." Jim Deane had grown up affluent in East Grand Rapids, Mich. His father had run a desk manufacturing company but had recently had some financial troubles. A Naval ROTC scholarship offered Deane a student deferment from the Korean War, a way to pay for college and the chance to earn his wings.

He'd been a top student in high school, vice president of his senior class and a varsity letterman in football, basketball, track and swimming. His younger sister, Pam Deane Truog, remembers his childhood bedroom full of model airplanes. The glamour associated with her new suitor's military status wasn't lost on my mother. Pilots "were really the fair-haired heroes of the Navy," she recalls. By junior year, she had decided Deane was the one she wanted to marry. The question was when. He owed the Navy three years before he could pursue a business career. Following him around the world as a Navy wife, even for a few years, meant my mother would have to delay her medical school plans. It was a choice she hadn't sorted through yet. After college graduation, he left for Pensacola to become a pilot while she went to Manhattan to become a doctor.

"It wasn't until he went away and I was in medical school and couldn't see him but every four to five months that I thought I was going to go crazy," my mother says. When she visited him in Pensacola, my mother often stayed off base with Rumsfeld and his wife, Joyce, while Deane lived in the bachelors' quarters. The couples spent their free time water-skiing and sailing.

Rumsfeld remembers his friend as "very smart and very engaging and big. He enjoyed life. He was a serious person who worked hard." Near the end of the 18-month flight training, Deane got some frustrating news. Instead of jets, he'd been assigned to prop planes. Flying the lumbering multi-engine planes, he told my mother gloomily, "was just like driving a bus."

A few months later, he got his orders. He'd be with the VQ-1 squadron, otherwise known as "Electronic Countermeasure Squadron One," in Iwakuni. He'd heard the Navy was doing extensive background checks on him, probably for top secret clearance. He had to report for duty in two months.

"Oh my God," my mother recalls saying in a phone call between Pensacola and New York. "We'll get married, and I'll leave school." "I never wanted to ask you to do that," he said. Two months later, on May 19, 1956, they married in her home town of Norwalk, Connecticut, amid the blooming dogwoods. As she boarded a Navy plane to Japan that summer, my mother carried one small suitcase and her black medical bag stuffed with their wedding silver. Her life in Iwakuni felt exotic and refreshingly carefree. She filled her days getting to know the other Navy wives, taking Japanese flower-arranging classes and practicing her cooking. On weekends, she and her new husband bicycled through the countryside and attended cocktail parties at the officers' club.

The squadron's wives didn't discuss their husbands' work, my mother says, because none of them knew what their husbands did. She recalls once climbing around the inside of the P4M-1Q patrol plane during a base open house for the crews' families. In the rear, black sheets covered what looked like small desks. My mother assumed that was secret surveillance equipment. Seeing the ribbons of ammunition hanging from the machine guns, she remembers thinking, "Why do they need real bullets?"

About a month after she arrived in Japan, my mother remembers, she chatted with her husband while he got ready for work. "I'm so glad I didn't get jets," he said, adjusting his tie in the mirror. "Really?" she asked. "Why?" "Because what I'm doing now is so interesting and so valuable," she recalls Deane saying. Two weeks later, his plane was shot out of the sky.

What my mother didn't know was that her husband and his squadron were flying some of the most dangerous and secretive missions of the Cold War. It didn't take long for the Communist countries to figure out what the U.S. Planes were doing. Former Navy pilots say they had to keep finding new ways to provoke the other side into turning on the radar.

"They absolutely knew we were there," says Karle Naggs, 72, one of Deane's colleagues. "They'd see us and shut down their radar, and then we'd fly along, and they'd turn it on again. It was a little bit of a game." The VQ1 pilots usually flew at

night, with the plane lights off and the windows darkened. Sometimes, pilots say, a Chinese or Soviet jet would begin following them or lock its airborne radar on the U.S. plane. The pilots of the larger, slower P4M-1Q would dive toward the ocean. Their prop plane would have enough time to pull out and cruise low over the water. The faster jets couldn't follow and pull out safely. A few quick turns, and the American plane would fly away.

The missions were so secret that crews didn't learn where they would be flying until hours before takeoff. Several pilots say they never knew for certain whom their missions collected radar data for but assume it went to the National Security Agency. "I don't think anyone in the Navy knew what we were doing, says Gary Grau, one of Deane's fellow pilots. Many assumed that if anything went wrong over enemy territory -- a place where the United States never admitted to being -- their country would be in no position to rescue them. "There was no doubt in my mind that if you crashed, there was no one coming to pick you up," says Naggs.

On Wednesday, August 22, 1956, six weeks after my mother had arrived in Japan, Deane took a nap to rest up for that night's flight. Later, my mother dropped him off at the hangar with a quick kiss goodbye. Though she usually didn't know how long he'd be away, he assured her he'd be home for a squadron party four days later.

Looking back, Deane's flight seemed doomed from the start. His would be one of two VQ1 planes flying that night: The first would stir up the enemy radar, enabling Deane's plane to pick up more signals. But the crew wasn't aware of two key factors that made that night's mission even riskier than usual, according to the follow-up investigation. Unknown to the Navy, an Air Force plane was flying in the same area. The VQ1 squadron also wasn't aware that U. S. intelligence had picked up two new Chinese radar systems that could better detect them in the Shanghai area. With the Air Force plane and the preceding Navy plane already stirring up the radar, the Chinese would be more than ready for a third plane off their coast. It was also a bright, moonlit night, the kind usually avoided because it made the planes easy targets.

Lt. Commander Milton "Hutch" Hutchinson, 35, one of the squadron's most experienced flyers, was in the chief pilot's seat. As the junior pilots, Deane and Lt. j.g. Frank Flood, 24, likely would have switched off during the flight between co-pilot and navigator, other pilots say. In the back of the plane were 13 men who captured the radar signals, worked the radio and manned the machine guns.

At 11:17 p.m., three hours into the flight and apparently unbeknown to the crew, Deane's plane caught the attention of the Chinese air force, according to a detailed account of the incident in a 2002 Chinese book titled *The Fight to Protect Motherland's Airspace*. Chinese radar tracked the plane for almost 45 minutes, when it then flew over China's territorial waters, according to the book's account. Air

force pilot Zhang Wenyi, flying a Russian MiG-17F, intercepted the plane and, after receiving orders, opened fire.

Harry Sunder, now 72, an air intelligence officer and a friend of Deane's, was in the radio room back in Iwakuni when the emergency message came in. "Oh my gosh," Sunder remembers thinking, "This can't be happening." Though they had had plenty of close calls, a VQ1 squadron plane had never been shot down. Zhang reported that he saw the plane's left wing in flames and continued firing until his ammunition ran out. He then watched it crash into the sea, according to the book.

The story of the shoot down was big news in the United States and China. It made the front pages of *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, just below headlines about President Dwight Eisenhower accepting the GOP nomination to run for a second term.

The Navy's Seventh Fleet began to search almost immediately for the downed plane. However, because of confusion about its last known location, the fleet got to the crash site more than 24 hours late. The United States and China exchanged diplomatic protests via the British. Chinese officials said they had not found any crew members and did not know their fate, according to declassified documents and press reports at the time.

Within the next week, U.S. Navy vessels would find the bodies of two crew members and bits of wreckage floating in the East China Sea. The Chinese returned the bodies of two more crew members, saying only that both had washed up on islands. U.S. officials quickly realized they had a problem. In confidential memos, Navy officials noted that the last position the crew gave, along with the locations of one of the corpses and some of the wreckage, was well within what the Chinese considered the 12-mile territorial limit of their islands.

A top secret Navy board of inquiry attributed the shootdown to a likely navigational error. Unexpectedly strong headwinds probably caused the plane to stray off course and over Chinese islands. The board concluded that, based on severe damage to the wreckage and bodies that had been found, "the existence of any survivors is considered improbable."

In their investigation, however, the officers conducting the inquiry ignored a disturbing piece of evidence. On the last day of the hearing, the "counsel to the court" read a brief statement into the record. According to an intelligence report received four days earlier, just two weeks after the crash, "Fairly reliable information indicates two seriously injured survivors of the P4M that was downed were captured by Chinese Communists within 35 minutes after the actual shoot-down," he said. "Both were taken to a hospital, where one died . . . The other is now presumably a prisoner of war."

That information, the court noted cryptically, was "not within its purview," and the board "did not pursue the foregoing matter further," according to its declassified report.

With her new, married life suddenly gone and her husband listed as Missing in Action, my mother had returned to Cornell medical school. "It certainly doesn't feel right to mourn someone when you don't even know they are dead," she wrote a friend. Truog, who was 11 when her brother vanished, recalls how the disappearance of their only son devastated her parents. Their father, James Sr., wouldn't talk about it, she says. Their mother, Edna, a concert pianist, never played again for her own enjoyment. "She said it just made her too sad," says Truog, 61.

My mother spent late nights writing thank-you notes for still-arriving wedding gifts and responding to letters of condolence. She believed Naval officials' repeated assertions that no one could have survived the crash. Yet, she says, no one had convinced her that someone couldn't have first parachuted to safety. The scientist in her needed proof that her husband was dead, she says. She studied nautical charts of the East China Sea, trying to determine where currents would carry a person or wreckage.

She peppered the squadron's executive officer in Iwakuni with four pages of typewritten questions. She wrote to Eisenhower and top Navy officials, urging them to continue the search. She was repeatedly told the investigation was classified. Convinced the Navy would tell her nothing, she stopped writing.

While my mother stayed up nights in Manhattan typing letters, she didn't know that a State Department lawyer in Washington was sharing her search. Samuel Klaus had been assigned to prepare U.S. shoot down claims against China and the Soviet Union in the International Court of Justice. However, in detailed memos, Klaus wrote that he got little cooperation from the Navy, which had already dismissed the reports of survivors as lies.

It was in Klaus's State Department files, unearthed in the National Archives in the early 1990s, that my mother found most of the U.S. intelligence reports. The names of the sources who provided the information remain blacked out, still considered classified. The six reports, which began arriving two weeks after the shoot down and continued for nearly two years, gave the following account:

A Chinese patrol boat had rescued two badly injured crewmen about 35 minutes after the crash. The men were taken to a nearby hospital in "strict secrecy" before being transferred to an army hospital in north China. A nurse there reported that both had recovered and were transferred to the "residence" of Tsai Mao, the chief of public information for the social welfare ministry. Based on the physical descriptions provided and photos of the missing crew, one prisoner was believed to be

Deane and the other either Warren E. Caron, 23, or Leonard Strykowski, 22. A house boy where the two Americans were being held seven months after the shoot down said they were examined by a doctor twice a month and had "received favorable treatment." The final report said the older captive, known as "Mr. J" and fitting Deane's description, was living outside Beijing in the "residence" of a man named Ch'en Lung, who was assistant chief of the Public Security Department in Beijing. The other American, the report said, was "employed at the Sheng-Lung Corporation" in Shanghai.

Four of the six reports had been given an evaluation ranking of F6, meaning the intelligence officer didn't know the reliability of the source or the accuracy of the information, according to retired Far East intelligence officials. British diplomats questioned the first report's validity, saying they doubted China would conceal prisoners who could prove the United States had violated its air space, according to a letter from the British government. An internal Joint Chiefs of Staff memo noted that a CIA official considered the first two reports of survivors to be "almost certainly fabrication."

The only person who seemed to take the intelligence reports seriously was Klaus, the State Department lawyer. . . . Klaus questioned why Navy officials "had not demanded a return of any living personnel . . . and operated on the assumption that all were dead." Nearly three years after the shoot down, Klaus made the last entry in his file. He said he was dropping the case because the Navy had not provided enough evidence to prove that the Chinese had violated international law by shooting down the plane. Klaus died four years later.

One year after Deane disappeared, my mother accepted the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism on his behalf. She also received a letter from the Navy stating that he had been declared dead. "Please rest assured," the letter said, "that if any additional information is ever received, it will be forwarded to you promptly."

Like my mother 10 years before me, I showed the intelligence reports to anyone I could think of: China experts, former Far East military and intelligence officials, retired VQ1 pilots and Chinese historians. From my initial reading, the reports of Deane's survival seemed to make sense. A few details didn't quite jibe, but the description of one of the captives -- his height, the thin lips and high cheekbones -- matched Deane's photos. Most striking was one of the sources describing one of the Americans as "not hairy." It seemed like an odd feature to include. It also wasn't part of the physical description that the Navy had for Deane and wasn't apparent from his photos. Yet, my mother says, her husband's smooth, almost hairless skin was his most distinguishing physical trait. And how could six reports from apparently different sources -- some to an Air Force intelligence unit in Japan and others to the Army in Korea -- all be fabricated with such similar details?

"Various reports seemed to fit well enough to me to sound right," says Eric McVadon, a retired rear admiral and U.S. defense attache in Beijing in the early

1990s. "I don't see any motive for someone making up all that." However, McVadon is one of the few experts who didn't find flaws. Deane's colleagues and other P4M-1Q pilots believe it unlikely that anyone could have escaped from the plane in the first place.

Even if two people did bail out, experts in China and Far East intelligence gathering during the 1950s say reports of their captivity seem far-fetched. The United States didn't have the sophisticated intelligence network to gather such detailed information, they say. Informants boasting of their inside sources would make up stories because they knew U.S. officials would pay for them. It wasn't unusual for informants to sell the same story to different branches of the U.S. military, they say.

"It was almost impossible to get this information out, and when you did get it out, it was almost always fabricated," says [James] Lilley, [a former U. S. ambassador to China who worked for the CIA throughout the Far East during the 1950's and now] a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. Many of the China experts and former intelligence officials I consulted also noted questionable details.

It didn't seem plausible, they say, that China would have kept two U.S. captives secret when they would have been proof that the Americans had been spying. When I started looking for answers in China, Americans who had done business there cautioned me that I would get nothing by calling people out of the blue. Everything happens through contacts and personal introductions, I was told. I spent four months calling and writing the Chinese foreign affairs and defense ministries, quasi-government organizations that specialize in military and foreign relations, and anyone who might know anyone in China.

I hit a wall. Even after almost 50 years, what I considered a small piece of Cold War history is apparently still an unbroachable topic in China.

This fall, Jia Xiudong, the Chinese Embassy's political counselor, agreed to meet with me. I knew it was likely my only shot at making a personal pitch. I asked to see any historical documents China had in the case. [H]e said he had nothing to add to what he had told me several weeks earlier by phone: that the Chinese never found survivors. He said former secretary of state Colin Powell had asked about the case during a visit to Beijing in July 2001 and that Rumsfeld himself had asked about it again last October. The Cold War, Jia said, is history. "We have nothing to keep away from you."

After receiving no response to my inquiries at our meeting, I wrote Jia that I was left wondering why, if China had never captured any survivors, no one in the United States had been allowed to see any evidence supporting that. Several weeks later, I received a two-page statement from the embassy. The Chinese government had searched its military and public security archives. It also had reinterviewed the Chinese pilot who shot down the American plane, along with other military officials involved in the incident. China's military archives had no records of Americans being captured alive, the statement said. Any retired Chinese military official who remembered survivors was

probably confusing it with another Cold War shootdown. Jia said he couldn't supply the Chinese historical records because it would be too time-consuming to compile them from numerous archives.

The statement also refuted a new, curious detail. The United States, it said, had argued that a Chinese air force pilot's "memoir" mentioned that two people "were ejected from the cockpit of the aircraft." However, the statement said, the memoir had to be wrong because Deane's plane was flying too low for a parachute to open in time. It was more likely, the statement said, that the Chinese pilot saw "an ejection [of two people] after the aircraft was shot, rather than a voluntary bailout."

The Pentagon's POW/MIA office has never heard of such a memoir, nor of any Chinese account in which two crewmen were seen ejecting, or being ejected, from the plane, a Pentagon official says. Neither has my mother. The 2002 Chinese book also never mentioned two people being ejected. Perhaps they were two of the four crew members whose bodies were later found. Perhaps it was new evidence that two people did, indeed, get out alive.

I wrote and called Jia repeatedly, asking for more information. His assistant said the embassy was waiting on an answer from Beijing. I never heard back.

After six months of research, I reluctantly conclude that Deane most likely did not survive the crash. I am still struck by the uncanny similarity between Deane and the physical description of one of the reported captives, but that is about all. In speaking with the most informed experts I could find, I believe the scales tip too much toward the likelihood that most of the information in the intelligence reports is implausible or wrong.

I am sickened by the thought that the pain and stress that has often consumed my mother for 13 years might have stemmed from an informant concocting a story for money. But I am also left with troubling questions. Like my mother, I wonder why the Chinese, if they have nothing to hide, refuse to release 50-year-old military records. And why won't they explain the new account of two crew members being seen ejecting from the plane before it crashed? I also share her dismay that, according to Klaus, the U.S. government didn't pursue reports of Deane's captivity more seriously.

My mother remains convinced that Deane parachuted from the plane and ended up a prisoner of the Chinese. How else could someone who hadn't seen him firsthand describe him so accurately? There was the hairless skin, the high cheek bones, the fact that one of the American prisoners was known as "Mr. J." Deane was the only crew member with a first or last name that started with "J."

"Do we presume someone made this up and it all came together to matchup with Jim Deane?" she asks. "What are the chances of that happening?" She also cannot forget the retired Chinese air defense official who initially said he remembered

China capturing two crew members before he clammed up. Deane probably died in prison, my mother figures, but even that she can't be certain of. "It's not grief, it's something different," my mother says of the emotions she is left with. "It's the horror of not knowing. How do you deal with that?"

Finally, I am struck by a sad irony. Had the U.S. government followed through on its promise to tell my mother any new information gathered about her husband, my family and I would not exist. Worse yet, my young mother would have been left with a frustrating, lonely life. Had she known that Deane had been reported alive in China, she said recently, she never would have gone on another date, let alone married my father. "In that sense all these lies allowed me to remarry, to have children, to have years of happiness," my mother says. "But it still angers me that I was lied to all those years."

On a particularly frustrating day toward the end of my research, my mother called and heard my voice choked with tears. Short of China suddenly deciding to open its military archives to me, I had hit the same dead end as she had. I had wanted so much to provide her a sense of peace, to help her let go rather than carry this search to her grave. I felt like I had failed her. Coming from a family where one does not cry easily, I hurriedly told my mother I would have to call her back. Instead, I wrote her an e-mail, saying I was exhausted. I told her my head hurt from banging it against a wall.

She wrote back within minutes, "I am 73 years old and have spent the last 13 years of my life beating my head against the wall." While she hadn't learned her first husband's fate, she wrote, she finally had what she needed. She was ready to call off her search. "After all you've done and all I've done, there is no question in my mind that we have probably exhausted the possibilities," my mother wrote. "That is something that I never could have said before, and that in itself gives me great peace of mind and lets me get on with the rest of my life. The ironic thing is that some day -- some day -- the answer will come out. I probably will not be around to hear it, but you will."

Perhaps, but that possibility leaves me angry and sad, because my mother and I agree on something vital: Whether he died in the crash or was captured alive, James Deane gave his life for his country. A half-century later, his widow deserves to know how the story really ends.

Katherine Shaver  
Extracted from "Truth and Lies,"  
*The Washington Post Sunday Magazine*,  
May 7, 2006

*Katherine Shaver is a reporter for The Washington Post's Metro section. Staff writer Philip P. Pan, staff researcher Bobbye Pratt and researchers Jin Ling, Doreen Dai and Cherry Zhang also contributed to this story. . . . [The editor's elisions from the original text of the article are almost entirely additional details*

of various American or Chinese officials' polite unanswers to Beverly's or Katherine's questions, interesting but not pertinent to our group memoir.]

*Acknowledgements*

**In addition to classmates who have contributed to this history, we wish to acknowledge the help and support of the following people:**

FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS	CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Professor Irene Kacandes, Dartmouth University Katherine Shaver <i>The Washington Post</i> Frederic C. Tubach Sally Patterson Tubach	Professor Meyer H. Abrams Anne Carson Briseida Castellanos Joanne E. Davenport Susan H. Doney Elaine Engst Connie Finnerty Nancy Gehres Jeremy Hardigan Sarah Keene Laura Linke Jill Powell