

# AGNES SCOTT

ALUMNAE MAGAZINE SPRING 1992



*Agnes Scott  
founded by Mary Francis Scott*

DOCUMENTING THE INWARD JOURNEY

## Preservationist Gayle: NYC's "Cast Iron Lady"

Margot Gayle '31 has saved a ton of New York, literally. A champion of preservation causes for more than 40 years and a master grass-roots activist, the energetic Gayle has focused most of her life on researching and saving the things many considered old-fashioned and useless—cast-iron buildings and bridges.

Gayle was taken by the distinctiveness of cast iron, the delicate designs into which it could be shaped and the ruggedness of the metal that could be inexpensively produced and quickly assembled. From her Upper East Side "command center"—an apartment filled with remnants of past projects (clips, files, books, notes, photographs, a personal computer, salvaged floor-to-ceiling mirrors and decorative iron pieces)—down to her old turf in SoHo, Gayle has gained fame as the "Cast-Iron Lady." This past fall, the diminutive Gayle was handed a hefty bouquet of praise for her work by the New York Landmarks Conservancy in the form of the Lucy G. Moses Award for Preservation Leadership.

*New Yorker Magazine* writer and critic Brendan Gill encapsulated Gayle's lifetime of work in a speech before presenting her with the Moses award in October. He cited as one of her most notable accomplishments, the founding of the Friends of Cast-Iron Architecture in 1970. Through FCIA Gayle successfully leveraged public support and funding to

Monika Nikore Photo



save a long list of cast-iron buildings and bridges built in New York City between 1850 and 1900. Many of them are included in *Cast-Iron Architecture in New York*, a photographic record that Gayle produced jointly with photographer Edmund V. Gillon Jr., in 1974, of more than 100 cast-iron buildings.

But her effort doesn't end there. Gayle has used her knowledge and persuasiveness to attain recognition for James

Bogardus, responsible for starting the cast-iron building movement in 1848.

Bogardus, a self-educated Dutch-American inventor, revolutionized a milling method that could be applied to many grinding needs—corn, wheat, paint. The wealth he accumulated from this invention and the technical knowledge in iron casting he acquired by attending British exhibitions of similar technology allowed him to revolutionize the

commercial building industry and capitalize on the idea during a boom time in New York's history.

"It must have thrilled him because he came back and said, in effect, 'In England, they just use it for interior construction. Why not for outside?' Today, everyone calls to mind his name with that [industrial] connection but they don't know anything more about him," explains Gayle, who is finishing a book about the inventor. "I will add a good bit



*Recognizing the beauty of New York City's cast-iron architecture, ASC's Margot Gayle fought to save it for future generations.*

of original information about Bogardus."

Gayle's passion for preservation began soon after she and her family moved to New York in 1944. While her husband served overseas in the military, Gayle worked as a staff writer for CBS. From her Greenwich Village apartment, she

launched a host of political and preservation campaigns, which "nearly drove my family crazy," she says. A failed attempt to win a New York City Council seat in 1957 didn't daunt Gayle, whom many Scotties knew as Margaret McCoy in 1928-29. She eventually served as assistant to the commissioner of the New York City Department of Public Events and as information officer of the NYC Planning Committee.

In 1959, while a freelance

magazine writer, she rallied a group known as The Village Neighborhood Committee for a three-year fight to save the 1877 Jefferson Market Courthouse. She led the push for passage of the city's 1965 Landmarks Law which preserves historic structures and in 1966 she founded the American Victorian Society, which educates the public on the importance of numerous historic structures. Gayle has long been a member of New York's Municipal Art Society, has served on former Mayor Ed Koch's city Art Commission and has served on the city-controlled Consultative Advisory Group, pushing for acquisition and preservation of high quality public art. In 1988, with art historian Michele Cohen, Gayle penned a guide to outdoor sculpture in Manhattan.

While her own legacy is impressive, Gayle is even prouder of her recent efforts to gain recognition for the man who started the cast-iron movement, James Bogardus. Today in SoHo, a pie-shaped traffic island park (with six trees) bears Bogardus' name. "You know you have to go through a lot of rigamarole to get something permanently named and in an old city, everything's already named," observes Gayle. "But we got it through the local planning board and through the Parks Committee of the New York City Council. It all came off just fine. Mayor Ed Koch signed the final bill and said, 'If Margot says it's a good idea, we know it's a good idea.' And it's a stone's throw away from the very few Bogardus buildings still in existence."

— Mary Alma Durrett

## Education Consultant Lucas: Helping Arctic Teachers Teach

**B**racing herself and her child against the weather, which hovers near 55 degrees below zero, she quickly makes her way to the plane. Once she's safely inside, the pilot readies the two-seater for take off to a remotely-located school in the Arctic region.

Traveling from one assignment to another by plane is typical for Mary Paige Lucas '73, a curriculum consultant to rural school districts in Alaska. "Because of inclement weather and unpaved roads in rural areas, traveling by mail plane is the quickest and safest way to go," she explains.

Her 10-month-old son often accompanies her on assignments. "I just pack his little playpen and set it up in the classrooms. It is pretty informal, and I usually stay four or five days at a time when I go out to the districts."

Lucas' work as a consultant has taken her to more than 15 school districts in Alaska—from small Arctic villages to cities such as Anchorage, where she now lives with her husband, a natural resources economist, and three children. She enjoys traveling but admits it can be hard to manage a hectic schedule and raise a family. "I have a lot of support from my husband. Without him I could not do this type of work."

Her job involves working with elementary and junior high school-level teachers and administrators on a contract basis. One of her more challenging projects was to design a



*In the pristine Arctic wilderness, Alaska education consultant Mary Paige Lucas '73 helps native peoples preserve their culture while they learn to live in a white-oriented society.*

behavioral management training program for teachers' aides in the northwest Arctic. She has also maintained a five-year collaboration with Alaska's Special Education Service Agency (SESA). With SESA's approval she makes modifications to school curriculums in order to accommodate neurologically-impaired and other special education children.

Her work has also taken her directly into the classroom where she has conducted cooperative education workshops in which students learn to work in groups rather than individually. "This workshop fosters self-esteem and it's an Eskimo way of working together. It fits well into how they do things at home and it has helped to implement lessons in the classroom," she says.

Lucas notes that another aspect of her work—which she finds very important—is her ability to bridge the culture of mainstream society and the unique culture of the Eskimo. "It involves mixing the white culture of the school setting and the native culture of the town. From there I try to figure out how to keep the Eskimo heritage and culture, yet help them prepare to move ahead in the 20th century.

"Eskimos want to be able to function in society—to get a job, run a business, work a computer . . . I never know what I'm going to find, who I'm going to meet and how it is going to work. I would have been considered to be just one more person who came in and out, but I have a genuine interest and pleasure in working with

them in *their* way."

In many of the school districts Lucas visits, the Eskimos live in very small, isolated communities. Although many speak English and some have satellite television to connect them to the outside world, they embrace their own cultural values. Lucas explains these values as being "not as competitive, being respectful of elders and operating within extended families."

Lucas, a psychology major, looks back on the long-lasting repercussions of her education. "One of the things Agnes Scott teaches is to be able to adapt to a situation and how to work with and see the whole picture. And in this type of work that is necessary."

Following graduation from ASC, Lucas taught in Douglas

and Cobb counties. She describes her move from Georgia to Nome, Alaska, in 1978 as an "impulsive decision, and I don't tend to make impulsive decisions." A friend teaching in Fairbanks told her of the state's shortage of special education teachers. So Lucas did some research and literally struck gold—opportunities were abundant. Soon a position was offered and within two weeks she went from 95-degree to 45-degree weather.

In 1983 she and her family returned to the "lower 48" so that she could attend graduate school at the University of Delaware. When they returned to Alaska in 1987, Lucas began consulting and working on her Ph.D. dissertation. She completed her doctorate in education in 1991.

On returning to Alaska she and her family settled into a house on the coast of the Cook Inlet, just off the Pacific Ocean. Their reason for returning to the state: job opportunities, its geographic beauty and adventure. "The opportunities here are special—not as many bureaucratic layers to go through. This is also pristine country—the forest is right here. I have moose in my backyard and the mountains and oceans are gorgeous.

"Alaskans have a spirit of adventure about them," she adds. "They want to branch out and try things. People here have a lot of energy and are creative."

True to her description of Alaskans, Lucas is also fond of adventure. Each time she steps into a mail plane she begins an "educational adventure."

—Audrey Arthur

# READING BETWEEN THE LINES



When green-eyed Joan Kimble '91 walks into the Thompson house, Betty Thompson's entire face creases deeply into a smile and her right arm—the one not tied to her wheelchair—flies up to meet Kimble's affectionate embrace.

"How are you?" asks Kimble, plopping a red board engraved with a white alphabet onto Thompson's lap.

Thompson's free hand thrusts downward, her finger lands on G.

"Good?" guesses Kimble.

Thompson cuts her eyes upward and makes a guttural yyyeh for yes.

Her finger points to I-L-O-V.

"I love," repeats Kimble. "I love. . ."

H-U-G-S.

RTC-grad Joan Kimble '91 has turned work with a quadriplegic client into something more.

Written by  
Celeste Pennington

Photographed by  
Paul Obregón

**K**IMBLE AND THOMPSON became acquainted through United Cerebral Palsy of Atlanta, where Kimble worked part time as a respite care giver, helping families care for people of all disabilities. Thompson, who at seven months of age contracted meningitis, is a quadriplegic.

With Kimble's regular visits, the two quickly developed a close relationship—at its base, this letter-by-letter communication. "I majored in English at Agnes Scott," says Kimble, a former Return to College student. She laughs: "I can spell.

"Betty has little control over her muscle functions. She can't speak, but she understands everything. Through spelling, she taught me how to care for her: How to use the lift for the wheelchair, where to find the soap, where to find her toothbrush, how to turn on her typewriter."

Kimble *can* spell. She is also attuned to Thompson's more subtle communication: a shift of her eyes or flutter of eyelids, a hand motion, the nuance of sound without words. For everything to click, Kimble must read between the lines, exercising skills in psychology, imagination and intuition. "Has anything been going on?" she asks Thompson, who points to N.

"No?"

Thompson cuts her eyes. Kimble knows Thompson's joking.

R-O-B-I-S-T-A-K

"Rob is taking you to. . . ."

P-O-T-L-U

"Potluck supper? At the Quaker church?"

Y-

Both grin.

H-U-M-O-R, spells out Thompson, is another key to care. "You have to really like the person who is helping you," Kimble explains. "We [caregivers] are constantly in your face."

MENTALLY TAXING is the way Kimble describes work. "I must always be thinking for two." For Kimble the job is a constant tug-of-war: to anticipate need yet not interfere with her clients' self-sufficiency.

The work requires great patience, as well, reminds Estella Sims, respite care coordinator for United Cerebral Palsy. "Dressing a person takes time. Feeding a handicapped person may take more than three hours."

Kimble is constantly seeking new ways to

*Joan Kimble's relationship with quadriplegic Betty Thompson is more than caregiver/client. A deep friendship has evolved as they've worked together. Whether in the Thompson house or on valued walks, "I must always be thinking for two," says Kimble.*





Kimble “takes the extra step. She is there even when she isn’t getting paid.”

*Kimble believes the government does too little to meet the needs of people like Thompson. She often writes to public officials, urging creation of special group homes. Thompson's father, Raymond (below right), now spends six hours a day in hands-on care for his daughter. What happens, wonders Kimble, when Raymond—now in his mid-70s—can no longer provide this care for his daughter?*

communicate, analyzing and breaking down daily tasks into basic components as well as frequently lifting, bathing, dressing, feeding, shifting, moving. “This job is exhausting,” admits Kimble.

“It takes my mind and my body and my heart.”

Critical to doing her best is Kimble’s ability to assess and mentally catalogue each client’s capabilities. Thompson, for instance, reads, works jigsaw puzzles, types with one hand, and takes “walks” through the neighborhood in her electric wheelchair. “You must,” says Kimble, “allow every person to do whatever they can for themselves.

“You have to *learn* each person.”

What she has learned in her four years of working with the handicapped is that “each one is so different from the last.” Mentally retarded clients she describes as stable, predictable. The challenge is to teach them basic living skills. Simply washing hands, explains Kimble, must be thoughtfully communicated: “This is a water faucet. Turn on the water. Pick up the soap, please. Put the soap on your hands. Lather up the soap. Put the soap down, please. Rinse your hands. Turn off the faucet. Pick up the paper towel. Dry your hands. Now, put the paper towel in the basket. For some, to turn on the water before they pick up the soap is quite an accomplishment.”

Her mentally ill clients have intelligence, good mobility and communication skills, yet behaves unpredictably. Diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic, this person requires careful observation and protection from doing things like overmedicating himself.

Kimble chose this work over teaching English in a school where she encountered drug-related discipline problems. She found two part-time jobs

working with handicapped persons. Seven months after graduation—and in the midst of a hiring freeze—she was hired full time by Gwinnett County Mental Retardation. “The people Joan helps are very fortunate,” notes Sims. “When she wanted to work out a program for a child, I remember she called late one night wondering how she could help. She takes the extra step. She is there even when she isn’t paid.”

Teaching task analysis and training others to work with the mentally retarded interest Kimble. “The mentally retarded are extremely loving people. You begin talking, and they respond. Not only am I able to give love in this relationship,” she says, “but my love is returned.”

Eventually, Kimble would like to manage a home for people like Thompson who have normal intelligence but special needs for communication and mobility. She is acutely aware of this need for a home as she relates to Thompson, 44, and to Thompson’s 73-year-old father, Raymond. He is proud of his daughter and her accomplishments, and has devoted his retirement years to her care. But he expresses concern for her after he is gone. Her only option now would be a nursing home. “People there are often senile,” says Kimble, “not mentally quick like Betty. We are afraid she might end up with no real communication.”

Kimble has helped Raymond draft letters to state officials and representatives expressing the need for a group home in DeKalb County. “I am a friend who is concerned.”

FRIENDSHIP partially accounts for the successful shorthand communication between Kimble and Thompson. “I read people fairly well,” says Kimble. “But Betty reads me like an open book. She is that tuned in.” Even though Thompson is no longer an assigned client, Kimble stops by to talk, to take her friend on an outing or for a walk: Thompson honk-honking the horn on the wheelchair and laughing—Kimble running to keep up.

Because the two are such good communicators, last year Kimble was chosen to translate for Thompson when she appeared on a local telethon. But now and then even Kimble fails to second guess, as this day when Thompson spells out her reason for their enduring friendship: I-L-O

“I love?” Kimble translates.

H-E-R-S-O-M

“I love her sometimes?”

S-O-M-U-C-H. **ASC**







*Being outdoors is a special treat for Thompson, one she and Kimble share together. Despite her disabilities, Thompson remains active; she serves as secretary for a sports program for the disabled—she has learned to bowl with a ramp.*

# A SOLITARY ACT

Keeping a journal gives words to thought and documents a person's inward journey.

---

Written by  
Lynn Bulloch '64  
Illustrated by  
Mitzi Cartee

*Physical growth is easy to recognize, but personal growth is inward and elusive. In the metaphor of Lao Tse, it is evanescent, like smoke going out the chimney.*

—IRA PROGOFF, JOURNAL WORKSHOP LEADER, DREW UNIVERSITY

For an hour the business executive scribbled notes. The man, a Princeton graduate in his 60s, had already crafted a tightly written letter to his shareholders, but it was this freely written journal account of a crucial, life-changing experience—a turning point—that he wanted to present to the investors.

Instead of what is normally a very image-conscious corporate note, this communication was marvelously unguarded. He was determined to offer more to his readers than straight numbers and the proverbial bottom line.

Usually reserved for the writer's use, alone, a journal is characterized by a frankness unlike writing done for publication. As defined by Webster, a journal or diary is a daily record of experiences and observations.

Reasons for keeping a journal are as varied as each writer: one documents significant family or historical events; another notes regular touch-points of a life in progress; one collects poems, jokes or song lyrics; while another chronicles the inner life, or, with intensive journal keeping, works through personal crisis. Some educators of young children use group journal-writing to enhance writing and reading skills. For professional writers, material from journals may provide the seeds of a play or novel.

I think of it as a log book of one who is on a journey.

As a form, journal writing actually began to flower in the late Renaissance period, with its focus on the individual.

Some of these and later journals offered great records of social and political history, such as *Journal d'un Paris*, kept by an anonymous French priest from 1409 to 1431, an invaluable resource to historians of the reign of Charles VI. While many men have kept journals, through the centuries women have proven to be the more diligent and prolific journal-keepers.

As a discipline, according to a recent article in *The New York Times*, journal-keeping is rooted in 16th century England: then, Puritan clergy instructed the faithful to keep daily record of their

spiritual lives. The earliest surviving example is the religious self-examination of Englishwoman Margaret Hoby, dated 1599. Letter diaries were in vogue by the time of the American Revolution. And here, pioneers optimistically kept such journals to be mailed out at the journey's end:

"If we drown," wrote Margaret Van Horn Dwight matter-of-factly in 1810, "there will be an end to my journal."

Historically, suggests the *Times* article, women particularly have understood journal-keeping as an opportunity for self-assertion and self-communication, setting apart time, as described by English writer Mary Berry in her diary in 1836, to have a "little colloquy with myself every day."

For me, journal-keeping provides inner stability and a sense of connection within the complex tapestry of my own existence. It provides an antidote to the contemporary world that, as e e cummings noted, daily seems to be trying to make me someone I am not.

Its value for me became particularly clear in the summer of 1986. After an 18-year career as counselor and group therapist, I had arrived at a painful moment: no matter how wonderful my life appeared on the surface, I was crying every night. Out of that time, call it mid-life crisis or deep psychological shift, I felt compelled to make a career change. I learned, then, that life offers no place of honor for darkness. So I turned to the wisdom of keeping a journal. Thumbing through the pages of my journal dating back to that year, I found this tear-stained entry dated June: "I may break down in front of the staff," I wrote. "What does this mean? Am I breaking down—or am I breaking through?"

*Under certain stresses, certain violent events, losses, separations, one experiences the world with the emotional size of Alice in Wonderland. . . . smaller than events call for.*

—DIARY OF ANAIS NIN, VOL IV, 1945



Dreams

In recording their thoughts, many “journalists” discover that the dreams they hold can be realized within themselves.

Journal-keeping begins as a very private discipline and requires only rudimentary tools, ranging from a pocket-sized notepad and pencil to an elaborate art book and costly pen, depending on the style of the writer. There is no right or wrong way to keep a journal—again, styles vary.

Journal-keeping usually begins as a silent work. Simple and solitary.

Yet like the daily walk or aerobics workout that gets the heart pumping, journal-keeping can grow into a regular exercise of the heart and mind.

A technique I suggest for beginning journal-keepers is this: with pen and journal in hand, sit quietly, for a moment closing your eyes and breathing deeply. Clear your mind of distractions, then write deliberately, and without censoring the flow.

While on one level this activity may seem innocuous, I like to point out that on another level it may very well be slightly subversive as a writer begins to listen to the sounds of her own soul. Some journal-keepers have been known to give up strict attention to what others expect as they tap that normally elusive inner voice.

While this discipline may begin by blessing the life of the writer, it sometimes has immeasurable implications for others, as well. What reader can resist a literary peek through another's window and the privacy, revealed?

Artist Georgia O'Keeffe's published journals reflect humorously and obliquely on her life's work. “I don't know what Art is,” she wrote in her *New York Diaries*, 1916, “but I know some things it isn't when I see them.”

Writers Virginia Woolf and Anaïs Nin used their journals to try ideas, to collect fragments of information, to explore their own minds.

Anne Frank's diary and Etty Hillesum's journal, historical gems, gave each of them as writers—and each of us as readers—tools with which to sift through life in the midst of Holocaust.

*I have often been downcast, but never in despair. I regard our hiding as a dangerous adventure, romantic and interesting at the same time. In my diary I treat all the privations as amus-*

*ing. I have made up my mind now to lead a different life from other girls.*

—DIARY OF ANNE FRANK, 3 MAY, 1944

Contemporary journal-keeping, suggests Harriet Blodgett, author of the *Times* article and editor of *Capacious Hold-All. An Anthology of Englishwomen's Diary Writings*, suggests that the Velcro-sealed Filofax or Day Runner which she calls a “ubiquitous yuppie handbook” fills the need for a personal diary at the same time it keeps the lives of “status-seeking men and women on track and on time.”

In her research, she found that Filofax ancestry actually dates back to 18th century England where it became common for women to use bound pocket diaries. The 19th century version of this pocket diary might include an almanac, verses, notes of personal interest, and a space for household expenses.

In our next century, Blodgett suggests, diaries could be on computer disk.

Whatever the form, I believe the basis of journal-keeping is the unfolding of a person at different intersections of life. I have come to trust the process. I believe it helps scratch out the clues of our existence and gives voice to an inner thought-life which is often squelched by circumstances or lost in the barrage of other voices that direct and shape us.

A woman attending one of my journal seminars, last year—Tapping the Writer Within—has found that inner voice. She told the group that as a child she had kept a diary that recorded family events. More recently, at age 50, and after her fifth divorce, she discovered her latest journals were filled with poetry, for her, a new genre.

Later during the afternoon seminar, as she and the other participants wrote in their journals, I could hear this woman chuckling.

When, in the final hour, I gave group members an opportunity to share whatever they wished, she read a poem.

She called the poem “Prince Charming,” and observed that the prince she had sought all of her adult life was probably within. **ASC**

*Additional research for this story was done by Emily Pender '95.*

Linda Bulloch '64 is a playwright and writer from Maysville, Ga., who leads journal-keeping workshops. She is also coordinator for the upcoming International Women's Writing Guild seminar which will be from 9 to 5 on Saturday, Oct. 31, 1992, at Agnes Scott College. The program is the first Southern seminar in the organization's 15-year history and will include presentations by four Southern authors. For more information about the seminar contact Bulloch at 404-652-3271.

# A STUDENT JOURNAL

**M**ary Sturtevant Cunningham '33 was a pediatrician's daughter from Philadelphia who attended Agnes Scott during the Depression. Active in YWCA and Mortar Board, she worked to change College chaperonage rules and in 1931 she supported an effort to "boost Southern industry" by wearing 25-cent beige cotton hosiery. In 1933, she played "Light" in the May Day Festival and helped direct "The Stewed Prince (In Two Sips and a Final Gulp)."

After graduation she returned to Philadelphia to work as a fund raiser for the Museum of Natural History. In 1936, she married her high school sweetheart, Gilbert L. Bean. They lived in Braintree, where she worked with the town's Historical Society. After Bean died in 1972, she married Donald Cunningham.

The Smithsonian Institution recognized a program she developed for children as a prototype for giving youngsters an appreciation of life in the 18th century. At her death in 1990, the Historical Society called her a guardian angel, "a philanthropist in the truest sense of the word." Among Cunningham's papers was found a small ring-bound diary recounting notes she'd kept during her college years (1929-1933). Given to ASC by her family, the journal is excerpted below.

## 1929

### ARRIVAL

We had a good time on the train because about 50 boys from Riverside Military Academy entertained us with their victrola. One of them in particular said he wanted to see me. . . .

My room is quite nice, rather big with two large closets. The girls are all very nice to me and my "Grandmother" is the president of the Senior Class and the most popular girl in the school.

I was glad to get my first letter from home. Almost everyone weeps buckets over their first letter, but I didn't. I haven't been homesick at all. . . .

### STUDIES

I am getting used to studying so long and it doesn't

seem nearly so bad as it did at first. We have a Latin prose test on Thursday. That makes me shake in my shoes, but I am learning how to study and I'll do my best to pass it.

There is a story around here that one of our Latin teachers was engaged to Mr. Bennett of "Bennett's Latin Grammar" and broke her engagement because they had a fight over the ablative case.

Oh, Thornton Wilder spoke here on Wednesday. He was excellent and his talk showed a good deal of understanding of human nature.

### CLASS ACTION

Last night the Sophomores went around selling things. They said they would launder our curtains for 25 cents apiece. They also sold us chapel seats for 25 cents, all of which was spaghetti—we bit.

After dinner there was a Student Government Meeting which all the Freshman had to attend. As soon as it was over they turned out the lights and shut the doors so that no one could get out. Then the Sophs came in dressed in long robes and singing a funeral song. They carried a coffin. They called certain Freshmen up before them, who had to kneel before the coffin and put their foreheads on it. These lowly rats were told to provide a dance at a certain time and place before the whole school. Some had to take a census of all the black cats in Decatur. . . .

Now I will tell you how we are dressed. Our hair is up in curl papers, no less than 10. We have white middies with long sleeves, a white petticoat and a gingham dress, black stockings and white tennis shoes, cotton gloves and a cap. We wear the cap outside and carry it inside. A candle we hold in our left hand and whenever a Soph asks us where we are going, we must say, "Trying to find our way out of the fog."

### MY BIRTHDAY

I had not been looking forward to a birthday away from home but now I am almost decided that it is just as much fun to get lots of packages and letters as to have a birthday dinner. Your box arrived Monday morning, and now there is one piece of cake and three brownies left. Need I say the food was enjoyed by everyone?

Notes from  
the college  
writings of a  
Depression-  
era Agnes  
Scott student.



From golfer Bobby Jones to socialist Norman Thomas, a lineup of famous people tantalized Cunningham.



Mary Startevant Cunningham (first row, right) and other first year students. The candles are to help them "find our way out of a fog."



## DORMITORY DEMENTURE

There has been loads of excitement here this week. On Monday night a group of us were together in a girl's room having a feed for the girl whose leg was broken. Suddenly we heard someone playing taps on a bugle. We rushed to the window and saw a man outside tooting away. We called "encore" and he started to play "O Solo Mio." A girl from the college ran down the drive, met him and they ran down the street together. Great was the excitement, for we were sure we had seen a real honest elopement. . . .



After two days of much talk and rumors, it was discovered that the girl was only a day student merely going home. What a disillusionment, and especially after we were beginning to believe that romance was not dead after all.

## Y.W.C.A

Last night a group of us went to the "Manless Dance" given by a group of industrial girls at the Atlanta Y.W. I never realized before how interesting girls who worked in the mills could be. I hope that I will have the opportunity to see them again. Dad, will you tell me something about the industrial situation? What is the average income of the working class? What about labor unions and communism? I'd like to know more. . . .

## 1930-1931

### THE DEPRESSION

Things are in a pretty state here in the South. Almost every day we hear that a bank has failed. Several [girls] will probably have to stay here during Christmas, if they cannot go home by bus. I never saw such an absolutely broke community. None of us has any money to spend.

The most exciting event happened on Thursday when the Decatur bank failed. Some Commotion! The school, campus organizations and lots of individuals, especially faculty members, lost lots of money. I don't know how hard hit the school was, but not very badly I guess, because it has its money in several banks.

### THE LEISURE LIFE

Norman Thomas spoke here this afternoon. He is very tall, has white hair and wears very ill-fitting clothes. I don't believe in his politics, but I certainly admire him because he has the courage of his convictions.

On Tuesday night I went with a huge crowd from school to hear Paderewski, and he was wonderful. He played Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata," Chopin's "Nocturne in E. flat" and Rachmaninoff's "Prelude." The crowd was so enthusiastic they made him play three encores.

Last night a group of us went over to Emory University to hear Carl Sandburg read some of his poems and play and sing songs from "The American Songbook."

I saw Bobby Jones play in a charity game. We couldn't afford to buy a ticket, but we drove along the road beside the golf course and stood on the car where we saw quite well. The point was to see him rather than to see him play.

## THE CAMPAIGN

For the next two weeks, the administration is planning to put on a campaign to raise enough money to finish paying for the new building which we built this summer. We are working hard to help with it.

Of all the crazy times to raise money, this is the worst. . . . They asked the students and faculty to pledge \$20,000. We did that and more.

## 1931-32

### CONSTRUCTIVE THINKING

We have been working hard to get the chaperonage rule changed. As it stands now, it is nothing more than a farce. . . . There is a meeting on Thursday which will tell whether we have been doing any constructive thinking.

### ON BEING A JUNIOR

I think that the Junior year is the nicest of all. This is the time when we can enjoy our friends so much. Our class is all in a dither about Junior Banquet, which I think is a pretty dumb entertainment. But, after all it's the only official time when men are entertained out here, so I guess it is pretty important. A dance would be much more worth getting excited about. (I am going to invite a boy from Emory.)



## 1932-33

### STUDIES

I am taking American Lit, American History, a survey course of German Lit, German Conversa-

tion, Art History and Genetics and Evolution. . . .

I talk of my exams as though they were terrible things, when really I am having a fine time. Not having to go to classes or to have any kind of a regular schedule is giving me a complete vacation. Of course there is always studying to do, but I can sleep late, stay away from meals and be as lazy as I please when I don't have an exam the next morning. This week is my easy one. I have four exams next week and they are all pretty hard.



### MAY DAY

I was told this morning that I am to do a solo dance in May Day. That has been the height of my ambition. I realize that it will be difficult to imagine this horse getting out and flitting before all those people. My costume is white crepe de chine, and cut exactly like an evening dress.

### SENIOR OPERA

The Senior class always gives a burlesque on the evening of May Day. I am general chairman, which means I can't do any acting. This year we're presenting "The Stewed Prince In Two Sips and a Final Gulp" by the Senioropolitan Operetta Company. We practice every night. I have to see a million people a day, and when I go to bed and try to get some sleep, I lie awake and think about all the people I have to see the next day. You would think that I didn't enjoy it, by the way I am complaining, but I really do love it.

### MISCELLANY

The Fox Theater here is making an all Atlanta picture and one of our Freshmen is the heroine. They have been taking pictures out here.

Everything is out here in full bloom. Atlanta is famous for its dogwoods and believe me, justly so. The main residential district looks like fairyland. In addition the azalias are in bloom.

### FRIENDS AND LAST DAYS

Although our old crowd is divided, we see a good bit of each other, so I don't miss them as much as I thought I would.

I am sleeping out on the roof at night and it is glorious. I have been busy getting a tan and playing tennis. These last days are so much fun and so short. **ASC**



In the worst of times, students and faculty managed to raise \$20,000 for a new building.

# LOVE IN THE MORTAR JOINTS

On their spring break, 13 Agnes Scott students help build a new family of friends—and four habitats for humanity

Written and photographed by Mary Alma Durrett



**FRIDAY** “I just didn’t  
**MARCH 20** want  
today  
**5 P.M.** to end,” Savannah  
sophomore Nancy Zehl im-  
parts our collective feeling as  
she kicks the red clay off her  
running shoes, takes a seat in  
our familiar muddy maroon  
van and readies herself for the  
short but bouncy ride back to

our home away from home—the First Baptist Church of Starkville, Miss. We are dust covered and physically weary but we are high with the euphoria of accomplishment. Sixteen of us have completed our week (March 15-20) as a work group for Habitat for Humanity which builds and refurbishes homes, world-

wide, through the efforts of volunteers and recipient homeowners.

This week we started one house from the ground up, walled and sided two others, and finished (or very nearly finished) a fourth. We have made friends. We have seen a new place, worked hard, negotiated our way through prob-





lems, eaten heartily and accomplished much. We have learned a good deal about ourselves.

Tomorrow we will begin our 300-mile journey back to the campus of Agnes Scott College but tonight, in our final huddle with our co-workers we will “die and go to cat-fish heaven.” A rivers-edge

eatery known as The Friendship House Restaurant provides us with a seemingly never-ending stream of cat-fish.

I savor the food and company—the dozen University of Vermont students, the local Habitat for Humanity board members, the women from the First Baptist Church who have

coordinated the lunch and laundry needs of Scottie group.

What’s stuck in my memory for the moment is the sheer beauty of the day—blue sky, cool breeze, warm chatter and pure exhilaration from hoisting up the framework at the Washington Street site.

Another house is begun.

*Like an ol’ time barn raising, lifting the framework on the Habitat home was a high point for the ASC and University of Vermont crews that worked on the Mississippi site during spring vacation.*

Women in workclothes find "at days end, it's nice to see what you've accomplished."

---

**SUNDAY** "This is  
**MARCH 15** where  
**NOON** rubber meets  
the road," says Chaplain Patti Snyder as she and I point the two vans full of women and workclothes toward north Mississippi, arriving in Starkville at about 4:30 p.m. We find the church fellowship hall where we are to bed and

bathe this week, divide into snoring and non-snoring groups and unfurl the sleeping bags and foam cushions. Dinnertime arrives and we beat a path to the First Presbyterian Church for the first of many meals given to us by total strangers.

We arrive in Oktibbeha County after much preparation.



**MONDAY** Scents  
**MARCH 16** of  
**7 A.M.** coffee  
and sweet rolls  
awaken me. Rick and Eliza-  
beth Gaupo, the site coordina-  
tors from Habitat Interna-  
tional, and the Vermont group  
join us for our first of five pre-  
work devotionals. We gather  
our hammers and lunches  
(which we made the night  
before) and head for the work  
sites. "I saw a side of life I've  
never seen before," says  
Theresa Hoenes, a sophomore  
from Marietta, Ga., who is  
among the students I travel  
with to the Holland family  
house site, out on a secluded  
dirt road beyond the expanse  
of Mississippi State University.

Fire destroyed the  
Holland's home in November.  
The stark symmetry of their  
new home-in-progress stands  
in contrast to the lumbering,  
old home which had a geode-  
sic dome as its focal point.  
The family's belongings are  
strewn out across the lawn—  
toys, clothes, appliances.  
Hoenes and most of the other  
workers spend the day sand-  
ing, staining and coating  
baseboards, painting the house  
interior, tiling the floors, or  
wiping up the sticky black  
adhesive that seeps up

*Christy Beal '95 (right) cut all  
the lumber used in making the  
door and window headers for the  
Washington Street house.  
Kara Russell '92 (left) found  
many tasks familiar: her father is  
in the construction business.*



*Nancy Zehl '94 and French instructor Marie-Christine Lagier work on door frames. Although she didn't bring many building skills, said Zehl, she brought what is most important: "All you need is an ability to care."*

through the flooring squares.

Owner, Debbie Holland is  
the hardest of workers. She is  
on her knees all day, laying

down tile and custom-cutting  
the pieces that wrap around  
the plumbing fixtures. Her  
three sons are bright and in-

quisitive and play all around  
us, making swords of anything  
that doesn't move, including  
sheetrock.

Debbie schools them at  
home and admits that they are  
behind in their studies. Her  
husband, Sonny, is in town at  
his regular job.

The Hollands have pur-  
chased the home on what  
Habitat Founder Millard  
Fuller calls the "Bible Finance  
Plan": 500 hours of donated  
service to the organization  
plus a no-interest mortgage  
issued over a fixed period.  
Their monthly house pay-  
ments are made at no profit to  
Habitat partners and actually  
will be used to build other  
homes for the needy.

"I enjoyed meeting the  
families and working with  
them, especially the Hollands  
and their little boys," com-  
ments Hoenes.

"It was nice to be able to  
actually see what you had  
accomplished at the end of a  
day."



Fuller's message in song—"Give a little love"—becomes the theme of the Habitat week.

**WEDNESDAY  
MARCH 18** The group **8:10 A.M.** is physically tired. For two days we have installed insulation, hung sheetrock, mudded walls, affixed siding, sanded, shoveled, hammered and painted. It is raining and will likely continue all day. Personalities rub and friction results.

Snyder advises: "We have to learn to be patient with a lot of people."

I am in need of inspiration.

Enter, Georgia Fuller for the daily devotional.

She tells us about the origin of Habitat in her native Americus, Ga., about the ridicule she and her family (Millard and Linda Fuller) have endured for daring to reverse the trend of poverty housing. Through volunteer labor, management expertise and donations of money and materials, Habitat will have built 13,000 homes, worldwide, by the close of this week. Fuller reads from scripture in Galatians about the importance of being bold and teaches us a song she has written the night before, called "Give a little love. . . ."

For three hours today it rains down on volunteers Julia Short, a sophomore from Tennessee, and UV student, Charlotte Sector, who refuse to give up their outdoor posts at the siding saw. Short, with a length of siding, negotiates her way up onto a sawhorse and beneath steadily dripping eaves, hammers siding onto the house.

As Georgia Fuller says, "There are lots of consequences to doing God's work."



## A HABITAT FULLER AT ASC



When Georgia Fuller enters a room, if her nearly six-foot frame and long, wavy brown tresses weren't enough to command attention, her effervescent personality invariably does. This Agnes Scott College junior is the daughter of Habitat for Humanity founders Millard and Linda Fuller.

"I grew up in Habitat," explains the Americus, Ga., native.

"We had a sign out in front of our house that said we were going to 'Eliminate poverty from the face of the Earth.'

*Georgia Fuller '93, daughter of Millard and Linda Fuller, founders of Habitat for Humanity, found some down time in the evenings to play piano. Her song, "Give a Little Love," became a theme of the students' alternate spring break. An excerpt expresses the mood:*  
*"When you see your neighbor's in trouble now,  
 Give a little love.  
 You just better get on the double now,  
 Give a little love.  
 Don't just keep it, take and deliver it,  
 Give a little love . . ."*



With our whole family and a few others working, we had just enough people to lick the stamps to send out fundraising letters."

Most people thought their plan was a foolish little whim.

Detractors ridiculed her parents; the people they helped were often harassed. Millard Fuller's name was purportedly second on local law enforcement's list of Communist Party members. "Jimmy Carter's name was first," Fuller says and laughs. "But that didn't stop them. As my father would say: 'There are times for

being bold or foolish and this clearly was one. For Christ's sake, we are fools.'"

Georgia Fuller has participated in numerous work projects in the United States and in Tijuana, Mexico. Since the first house was built in 1969 in southwest Georgia, 300 houses have been built in Fuller's home county alone, and Habitat for Humanity has grown into a worldwide movement building 13,000 houses.

Today Habitat has building projects in 800 cities in 37 countries worldwide, averaging 15 houses per day.

On the evening of day two, with the group of ASC and University of Vermont "Collegiate Challenge" homebuilders tired from physical labor and bracing for a day of work in the rain, Fuller inspired us with her memories of Habitat. Putting musical talents to work, she taught the group an a cappella song she'd written specifically for that morning's devotional. In the evenings throughout the week, it was not unusual to hear her singing in the stairwell of the church where the ASC group stayed or playing

the piano in one of the church choir rooms.

A French major, with minors in religion and German, Fuller plans to study in Angers, France, next year before returning to ASC for graduation.

"I love to travel and Habitat is starting to have more projects in Europe now, so I know that for the rest of my life I am going to be interested in participating in Habitat in one way or another," says Fuller, "because Habitat fulfills what I perceive to be the goals of Christianity."

Monotonous work turns joyful, tired muscles ache, and the new home progresses.

**THURSDAY** The site on **MARCH 19** 9:30 A.M. Washington Street is mighty muddy. I am shoveling gravel around the rim of the house. It is chilly. Nancy Zehl and Nitya Jacobs, a first-year student from Maharashtra, India, are hammering odd nails out of two-by-fours. Christy Beal, a first-year student from Ellijay, Ga., proves quite adept with the circular saw and is cutting and assembling door and window headers to be used in the frame.

The work is a bit monotonous. We play a word game until the sound of slinging gravel and buzzing saw drowns

out our voices.

Nancy and Nitya ask Glen Heath for their next job. Heath, our site manager and a construction veteran advises, "Lay those studs onto those horses."

Nancy repeats, "Lay the what on the what?"

We laugh as Heath adds the needed definitions.

My shoulders ache.

*From carrying lumber to "mudding" and sanding dry-walls, students proved they could do the work. ASC, developing a campus chapter of Habitat, will work on an all-women built house in Atlanta this coming fall.*





THURSDAY At  
MARCH 19 Trinity

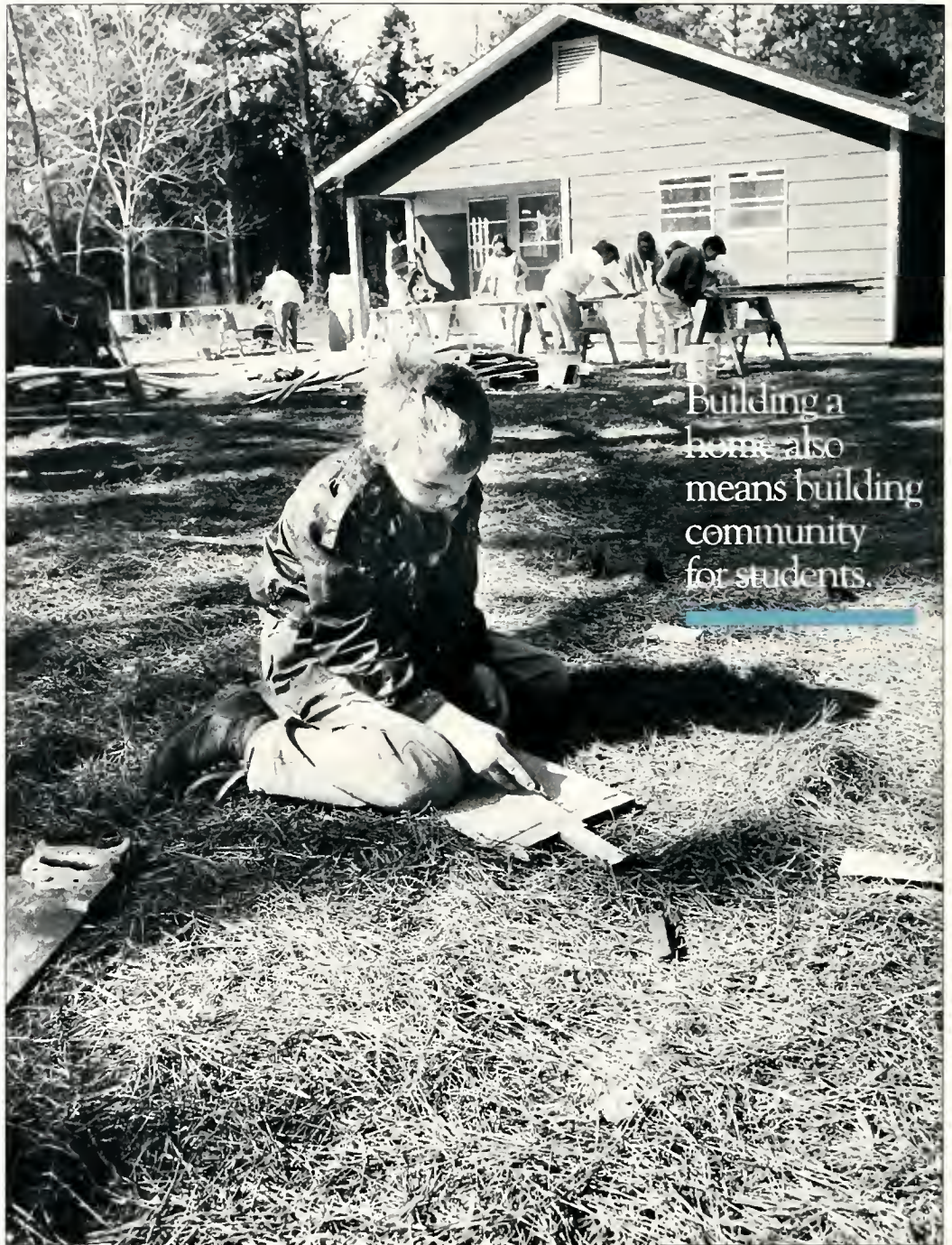
9 P.M. Presbyterian Church, students and homeowner families meet for the first time and sit down together for supper. I'm across from Mary Isaac, a quiet woman of about 50, who works in a professor's office at Mississippi State. She says when she found out she was going to get a Habitat house she didn't sleep all night. With this project, she has almost completed her 500 hours of volunteer labor required of homeowners. Children are moving about the fellowship hall at Trinity, playing, talking and laughing as the other homeowners tell their stories and the group applauds.

Then Snyder presents ASC's contribution of \$1,500 to Habitat local board member Wilson Ashford. Months ago we began raising money for this Habitat for Humanity "Alternative Spring Break" project, soliciting our friends and helping with a benefit play performance by Atlanta's Theatre Gael. Agnes Scott participants are 16 among 3,000 students nationwide, from 100 colleges and universities who have contributed \$140,000 to Habitat and building homes in 70 cities across the United States.

The ASC and UV students move to one side of the fellowship hall to sing our newly-learned, "Give a little love," song.

Everyone stands to applaud. Then handshakes and hugs break out all around.

"For many in the group this was an important trip because



Building a home also means building community for students.

*His family's home rising in the background, T.J. Holland carves a sword from discarded sheetrock. Like other family members, he contributed "sweat-equity" during the week of intense building by the visiting collegians.*

they had not only an opportunity to apply things learned in the classrooms of Agnes Scott to real life situations but to come to terms with their own religious beliefs and philosophies," says the chaplain. "This was a first-hand example of how you live out

what you believe."

The entire group forms a circle and joins hands.

Snyder sings a benediction. A kind of spiritual energy fills the room.

And for that bright and fleeting moment, we are a Habitat community. **ASC**

—Writer Dumett traveled to Starkville with the Agnes Scott students mentioned above, as well as Christy Beal, Jessica Daugherty, Joy Farist, Sarah Fisher, Nitya Jacobs, Marie-Christine Lagier, Lora Munroe, Lisa Rogers, Kara Russell and Jennie Sparrow.



## New ASC master's degree to further teaching careers

With an eye toward education for the next century, this summer Agnes Scott will offer its first graduate degree program, a Master of Arts in Teaching [MAT] Secondary English.

The initial graduate session will begin June 15 with as many as 5-10 students enrolling in the first-year class.

The College takes its place with 15 (out of 84) other women's colleges in the United States to offer graduate-level degrees. Because federal law mandates that all newly created graduate programs cannot deny entrance to students on the basis of gender, race or creed, the Agnes Scott program will be open to men.

The program will emphasize gender equity in public school classrooms. "So that young women will realize their potential, we need men and women teachers who are sensitive to the destructive effects of bias in the classroom," says Dean of the College Sarah Blanshei.

"We want to provide the model for a bias-free, gender-equal education," concludes Blanshei.

"The MAT program will enable Agnes Scott to do an even better job of preparing well-educated teachers for the schools of Georgia and other states," observes President Ruth Schmidt. "Fine teachers are desperately needed and this is an area where Agnes

Scott's mission and strengths match the need."

During the next decade, according to Ruth Bettendorff, associate dean of the College, about one-third of the pre-college teaching force will retire. By 1995, she says, the need for teachers will increase by 24 percent and half of that need will be in

**The MAT plan evolved as "we were reflecting on the College and thinking of ways to make the institution more viable, exciting and directed toward the next century." —Linda Hubert**

secondary education. Bettendorff will direct the new office of graduate studies.

Agnes Scott's program is designed specifically for students who have either made a late decision as undergraduates to become teachers or for those who have been out of school for a few years.

Distinctive from MAT offerings at other colleges will be Agnes Scott's writing workshop, "an exciting hands-on experience, a chance for graduate students to develop their own writing as well as learn good ways to help others with their writing. It will focus on composition, shaping ideas and communicating those ideas," according to Linda Hubert, chair of the English Department.

Academic requirements for students participating in the Agnes Scott program will include either a bachelor's degree in English or a degree in a related field with signifi-

cant course work in English. The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is not a prerequisite for admission.

The MAT degree will require 45 credit hours and student teaching in Atlanta metro area high schools. "Students will take between 12 to 15 credit hours per session with schedules tailored to fit

ate studies, explains Dean of the College Sarah Blanshei. Graduate students will not participate in undergraduate organizations or activities and male students who enroll in the program will not be housed in Agnes Scott residence halls, she says.

"Agnes Scott is not becoming a co-educational institution," emphasizes Blanshei, who with other administrators downplays the impact of a possibly greater male presence on campus.

The plan for the Agnes Scott graduate program grew out of the Strategic Plan. Hubert, who worked on the plan and was a guiding force in the MAT proposal, says, "We were reflecting on the College and thinking of ways to make the institution more viable, exciting and directed toward the next century. ASC has always provided qualified teachers at the undergraduate level.

"Now we will develop a program to train teachers who will be able to make a difference in the classroom in the next century."

Bettendorff adds, "Offering a graduate program provides a new dimension to Agnes Scott in the eyes of other academic institutions. We are known for the quality of our undergraduates; now we will be recognized for providing quality teachers for the classrooms of tomorrow."

As ASC readies for the arrival of its first graduate students, Hubert concludes, "This program makes good sense in terms of Agnes Scott's history and future."

—Audrey Arthur

the needs of the individual student," explains Hubert. "Classes will be small to provide lots of personal attention."

Tuition for the summer graduate session will be \$2,875; during the academic year (fall and spring semesters) it will be a total of \$5,750.

Seniors like Return-to-College Student Florence Hardney-Hines believe the MAT could dovetail nicely with the announced Scott-Free Year 5 which will offer ASC students completing graduation requirements between December 1991 and August 1992 the first opportunity to take classes during a fifth year, tuition free, on a space-available basis. "I already know the teachers," she says. "It gives me more options to enable me to teach."

The graduate program will be separate from undergradu-

# BODY TALK

Alumnae ranging in age from the mid-twenties to the late eighties share how they keep fit.

Written by  
Celeste Pennington  
Photographed by  
Paul Obregón

The rhythm starts easy. The singing is seductive: "Dahlin', dahlin' stay, please stay. I want to see you in the morning sun, every day, every day," croons Bob Seger to 20 women gathered in the Briarlake Baptist Church gymnasium. Three times a week, a lanky, lean Deborah Long Wingate '72, leads the class of 55-to 75-year-olds in an hour of carefully choreographed muscle-stretching, mind-bending dance. She calls it conscious movement—training for body and brain.

"If you don't use it, you lose it," warns Wingate. "It boils down to that."

Wingate is a certified dance aerobics instructor. She explains that with aging, "things like walking backward become more difficult. So as we do dance aerobics, we move backward to remind our bodies how to do that. When we do side lunges, it reminds our bodies that if we get off balance, to steady ourselves, we can lunge to the side instead of falling."

To call on muscles only to sit, stand, walk forward and lie down eventually limits the body's repertoire of motions, diminishes flexibility, stamina, balance and coordination.

"Rumba," barks Wingate and the women raise their right arms, bent at the elbows. "Good posture!" A few more steps. Then they lunge forward, in sync. Perspiration pops out on a forehead here or there and the class moves as one in intricate steps. Their motion is quick, light and controlled.

This is *low-impact* aerobics. As the rhythms change and the tempo escalates one wonders should real exercise seem this fun?

It's the notion of "no pain, no gain" that Wingate decries as myth. "You open any magazine or turn on any TV commercial and that's presented as the standard. But that's not real."

This is. Wingate and a core group of 10 or more women have been exercising, together, for eight years now: 45 minutes of aerobics, 10 minutes of floor work exercising abdominals, gluteals and thighs, and five minutes of stretching and upper body work with rubberbands. The workout is a challenge. But there is also a pervasive sense of well-being. Wingate explains, "We carefully monitor the effort at intervals in class. These women



know when they are working hard—and whether they are working harder than they should."

♦ ♦ ♦

*Regular aerobic exercise reduces the risk of heart disease, improves mental outlook, lowers blood pressure and cholesterol. It can also cause chronic health problems. "If your body is hurting," warns Wingate, "it's saying to stop."*

♦ ♦ ♦

REGULAR AEROBIC EXERCISE like running, brisk walks, bicycling and aerobic dance, reduces the risk of heart disease by 50 percent, decreases mental anxiety and depression, lowers blood pressure and cholesterol levels and improves the delivery of oxygen to body muscle cells, according to an article in *Women's Sports & Fitness*.

Few argue the value of exercise. Yet the experts differ widely on what constitutes *effective* exercise.

Must a person work out at 70 percent of the maximal heart rate for 30 minutes, three times a week? The answer hinges on individual physical condition, exercise needs and goals: does a person



*Exercise, says dance  
aerobics instructor  
Deborah Long  
Wingate '72, is  
crucial to life-long fitness.*

*"If you don't use it," she warns,  
"you lose it."*

need to build muscle, for instance, or to increase aerobic capacity or to burn fat?

The growing concern is that long-term exercise, as noted in a recent article in the *New York Times*, can actually lead to painful, often chronic health problems, so some fitness programs make people less fit. Even young people.

Wingate ruined her knees, running. She advocates carefully monitored exercise. "Why put your muscles and joints in jeopardy," she reasons. "If

your body is hurting, it is saying to stop."

Pushing the body beyond its limit can also produce hormones that cause stress rather than reduce it, warns Ralph LaForge, director of health promotion at the San Diego Cardiac Medical Group, interviewed in the April issue of *Working Women*.

\*\*\*

*Bicycling and aerobic dance are safe sports for injury-prone athletes. Even no-sweat activity can yield health benefits. "Listen to what your body is saying," advises Wingate, "and adjust."*

\*\*\*

WITH INCREASING AMOUNTS of exercise and intensity, risks grow exponentially. "Your body," Wingate notes from her own experience with injuries, "will win, every time."

Running and tennis can cause knee and ankle injury; jumps and lunges can result in athlete's leg (a partial pulling away of the Achilles tendon from the calf muscle). Swimming, often regarded as one of the safest and most beneficial sports, pro-

Exercise is individual; each sets her own pace. But for all, it's a perscription for better health.



For alumna Pauline Hoch '55 (right), exercise fights high cholesterol; for Jane Espy '42, exercise is a remedy for arthritis.

duces tendinitis of the shoulder among 10 percent of serious recreational swimmers within one year of swimming.

Bicycling, which avoids pounding the legs and feet, is one of the best sports for injury-prone athletes, according to the *Times* article. Because of the low intensity of the workouts, aerobic dance injury rate is also quite low; and researchers have found that fewer than 10 percent of those injuries require medical treatment.

The Public Health Service has revised its national fitness goals for A.D. 2000, which will call for adults to be physically active 30 minutes each day. Each person is encouraged to find exercise that will be enjoyed on a regular basis.

Even no-sweat activity can yield health benefits. For those who don't care to walk or can't run, regular physical chores like window washing, car washing and gardening will foster fitness.

In fact, researchers at the University of Pittsburgh compared volunteers who gardened for an hour a day with those who ran 20 or more miles a week. While the runners burned far more calories, they showed only slight health advantages over their gardener counterparts, according to the article in *Working Woman*. "The three times a week program is only relevant for a sedentary person who wants to improve her aerobic capacity," insists James M. Rippe, author of *The Exercise Exchange Program*. Yet he also notes a number of other things like improving flexibility, reducing risks of heart disease and better weight control as valid goals for fitness.

\*\*\*

*Running 20 hours a week, reports one study, showed only slight health advantages over gardening an hour per day.*

\*\*\*

GETTING BACK IN SHAPE after pregnancy was Wingate's goal when she began taking dance aerobics almost a decade ago at a YMCA. Later she decided to teach. "I knew if I did not teach, I would not participate on a regular basis."

Each woman in the class has an individual goal. Trim Pauline Hoch '55, who has participated for five years, says, "I have very high cholesterol and pre-osteoporosis. I'm involved to keep cholesterol down and my bones intact."

Each also has different physical limitations which become more pronounced with age. Each



person's height for leg lifts varies as does the depth of lunges. "From your head to your toes, from your brain to the soles of feet," says Wingate, "aging makes a difference."

Wingate emphasizes the importance of taking differences into account as each person becomes involved in exercise. "We don't make comparisons. But we must listen to what our bodies are saying to us, and adjust." Agrees Hoch, "You can bring vigor to this experience or you can tone it down."

Wingate knows the long-term values of fitness and keeps the class moving. "March forward and reach," she calls to the class. "Left, left, turn from the left. And back."

"This class helps keep all my joints moving," says Jane Stillwell Espy '42. She smiles. But she's not kidding. She names arthritis and rheumatism as prime motivation for her regular dance aerobics workouts. That and the fact that Wingate keeps it fun. "Just about the time I feel like, 'Oh, no, why do we have to do this?' they have a routine to music from my era," says Espy.

Out on the floor today, Espy moves smoothly, gracefully to the Big Band sound of "Satin Doll."



## VIRGINIA PHILIP '61

### A Runner's World

On February 1, Gellerstedt Track echoes with the soft clip-clop-clip-clop of feet and a chorus of belabored breathing: Who who who who, hah-hah-hah-hah, hnh-hah, hnh-hah, hnh-hah, hnh-hah.

"This is lap four?" asks one runner edging past another.

"Yeah."

A frosty breeze freezes faces, nips at bare legs and hands. One woman who checks her watch, hardly lifts her feet above the blacktop as she scoots along.

"Ha-HAH, Ha-HAH, Ha-HAH. I'm hurtin'," admits a silver-haired man. "HAH! HAH! HAH! HAH! HAH! HAH!" another runner loudly yells as he gasps in the biting air.

Among the 73 competing in this Atlanta Track Club-sponsored hour run emerges the slim, compact form of Virginia Philip '61 in white knit gloves, shirt and pink-purple-teal-swirled spandex.

She runs easily, she breathes easily, face forward, cropped dark hair bobbing. Now and then, she grins.

Even after 50 minutes, after the trackside is strewn with overheated runners' discarded hats, gloves, T-shirts and empty paper cups, and after the run has slowed many folk—with haggard faces and heaving chests—to a walk, Philip keeps pace.

Finally, a gunshot cracks out over the field.

Philip stops. Stretches. Smiles. "It's time to rest," she says, while the man behind her catches his breath. "You begin to wonder, are they ever going to shoot that gun?"

Her spotter fills out a little blue card after tracking 26 laps plus 713 yards in lane 3. That divides out to more than 6.5 miles in an hour. "Four to five years ago, I could run under eight,"

Philip runs for health, for solitude, for friendship—for, most of all, the challenge.



Philip dismisses her many medals and awards, but she's proud of her runner's chart that shows a nine-month total of 608.8 miles.

laments Philip, 52. Later when medals are passed out, she gets one. Another runner catches Philip's eye and mouths: "You *always* win something."

If that spells frustration to other runners, so must the fact that Philip just ran more than six eight-minute miles with no hard breathing and a mere film of perspiration glistening her forehead.

In the larger scheme of things six or seven miles is just no sweat for Philip; the Saturday before she ran 20.

Philip is a marathoner who celebrated her 50th birthday by running one of the most physically challenging events, the Boston Marathon. She ran the New York Marathon that same year. "Your body is destroyed after a marathon, but your head is happy."

She laughs a little. "It is difficult to walk after a marathon."

\* \* \*

VIRGINIA PHILIP grew up in LaGrange. Childhood friends remind her that as a kid, she didn't like playing out-of-doors. At Agnes Scott she was a chemistry major, "absolutely not" involved in sports. She remembers her off hours being spent in the campus gathering place, the Hub, playing bridge and smoking.

It was in 1978, a year after Philip quit smoking, that she began to exercise to improve health and to lose weight. She started running with friends after a Y exercise class. Then she joined co-workers at The Coca-Cola Company in the Peachtree Road Race. "I decided on July 3. I competed on July 4. I remember asking, 'Am I going to come in last?' My friends said no. What I remember about the race is the sound of this thundering herd around me."

Philip won a T-shirt that day and became a regular in the 10K event. "It's like a party running down Peachtree Road. People play music and carry flags. My mother who was in her 80s, would come up every year. As runners stampeded down the street, she'd be there, clinging to a lamp post. I'd run by, stop and give her a kiss."

\* \* \*

THE CACHE OF SYMBOLIC AWARDS Philip has accumulated—glass plates, a second place silver tray from the Savannah Marathon, pottery mug and bowls from runs in North Carolina, assorted medals and what she calls "tacky trophies with plastic runners on top"—she quietly dis-

misses as "somewhere in the closet."

What Philip does show is a dog-eared paper, marked 1978. On one side a yellow highlighter traces her paths on a photocopied map; on the other side a chart records daily distances run. The chart begins with a 3.6 mile run Friday, July 21, and continues through April 6 the following year. The first week adds up to 18.1 miles and slowly increases every few weeks until the nine-month running total is 608.8.

In the intervening 14 years Philip has maintained a general conditioning regimen, running four or five times a week. "It makes me feel physically stronger and emotionally calmer." Each week she logs about 20 miles. "That varies. From year to year, from day to day, I experience periods of different kinds of motivation. Sometimes it is to run in the company of other people. Sometimes it is to run alone, to have that solitary time. Sometimes it is to set a goal and make it."

The goal before Philip at 5:45 a.m., this Saturday, January 25, 1992, is the London Marathon which occurs in spring.

To prepare, during the week she has run in downtown Atlanta from her office where she is executive assistant to the senior vice president for science for The Coca-Cola Company, to Piedmont Park. On weekends she has added two miles every other week until she's running 26 miles for the last three weeks before the marathon.

"The decision to run a marathon," she explains, "means I have to make a commitment to follow a training schedule. I have to plan around it. For instance I know that a training run of 20 miles will take all of this Saturday morning."

Philip keeps two pairs of running shoes lined with simple felt orthotics which she has built up herself to push the balance of her foot to the outside. She smooths on a little lip balm, but otherwise runs without tape and the other paraphernalia connected with muscle strains and aching joints experienced by many distance runners. She saves her stretches for *after* the run: "My muscles," she explains, "are warmer then."

She ran a week ago in the snow. This dark morning temperatures hover around 30. The silver of a half-moon shines down through the bare tree branches as Philip steps out the front door of her town home. The perfect stillness is broken by the swish-swish-swish of nylon warmups and Nikes' soft pop against black top as Philip heads down the hill onto Habersham.

"This is my favorite time of day. Nobody's out there. It's a very solitary time for me," says Philip.

"I can see the sun rise. I love the quietness of it."

\* \* \*

FOR THE NEXT HOUR Philip runs up and down gentle hills, past dormant houses and into pool after glowing pool of street lamp light.

Daylight reveals tiny puffs of breath forming a halo of light, air and moisture around her face as she inhales-exhales. The air is burning cold.

By 8:53 a.m., she's joined by a friend and legal assistant with Coca-Cola, Gale Nairne, who along with Philip has competed on the company team. At 10:01 a.m., Philip is pulling up the hill toward Peachtree Street, still running steadily as she finishes the last leg of her workout.

By the time she reaches home she admits her breathing was a little shallow toward the end of her 20 miles, but, she says, "I'm not running hard enough to get winded." She does a few long, slow stretches against her Volvo.

"My legs feel *used*," she says as she prepares to go in the house to shower. "It feels good to have done it."

She grins and assures, "I'm not going to run any more today."

\* \* \*

DISCIPLINED, STRONG, mentally tough are all words applied to runners who have gone the distance (26 miles and 385 yards) since marathon running began in 1896. (Women officially joined the competitive ranks of marathoners in 1972.) Philip began with the Savannah Marathon in 1985; the Boston and New York marathons in April and November of 1989.

In London, she'll compete along with friends who are traveling with her. She's been thinking about this marathon since that first one in Savannah. "It's a big one." For the past three years, she and her friends have talked about it. And since late last year, she's been regularly training for it. "I'm ready. I'm as well-trained as I've ever been."

When she arrives in London she will rest, drink plenty of water and try to eat carbohydrates and avoid fats.

For about a week after the London Marathon she says she will take a break and resume her normal running schedule.

"A marathon? Anyone can do it," she says.

## SARAH QUINN SLAUGHTER '26

*A Drawer Full of Walkathon T-Shirts*

Slaughter is not into the celebrity video work outs. She just watches Atlanta's Peachtree Road Race. "I'm not into running or jogging," she quips. She is into walking. She has a drawerful of walkathon T-shirts to prove it. Last October she was recognized as the oldest among roughly 800 members from 150 churches participating in an 8.2-mile Stone Mountain walkathon to generate money for Wesley community centers.

Not so much to keep in shape for those events, and on no set course, she gets out and walks a couple of miles daily.

She's one among an impressive array of Agnes Scott women—some competitors (a number of them marathon runners like Virginia Philip), some not—who find exercise so enjoyable, or sport so physically challenging, that it's now an integral part of their lives.

## MARY ANNA SMITH '78

## MARTHA THOMPSON '66

*Running for Life . . . and Fun*

Sporting Agnes Scott T-shirts, last spring Mary Anna Smith of New York and her coach, Martha Thompson of Washington, D. C., partici-

*Sarah Slaughter '26 at the Agnes Scott challenge race at Gellerstedt Field. She walks daily: to the post office, to Ansley Mall, to her church. Pretty good for a woman pushing 88.*



The “why they exercise” varies. But for all, there is pleasure in the challenge and in the feeling of completion.



Mary, Alma Currett Photo



Running gives Mary Anna Smith '78 (above) “a great way to maintain weight.” For Tennis Hall of Famer Ruth Lay '46 (right, with Kristin Louer '93, ASC's top tennis player and one of Lay's former students), “there is nothing greater” than coaching 30 young players a week. “They are my friends,” she says.

pated in the five-mile Alamo [Car Rental] Alumni Run through NYC Central Park.

“Running for speed is very much of a talent,” says Thompson. “Distance running is a discipline.”

To build endurance, Smith, a special events consultant whose clients include American Express and the Museum of Modern Art, runs mornings along the loops through Central Park: “It’s a great way to maintain weight. The more you run, the more you can eat.”

Thompson, who works for Compuware, literally runs errands or runs to see friends. She likes to map out interesting courses for herself, like running a series of area bridges. She has run on vacations in Ecuador and Africa and recommends it as a “great way to learn a place.” Often she and Smith meet in Atlanta to run the Peachtree together. And Thompson has run the Chicago and New York marathons, back to back.

It’s the New York Marathon that the two love

to have run. It begins early in the morning and touches various boroughs in the city. “You run through all the ethnic neighborhoods. The children reach out and touch you,” says Thompson. “When you enter Manhattan there are 200,000 people on street corners cheering for you.”

### CAROLYN WEAVER '89

*Challenged by Rock Climbing*

W eaver is limber—and short. She eliminated a field of activities dominated by tall folks and made rock-climbing her sport of choice. “Rock-climbing was something I could do respectably well, early on,” she explains. “It helps that I can bring my foot almost to my shoulder.”

Weaver, a marketing analyst for an insurance company in the Atlanta area, likes the clear-cut goal and personal challenge of the sport. It holds



an element of danger. And on picking a course to the summit, she says, "You have to fight every step of the way."

Her interest in climbing was piqued along the Appalachian Trail. One experience in Virginia stands out.

Two male climbers tried and failed to scale the face of a rock, there.

"I fell, too. I wondered if I would bust my head. But," she says, "I made it to the top."

## RUTH RYNER LAY '46

*Tennis Halls of Fame*

Southern Tennis Hall of Famer Lay ranks as a tough competitor in her own right, honored in both the Southern and the Georgia Tennis halls of fame. And she has been to Wimbledon nine times with her students. She spends three to four hours each day on the tennis courts, coaching 30 young players a week. "There is nothing greater than working with young people," insists Lay. "They are my friends."

Over the years, Lay, of Norcross, Ga., has recruited some top players for Agnes Scott's tennis teams. She follows their play with more than passing interest. Lay and Anne Register Jones '46 (who played tennis together at Agnes Scott) purchased purple and white warmup outfits for this year's team.

## RACHEL KENNEDY LOWTHIAN '37

*Gutsy Golfing with the Pros*

A "gutsy old woman" is how a Delaware newspaper describes Lowthian. Her golf partners have included pros Nancy Lopez, Hollis Stacy, Patty Rizzo and Sandra Post during 13 years of Pro-Am tournaments. "In spite of her 76 years and a total hip replacement, Lowthian plays 18 holes of golf three or four times a week and consistently scores between 95 and 105.

She likes the mental rigor: "You have to think through your shots." She enjoys the out-of-doors, the scenery, the birds. "Most of all," she says, "I like my partners. We just have a great time together."

Lowthian, who began golfing in 1965, played every day for a while and had a 19 handicap. She

remains among few amateur women competing in pro-am events. "It's pretty nerve-wracking on the first tee," the sturdy Lowthian admits about playing with the pros. "You always want to get off on the first tee with a good drive."

## JOSEPHINE SULLIVAN '44

*Jumping to Better Health*

Sullivan of Greenville, S.C., says her six children were a bit shocked when she began training for master's level track and field events. But she says, "They got used to it." This winter she placed first in the long and triple jumps at the

*After appearing in a tournament together, pro golfer Nancy Lopez congratulates 72-year-old Rachel Lowthian '37.*

*"Nancy is one of the finest young ladies in the sport," says Lowthian, who laments that so few women play in the Pro-Ams. "I am chagrined that other women golfers are afraid."*



Golfnet Photo by Michael Schwartz/Recherster Times-Union

Spry got into exercise when she found team Frisbee an addictive sport.



*Spry, a caseworker for Family and Children Services in Cobb County, Ga., practices regularly. For out-of-town tournaments, she—like many—often stays in the homes of other players.*

Master's indoor track meet at Brown University. She won a gold last summer in the triple jump during an international track and field competition drawing 5,500 Master's athletes to Finland.

She begins training (aerobic exercise and weight lifting) around January and competes at indoor and outdoor meets through the end of summer. Her best is 12 feet 3 3/4 inches in the long jump and 23 feet 4 inches in the triple.

She also competes in the 55-meter and 200-meter runs at 9.8 and 40 seconds, respectively.

"I think this makes a difference in strength and endurance and lung capacity. And this has opened up a whole new world.

I didn't think there would be anything like this, competitive sports, for someone as old as I am."

Although Sullivan usually tries to win, there is one exception. When racing along the beach with grandchildren, she says, "We sort of tie."

## ANNE SPRY '86

*The Ultimate in Frisbee*

Sports are something Spry has engaged in only "under pressure." Three years ago she came to watch a game of Ultimate [Frisbee], and was literally dragged into the game because the team needed an additional woman (coed leagues require each team to have at least two women on the field at all times).

"They were so desperate. It didn't matter to them that I was awful," remembers Spry, who enjoyed herself in spite of having to run up and down a soccer-sized field, catching and passing a plastic disc until it was caught in the end zone. Now she's a regular on the women's B-Flat team, competing in Southeastern tournaments from South Carolina to Florida.

Ultimate, invented by a New Jersey high school, is played in 30 countries. It consists of two seven-member teams attempting to keep a Frisbee in the air and moving down field to the goal.

"The people are very nice. After about the first two or three weeks of playing, I thought, this is awfully fun. And once you get in shape," says Spry, "it is addictive." **ASC**

## Mortar Board: Sixty Years Of Highest Honors

The clock closes on midnight. Sixteen young women cross the quadrangle, a space framed in red brick, amber lit. They walk in pairs and in threes. Robed. Figures in black. They duck through doors. Reappear. Cross again. Enter others. They glide. A Chimera. Monastic. Something ancient, venerable.

There is little sound, only snatches. The swish of cloth. Heels against brick. One woman softly calling to another as they pass.

For 60 years each spring at Agnes Scott, in ceremony more ritual than secret, soon-to-be-graduating seniors have tapped juniors to take their place on Mortar Board.

It is an unbroken chain.

Though the years have brought changes, those with a view of six decades still find familiarity in the practice and intent of the organization. The values recognized among its members then—leadership, scholarship, and service—remain intact.

Mortar Board arrived at Agnes Scott through the efforts of 14 members of the Class of 1931. Members of HOASC—the Honorary Order of Agnes Scott College—a campus honor society for seniors founded in 1916 with aims similar to those of Mortar Board, petitioned the national organization for a chapter on campus. A charter was granted and Mortar Board began the following year.



Members of Mortar Board in 1945: Always the highest ideals . . .

When the new honor society began, it simply picked up where the old one had left off, numbering among the membership those elected since 1916.

Katherine Morrow Norem '31, one of the 14 who brought Mortar Board here, remembers selecting juniors for that first year's membership. They were leaders, involved in student government and other campus organizations, holders of an exemplary standard of scholarship. People like herself—feature editor for the college newspaper, member of the YWCA board, class secretary, and “probably some things I've forgotten.”

Membership was announced at a special convocation held during chapel. “Agnes Scott was a Presbyterian school and we had chapel every day,” says Norem. She remembers it as lovely. A procession of seniors in caps and gowns, faculty in colorful academic hoods. Later there was dinner and investiture of new members who wore the recognition pin of their senior sponsors, a simple “H,” until Mortar Board pins arrived the next year.

“While Phi Beta Kappa

honored scholarship, HOASC was something more. It was about the highest honor you could get at Agnes Scott,” says Norem.

Ann Chapin Hudson Hankins '31 agrees. “It recognizes what you did for the college.”

Many of Hankins' contributions were on the athletic field, but it was as YWCA president her senior year that she made a most lasting contribution. The Y sponsored a forum, a meeting with black students from Spelman and Morehouse colleges, to discuss racial issues. In 1931, no black students attended ASC. Even when students from the three colleges met, they were not allowed to eat together—“There were laws against such things then,” she says. And there were other ramifications. She recalls the parents of one Agnes Scott student almost pulling her from the college for participating. Out of that experience grew the Maude and Waddy Hudson Memorial Scholarship for black students. It is named for Hankins' parents. She and her husband contribute funds each year.

Through the years, one characteristic common

among individual members of the honor society is commitment—perhaps over-commitment—to causes both on and off campus. The most notable shift in Mortar Board in recent years has been to not only to recognize this commitment, but to make it a characteristic of the organization itself. Traditionally, Mortar Board has been responsible for Black Cat, student elections and service projects for the year. During 1991-92, Mortar Board sponsored faculty lectures, two blood drives, a family at Christmas; members did volunteer work at an elementary school, helped with the Special Olympics, collected funds for an international hunger relief agency, worked one night in a women's shelter, worked with mentally handicapped adults, tutored non-reading adolescents and adults, and secured a grant that will bring a literacy program on campus next year.

It's not surprising that the organization accomplishes so much, says current president Jennifer Bruce '92. “We didn't turn down a thing. These are committed people. All you had to do was mention a project and hands shot up.”

What next year's Mortar Board will accomplish is anyone's guess.

What is sure, the time-honored values of leadership, scholarship, and service will be passed from one class to the next, one generation to the next, one decade to the next—women linked across time in what is best at Agnes Scott College.

—By Bill Bangham

# BEST SHOTS CONTEST WINNERS



## First Prize

*"Meghan"*  
Hannah Griffin Wildner '81  
Norcross, Georgia

## Second Prize

*"My Husband at 50"*  
Patricia H. Cooper '61  
Eaton Rouge, Louisiana



## Honorable Mention

*Untitled*  
Lisa Freeman '95  
Atlanta, Georgia





**Third Prize**

*"Capping Candles"*  
Barbie Stitt '92  
Chattanooga, Tennessee

**Honorable Mention**

*Freedom—*  
*Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia*  
Tracy Peavy '93  
Dallas, Texas



**Honorable Mention**

*Untitled*  
Lucia Sizemore '65  
Stone Mountain, Georgia



**Honorable Mention**

*Violinist Dana Chesnut*  
Carolyn Thorsen '55  
Atlanta, Georgia

Decatur GA 30033

## “Out of the Fog”



*A candle we hold in our left hand  
and whenever a Soph asks us where we are  
going, we must say, “Trying to find our  
way out of the fog.”*

—from the journal of  
Mary Sturtevant Cunningham, 1929  
Page 13



recycled paper



**SHARP!  
WOMEN**  
ASC SEEKS  
TO ENCOURAGE  
CAREERS  
IN SCIENCE

# AGNES SCOTT

ALUMNAE MAGAZINE • FALL 1992

Ernest Hemingway stood up to write. To the right of his typewriter he scrawled in longhand, then transferred his copy to type. Robert Frost wrote in an armless chair so he would have complete freedom of movement. James Thurber had poor eyesight and a phenomenal memory, so often he composed in his head and wrote by dictation. Truman Capote wrote lying down. He insisted that he was incapable of writing anything he thought he couldn't get paid for.

Writers' quirks. It seems those endearing idiosyncrasies have gone the way of manual typewriters and worn fedoras. Like staff in Agnes Scott's Office of Publications, more and more writers today work seated at computers.

The quirks, we all suspect, are in the technology.

In one corner of this office sits assistant publications manager Mary Alma Durrett with head slightly down and fingers pounding the keyboard in a way that heats up her Macintosh SE with first drafts that throw caution—and typos—to the wind. "You certainly write with *verve*," observed an alumna reader. She does. That word also fits Durrett, who started her career as a feature writer for the *Mobile Press Register* in Alabama, worked a few years in magazine writing/editing, then switched to public relations. Her litmus for writing parallels a Carson McCullers character's measure for romance: does it "make you shiver?" Durrett edits *Main Events* and contributes to this magazine and other College publications. A contrary computer is about the only thing that slows her down: "There's a pattern on my computer screen that I've never seen before," she calls out.

"Is it a plaid?"

"No. Stripes."

Editorial assistant Audrey Arthur brings to publications dignity: strains of classical music waft from her small desk-top radio accompanied by her keyboard's rat-ta-tat-tat-tat. She likes the Thurber approach to writing, working constantly to "make the finished version seem smooth and effortless." She has a degree



Art Lassek Photo

## Writers' Quirks

iceberg principle: "There is seven-eighths of it underwater," he said of his writing, "for every part that shows." Even a small story is built on a couple of notepads of interviews, a stack of library books and photocopied magazine excerpts. Then I write to rewrite. As Dorothy Parker said, "I can't write five words but that I change seven." My 20-year career spans Texas newspaper reporting in the early '70s, seven years of magazine writing (dealing primarily with religious, ethnic and socio-economic issues), eight years of book publishing plus movie and video script writing. On computer I've edited many books and authored a few.

*Burp. Blip. Blip. Beeeep.* "Can you hear this?" asks Durrett. Her computer continues: *Boing-boing.* "I don't want to overreact, Celeste, but I smell something burning. . . ."

Sometimes I wonder if the great writers would have swapped some of their quirks for ours. I can imagine at least Truman Capote "the horizontal author" would have appreciated a laptop computer. First drafts he wrote longhand.

Final drafts he wrote with his typewriter balanced on his knees.

*Celeste Pennington*

**Editor:** Celeste Pennington. **Contributing Editor:** Mary Alma Durrett. **Editorial Assistant:** Audrey Arthur.

**Design:** Harold Waller and Everett Hullum. **Student Assistants:** Elizabeth Cherry '95,

Willa Hendrickson '94, Josie Hoilman '94, Helen Nash '93, Emily Pender '95, Tonya Smith '93.

**Publications Advisory Board:** Jenifer Cooper '86, Christine Cozzens, Carey Bowen Craig '62, Bonnie Brown Johnson '70, Randy Jones '70, Helen Nash '93, Kay Parkerson O'Briant '70, Edmund Sheehy, Lucia Howard Sizemore '65.

**Cover:** Tynesha Davis, a high school student, works with plants during the SHARP! Women experience at ASC.

**Photographer:** Phillip Spears.



Agnes Scott Alumnae Magazine

# AGNES SCOTT

Fall 1992 Volume 70, Number 2

What fun to see Sturdy's [Mary Sturtevant Cunningham '33] journal excerpts in the *Alumnae Magazine*.

But so much of the fun was left out! I have a five-year journal with brief entries. . . . On October first, hazing started. The Sophomore funeral marched into Chapel after the Student Government meeting, and then they ran us through a gauntlet. . . . The next day I made Chris Gray's bed, carried her books and dragged mine in a shoebox. . . .

On October 8, the school got a radio.

In March we began to worry about "Spring Raid" when the Sophomores would descend unannounced on the Freshmen with who knows what dreadful consequences.

We danced on Inman porch; went to the tea rooms (often in our pajamas) for snacks after the dates were shooed out of Main at 10 o'clock. . . .

I guess our pleasures were simple, but they were happy days.

*Margy Ellis Pierce '33  
Newton Square, PA*

Congratulations on your excellent article, "Love in the Mortar Joints."

Our copy arrived on Wednesday and all of us here at the Fuller house thoroughly enjoyed reading the article and viewing the outstanding photographs. Especially I want to commend Mary Alma Durrett on the photograph which appears at the beginning of the article. You can almost *feel* the energy and excitement of the wall going up. . . .

*Millard Fuller  
Founder, Habitat for Humanity  
Americus, GA*

In a recent issue of the *Alumnae Quarterly* there was a story about May Day at Agnes Scott. . . . My mother, Ethel McKay Holmes '15, was the first May Queen on the first [official] May Day in 1913. I enclose a picture of that first May Day from an issue of the *Agnes Scott News* (I was Editor in 1944-45).

*Leila B. Hobnes '45  
Thomasville, GA*

Page 5

## O Rats!

by Audrey Arthur



Responding to a national shortage of scientists, ASC devised a unique program aimed at engaging young women in research science.

Page 11

## The Renaissance of Marguerite de Navarre

by Mary Alma Durrett



International scholars gathered here to re-examine the work of this religious reformer, writer and patron of the humanities.

Page 14

## Wonder and Lighting

by Harriet Stovall Kelley '55



Some stunning examples of the serendipity of scholarly research.

Page 20

## When Corporate Patterns Don't Fit

by Celeste Pennington

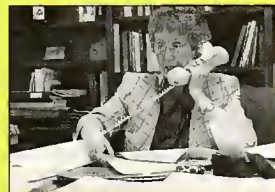


Erin Odom '85 scrapped a promising corporate career for fabric, needle and thread.

Page 24

## The Merits of Self-Scrutiny

by Celeste Pennington



A few words about the SACS self-study from Dean Sarah Blanshei, who knows college accrediting commissions from the inside, out.

Page 2  
**Lifestyle**

Page 27

**Book Review: Life of the Party**

Page 28  
**Classic: Black Cat**

Page 29

**In Memoriam: Llewellyn Wilburn**

## ASC's Anderson: Political Insider Brings Others In

The red, white, and blue Democratic logo on Karen Anderson's business card bears the identifiable donkey head silhouetted in profile beside the outline of the state of Georgia. The donkey's ears are angled up in a V for victory fashion. "Winning in November is a reality," believes Anderson.

"We are extremely excited about the large number of women candidates running this year," says Anderson in a confidently modulated voice.

Anderson '90, is a behind-the-scenes professional staffer helping Democratic women and men win election this fall.

As a political director of the Democratic Party of Georgia, she advises and provides resource services to candidates throughout the state.

This past July she attended her first national convention in New York, acting as a primary staffer for the 109-member Georgia delegation.

Months of preparation led up to the convention, from managing delegate selection to updating the state's 40-page plan so that it might be properly implemented.

She initiated affirmative action workshops throughout Georgia to enlist proportional representation of women and minorities—the state's delegation was comprised of 50 percent women and 31 percent minorities.

A typical convention day began at 6 a.m. and ended after midnight back at the hotel, planning sessions for the next

day's events. In between she made sure that shuttle buses ran on schedule to and from the Madison Square Garden Convention Center, that the 109 delegates arrived at the right locations and at designated times each day, that they even hummed a few bars of "I



*Anderson is working to involve more women in Georgia politics.*

Love New York" and "Happy Days Are Here Again."

According to Scotty Greenwood, executive director of the Democratic Party of Georgia, Anderson was the "reason that everything came together so well. She managed to give the same attentiveness to the average delegate as she did to the VIPs . . . She's an incredibly good listener and effective communicator. And she really follows through on what she says. Her word is golden."

As political director, Anderson's primary duties now include overseeing opposition research, targeting for state races and building strong links between the state organization and local legislative candidates.

During her years at ASC, Anderson (daughter of Margaret Shugart '62) was active in campus politics and was elected

president of the Student Government Association her senior year. A double major in political science and economics, Anderson learned early to work from within to affect change.

ASC's Gus Cochran, chair of the political science department, recalls Anderson as a soft-spoken student who could lead by the forcefulness of her convictions. "Karen was one of a whole group that really changed the student body from inward-turning and not terribly interested in larger political issues, to one that became politically engaged."

Issues included advocacy for on-campus day care, a fully operational recycling program and a stronger women's studies program. Looking back, she voices appreciation for the diversity of opinion at ASC. "I don't think outsiders realize its extent."

Two weeks before graduation Anderson answered a 1988 recruitment letter filed away in the college placement office which sought applicants for an internship program at the state Democratic headquarters. Immediately she was called for an interview and was hired. In May of 1990 she began work with the party as a research assistant on a small stipend.

Now she is setting up the delegate selection process for the state in what Greenwood describes as a "meteoric rise" for the young alumna.

Because of the current political climate, Anderson believes a lot of women will be elected in November.

But she firmly dismisses the idea of ever running for political office herself.

—Barbara Allen Kenney is a free-lance writer in Decatur, Ga.

Eddie Ross illustration





## Keller Barron: A Career of Bringing Out the Vote

Care about politics. Have a sense of responsibility. Be involved in issues for the sake of your community and for your children.

Those were lessons Keller Barron '54 learned at Agnes Scott 38 years ago, and they are the lessons she has applied to her life and work as a volunteer for the League of Women Voters and as the paid director of research for the South Carolina Joint Legislative Committee on Aging in Columbia, S.C.

As a national board member, Barron chaired the League's efforts to lobby for the Equal Rights Amendment.

Since 1979, the Atlanta native has worked with the South Carolina house and senate and advocacy groups to improve conditions for the aging.

She effortlessly recalls the long list of her committee's accomplishments and speaks passionately about each of them. They include giving the aging person power of attorney, the right to name an individual to make health care decisions in the event of disability; the homestead exemption, relief from property taxes as income decreases; and a death with dignity act, allowing a person the right to die a natural death versus having one's life sustained by medical technology.

The tempo of her conversation increases as she describes South Carolina's current efforts encouraging businesses to provide employees adult day care in addition to child care.

"We're emphasizing commu-

nity-assisted living—home and community care versus institutionalized care. Working people can place their parents in adult day care and care for them in their homes at night."

Barron chuckles when asked if she, at age 60, is benefitting from her efforts to improve the aging's quality of life. It is the



*Barron has been active in the League of Women Voters, which informs citizens about government and lobbies for certain issues.*

baby-boom generation, she explains, that benefits from such legislation, because they will take care of their parents.

Agnes Scott graduates in South Carolina's capital city take care of each other. When Barron needs legal advice or an advocate in passing legislation, she phones attorney Mary Smith Bryan '65 or Elizabeth Goud Patterson '68, University of South Carolina law professor, or "our pride and joy" Jean Hoefler Toal '65, the first woman elected justice of South Carolina's supreme court.

"Our ASC network makes a difference in a little state," says Barron with alumnae pride.

—Leisa Hammett-Goad  
*is a communication specialist in Stone Mountain, Ga.*

## Susan Phillips: An Opportunity to Influence Policy

In the imposing marble corridors of the nation's central bank, among the country's top economists, Susan M. Phillips '67, is in her element.

"Coming into this environment provides opportunity for a lot more than policy-setting," says Phillips, who was appointed in December 1991 to fill an unexpired term on the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. "I had been specializing, but now I am going back to the basics of economics. It is like climbing back into a textbook." Thoughtful and analytical—not prone to snap judgments—she enjoys the process of re-examining policy, mulling over ideas, fine-tuning her own. "I don't want to be rigid or unthinking," she says. "I want to keep fresh ways of looking at things."

Phillips was vice president for finance at the University of Iowa when Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady called to say that President George Bush wanted to nominate her to become a member of the Federal Reserve Board.

When Brady and Fed chairman Alan Greenspan interviewed her for the job, they delved into "how I go about making decisions, how I analyze something. Some people in the economic world are strict monetarists who only look at the monetary supply. Others are more concerned with ideology. I come from a more pragmatic background."

Each member of the board works with the others to refine

and influence the direction of economic policies for the country. Banking regulation, for one, is a perennial topic of discussion at the Fed.

Basically the Federal Reserve Board has supported banking deregulation, but Phillips says the discussion doesn't stop there. Even though



Phillips' "pragmatic background" made her right for the Fed.

a policy may be established, its impact and its side effects may be understood only after time. "You monitor the effects of regulation, things in the economy that happen to affect them."

When Phillips' ideas about federal monetary regulations don't mesh with those of the other members of the board, she says, "You have to convince the other governors of your point of view. Sometimes you convince them at the board table. Sometimes you . . . direct the staff to investigate." And, she grants, "There has to be a certain amount of give and take."

Phillips' career has led her from the futures market to scholarly examination of the theory of regulation, to the Fed. Her areas of specialization in-

clude options and commodities futures, financial management and the economic theory of regulation, all a far cry from the career as a math teacher that she envisioned more than 20 years ago.

"While at Agnes Scott, I thought I would be a math teacher. When I went to do my student teaching, I wasn't crazy about it. I liked teaching, but dealing with the discipline problems in high school, I didn't like. And I didn't like the routine." That's why she began exploring other options.

From the days when Phillips worked as a resident assistant and Mollie Merrick (now associate dean of students at Agnes Scott College) was resident director of Walters Residence Hall, Merrick remembers that Phillips was "one student who was willing to go far afield when it was time to look for a job. She went to Indiana and Boston at a time when most students just wanted to stay in Atlanta."

Phillips wound up working for an insurance company, then later went to graduate school. (She received a B.A. in mathematics from Agnes Scott College in 1967, a master's degree in finance and insurance from Louisiana State University [LSU] in 1971, and a Ph.D. in finance and economics from LSU in 1973.) She worked at the University of Iowa in 1978 as an associate professor and later was named associate vice president for finance and university services in 1980.

In 1981, she was appointed to membership on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission [CFTC], and became its chair in 1983. At the CFTC,

she gained a reputation for minimizing government regulation of the marketplace. She returned to the University of Iowa as vice president in 1987.

Phillips' adaptability to new places and new roles arises, perhaps in part, from growing up in an Air Force family. "We lived overseas a lot so I was exposed to lots of things. When I lived in England, in the 5th or 6th grade, I can remember people weren't fond of Americans. They would ask you what time it was, you'd answer and they'd know just by those few words that you were an American.

"I did have English friends, and very much enjoyed living there, but there was some adjustment, too."

In her spare time, Phillips still enjoys travel. She's been to the coral reefs of Australia, taken helicopter rides over Hawaii, marveled at the reconstructed versions of the *Niña*, the *Pinta* and the *Santa Maria*. Seeing such diverse parts of the world opens her to new ideas, says Phillips, the same way her college education did.

"The variety of liberal arts stretched me," Phillips says. "You don't have the luxury of concentrating in one area, you dabble. It gave me a sense of breadth. The struggle of trying to do well forced me into the rigor of studying. It was a very competitive environment. I worked in the library, and one of the faculty, Dr. [Henry] Robinson in math, asked me to tutor. There was a sense and tradition of studying being hard work."

—Elaine Furlow is an editor with an environmental communications group in Washington, D.C.

# O RATS!



Responding to a national shortage of scientists—especially women scientists—each summer Agnes Scott College brings sharp young women eye-to-eye with the adventure of research; their projects are both educational . . . and rewarding.

---

Written by Audrey Arthur  
Photographed  
by Mark Sandlin  
and Phillip Spears

**W**hile many teenagers headed for the beach, lounged at home or earned money this past summer, several Atlanta high school students spent part of their break at work in Agnes Scott's laboratories, classrooms and greenhouse—participating in significant scientific experimentation.

The psychology project involved rats.

It compared the stress levels and the resulting neurological effects on rats raised in different envi-

ronments (rats living alone in small cages versus those living in rat communities with enriched or activity-enhanced settings). The experience brought Emily Kyle, a junior at Woodward Academy, face to face with realities of research.

"We thought there were going to be these cute little mice. And here were these huge rats," she says, "with red eyes."

What she and the others discovered through careful monitoring, testing and finally dissection is that rats living in enriched environments were

**SHARP!**  
Women is focused on educating women and minorities in science. It also “helps teachers who will reach many more students than the ASC summer program can.”

healthier, more alert, “had a thicker cortex and bigger brain cells,” notes Assistant Professor of Psychology Barbara Blatchley who headed up the psychology team. “They were better rats.”

Kyle and nine other high school students were part of a two-week program called SHARP! (Science Honors Associates Research Program) for Women. According to Assistant Dean of the College Patricia White, three-year-old SHARP! Women is one of the few “hands-on” science programs in the nation that involves teams of students and faculty working together on research projects. It is an outgrowth of the Strategic Planning Process and its call for the College to develop a Science Center for Women.

SPECIFICALLY SHARP! WOMEN is focused on educating women and minorities in science. This year it included both students and teachers from five high schools as well as Agnes Scott students and faculty working in teams on four individual projects in biology, chemistry, mathematics/computer science and psychology.

“The American Association of University Women issued a report about how females aren’t encouraged to pursue science careers,” White says. “We need women not just because they are women but because there is an overall shortage of scientists. Women will help fill that shortage.”

Recently the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C., further quantified the need, reporting that the number of men and women

*Beth Barnes '94, chemistry major, was part of a team led by chemistry professor Leon Venable that worked to create compounds that don't exist in nature.*

who earned degrees in physical science, earth, atmospheric, and ocean science declined in 1990, with the exception of math/computer science (which did not experience a decrease in male recipients). Most scientific degrees earned by women were in fields of psychology, social science and biological/agricultural science.

The SHARP! Women pilot program grew out of a research project undertaken by White and Professor of Biology Sandra Bowden. They realized that Agnes Scott students needed research experience for teaching, research and post-graduate studies. Two Agnes Scott students assisted in research the first year. The next year the program expanded to include six high school students and four ASC students working on two teams, biology and astronomy.

White and Bowden knew, too, that high school teachers needed research experience to remain on top of scientific advances and technology. So now SHARP! Women is also a way “to help teachers who will reach many more students than we can.”

THIS SUMMER, Frances Dale, biology/physics teacher at Avondale High School, welcomed the opportunity. “My greatest pleasure is learning about things, firsthand, rather than reading about them. It’s also great to see the kids get a joy out of this hands-on experience.” Through labs, she and students worked side by side. “Students think that teachers know everything,” Dale says with a grin, so now and then “it’s probably fun for them to see a puzzled look on my face.”

From the outset, emphasizes White, “SHARP! was not a lab [in which only lecturing takes place], this was *research*. They were collecting data and analyzing data. The high school students had to explain to the other high school teams what was happening to their projects. It was nice because whenever students had a break, they would go to someone else’s project and there was an exchange going on.

“It worked well.”

So well in fact that this year two additional high schools were invited to participate. Each project team was comprised of a high school teacher and students, and an ASC professor and students. Participating high schools were Woodward Academy, Shamrock, Columbia and Avondale. Students were chosen for the program based on application, transcripts and recommen-





ASC students Jane Xu and Elizabeth Isaacs helped monitor the stress levels of lab rats in the psychology project.

dations by science teachers. High school faculty members were also selected, based on applications and nominations by school principals and/or science coordinators.

"SHARP! Women gives the high school students a chance to see that there is an awful lot of everyday work that goes into scientific discoveries," comments Frances Kennedy, a biology instructor/lab coordinator at Agnes Scott.

She coordinated the biology project which was designed to show how hormones applied to the leaves affect growing plants.

During the two weeks, students learned the importance of teamwork, says Kennedy, as they learned how to dab hormones on delicate plant leaves, compare growth rates, harvest plants, use a centrifuge, run protein assays (strength or potency tests). "SHARP! Women gives students an early view as to whether they would like to pursue science as an everyday affair, and it's good for the undergrads because it gives them a different lab experience. Class lab is often self-contained, whereas, in this research experience they experimented and made predictions. As in real life these predictions and experiments didn't always come out as they thought they would."


THE MATHEMATICAL PORTION OF SHARP! Women was directed by Dan Waggoner, assistant professor of mathematics. He, together with ASC student Laylage Courie '94, wrote a computer program utilizing the latest Windows graphic environment. It allowed their team to visualize polynomial equations in non-traditional ways. Producing a single picture often required over 16 million algebraic operations. However, using optimized computer routines together with state-of-the-art PC's [personal computers], these computations were completed in minutes as opposed to hours.

"Students discovered on their own that for cubics the picture depends on only the configuration of the roots." Waggoner says. "If the roots form similar triangles, then the pictures are similar. By the end of the program they could fairly accurately predict the image that they would get, given the configuration of the roots. However, as with all research projects, more questions were raised than were answered."

Andrea Bradner '93 also worked with Waggoner. She believes SHARP! Women is especially valuable because it gives high school and college students a chance to identify scientific in-

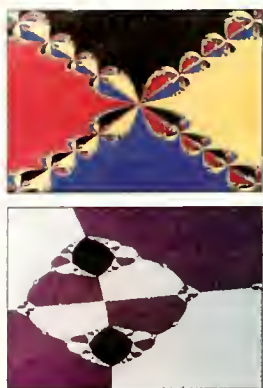




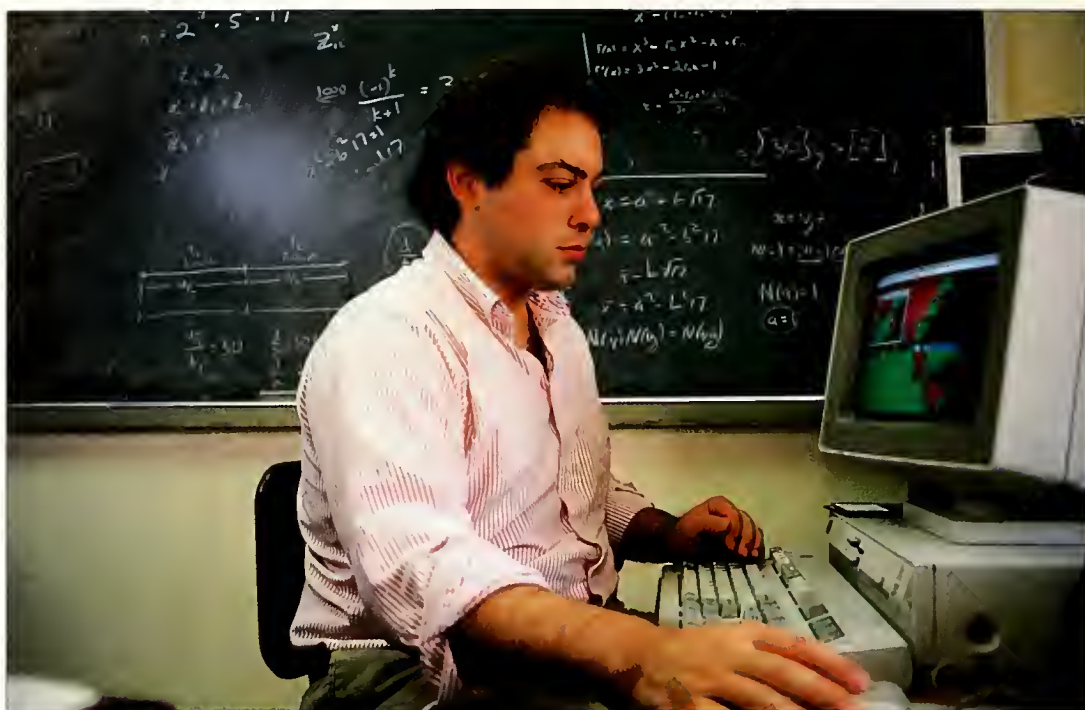


ASC biology  
instructor/lab  
coordinator  
Frances  
Kennedy (*at  
right with ASC  
student Annette  
Sessions*)  
conducted a  
project designed  
to show how  
hormones  
applied to the  
leaves affect  
growing plants.  
The experiment  
gave students  
“a chance to  
see that there  
is an awful lot  
of everyday  
work that goes  
into scientific  
discoveries.”

---



As a result of participation in SHARP!, high school students will take their knowledge back to their high school science classes.



Dan Waggoner's team wrote a computer program to visualize polynomial equations in non-traditional ways (left).

terests. "I told Dr. Waggoner that I wished I'd had this opportunity in high school. I went through four or five different majors before I came back to math. If I had been encouraged about math I would have had a better idea of what I wanted in college."

The team led by Leon Venable, associate professor of chemistry, concentrated on exploratory synthesis, creating new compounds that don't exist in nature.

One project was aimed at making compounds (based on organic, polyvalent elements ruthenium and boron) which may have potential use in cancer treatment. "The evidence is preliminary, but we think we have managed to attach the organic molecule beta estadiol, an estrogen steroid, to the ruthenium atom," says Venable. Researchers are currently working to make boron site-specific by using the steroid to guide it to the cancer. But says Venable, "we've not managed to add boron yet."

The second project included an effort to prepare a class of compounds—molecular wires—which could be used to transmit electrical currents. He believes that these could be produced to pack more information—or electrical current—into a much smaller space than can conventional wires. Venable made an analogy: it would be like making the largest computer on campus fit in a shirt pocket.

He believes that molecular wire, which was produced in small quantity by the SHARP! team,

could revolutionize circuit design, yet it's "years away from practical application."

Overall, Venable said the students were eager to work in the labs. "They weren't shy or intimidated. They synthesized new compounds."

ASC STUDENTS WORKED 8-12 weeks this summer. Students and faculty have indicated interest in expanding the high school portion of SHARP! Women from two to three weeks, and White notes that Agnes Scott would also like to add more high schools to the program. They are limited, however, by the availability of ASC faculty and by funding. (The program which will continue its fourth year next summer has been funded by a \$100,000 grant from The Coca-Cola Foundation and individual gifts.)

Although the program's long-term impact is not yet evident, as a result of participation in SHARP!, high school students will take their knowledge back to their high schools where some will conduct science projects.

A few ASC faculty and students will continue their research projects through the academic year. And several ASC faculty have presented findings to professional organizations.

Waggoner summarizes the importance of SHARP! Women by noting that fewer and fewer males are becoming scientists. "If we are to survive [as scientists] we have to attract women. If we don't, we are wasting half the intellect out there."

# THE RENAISSANCE OF MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE

An Agnes Scott professor is helping academicians and others rediscover the contributions of a 16th century French author.

Written by  
Mary Alma Durrett



Marguerite de Navarre might have felt at home at her birthday dinner on April 13 with chicken, lentil stuffing, beef ribs and leeks lapping over the edges of the dinner plates and wine glasses raised in her honor. She might have enjoyed the Georgian Dancers performing Renaissance dance and the Emory Early Music Consort performing period music. Air conditioning and electric lights would have certainly been a curiosity though.

The dinner, held just two days after the 500th anniversary of the French queen's birth might have gone unnoticed had not her resident devotee, Regine Reynolds-Cornell, brought her into the light for all to study.

Reynolds-Cornell, Agnes Scott's Adeline Arnold Loridans Professor and chair of the French department, recognized 1492 as being important for more reasons than Columbus' voyage. It marked the birth of Marguerite d'Angouleme, duchess of Alençon, queen of Navarre, who is recognized as an outstanding figure in the

French Renaissance. Reynolds-Cornell, a French native and authority on the life and works of Marguerite de Navarre, launched her own "retro-journey" to Marguerite's world this past April 13 and 14 through an international symposium held at ASC. Reynolds-Cornell gathered a group of scholars from Italy, France, Canada and across the United States who could illuminate the powerful queen's life (1492-1549) and works within the context of French history and offer insight into the public, the private and the secret life of Marguerite.

"Very few women achieved star status" in that age, observes Reynolds-Cornell, whose doctoral dissertation focused on Marguerite's *Heptameron*. "There had been many studies written about [Marguerite], but she was not considered an important character. She was considered more a dilettante and a mystic, very interested in religion—in this because she saved lives—but was simply not considered a great *brain*, a great influence, a great power in terms of literature."

But Reynolds-Cornell holds a different opinion. "She was very influential in church reform." She was a kind, well-educated woman, who was fascinated with religion and who wrote "with the didactic aim; never totally to entertain." She wrote meditations, songs and plays, all of which dealt with religion, with death or relationships of people—love, friendship, marriage, faithfulness, integrity—with intellectual and social "prisons," with liberation of the intellect, but never manners.

BORN APRIL 11, 1492, to Charles de Valois-Orleans, comte d'Angouleme, and Louise of Savoy, Marguerite was influential as queen consort to King Henry II of Navarre and as the sister of King Francis I, who almost by a fluke (French kings Louis XII and Charles VIII died without male heirs) acceded to the throne of France in 1515. She was a patron of Humanists and Reformers, and a writer, producing poems, spiritual essays, songs and novellas. *Heptameron*, considered her most important work and published posthumously in 1558, is a collection of 72 stories told by travelers delayed in their return from a Pyrenean spa.

A voracious reader, Marguerite had other habits—good hygiene and a balanced diet—which



Many members of Marguerite's circle were brought up on charges of heresy, their works condemned. Many were killed. "This was a time when people were burned at the stake for their religious beliefs."

seemed rather quirky for her day. Her idiosyncrasies would not have been tolerated had she not enjoyed the "protection" of court life; but she was, after all, a product of court life. Two years after her brother Francis was born (Marguerite was four years old at the time), their father, Charles, died. Marguerite, her mother and brother were invited by the king to live in the castle Amboise and both children were educated by outstanding scholars. "It was a happy and warm intellectual place to be when she and her brother were together," comments Reynolds-Cornell. "The only person she thought had no faults was her brother. She adored him. Friendship was a passionate thing in the 16th century, a lot more important than it is now, like a bond."

When Marguerite was 17, (and thought to be practically past marrying age), Marguerite's marriage was arranged to Charles, Fourth Duke of Alençon, who is described as a "kind man of limited intellect." Distraught by the betrothal, Marguerite is said to have "wept enough tears to hollow out a stone" during the wedding ceremony. To the union she brought intellectual passion and a vast library which she continued to build. She liked to entertain and was given to kitchen innovation, but led what Reynolds-Cornell describes as a rather dull life. However, 1515 proved a turning-point.

With the death of King Louis XII, brother Francis advanced to the throne, and Marguerite, with the added title of duchess of Alençon, was allowed much freedom and greater cause to traverse the provinces. She witnessed first-hand corruption within many convents, "some were little more than brothels," and recognized a need for reform within the Catholic Church which had grown wealthy and powerful as the poor became poorer. She was familiar with Martin Luther's works and was influenced by the doctrinal and disciplinary reformists: François Rabelais, Clément Marot, Bonaventure Des Périers and Étienne Dolet. Her spiritual concerns drew her to seek counsel in the Humanist scholar Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples and precipitated what Reynolds-Cornell describes as a "turning point in Marguerite's spiritual itinerary."

She became involved in the evangelical movement and extended protection to the scholars who wished to return study to the classical Greek texts. This approach, which grew into what is now called the College of France, differed greatly from

the scholarly methods employed by the traditional Faculty of Theology of the University of Paris (Sorbonne). Explains Reynolds-Cornell: "It was a direct challenge that the University of Paris took very badly but they [College of France] engaged the best scholars from Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, and people would come from all those countries to hear their lectures. It was a great Humanistic wave that engulfed Europe and Marguerite and her brother greatly influenced this."



In an age when knowledge and religion were closely entwined, "ideas deemed false or heretical posed a threat both to good order in this world and to salvation

in the next. Censorship was therefore as logical and necessary to people in the sixteenth century as are traffic laws and the control of toxic substances to us in the twentieth," observes James K. Farge of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies in Toronto in his colloquium address. "The Faculty of Theology was the heart of conservatism in France and the *Parlement* of Paris was its strong right arm." Many members of Marguerite's circle were brought up on charges of heresy, their works condemned and many killed.

"This was a time when people were burned at the stake for their religious beliefs. Books were burned and books were banned," says Reynolds-Cornell, who has published three book-length studies on French women authors of the 16th century. Marguerite protected men who advanced church reform and scholars of the new school from prison and sometimes from death. Apparently it was through her that John Calvin was informed that he was about to be arrested. "Later on she and Calvin did not see eye to eye and they stopped communicating. He felt she was not austere enough. Others thought her too austere."

While the ecclesiastical and intellectual battles dominated Marguerite's life, economic and geographic wars raged beyond the provinces. In 1525, a failed battle placed Francis I in a Madrid prison, the captive of Emperor Charles V of Spain.

"It was because of Marguerite's husband's [Charles duc d'Alençon] misunderstanding of some battle plan," that her brother, the French king, was captured, and her husband was mortally wounded, explains Reynolds-Cornell. "Charles d'Alençon was of course very remorseful and upset

about that.” He died after 15 years of marriage, leaving no heirs.

**BROTHER FRANCIS** was “the person she loved most in her entire life,” and Marguerite would not rest until he was freed from prison. She traveled to Spain to seek his release and found him ill. “She was beside herself,” explains Reynolds-Cornell. With the Spanish crown she negotiated fiercely for his release, all the while watching the approach of her passport deadline. “When she secured his release and documents were drawn, she left not in a carriage but on horseback, galloping across the Pyrenees to beat the sunset. When she arrived back in France she collapsed from her horse and sustained a nasty cut on her leg.”

Charles V was so impressed with Marguerite’s abilities that he asked for her hand in marriage. His request was not obliged. In 1527, Marguerite married Henry of Albret, king of Navarre, who was 11 years her junior. With him she bore a daughter, Jeanne d’Albret (who would be the mother of Henry IV of France). Henry was fond of Marguerite but as Reynolds-Cornell explains, “he much enjoyed the company of attractive women” and entertained a mistress. The complexities of loyalty, friendship and marriage Marguerite chose to explore in *The Coach*, *Comedy for Four Women*, *On Perfect Love* and later in the characters of *Heptameron*.

**WRITING HAD ALWAYS BEEN** Marguerite’s response, particularly in times of death and mourning which were frequent. She lost her father, husband, aunt, nieces and nephews, endured several miscarriages before giving birth to a daughter, lost a child in 1530 and endured the death of her mother in 1531. During these periods of mourning and contemplation, Marguerite wrote. Her *Dialogue in the Form of a Nocturnal Vision* and *Mirror of the Sinful Soul* (which was banned) followed the deaths of her niece and daughter. Between 1526 and 1530 she penned *Prayer to Our Lord Jesus*, *Salve Regina*, *Théâtre Profane*, *Prayer from the Faithful Soul* and *Discord Between the Soul and the Flesh* which centered on Paul’s Epistle to the Romans.

By 1535 when six “heretics” were paraded and burned at the stake in Paris, Marguerite had already left court (possibly at her brother’s request), begun to travel extensively and spent a good bit of time in Béarn. In 1540 she resided at the Louvre.

After 1542 Marguerite was less in the public eye and kept a low profile because her brother hardened his stance against moving away from church tradition. “That was a very logical thing for the King of France who needed the church to reaffirm his power and to get money,” observes Reynolds-Cornell.

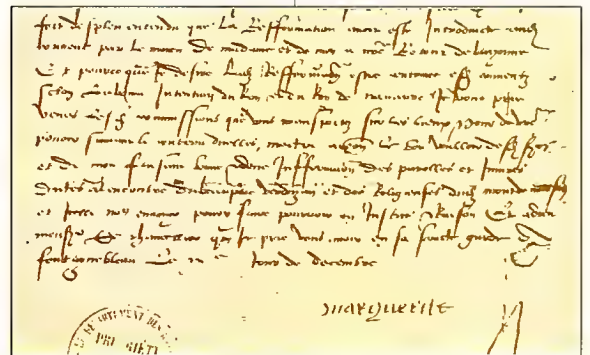
*Comedy for Four Women* is believed to have been written in 1542 and *Most, Much, Little, Less* in 1544. The latter was critical of the Roman Church and revealed her belief that the differences between the Sorbonne faculty and her circle could not be reconciled. By 1546, all the key members of the Humanist circle were dead, her husband’s mistress had borne him a son, Marguerite’s daughter was restricted from travel to Navarre, and she was even more isolated from her brother (who died in 1547).

Surrounded by death, Marguerite began to contemplate her own life and what legacy she might leave, prompting publication of *The Pearl of the Pearl Among Princesses*. “I feel that she included a sample of every genre in which she wrote,” explains Reynolds-Cornell. “I think she did that to show that she was a versatile and creative woman. That was very rare and it shows that she was perhaps not as humble as we thought she was, especially in light of the title.”

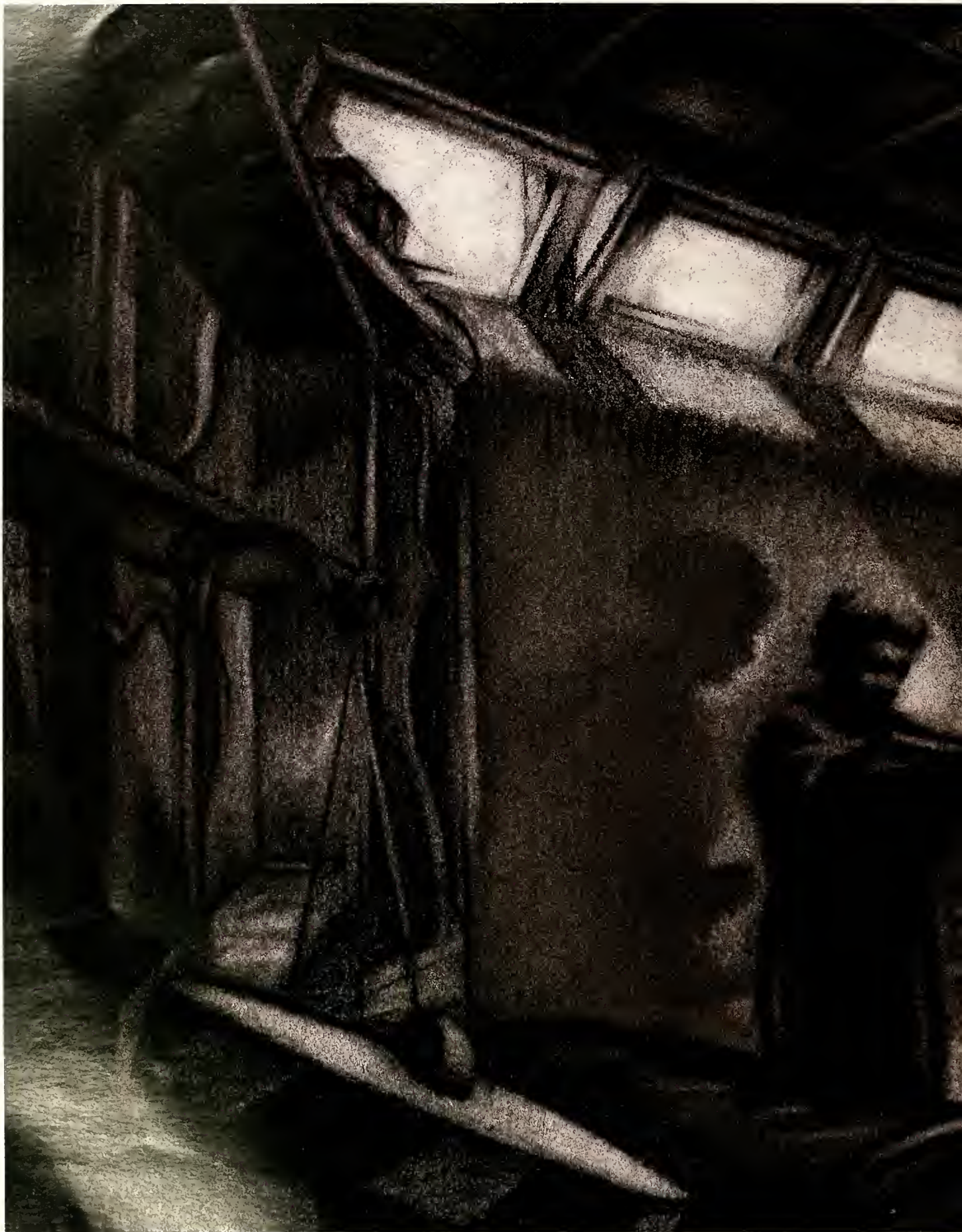
She died in 1549.

Reynold-Cornell’s insights on the French writer, illuminated in her doctoral dissertation, *The Storytellers in the Heptameron’s Contribution to Political and Social Thinking of Marguerite de Navarre*, were used by Robert Aulotte, professor emeritus of the Sorbonne, in his lectures on Marguerite. Aulotte, the former president of the International Society of 16th Century Specialists, participated in the recent ASC colloquium.

“When he read my dissertation, he sent me a letter and said he realized that women perhaps understood Marguerite better than men did and that there was a dimension that had escaped them,” the ASC professor relays. “That was very ego boosting.”



Throughout Marguerite’s life, writing was her ongoing response, particularly in times of conflict or sorrow.





# WONDER LIGHTING

*I never saw their faces, never  
heard their speech,  
and no one I know ever heard  
their names.*

*I only stumbled on their dark  
shades, some might say  
by Chance. I like to think  
my Muse or Angels led me  
to them, hidden partly by  
the night . . . .*

## The Aesthetics of Research

---

By Harriet Stovall Kelley '55  
Illustrations by Ralph Gilbert

Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose. It is a seeking that he who wishes may know the cosmic secrets of the world and they that dwell therein.

—Zora Neale Hurston

I NEVER HEARD OF ZORA Neale Hurston until my mother-in-law's Atlanta home near Little Five Points was condemned in the 1960s to make way for the "infamous" Druid Hills freeway that was scrapped before completion (now the site of the Jimmy Carter Library). Going through her basement we found a dusty old book left there apparently by a former boarder. It was *Dust Tracks on a Road* and was identified as having come from the

"Phillis Wheatley Branch of the YWCA." (I'd never heard of Phillis Wheatley, either, but through this coincidence she became one of my spiritual comrades, dear as a sister, *closer* than a contemporary.)

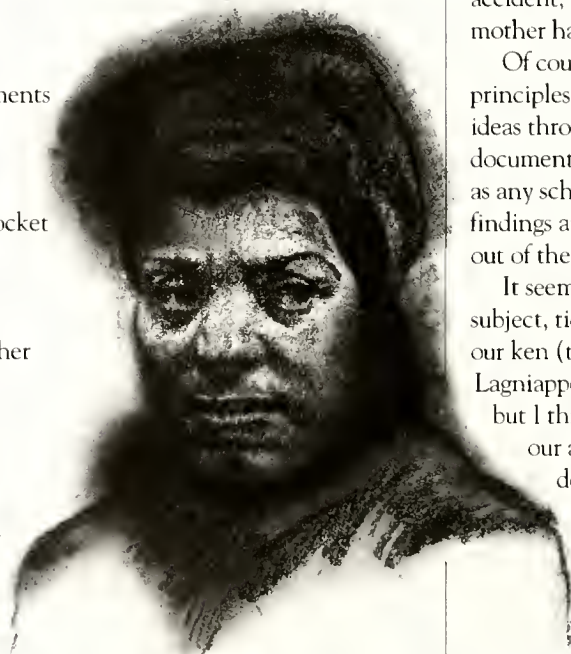
Hurston grew up in Eatonville, Fla., the country's first all-black autonomous community established by its own citizens after the Civil War. I never made any effort to find out about Eatonville, or visit there, but one summer right after I became acquainted with the author, we were driving home to Atlanta from a trip to Disney World in Orlando and the car died from a broken fan belt or something. We were right by an exit ramp on the highway and could ease off and coast to a safe stop. We looked up and saw that it was the Eatonville exit. . . .

Because of these unexpected encounters, my life was enriched by two women, Hurston and Wheatley, who became profoundly significant for me. I didn't learn of them in a class, no one recommended them to me, I discovered them only by accident, in the cellar of a house my husband's mother had lived in for 40 years.

Of course, at Agnes Scott I was taught the principles of authentic research: how to follow ideas through channels to conclusions, how to document findings with meticulous precision, but as any scholar knows, some of the most intriguing findings and intricate involvements have come out of the blue like "bolts from heaven."

It seems that when one becomes immersed in a subject, tidbits seem to gravitate or magnetize to our ken (to use a poetic term). Serendipity? Lagniappe? I don't even know if it has a name, but I think it's more than these. As is true with our approach to Scripture, I think all we can do is be humble before the Mystery of these experiences and not try to equate believing with understanding.

ABOUT THE SAME TIME I became acquainted with Hurston, I moved from Morningside to Braithwood Court, in a section of north Atlanta, with streets named Hazelwood, Boxwood, Cherrywood, WillowWood. Those trees I knew, but what was a Braith? I looked it up ("A restless, roaming, discontented, disembodied spirit"—appropriate since I was never happy living there). Then my eye fell on "Braithwaite, William Stanley: Black American mystic poet, born in Boston, works unrelated to race."



De Sun, Ah!

Gethered up de fiery skirts of her garments  
And wheeled about de throne, Ah!

Saying, Ah, make man after me, ha!

God gazed upon the sun

And sent her back to her blood-red socket

And shook His head, ha!

De Moon, ha!

Grabbed up de reins of de tides.

And dragged a thousand seas behind her

As she walked around de throne

Ah-h, please, make man after me

But God said, "NO!"

De stars bust out from their diamond  
sockets

And circled de glitterin' throne cryin'

A-aah! Make man after me.

God said, "NO!"

I'll make man in my own image, ha!"

—From *Jonah's Gourd Vine*

## ZORA NEALE HURSTON (1901-1960)

During the Harlem Renaissance this flamboyant, multifaceted artist wrote short stories, plays, musical reviews, novels, articles, essays and critiques for newspapers and journals. A graduate of Morgan College and recipient of a Guggenheim fellowship, her first published novel was *Jonah's Gourd Vine*.



It was some years later that I made the discovery that this man had taught creative literature at Atlanta University for most of his career. Earlier, through yet another happenstance, I became acquainted with Nan Cooke Carpenter of Athens, Georgia, whose sister Margaret Haley had collaborated with Braithwaite on some of the anthologies of *American Magazine Verse* for which he was best known. Cooke and I shared the same publisher at the time, and when we began to correspond (after I moved to Texas in 1983) she sent me a copy of his 1958 collection that her sister had edited and introduced.

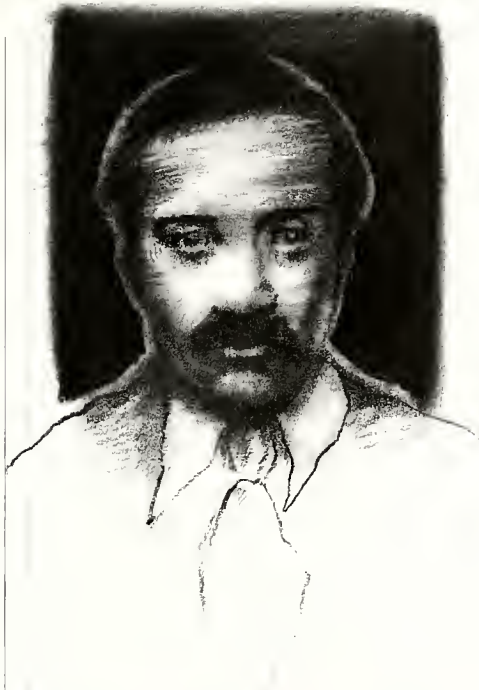
CHARLES MORGAN IS ANOTHER favorite writer whose themes I share. I discovered him the year after my graduation. (I invite you to discover his themes for yourself. I think I'm the only person who has checked out his essays from the ASC library in all these years!) I was working in the library and was assigned to process for acquisition the collection of books donated by the late Emma May Laney upon her retirement after 37 years of teaching English at the College. Morgan's essays were among them. I read them only out of curiosity because Charles Morgan Kelley is my husband's (at that time my fiancé's) name. An uncanny affinity sprang up. I later learned that Morgan had died about the very time I was discovering him, the same year, also, that my own father died.

During the ensuing years, without even trying, I found more and more connections with the Morgans—people in Atlanta who had known Charles Morgan during World War II, who still kept up with his widow in London. One family kindly loaned me copies of Morgan's books no longer available anywhere else. I never sought out these people, but met them first through a tennis partner and a fellow employee of my husband.

I believe these found fellows have not so much "influenced me" as they have awakened in me the recognition of shared affinities. C.S. Lewis speaks of older writers as "sources, not influences nor models." But even the word *source* implies to me a priority, not mere congruity which has been my experience with these writers through the years.

There's more. . . .

In London in 1984, while on a business trip with my husband, I stopped in a small bookshop to ask directions to the British Museum and my eye fell on a shiny little green and gold book on



## WILLIAM S. BRAITHWAITE (1878-1962)

*Poet, anthologist, literary critic, he is best known as compiler and editor of 17 volumes of the Anthology of Magazine Verse and Year Book of American Poetry, which helped launch the careers of Vachel Lindsay and Carl Sandburg. He wrote critical essays for such publications as Atlantic. From 1936-1945, he was professor of literature at Atlanta University.*

Times of sorrowing: yea, to weep:  
To wash my soul with tears, and  
keep  
It clean from earth's too constant  
gain,  
Even as a flower needs the rain  
To cool the passion of the sun,  
And takes a fresh new glory on.

Farther than noon lo! the sun  
mounts no higher,  
And Love in man's life is his  
noon-sun a-beaming.

Failure is a crown of sorrow,  
Success is a crown of fears. . . .

— *The House of Falling Leaves*

the shelf just past the proprietor's head. It was a mint copy of Morgan's history of *The House of MacMillan* written for the publisher's centennial in the 1940s. Such a find is humbling, and I suppose, a little frightening. I was not looking for a copy of this book or any book, whatever. If the store had been a flower shop, at that moment I would have dipped in for directions. The best detective skills and experience in the world (and I think I'd have made a pretty good detective) could not have sufficed to uncover, with as little effort, these in-mediate (which is one of the meanings of mystic) "haps."

AMONG THE MOST GLITTERING of these gems came to me during my work on William Ferguson Smith's (my great-grandfather) Civil War papers, discovered a hundred years after he wrote them, and narrated in the third person as a novel. To validate the authenticity of his battle accounts as well as his historical and autobiographical data, I spent seven years studying the

These anecdotes about my great grandfather do not minimize the importance of pristine research. The point is to show that there are rewards and receipts of sublime inheritance even in the driest of drudgery.

period, the idiom, the customs of his era. Some puzzling inconsistencies I could not reconcile. In one early chapter there was a reference to *Por LaChaise* in Paris. Being provincial and untraveled, I naturally assumed this to be a typo for *Port* but could find nothing.

After the manuscript had already gone to press, I was in the home of a friend who had just died, helping her daughters to sort out things, and on the coffee table, in plain view, was an old copy of *Smithsonian* magazine with the cover illustration for a feature article on *Pere Lachaise*, the Paris cemetery where many notables are buried! The wonder is that the public library people I queried for reference did not make this connection, unable to find it as I had been. I cannot really fault one of them for pronouncing Versailles as "Veer-Sallies" because I myself had called *gaol gowl* (hard g) until I was grown and visited Williamsburg with my children. Again, so much for proper research.

A MORE STARTLING answer came to a puzzling reference in the manuscript about prisoners of war at Point Lookout, Md., raising the Confederate flag in their quarter of the camp. Experts from A to Z (Dr. Bell Wiley of Emory had become ill and died before I could avail myself of his endorsement and counsel) had told me an occurrence like this was not possible. My ancestor, they believed, had made it up. I doubted that. Up to this point, my great-grandfather's veracity had been impeccable. He had been incarcerated at Point Lookout. So he should know.

I queried Edwin Beitzel, head of the park now encompassing the old encampment. This time I did not hear until almost too late. To save face both for my fore-

bear and my publisher, I deleted the paragraph, reluctantly, to "purge" the original manuscript from possible error. After the gal-

leys were set, I received a long distance call from the New Hampshire Historical Society. Beitzel, who had helped me before, had retired and New Hampshire had somehow fallen heir to some of his papers, including my letter. The man who called had found a parallel incident: officials of a rebel camp had allowed the New Hampshire flag to be raised, without incident. I rewrote the passage (or rather, reinstated it in my great grandfather's original words—and at my own expense), relieved, and awed at the mysterious workings of the Guardian Angels of Accuracy.

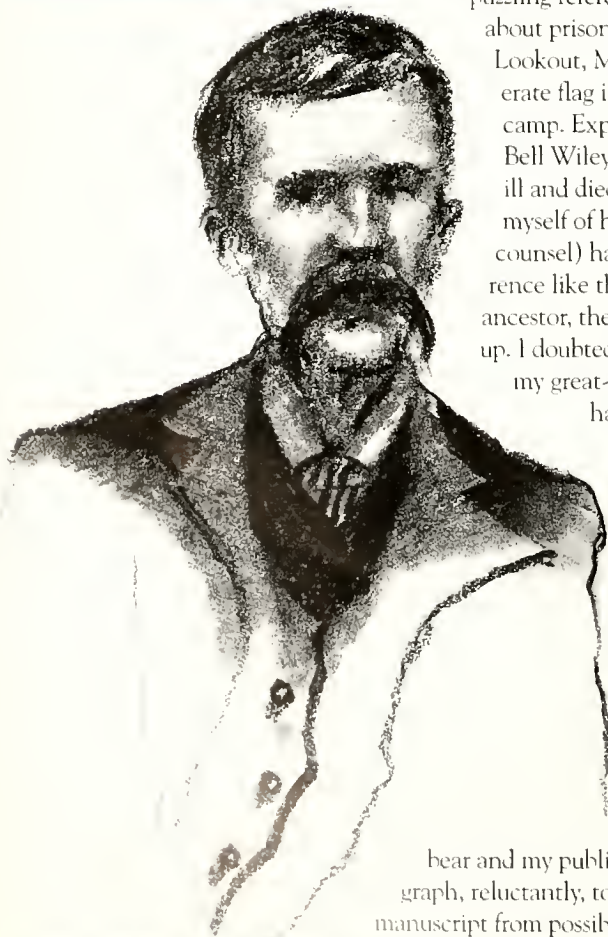
THESE NARRATIONS do not minimize the importance of pristine research. I suppose the point is to show that there are rewards and receipts of sublime inheritance even in the driest of drudgery.

I am enriched by my findings, treasures that Just Came, but would they have come were I not already focused on truth? Who said that Beauty eludes us when we seek her, but overtakes us when our minds are dedicated to our duties? The Bible does tell us to seek first the Kingdom of Heaven, and all else, material and otherwise, shall be added. And we learned in human anatomy and in Dr. William Calder's astronomy, that the corner of the eye is most sensitive to brightness and to the magnitude of the stars.

A final cap on the interconnectedness of all these things came when I inherited a large scrapbook that had been made by a village lady for my great-grandfather, the Civil War chronicler. Miss Jo Varner, whose old home is now Indian Spring Hotel (currently being restored by the Butts County Historical Society) made these books as spelling-bee prizes and convalescence gifts for her friends. Today, several are housed in collections of the Georgia State Archives in downtown Atlanta. This particular scrapbook contained random newspaper clippings and programmes, pictures and trivia, and in perusing it, my attention was arrested by a long article cut from an undocumented source, headlined, "Young Negro Poet Gains Acclaim on Two Continents." The clipping supplied, belatedly, biographical details I had not seen anywhere else, on William Stanley Braithwaite.

What is the lesson or moral of all this? Some guarantee that all missing links will eventually fall into place?

The synthesis of this, for me, came in my writing a poem. If I had to reduce the principles to a lesson or moral, I would have to say, as I say in the



## PHILLIS WHEATLEY (c. 1753-1784)

Born in Africa, she was purchased from a slave ship (at about age 7) by wealthy Boston merchant John Wheatley. Within a few months of arriving in the States, she learned to read and write. By 17, she had had her first poem published. She went on to write a book of 38 poems, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, before she died, at age 31, shortly after the birth of a child.

Imagination! Who can sing thy force?  
Or who describe the swiftness of thy course?  
Soaring through air to find the bright abode,  
The empyreal palace of the thundering God,  
Where thy pinions can surpass the wind,  
And leave the rolling universe behind. . .

—*On Imagination*

"Her morning sun, which rose divinely bright,  
Was quickly mantled with the gloom of night.  
But hear in heaven's best bowers your Nancy fair,  
And learn to imitate her language there."

—*On the death of a young lady of five years of age*



poem, let us be careful what our purposes are. Those who crusade may miss their target, their audience, their purpose, their best rewards. Zora Neale Hurston was a storyteller, pure and simple. Braithwaite and Wheatley were devoted to their art and experience as well. They are alongside-companions, not mentors or tutors, not accusing me from a podium or pedestal or yelling at me from the past.

When I judge poetry contests, I eliminate first all those that are too preachy, too didactic, too obvious. Give me the experience, I say, and I'll make my own point.

I HAVE LOOKED for many other elusive things

## HARRIET STOVALL KELLEY

Kelley '55 is an artist, writer and poet living in Texas, who spent the first 50 years of her life in Atlanta. An art major, she illustrated the Spring 1955 edition of *The Alumnae Quarterly*, and designed the sketches used on *Alumnae Association* letterheads and brochures for many years. Her husband works with IBM and they have

and people I never did find, and sleuthed out others, intentionally, and found them through the usual avenues of research.

So why did these other experiences occur? Those of us who look for meaning and purpose and plan in all we do, have no easy answers, only occasional stunning evidence.

That there is a design is apparent. It is the repeated mirroring, reflection, of the random flotsam in a kaleidoscope that gives symmetry to any otherwise chaotic arrangement of baubles, and holds our fascinated attention. It may be nothing more than to delight us, and keep us in the game. It is not an answer, but it is a start.

The Question is gift enough.

three grown children. Her works include an historical study, *The Rival Lovers of William Ferguson Smith 1845-1912*, published by Peachtree Publishers in 1980, and *My Flovilla*, published by HaSk in 1988. Recently she won the National Federation of State Poetry Societies Grand Prize for her poem *The Sand Bottle*.

Go know them now,  
go find them,  
hear them, listen,  
all you who think Art  
must have  
Messages.

Forget all politics and  
propaganda.

Talewrights,  
mystics,  
all, in their own way,  
taught us this  
lesson:

there doesn't have to be  
a lesson in it after  
all!

It is the light that  
matters, in the  
dark.

The italicized excerpts at the beginning and end of this article are from "Three Figures Far: A Charcoal Sketch," by Harriet Stovall Kelley, reprinted courtesy of The National Federation of State Poetry Societies, *Prize Poems of 1986*.

# WHEN CORPORATE PATTERNS DON'T FIT

Blithe spirit Erin Odom stitches a career from swatches of cloth.

Written by  
Celeste Pennington  
Photographed by Monika  
Nikore and Mark Sandlin



Erin Odom shatters most stereotypes of a traditional quilter. "Lots of people perceive quilts as 'country' or 'old fashioned.' I try to dispel that idea. I try to re-educate each person I meet. I like people to put some of themselves in the design."

A SHORT, SILVERY NEEDLE. A heavy-duty thimble. Orange-handled scissors. A tangle of white threads on dark teal cotton. And an ample supply of hydrogen peroxide. At age 27, Erin Odom traded a promising corporate career for these quilting tools and a simpler life.

Under a soft light pouring through her dining room window, Odom '85, a slim, well-toned woman with roundish black-rimmed glasses and dark, shorn hair, sits alone at fabric stretched over a white PVC frame.

Carefully she loads up her needle with stitches: this day she traces her own patterns of soft dark plumes; on other days she has outlined golden starbursts or bear claws or pink flying geese and kelp-stitched corners and waves of sea-foam green.

Each night by lamplight she cuts shapes from scraps of colorful print and solid cottons, then with precision she stitches them into blocks and strips and lovely patterns.

"Today my fingers are pretty sore," she admits, examining a punctured, calloused thumb.

Etched in painful memory is her work on one quilt, straight through the night to 4 a.m. on the day of an art gallery exhibit deadline. "My fingers were bleeding." With hydrogen peroxide she completely erased the stains from the fabric. But her fingers remained tender.

"I didn't want to quilt again," she remarks, then stops herself and grins—"for a week, at least."

THE WHISPER of thread pushed and pulled through layers of cloth and cotton batting punctuates what for Odom is a solitary occupation.

Sewing by hand—cross-stitch and embroidery—Odom learned as a youngster. But she has never joined with other women around a large, wooden frame for a convivial quilting bee nor has she attended a quilting class. "Some real quilters might come in and say, 'Where did you learn your technique?'" What Odom knows, she has learned by trial and error or from books. She confesses, "I am a loner."

She often listens to jazz as she works. "I don't consider myself a patient person," she explains, "but for the most part I don't get impatient with this because I enjoy meticulously detailed work."

"I can sit and do these little bitty stitches every day, hour after hour."

On schedule, she's up and quilting by 9 a.m. With breaks for lunch, a walk, or exercising her fingers, she quilts until 5:30 or 6 p.m.

Often during those silent times, Odom mentally sketches quilt tops or plans her weekend or ponders life's problems. "Having a steady income. Making this successful. That's mostly it."

She laughs. "I am not wild in terms of going out and really living it up. But day by day, I'm living on the edge."

Less than two years ago Odom started thinking seriously about quilting full time. She paid off what she could, built up savings and began restructuring her finances.

Over seven months she began phasing out of a successful job as operations manager for an industrial real estate firm: "I had acquired a lot of skills. But as time went on, I knew it wasn't my niche. I didn't like the corporate atmosphere; it was too political for me. And my creative juices never came into play."

But to make that change of lifestyle requires "a lot of realism," admits Odom. "I spent a year of gut-wrenching kinds of thinking just to get myself ready to cut back to part-time."

For less than a year, quilting has been Odom's business. To insure a small, steady income she works as a wordprocessor/bookkeeper for a few hours a week. "Since quilting is really what I want to do, I am unwilling to sacrifice very much quilting time in order to make more money. I just don't want any job to cut into my quilting."

So she has established clear priorities. "My bills come first. Quilting supplies come second. Somebody's birthday—that's a priority. Sometimes I feel the need to buy a little something for myself every now and then, just to keep my hand in the consumer market. But I have a lot of will power. I want to become self-sufficient in this."

Her long-range goals include showing her quilts in more galleries. Eventually she wants to serve corporate clients with what she calls "more art pieces than functional quilts." But for now she relies on individual clients with advertising by word of mouth.

Since making her first quilt—a yard-square wall hanging with a broken ribbon border and bright pinwheels against black—she's completed nine. Bed-sized quilts start at \$650; wall hangings, \$300 and up. Some, like one patchwork quilt, she might love to sell but hates to part with: "I think I



Odom, a history and French major at Agnes Scott, grew up in a family of artists: both parents paint; her sister makes jewelry. Odom's gift for quilting is handed down from maternal grandparent Mamaw Grace Fowler: "It's in the blood."

subconsciously designed that with me in mind." She likes at least three projects going at once, each in a different stage of completion. From an armoire she pulls the beginnings of another quilt: small squares neatly hand-sewn together, 17-20 stitches per side with 1/4-inch seams all around. "Straight lines are easy to work with. Curved shapes are hard. Points," she warns, "are tedious."

BLOCKS OF TURQUOISE, black, hot pink, dark and what she calls light-teal green spill from the 2 x 4 portable frame onto shiny hardwood dining room floor. This quilt, commissioned as a coverlet for a Victorian bed and breakfast inn, is a rich juxtaposition of color and line, employing piece-work and appliqué. Colors she has chosen for this quilt complement a pre-existing scheme. So her real challenge was to combine them into a customized design for the client.

For ideas Odom usually combs books of quilts. She also borrows from images around her. "There is a big hutch at Mick's restaurant in Decatur. It has an interesting running pattern. It would make a great quilt border.

"Everything I look at turns into a possible quilt pattern."

Because quilt designing offers endless combinations of color and pattern, "the possibilities out there exceed what I have done or what I will ever be able to do," laments Odom. "The choices are hard to narrow down." For this project, Odom talked with the client and spent a night at the inn to gain a sense of the place. "I worked and worked at it, but I couldn't come up with the design. What epitomized this client? This project I had to set aside for a while."

Like colorful pieces in a turning kaleidoscope, finally the elements fell into place. Against a traditional block pattern Odom set several architectural details from the inn's Victoriana gable and weathervane: appliqués of stylized birds, stars (4-point, 8-point and royal stars), half moons and dancing ladies.

If quilting is an art, it is also a science. Before Odom ever begins to cut or stitch a project, she must translate her colored pencil sketch into inches and yards of fabric. She plans for each pattern to match, criss-cross or dovetail precisely with the next. All renderings and measurements she keeps on file. "The worst part of quilting for me is figuring out how big all the pieces should be. I hate math. It's agony."

ODOM SEEMS A STUDY in contrast with ancient seamstresses (from the days of poor knights and fair maidens) who once stitched together two layers of fabric, stuffed with wool, to warm their castle beds or to fashion into vests as substitutes for armour, or with the English and Dutch who brought quilt-making to the New World. By the 18th century Americans were quilting petticoats and patchwork comforters.

She treasures those old, soft and worn bedcovers. Some with their melange of fabrics and embroidered signatures hold family history, remembrances of a church missionary group or the bits and pieces of a larger community. And each recalls gentler times. "Most of us can remember a quilt in our lives, one that may have been ugly or pretty," she says. "My mother had a scrap quilt that my grandmother made that was always on someone's bed."

From their closets and attics, friends send scraps to Odom; she purchases traditional fabrics from New England. But scrap quilts and traditional fabrics provide merely a point of departure for her own artistry which reflects an imaginative sense of pattern, design and color. Often she cuts her own mylar stencils and templates. She moves quilt pieces around and around on the floor in different combinations to achieve unusual effects of prints and solids, of primary colors with others. For one project she pulled together hot pink, hot turquoise and bright yellow: "I like the colors to really do something.

"I especially like rarely seen, older quilt patterns," she says, yet insists, "I will never copy a quilt exactly. I don't like to make carbon copies."

FOUR TALL KARATE trophies stand on a white-painted windowseat in the living room. Odom, a black-belt karate instructor, removes the trophies and opens the lid. Inside is an "oddfellows" quilt made from an unfinished top handed down from her maternal grandparent, Mamaw Grace Fowler. "She started this not long after she was married, but she had never finished it. Each piece is a different fabric."

It was this unfinished quilt top that invited Odom's own first quilting efforts.

She carefully draws out the oddfellow, dancing with rows on rows of tiny prints and solids. She spreads it out on the floor and kneels over it. "When I was nine, my Mom made us all matching Easter dresses out of this fabric: the pink was



*Piecing fabric is the first step, then the pieced cover is quilted (stitched)—in a pattern—to a backing material, with wool, cotton or other fabric in between for added warmth. Traditional quilting calls for at least 11 stitches per inch.*

Mother's," she hunts and points, "the blue was mine, this green was my sister's."

Odom finds a bold pink-flowered pattern: "This was from a dress of my Grandmother."

She points again, "This peach fabric with the tennis player? That was from my mother's playsuit." She smooths another bright piece: "And this pink-orange-navy-brown ugly striped stuff—very '70s—was from one of my favorite outfits in the world."

She sighs. "These days, people don't sew so

they don't have the scraps with memories of their old dresses and playsuits. That's disappointing." She carefully folds up the quilt and puts it away. "I guess I have a nostalgic streak."

Quilting is her way to preserve a valued tradition, a sense of family, a reminder of another time. "I value this link with the past," says Odom running her hand along the folds of a favorite patchwork quilt. "To me, this is like comfort food. . . ."

"It is something to wrap around you, while you eat chicken soup or watch an old movie."

# THE MERITS OF SELF-SCRUTINY

Once a decade, Agnes Scott goes through the vital college accreditation process. For Dean Blanshei, it's an opportunity, not a "terrible burden."

---

*One thing that is wrong with us and eats away at us: we do not know enough about ourselves.*

—Lewis Thomas in an address at Douglas College

Agnes Scott's Dean of the College Sarah Blanshei takes off her wire-rimmed glasses and rubs her eyes. In a day filled with back-to-back appointments, once again she's switching gears. Her focus at this moment is college accreditation and SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools).

In less than a year after arriving at Agnes Scott, Blanshei began laying groundwork for the institution-wide self-study and resulting report to be reviewed by a visiting SACS team in 1993.

It's a once per decade event. The self-study por-

tion of the review engages the entire college community and requires hours on hours of meetings, committee work, detailed research and the digestion of stacks of written and statistical reports. Recommendations for the College are distilled from task force and department reports. Some administrators might rely on assistants to organize the study. But Blanshei's concerns for the College are as wide-ranging as the study and her goal is to help the College achieve a holistic approach to liberal arts education. "I see this as an opportunity," she says, "instead of a terrible burden."

Ultimately the SACS review determines institutional accreditation.

THE REVIEW ITSELF involves analysis of numerous interrelated and complex issues. Recommendations from the self-study 10 years ago led to the newly arrived President Ruth Schmidt's immediate investigation into several philosophical and practical matters ranging from academic freedom to expansion of admission's Return-to-College program to hiring a full-time chaplain, to the structural integrity of the Hub (the Murphey Candler Building) as well as Rebekah, Main and Inman residence halls.

It's anticipated that the 1992-93 SACS recommendations will closely parallel plans already outlined and under way as a result of the recent strategic planning process. Blanshei, who played a key role in strategic planning, feels that that will certainly facilitate this review. As will, according to others, her approach and the experience she brings to the task.

Faculty members describe Blanshei as a quick study, "impeccably organized." Notes Michael Brown, professor of history and chair of the self-study a decade ago, "She has a wonderful head for detail. She has an appetite for work that is close to being awesome, I think."

Rock-ribbed intellectual intensity is how John Presley describes it. He served as associate provost to Blanshei when she was the first woman provost at Lafayette College in Easton, Pa. before coming to Agnes Scott two years ago. Blanshei organized the Lafayette self-study and served as chair for the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. "She set a pace," says Robert Kirkwood, retired director of Middle States, "that others admired and tried to keep up with." Through that,



Gathering information for the SACS study takes Dean Blanshei across campus several times each day.





she gained experience on both sides of the review process, handling what Kirkwood describes as delicate issues. “She was rigorous and demanding, while at the same time sympathetic to problems that perplex institutions.”

Since migrating South, Blanshei has also served on a SACS review team.

She has weighed the advantages and pitfalls; she knows the intricacies of the reviews. She understands the Agnes Scott College faculty wariness concerning a new (1986) SACS requirement for each institution to gather evidence to show what it is doing for students. “The new buzzword is *assessment*,” comments one faculty member. “That implies measuring outcomes. And this drives faculty right up the wall.” While assessment does not require “precise measurements,” it puts a gnarly spin on an already labor-intensive, time-consuming process. Time, notes Blanshei, “is most precious to faculty: time to prepare lectures, to grade papers, to meet with students, time to grow and reflect and not be crushed by routine.”

AT THE SAME TIME, she knows that in recent years consumers have taken a more critical view of education. They want to know if a college is, indeed, providing the product described in its academic catalog and student recruitment materials.

Earlier evaluation of education in general and particularly higher education tended to be anecdotal, reminds Tom Maier, acting director of computer services. But today, he says, “People aren’t

willing to take other people’s words. They want hard evidence to be convinced that this education is a worthwhile investment. I think in general it has been good for education. But there is a concern. Do you spend so much time assessing it that you never get around to doing it?”

Blanshei reminds that the approach to handling the study itself and consequent recommendations is “not prescriptive—you find your own way.” Some colleges have taken a statistical approach, relying on standardized tests to measure effectiveness. Others have experimented with more qualitative analysis.

Blanshei cites some conceptual abuse as institutions have dealt with self-study. Yet this process of soul-searching and self-scrutiny which first emerged in the late ’60s/early ’70s has also benefited many. As a result of assessment, for instance, Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania decided to hire external examiners to evaluate the overall development of honors students. A small private college in Wisconsin has developed a series of portfolios to track the students’ progress through the institution. Harvard University, beginning with leadership of then-president Derek Bok, has been involved in self-assessment for a number of years now. One result, notes Blanshei, is that “they have come up with some innovative learning curves.”

Blanshei, who trained as a historian in the field of new social history at Bryn Mawr with David Herlihy, welcomes the entire review as

*In one of the many meetings that consume her days, Dean Blanshei talks about library space with director Judith B. Jensen (above). The SACS study is difficult and time-consuming—meetings cut giant slices from everyone’s schedules. Yet Blanshei feels the rewards are more than simply scholastic acceptance by the college’s peers. It is not “prescriptive”—its findings offer insight into improvement and new direction.*

As a new member of the Board of Directors of the Association of American Colleges, and as an educator/administrator, Blanshei is concerned with liberal arts learning and its central issue: What does it mean to be an educated person?

another way for Agnes Scott to gain a more holistic understanding of itself and the education it provides. "Where I get my intellectual satisfaction as an administrator is in understanding interdisciplinary relationships and in forging new ones.

"What this study means is we have an opportunity to see what we do well and how we can do things better. It will," she explains, using the analogy of blind men who see the elephant by touching only one feature or another, "help us see how all the pieces fit together."

And as to the assessment aspect of the self-

study, she reminds with a smile, "Scholarship says you *back up* generalizations."

Agnes Scott has a long history with SACS and the distinction of being the first college or university to receive regional accreditation from them (1907). When SACS later established a program of institutional self-study, the College became an early participant. Blanshei believes the College is positioned well to execute the current study. And notes John Pilger, professor of biology, Blanshei "has brought organization to it so we are not starting next year cold. She has us moving, she's minimizing the burden, spreading it out."

## REFLECTIONS

*The dean talks about Agnes Scott's past, present and future*

Dean Sarah Blanshei had known Agnes Scott's academic reputation since high school. "When I came to Agnes Scott I felt there was a similarity with Wheaton [in Massachusetts], where I visited as an undergraduate. I also found here one-on-ones with faculty were so stimulating. There is a willingness here to listen to and engage the other. There was something else, that I found amazing. The absence of sexism. I didn't have to worry that I was a token woman and everything I said would affect all the other women."

Because Agnes Scott is small: "In a larger institution, one department may not care what happens to another. Because our departments are small, barriers between departments and disciplines are much smaller. Here, people of all disciplines talk with each other. I think that nourishes, so that teachers become the caliber of people we have here . . . The

place is so small; change affects everyone. Even a small change has a ripple effect."

Because Agnes Scott is well endowed: "With a high endowment comes high expectations. It's tough for this institution to make choices because of that legacy of resources. The fear of choices becomes more paralyzing."

Her administrative philosophy: "I try to prepare for each meeting the same way a faculty member prepares for a class. I feel I have to be the most prepared person present. That can be hard when you have several meetings all day. I try to reflect and anticipate issues. I try to do that, not so I'm simply putting my viewpoint

across, but so I am prepared to appreciate others' points of view."

To get away from it all she has a home in the hills overlooking Lake Burton. "Every time I look up, I feel refreshed in my soul." It provides her mini vacations and/or an opportunity for uninterrupted work.

To unwind at home, Blanshei reads for 30-minutes to an hour each evening. "I enjoy books in medieval history. I read novels voraciously."



## The Life of the Party: A Look at Festive Fiction

With its jaunty double entendre, the title of Christopher Ames' new book, *The Life of the Party*, hints at his multifaceted approach to the ambitious topic further defined by its subtitle, *Festive Vision in Modern Fiction*. An inclusive readership of literary scholars and lay enthusiasts of 20th-century fiction should find these pages central to their interest. *The Life of the Party* is criticism that may change the way a reader looks at the works of the seven authors Ames closely elucidates, but its engaging central argument may indeed alter the way some experience life itself. His is the kind of book that might reasonably contend for the Christian Gauss award of Phi Beta Kappa—distinguished by its scholarship and significant in its scope.

Extravagant? Perhaps. But when I agreed to introduce this promising young colleague's work, I warned that my remarks would naturally be predicated on bias. Now in his seventh year at Agnes Scott, Chris Ames has already made consequential contributions to the department of English, which, with his support and flexibility, has been diversified on several exciting fronts.

This fall, for instance, Ames is teaching a lively course in postmodern world fiction, designed for Agnes Scott's first students in the new masters program in the



teaching of English.

His first book, rooted in his prize-winning dissertation at Stanford University, proclaims Ames a scholar of substance. Standing sturdily on the now well-trampled shoulders of such giants of literary theory as Northrop Frye and Mikhail Bakhtin—and building on the seminal sociological and anthropological studies of Emile Durkheim and others—Ames imaginatively presses old theory to new purpose in explaining the developing narrative patterns of modern fiction as a function of each literary generation's response to the celebratory habits of its culture.

Ames notes that the novel and the private party have grown up together. The party, which begins to develop as an important social activity in the 18th century, is the modern legatee of the ancient carnival. Like the ancient community festivals it displaces, the private party represents a brief stay and stand against death: the party encourages excesses of jollity that belie the darkness and separation that tremble at the chronological edges of the social event, itself a metaphor for human life.

Carnivals and festivals often featured a ritual confrontation with death; so, too, the modern party provides a veiled encounter with morality, though in the novels, like Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, that track these modern versions of the ritual, the traditional catharsis and return to the normal social order are often frustrated.

Noting by a fascinating survey the extent to which the party scene is fundamental to modern fiction, Ames proceeds to focus on party texts that span the century—from the mortal celebrations of Joyce's wake to the misrule of Coover's *Gerald's Party*. Sorting 20th-century fiction into three distinct periods, Ames views the experimental narrative strategies of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf as exciting consequences of the excesses of control that contribute to the failed parties of modernist literature. The literature of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Evelyn Waugh and Henry Green describes the decadent parties between the world wars in structures that reflect resistance to experimentation and which represent "a collision of novelistic traditions;" and, with the party scenes of the postmodern writers Thomas Pynchon and Robert Coover, narrative experimentation resumes with intense vigor as "festivity turns chaotic."

The virtue of this study is not its accessibility. Even as Bakhtin contributes some of the principal premises for the relationship of festive visions to fiction, so, too, is he the source for the difficult jargon

that seems *de rigueur* for contemporary criticism: such terms as the "carnivalized novel," although efficient in encoding theory, elude dictionary definition.

However, Ames dazzles with his grasp of the seven authors he selects to illustrate his thesis—close readings that are all the more compelling because he considers featured works of fiction within the context of each author's entire canon—and each oeuvre with reference to a large body of modern British and American fiction.

Because parties and fiction are both forces to fight the darkness, this book promotes a doubly life-affirming endeavor.

My only regret is that ASC Professor George Hayes is not alive to enjoy it. The last author the 90-year-old Hayes studied during his estimable life of letters was the puzzling Thomas Pynchon, and he would have delighted in sharing Ames' remarkably lucid approach to Pynchon's texts. He would have taken supreme pleasure, too, in the knowledge that a teacher/scholar of Ames' stature was in place at Agnes Scott.

*The Life of the Party* is available from the University of Georgia Press, known among the university presses for fine design and quality publications.

Professor Ames is under way now with another fascinating study of the intersections of culture and literature—a comprehensive view of the Hollywood novel.

—Linda Lentz Hubert '62  
ASC Professor of English

## Black Cat: A Tradition in Wit vs. Wile

The "greening of freshies" is how early *Silhouette* yearbooks recorded it. Sophomores would creep up to a freshman's bedside; several would hold her down while one painted the green "F" on her forehead. That, unfortunately for the newcomers, was just the beginning. Each fall about the turn of the century, sophomores set aside an entire week for pranks (later known as Rat Week). Sometimes under the cover of darkness and cloaked in black, these upperclasswomen might tie together, then throw freshies in the swimming pool, or require them to lie on the ground and scramble like an egg, or skip backward across campus. Hairpulling often turned to duking it out in the dirt, leaving many a "middie"

tattered in the name of inter-class competition.

It was not a pretty picture. Enter Dr. Mary Frances Sweet (at ASC 1908-37), charged with student health and hygiene. She recognized the need for students to have physical and mental outlets. But many felt what had evolved was the antithesis of Southern womanhood.

About mid-way in her career, Sweet proposed an alternative to the humiliation and ridicule that had previously plagued each first-year class.

Perhaps Sweet's own black kitty whirling 'round her ankles sparked the idea for the bronze Black Cat trophy, but it was the sophomores in 1915 who chose new "weapons," then threw down the gauntlet: "Instead of the hand-to-hand fights with the new girls, we inaugurate a new method of deciding the championship." What they proposed was a battle of the

wits, with the two classes competing by writing original parodies of campus life in the forms of "stunts" or plays.

With this Thespian die cast, the curtain closed on the sophomore "reign of terror" and opened on a 77-year tradition that includes unforgettable theatrical performances such as *An Issue Concerning Miss Tishue* and *Romeow and Julicat*. Even the campus newspaper got in on the feline fun, parading such headlines as "Mystery Shrouds Campus; Annual Fur-ful Fray Nears."

"Most of what we did was brain work," says Caroline McKinney Clarke of Decatur, among the "stunt" writers for the Class of '27. She notes that the formal dance later marking the close

Bonnie Brown Johnson '70 (with Winnie the Pooh) and roommate Judy Maudlin Beggs '70.

of a Black Cat festival was not a part of their tradition. "Ours was the era when no men were allowed on campus so we didn't have a dance." She laughs. "It would surprise the men to know how much fun we had without them."

Fun they *did* have. Classes teamed up through the 1930s and '40s, first-year students with juniors, sophomore with seniors; class colors emerged in decorations and dress. Later on a rotation basis, either blue, yellow, red or



Plays, skits and Black Cat pranks: In 1924, a skit with cops and robbers from the class of '26; one year a marching band in front of Buttrick; two Black Cats ago, the kidnapping of the president. "It evolves every year," notes Merrick, "but the spirit of Black Cat continues."

green was assigned to a class to be retained as its color through all four years at ASC.

Musical competition upstaged the skit-to-skit duel by the close of the 1940s. That gave way to a single skit with each class presenting songs. Mortar Board, official sponsors, set the rules, enlisted judges and devised a system to determine song and spirit winners. Black Cat became a rite of passage for first-year students and the trophy a "symbol of the freshman class," recalls Mollie Merrick '57, associate dean of students and Black Cat authority.

Then late one night in 1953 in Rebekah Scott Hall, the Class of '55 cooked up the first mascot. Dorothy Sands Hawkins remembers classmates coaxing her into masking as their own crazy creation "Chief Yatilytch." Since then mascots from Pogo to the Blues Brothers have paraded across the Quad, along with three repeaters: Dennis the Menace, Raggedy Ann and Jiminy Cricket.

In Merrick's mind the most memorable mascot of the 1960s was the Yellow Pages. With yellow their assigned color, this class used the telephone directory motto "Let your fingers do the walking" and depicted it as a royal page in yellow garb. During those years Black Cat expanded to a multi-day festival including hockey matches, bonfire, community picnic, skit with songs, the unveiling of the first-year mascot and a party or dance following the evening skits. The 1967 skit afforded the only Friday the 13th Black Cat with partici-

pants dancing until midnight to music by a "purrfect" combo, The Black Cats.

Much of the modern battle of wits grew out of the 1960s when classes gathered clues to guess the identity of the first-year class's mascot before its campus debut. Bonnie Johnson '70, now ASC's vice president for development and public affairs, remembers how she and other classmates launched an offensive of "misinformation" with a decoy to draw conjecture away from the real class mascot, Christopher Robin. From her upstairs Hopkins room, Johnson plotted, then left a songbook open to the lyrics of "Little Red Riding Hood," by Sam the Sham and the Pharaohs, dropped the pattern for a hooded cloak in the trash and in slightly louder than normal telephone conversation dropped hints about the decoy. She believed the diversion would work. She bet her bellbottoms on it.

The competition (and the rigors of college life) landed Johnson in the College infirmary with mononucleosis. Today, she laughingly concedes the loss of a Black Cat trophy but claims, "It really pulled the class together."

Those *beginnings* for Johnson and others at ASC might have been dramatically different if Dr. Sweet's prescription for hazing had not brought a cure. Even today's first-year student might have found herself crawling the length of the hockey field as plebeian predecessors did, chanting and kissing the feet of sophomores.

—Mary Alma Durrett

## She Expected the Best from Her Scotties

Lewellyn Wilburn '19, former chair of the ASC physical education department, was an Agnes Scott alumna and faculty member known for strong leadership and resonant voice.

She died June 20 at the age of 94.

"She had good rapport with the students and staff and was a whispering boss who could be heard across the athletic field," remembers Kay Manuel, retired professor of physical education at ASC. "She conducted business well, but was fun to work with."

After earning a history degree, Wilburn remained at ASC as an instructor of physical education. She received her physical education masters' degree at Columbia University in 1923, instructed at the University of Michigan and worked in Tennessee, before returning to ASC in 1926 as chair of the physical education department—a post she held until her retirement in 1967.

At Agnes Scott she introduced such activities as archery and tumbling to the curriculum and coached field hockey. "She really built the department up," says her niece, Lee Kennedy.

In addition to faculty responsibilities, she was president of the alumnae association, active in fundraising, a participant in faculty skits and director of May Day events.

Her commitment to improving women's athletic programs extended from local to



*Coach Wilburn: Always concerned for her students's welfare.*

national levels. She served as president of the Southern Association Directors of Physical Education for College Women, and was a member of the President's Council on Physical Fitness for Georgia, district chair of the National Section Women's Athletics and member of the National Basketball Committee.

Wilburn was concerned for each student's development. Bertie Bond '53, administrative assistant to the President at ASC, was a student in Wilburn's PE class. "I was very non-athletic and it was hard for me," Bond recalls. "And she expected us all to give full participation and our best. She kidded me that badminton was my sport and that I was her badminton star. She gave me an A—that was the only A I ever got for athletics.

"I admired and respected her," says Bond. "She entertained friends and I felt fortunate to be in that category."

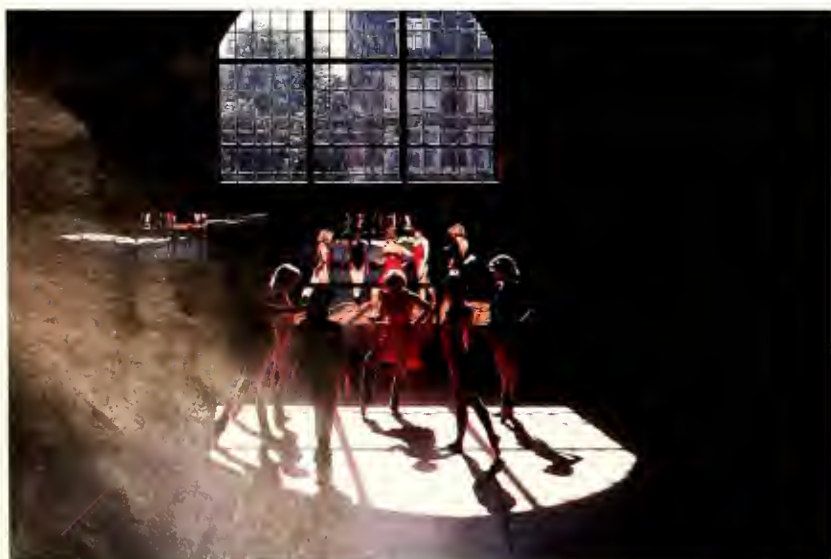
Wilburn is survived by three nieces, four nephews and two sisters-in-law. Burial services were held June 22 at Decatur Cemetery.

—Audrey Arthur

Agnes Scott College  
Decatur, Georgia 30030

Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID 83  
Decatur, GA 30030  
Permit No. 469

Decatur, GA 30030



## The Last Dance?

Some seem to think women's colleges—where the art of dance intermingles with the art of science and both add to the dimensions of the educational experience—are anachronisms, institutions with a past but without a future. Yet a growing number of studies continue to indicate women's colleges offer their students significant opportunities for learning, personal growth, as well as career development. For a look at the latest research and the answers to questions relating to the advantages offered by women's colleges, see the next **AGNES SCOTT ALUMNAE MAGAZINE.**