

# AGNES SCOTT

ALUMNAE MAGAZINE

Winter 2001



## New Frontiers For ASC

# GUEST COLUMN

*Agnes Scott gave me a life of promise beyond my plan and flexibility to cope with an unknown future; now my plan is to give something back.* • Lizanne Stephenson '84

In the movie *Back to the Future*, Michael J. Fox's character finds himself shuttled back in time to his parents' teen years. He has the chance to alter outcomes positively, and he does. But, he must get shuttled forward to his own life at a precise moment in time or he will be stuck in the past forever. Although carefully planned steps go awry, he ultimately makes it back. I like nice, neat plans that work.

For the past nine months or so, I've been involved as a volunteer with Bold Aspirations: The Campaign for Agnes Scott College. Entering Agnes Scott in the fall of 1980 as a Return-to-College (RTC) student, I had no idea that the College or philanthropy would play much of a role in my life. I was there—I thought—as a stop on my way to medical school. I had a plan. There was work to do and no time for new friendships or involvement in the College community. With a toddler at home and a second child due to arrive during the winter break, I guarded my time. I would graduate in 1985 and start medical school the next fall. I had a very neat plan.

Warp speed finds me in 2001. My daughters are 23 and 20. I work for a private foundation following 12 years serving as a professional fund-raiser for two nonprofit organizations. No, I'm not a doctor. The College, too, has made some warp speed changes and finds itself in new strategic directions. It's 2001, and I've decided to make a significant gift to the College for the Campaign.

What happened to my great plan?

My daughter arrived two weeks late: whole quarter missed. Returning spring quarter, I stumbled, exhausted, into Mary Boney Sheats' required Bible class. In that class, I met first-year student Meg Jenkins (now Locke), who took me under her wing (after I convinced her to quit calling me "m'am"). Meg was my first Agnes Scott traditional age friend, 10 years my junior. So much for the "no time for friends" part of the plan. The new plan—survival—had taken over. I learned a lot about the Bible that quarter, and I learned that Agnes Scott College was going to challenge me in new ways.

While the phrase "critical thinking" was not part of my lexicon—much less intuitive

process—I came to understand that it was expected of Agnes Scott students. Over the next four years, I continued on with my intentions toward medical school, but on an altered course. I became a French major, participated in Black Cat and spent many hours in the dorms. My daughters were sighted periodically on campus. In great part because of my friendship with Meg, I accelerated my studies and graduated with the class of '84.

What does any of this have to do with my decision to make a gift to the Campaign?

The future that is now my life has unfolded in ways that would have been impossible without an undergraduate degree. I could have earned a degree elsewhere, but Agnes Scott is essentially different from other institutions, and I have come to value that difference. My Agnes Scott years gave me gifts that I carry with me still: the ability to think critically, the love of learning

as a life-long process; an understanding of the

importance of community, friendship, family and spiritual life. The College's priorities are academic excellence, a curriculum for the new century, commitment to community and opportunity for personal and spiritual growth—the very elements that have come to shape my life,

often without my awareness.

Agnes Scott College equipped me to take on challenges regardless of their fit in "my plan."

I want the College to be able to offer to others the many benefits I've received. That's why I'm compelled and pleased to support Bold Aspirations and to give back to the future.

I encourage you to do the same.





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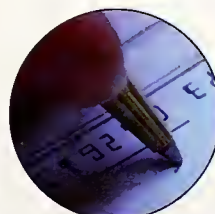


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# ON CAMPUS

## Opportunity knocks, Habitat, Sotto Voce

### ONE THING LEADS TO ANOTHER

The promotional material from Warner Bros.

Pictures reads, "For nine months prior to World War II, in an act of mercy unequalled anywhere else before the war, Britain conducted an extraordinary rescue mission, opening its doors to more than 10,000 Jewish and other children from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. These children, or *Kinder* (sing. *Kind*), as they came to be known, were taken into foster

homes and hostels in Britain, expecting eventually to be reunited with their parents. The majority of them never saw their families again."

Cayce Callaway '84, while pursuing talents and interests honed at Agnes Scott College, became one of two associate producers on Warner Bros.' documentary film *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport*. The film, released last fall, tells the story of the *Kinder*. Just prior to the film's release in Atlanta, Callaway returned to the College and talked with the



GARY MEER PHOTO

Lessons learned at ASC helped prepare Cayce Callaway '84 for her role as associate producer of the Holocaust film, *Into the Arms of Strangers*.

Holocaust class taught by Kathy Kennedy, associate professor of history and department chair, about her

two-and-a-half-year involvement with the film.

"It made me much more aware of how we treat peo-

### OUT IN THE COLD

Icy rain and bitter cold offered several Agnes Scott students first-hand experience of homelessness during an especially cruel winter season. One November night, members of the ASC Habitat for Humanity chapter denied themselves warm beds for the opportunity to huddle in cardboard boxes on the porch of Rebekah to bring attention to the problem of homelessness. A few students were too ill to sleep outside, but managed to tough out a night in the hallways of their residence hall. The students braved the elements throughout the night after receiving sponsorship to offset the cost of a spring break building project. Lucia Sizemore '65, director of student/alumnae relations and adviser of the College's Habitat chapter, described the second annual campout as a success and urged anyone interested in the fight against homelessness to contact her at (404) 471-6061. — Victoria Stopp '01



SUE CLUTES PHOTO



ple. I think we look at the Holocaust as an extreme. It was viewed as normal but went awry, so I learned how quickly things can go wrong with what is 'normal.' We cannot tolerate any kind of discrimination because it can be unconscionable," says Callaway.

"The film put a face on the Holocaust, and it's harder to dismiss. It made me very aware."

According to the film's producer, Deborah Oppenheimer, this project takes a different path from many Holocaust films because it is not just about the Holocaust. This film is about love, loss, survival and memory. It's about parents and children. The producer's mother was one of the children.

Callaway attributes her qualifications for her job in film production to Agnes Scott, where she majored in theatre. "Through theatre, I learned to work as part of a group, and I learned how to move from the beginning to the middle to the end of a project."

After graduating, Callaway studied directing in California but decided that at 22 she didn't have enough life experiences to direct. She went to Los Angeles to act, but that

wasn't satisfying. When her marriage ended, she started taking pictures. "The break-up of my marriage taught me to see in a way I hadn't before."

One thing led to another, as they say, and Callaway enrolled in a literature class through UCLA's extension program. This desire for life-long learning—instilled at Agnes Scott—put her in a class with another student who was producing a documentary on the Kindertransport.

"My work on the film started with my just helping out, and then Deborah realized I could write—another

thing I received from Agnes Scott."

Callaway moved into the role of head researcher and photo researcher—she unearthed 2,700 archival photographs. Her research caused her to travel extensively, following the Kindertransport route as well as conducting interviews. She also served as creative consultant and artistic director for the companion book published by Bloomsbury Press in the United Kingdom.

At times the work was depressing. Others who had been involved in similar projects warned Callaway not to watch too much footage at

one time, urging her to vary the kind of work she did each day.

"I remember reading one person's letters from her parents, and they were trying to parent through those letters. I felt as if I was intruding in their lives."

Her involvement in the film has led to a new venture for Callaway. "I'm going back to Los Angeles and start a program teaching photography to children. I've realized the impact you can have on children."

For more information on the film, go to:  
[www.intothearmsofstrangers.com](http://www.intothearmsofstrangers.com).

—Jennifer Bryon Owen

## AROUND THE WORLD

**S**otto Voce, directed by Lyn Schenbeck, entertained College alumnae, friends, faculty, staff and trustees last fall at the announcement of The Campaign for Agnes Scott College. This group has been invited to tour and perform in Bulgaria and

Romania next summer by Friendship Ambassadors, a nonprofit group that works with state departments overseas to promote American culture. In preparation, *Sotto Voce* members are learning the music in Bulgarian and Romanian, studying the languages and cultures as well as reading literature on and from these countries.



CAROLINE JOE PHOTO

# FRIENDS FOR A LIFETIME

The enduring friendships begun at the College continue to be one of the most valuable benefits of an Agnes Scott education.

By Tish Young McCutchen '73

One fall afternoon in 1934, a young girl, just 16, was handed by her father into a passenger car of the Chesapeake & Ohio train at Newport News, Va.

The train and the girl were bound for Richmond, Va., where the train would head west, and the young girl would change trains and head south. For the train this was a regular occurrence; for Elsie West, a life-changing experience. She was leaving family and home and heading into unknown territory: Decatur, Ga., and Agnes Scott College.

The next morning, Joyce Roper also boarded a train, the Southern, in Spartanburg, S.C. She, too, was leaving her family and home and embarking on an adventure. As had Elsie West, Roper, too, wore a purple-and-white ribbon to help drivers recognize her when she arrived in Atlanta. She, too, was headed for Decatur and Agnes Scott College.

These young women thought they were beginning their education. What they didn't know was that they were about to discover the friend of a lifetime.

What is a friend?

For Joyce Roper McKey '38, 66 years into her friendship with Elsie West Duval '38, the answer is simple. "I trust Elsie."

"I've got lots of friends, but Elsie is number one. We've laughed and we've cried a lot together. I've been through two life-threatening illnesses, and every day my husband called Elsie to tell her how I was.

"She wanted to come down, but he discouraged that. But I must have known how much she wanted to be with me, because my husband tells me that in my not-so-lucid

moments, I would talk to Elsie just as if she were sitting in the room with me. In a way, I think she was there with me. It's a very comforting thing to have a friend like that."

McKey and Duvall are the first to say they are not at all alike. And that was as true when they were 16 as it is now that they are in their 80s. "Oh, yes," says Duvall. "Joyce was always a 'joiner'. And she took college much more seriously than I did. I was getting a degree to please my parents; I never thought of their making sacrifices to send me to Agnes Scott—I was the one making the sacrifice to go there! I'll never forget the first time I heard Joyce talking about getting a job after graduation to repay her parents for the sacrifices they had made. I said, 'A job?' I'd never given one thought to working."

"Elsie never had any idea she was so pretty," says McKey. "She had narcolepsy, and she had to work so hard to keep up with her studies because she would fall asleep. I think she needed me a little bit. She put herself down. I was challenged to make her feel good about herself. And that made me feel better about myself."

The two met when neighbors on the third floor of Inman Hall their first year. By sophomore year, they were roommates and founding members of the KUSes (pronounced "cusses"). "It stood for 'Kappa Up So Late,'" giggles Duvall. "We went to the 10-cent store and got ID bracelets with KUS on them. We thought we were really something."

After graduation McKey did get a job, at the Davison-Paxon department store. Says Duvall proudly, "She was a great success. She was the first one to put on a fashion show at





the Cloister resort on the Georgia coast. Of course, the main reason she wanted to do that was because her fiancé was playing golf there." McKey and her husband have been married for almost 60 years.

One reason Duvall's parents sent her to Agnes Scott rather than one of the Seven Sisters women's colleges was so she wouldn't fall for a "Yankee." However, as soon as she returned home after graduation, she promptly met and fell in love with a Yankee who had moved there to work. Duvall has lost two husbands; McKey has been to each funeral.

"As you get older, often that's when you see your friends, at funerals—or at the weddings of your grandchildren," says Duvall.

Although living hundreds of miles apart, geography hasn't kept these two distant. They have taken several trips together, including participating in Agnes Scott's Elderhostel experiment in the mid-1980s. In the late 1950s, when their children were old enough to leave at home and before Duvall's first husband died, the couples met each spring in North Carolina for a mini-reunion along with several other Agnes Scott classmates.

What keeps them connected when they're not together? "Writing letters," says Duvall without hesitation. "Of course we talk on the telephone now, but we never got in the habit of long phone conversations. Besides, I have always chronicled my life by writing down whatever happens, when it happens. Every time something happened to me, I'd write it down and send carbon copies to my most intimate friends. Now, when I can't remember something, I can pull out my old accounts. I told too much, in excruciating detail—but it's wonderful to have reminders of what happened long ago."

McKey says affectionately that she has "Elsie files" at home. "Letters have kept us close to each other," she agrees. "Our friendship has developed into so much more since college, and our letters have helped make it so. We have a very special relationship." These women felt so grateful to Agnes Scott for bringing them together that when they returned to campus one year for Alumnae Weekend, they brought a plaque commemorating their friendship that was installed in the Alumnae Garden.

**T**he friendship of Dot Holloran Addison '43 and Swanna "Betty" Henderson Cameron '43 began in 1939, when they arrived as first-year students at Agnes Scott and found themselves neighbors in

Inman Hall. However, their friendship became something special in the dining room of Rebekah Scott Hall, where on Wednesday nights they would dine in long gowns with invited faculty members. For Addison and Cameron, Miss Emma Laney was both their favorite guest and the symbol of the scrupulous integrity of the Agnes Scott experience. For her part, the venerated chair of the English department was the catalyst that brought the two young women together in a friendship that has extended for decades and embraced their husbands and families.

"Miss Laney understood us very well from the beginning," says Cameron. "Dot was a scholar; I was a challenge."

"I don't know how to explain why I liked Swanna so much," says Addison. "She had some quality I didn't have ... depth, maturity. I was drawn to her by some lack in me."

Cameron has her own first impression of Dot. "It's hard to describe how brilliant Dot was."

These two friends commemorated their friendship and also their respect and affection for Emma Laney in 1989 by making a joint gift to create the Emma May Laney Endowment Fund, which provides funds to enhance the College's writing program and enrich the College's cultural life by bringing "lecturers, scholars, and other distinguished visitors" to campus for extended visits.

While Addison has lived in Atlanta and Cameron in Wilmington, N.C., all of their lives, they have held tightly to the connection forged at ASC. "With Swanna, it's as if she is moving along just where and when I am. That's the genius of the relationship—over the years, the things I was doing and thinking and reading, she was too," says Addison.

Their friendship has embraced their families. In fact, when Addison and her husband, Tom, lost their daughter Sara, Cameron honored Sara's memory by establishing the Sara Burke Addison Fund at the College to be used for professional development of the humanities faculty.

Addison credits Agnes Scott for the lasting friendships such as these. "Agnes Scott attracts the kind of young women who are bound to make lasting friendship. Something in them reaches out to others."

*EDITOR'S NOTE: After this article was written, Dot Addison's husband passed away. Betty Cameron attended the funeral. Just a few weeks later, Addison was present for the dedication of the Elizabeth Henderson Cameron Reading Terrace in McCain Library.*



**Far Left:** For more than 65 years, Joyce Roper McKey and Elsie West Duval have been friends—since meeting as first-year students at ASC in 1934. Their formal dress was required for Wednesday night dinners during their years on campus. **Above:** Dot Addison and Betty Cameron became friends in 1939. They were recently together for the dedication of the Elizabeth Henderson Cameron Reading Terrace.

# SWEET CHARITY

Phenomenal changes occur as women create a new climate and attitude about what they do with their money.

By Celeste Pennington

In July 1995, news media around the world picked up on an announcement made by a university in the South. A woman—Oseola McCarty—had given to the University of Southern Mississippi a \$150,000 scholarship fund out of the \$280,000 savings accrued over her lifetime of work as a laundress in Hattiesburg, Miss. “It’s not the ones that make the big money, but the ones who know how to save that get ahead,” McCarty explained her simple philanthropic strategy.

While McCarty’s sweet charity was acclaimed in the halls of Harvard University (with an honorary doctorate of humane letters) and in the White House (with the Presidential Citizen’s Award), she was circumspect. “We are responsible for the way we use our time on this earth, so I try to be a good steward. I start each day on my knees, saying the Lord’s Prayer. Then I get busy about my work. I find that my life and work are increasing all the time. I am blessed beyond my hopes.”

For those interested in trends, McCarty’s gift seems to signal a shift occurring in American philanthropy—from a predominantly male millionaires’ club to more grassroots giving often led by women. “Terms like new wealth, old wealth, wealth transfer and e-giving are all inadequate for describing and understanding the renaissance that is taking place in philanthropy,” believes Emmett Carson, CEO of the Minneapolis Foundation, who spoke in a Share the Wealth summit recently. Anyone can be a philanthropist.

He echoed the unpretentious message of the late Oseola McCarty: To make a life-changing gift may require honest work and thoughtful planning. But one does not have

to be fantastically wealthy. Or male.

It’s an idea not lost on Anne Register Jones ‘46 as she joins in Bold Aspirations: The Campaign for Agnes Scott College. “We haven’t reached women in the way that they should be reached concerning gifts for the College.

“When I graduated, we could join the Alumnae Association for \$2,” she remembers. “While that was a lot of money in those days, I don’t think I fully understood the concept of giving. The alumnae who have leadership roles today are excited that this new campaign can effect a culture change from modest giving to participation in philanthropy. I think women have finally come to the decision that it is time for us to step up to the plate.”

She acknowledges that women’s reluctance to give significant gifts in the past may be tied to the fund-raiser’s equal reluctance to ask. Recent research supports that. When asked for a gift, the percentage of women responding is actually higher than that of men. *Independent Sector* reveals that women also give more generously. While women in 1996 earned only 75 cents for every dollar earned by men, they gave 93 cents for every dollar given by men.

“My theory is, you should give until you feel it,” says Margo Smith, director of development for the Atlanta Women’s Foundation. “If \$25 is nothing, you need to give more.” The Atlanta Women’s Foundation is a catalyst for change for women and girls, primarily through raising funds and distributing grants. One way the foundation encourages young philanthropists is through their Destiny Fund, to which a dozen or so women members each commit to giving \$500 a year for five years. Members advise how the









*"I will not be remembered for philanthropy. But together, we are philanthropists. My classmates have been absolutely astounding. We're really excited. Our time at the next reunion will be a milestone. You may see us screaming and hollering—and acting like teenagers!"*

funds are used for causes that range from domestic violence to rape prevention to teen pregnancy. "This is thinking strategically," says Smith. "This is thinking about giving as an investment: What do I want my money to do in this world to effect change?"

With a sustained, healthy economy and a large transfer of wealth already beginning,

Smith says people are naturally thinking about where to direct their resources.

"People have made money. My hope is that we realize that we can buy only so many cars and second homes."

Anna DeVault Haley '51, of Greenville, S.C., has seen the power of women thinking strategically—and pooling their resources—

## WOMEN POISED TO GIVE

### THE GOOD NEWS

□ In 2000, 50 percent of this country's wealth transferred into the hands of women.

—*Boston College Social Welfare Research Institute*

□ Among top women wealth holders in 1995, the average net worth was \$1.38 million, slightly higher than for men wealth holders. Women carried less debt.

—*IRS Statistics of Income Bulletin, Winter 1999-2000*

□ In 1999, there were 9.1 million women-owned firms with 28 million employees generating \$3.6 trillion in sales. —*National Foundation for Women Business Owners*

□ High net worth women

business owners/executives are active, generous philanthropists. More than 50 percent give in excess of \$25,000 annually to charity; 19 percent contribute \$100,000 or more.

—*National Foundation for Women Business Owners, April 2000*

□ By the close of this century, 90 women's funds had been established, up from the original 11 started in the 1970s. —*Women's Funding Network, 1999*

□ At least \$41 trillion will pass from one generation to the next by 2044. —*Paul Schervish and John Havens, Boston College Social Welfare Research Institute*

□ Women outlive men by an average of seven years leaving 85-90 percent of them in charge of family financial affairs. —*Kelly Bolton, Merrill Lynch, 1999*

### AND THE BAD NEWS

■ Less than 6 percent of foundation and corporate funding goes specifically to women's and girl's programs. —*Atlanta Women's Foundation*

■ In charitable bequests, men left nearly 40 percent of their gifts to private foundations—women bequeathed less than 25 percent to such foundations. —*IRS: Statistics of Income Bulletin, 1999*





when about 120 from her class launched a five-year plan to raise \$51,000 by their 50th reunion as a "Vision Gift" inspired by the inaugural address theme of President Mary Brown Bullock '66. "We called it the 51 Club," Haley says with a gentle laugh. "Some would be able to give \$5.10—some could give \$5,100 or better.

"As we speak now, we are at \$151,000!" reports Haley. (At press time, just after Celebration Weekend, the figure was \$250,000.) "If you put dollars beside it, I will not be remembered for philanthropy. But together, we are philanthropists. My classmates have been absolutely astounding." To give at that level and accomplish so much more for the College has resulted in a flush of pleasure for the Class of '51. "We're really excited. Our time together [at the next reunion] will be a milestone," says quiet-spoken Haley. "You may see us screaming and hollering—and acting like teenagers!"

While women's earning power is still less, in many ways women are catching up with men. Roughly two thirds of all jobs created in the 1990s were filled by women. The average income of women is increasing at a greater pace than that of men, and the number of women in middle management now totals 44 percent. Women-owned businesses increased from 2.6 million in 1982 to 5.5 million in 1992. That year also marked a change in how women were challenged to give.

Instead of holding an auction or charity ball to raise campaign funds for members of the Democratic Party, a group of 120 pros-

perous women and their friends were invited to Denver to raise \$1 million—in a day. The theme was "Serious women, serious issues, serious money." Its organizers, who included Hillary Clinton and Tipper Gore, called it "October Million Dollar Day."

It was also a record-breaking year for support of female political candidates who received only \$10 million less, total, than males running in U.S. House and Senate races. For her own campaign, Sen. Barbara Boxer of California raised \$10 million. Two thirds of that money came from women.

The new female political contributors are baby boomers. These women are the best-educated generation of all time. Many have enjoyed lucrative careers. They have had an extraordinarily small number of children—and in the next decade they will be writing an enormous number of wills. That translates into a lot of dollars for philanthropy, predicts demographer Harold Hodgkinson.

In fact, in the next 20 years about \$7 trillion will pass into the hands of baby boomers. Since women outlive men by seven years, as many as 90 percent of women will be solely responsible for their finances at some point in their lives.

A challenge to give a substantial gift to Agnes Scott College recently caught the imagination of Anne Markette '84, senior vice president and sales team leader, Private Financial Advisers, Wachovia Bank in Atlanta.

Markette, who majored in economics, is pleased that her gift would be matched by her employer. She feels doubly good that

## GIVING SMART

Pooled funds and giving circles are often grassroots organizations that afford working women the means to be involved in major philanthropic giving, notes Andrea Kaminski, executive director of the Women's Philanthropy Institute in Madison, Wis. Another way is to examine—and sometimes alter—one's giving patterns.

"Women tend to spread their giving around—\$25 here and \$35 there. So often we think that we cannot have an impact, but we can."

To better understand that potential, and to bring focus to giving, Kaminski suggests this exercise:

- At tax time, total the amounts of your gifts for that year (including all those many smaller gifts) and then multiply that total by the number of working/giving years. "This will be an eye opener," she predicts.
- Establish a philanthropic mission.
- Measure each organization that requests funds against what you wish to accomplish with your giving.
- Narrow future gifts to what you consider three important causes.

"When a woman looks at it this way, she can realize what an impact she could have over a lifetime of giving," says Kaminski.







her charity will honor her parents. Since she has served on boards at the Woodruff Arts Center and the Botanical Gardens and chaired a Junior League placement on the board of Children's Health Care of Atlanta, Markette is keenly aware of what alumnae support ultimately means to the institution.

"If you ask a foundation or trust or company for money, their first question is: 'Tell me what percentage of your alumnae give?' If you stack us up against the other women's colleges, we don't score very well. These groups are not looking for the amount, but the percentage of people who give. We all get counted in the number. If we can't get \$10,000 because one alumna failed to give, it becomes a high price to pay. Our alums are just beginning to understand the magnitude of that.

"I would say that 99 out of 100 graduates would say they were proud to go to this school, but I don't think our percentage of giving is a number they would be proud of."

Adelia Thompson, assistant vice president for development, agrees. "I've heard Lewis Thayne, our vice president for institutional advancement, say many times that

Agnes Scott College has all the pieces in place to be the best liberal arts college in the country—save one important thing: We seriously lag behind comparable schools in financial support—in dollars and percentages—from living, connected alumnae. The College has had some enormously generous people in the past or we wouldn't be in the endowment shape we are in. But our ability to move forward relies on the alumnae who will step forward now and make the difference. One goal of the Campaign is to grow the College's support base through sustained, generous giving by alumnae beyond the Bold Aspirations campaign."

With alumna President Bullock at the helm, alumnae and development officers alike are optimistic about the shift in alumnae giving. "That place is on fire," says Jones. "When I walk across the [Woodruff] Quadrangle, I see the new student center, library and dining hall—and students everywhere. I'm reminded of the friendships I forged, and how thankful I am that others helped make possible my years at Agnes Scott. Now it's time for me to 'pay back to the future.'"

## 8 STRATEGIES FOR MORE EFFECTIVE GIVING

By Martha Taylor

1. **BEGIN** your philanthropy as early in life as possible. Even if you can't give as much as you'd like, your gifts will add up and begin to form your legacy.
2. **FIND** your passion, and focus your gifts, rather than scattering them. Think about two or three areas or causes you want to support, and make this your philanthropic mission. Not only will your gifts have more impact, but you also will find your giving more satisfying.
3. **WORK** for parity in giving in your household. You and your spouse should have equal say about which causes your contributions support and the amount given.
4. **GIVE**—if you can—out of principal to the causes you are passionate about. Think of your philanthropy as you would a child, your investment in the future of our world.
5. **CONSIDER**, even if you don't have so much money, the strength of numbers. Organize with others to provide a pooled gift that can make a project possible.
6. **LEVERAGE** your giving. Increase your impact by challenging others to support the causes you hold dear.
7. **TEACH** the art of philanthropy to the next generation. Instill in your children, and the young people with whom you associate, the values you treasure and your commitment to support them.
8. **HAVE FUN** with your philanthropy. Celebrate your birthday with a philanthropic gift that you might not have thought possible. Surprise your friends by giving in their name—or to a nonprofit of their choice. The possibilities are endless.

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# A RICH HISTORY

Campaigns from the past reveal the desire and determination of College leaders to develop an educational institution of the highest order.

By Lewis Thayne

President Mary Brown Bullock '66 points out on occasion that Agnes Scott's superb endowment was built with gifts most of which were given during the first half of the last century. The early history of giving to Agnes Scott is an interesting story in large part because our current history continues this proud legacy.

In the first 75 years of the College's existence, there was rarely a period when the school's leadership was not in "campaign mode." This was a College where the word "enterprising" and its cousin "entrepreneurial" seemed to fit well.

Agnes Scott College's first fund-raising campaign was the founding of the school itself. In a city of 1,000 residents, from a church with 300 families, one generation after the devastating effects of war, Frank Henry Gaines set forth the idea of a female seminary.

To raise the money, shares of stock (at \$50 par value) were issued. Thirty-six people bought a total of 107 shares. Among these was George Washington Scott who purchased 40 shares.

## Gifts Large and Small

From the beginning, private gift support has enabled the College to realize its educational goals, and the College's fund-raising success resulted from the combined support of a wealthy few and a larger number of moderate means.

It is important to note that these early gifts, shares in the corporation, were seen and spoken of as investments in the education of youth and specifically of women. Many who bought shares did not have children who would attend. The investors were simply people who believed in liberal education of high quality. Among his goals for the school, Gaines hoped that before he died the combined assets of the College, both physical plant and endowment, would reach \$1,000,000. He came close to realizing this

dream and passed his ambitions in this area to his successor.

In 1915, James Ross McCain arrived in Decatur to take up his duties as registrar of the College. By his own report, the registrar's job was to increase the number of students at the school and to raise money for endowment and development. In 1923, McCain became the second president of Agnes Scott, and his presidency was built on the foundations of the early work Gaines hired him to perform.

During McCain's tenure, the College conducted three campaigns before the crash of the stock market in 1929 and five after. All were successful—and the school reached an enrollment of more than 600 during the McCain years. Every fund-raising campaign had a precise purpose and an identifiable pattern and plan. McCain began with an appeal to the General Educational Board of New York, today the Rockefeller Fund. He then made the first gift to the campaign. All employees were always solicited for support. Trustees provided the leadership and were a major factor in the success of the fund drive, as were their friends among wealthy Atlanta citizens.

McCain then enlisted volunteers in all the counties of Georgia, in all the counties in the South where there was a Presbyterian church, focusing particularly on the alumnae. It was an article of faith for McCain that every family in the Southeastern states benefited from the educational influence of Agnes Scott College and therefore could be solicited for support of the school.

When McCain wanted to make the case for a fund-raising campaign in 1955, he need-

"Every dollar will be used to nourish the elements of greatness in Agnes Scott."

—1948 campaign case statement

## Women's Colleges with Phi Beta Kappa Chapters

(East of Mississippi River, 1955)



1. Agnes Scott
2. Randolph-Macon Woman's College
3. Sweet Briar
4. Goucher
5. Wilson
6. Barnard
7. Vassar
8. Mt. Holyoke
9. Smith
10. Wheaton
11. Wellesley
12. Radcliff
13. Elmira
14. Wells
15. Rockford
16. Milwaukee-Drower

Dear Wallace Alston:  
Thank you for the  
opportunity to take  
any part you will per-  
mit me in the cam-  
paign to make your  
great college great. As  
you know, I have had a  
growing affection for  
you through the years.  
My heart's with you.  
Always yours,

*Robert Frost*

Robert Frost  
February 10, 1960

On campus with President McCain is Robert Frost, the honorary chairman of the Seventh-Fifth Anniversary Campaign. Few colleges can boast a poet laureate for their campaign chair and few poet laureates would attach their name to a college effort they did not believe in strongly.

ed only two illustrations. One showed the location of private colleges for women east of the Mississippi with a Phi Beta Kappa chapter (see page 11) to indicate centers of academic quality. Agnes Scott stood alone in the Southeastern states. It is interesting to note that several of these other colleges no longer exist or have become co-educational. The second chart showed the financial assets of the top private women's colleges, where Agnes Scott ranked just behind the so-called Seven Sisters of the East.

These illustrations publicize a school of significant accomplishment and with high ambitions. McCain was interested in building a college with the financial resources to make it better than any in the nation. He understood deeply the connection between financial resources, campaign fund raising and academic excellence.

McCain conceived of the College's fund-raising campaigns comprehensively. Although their direct result was financial support, the indirect result was more students. Fund-raising activity and publicizing the quality of the College solidified its reputation among the synods of the Presbyterian church, all of the counties in Georgia and throughout the Southeast. The campaigns made possible the building of facilities that were not merely functional but also ornamental and as beautiful as those of any college in the country, a key principle with McCain. Finally, the campaigns built an alumnae network and required a measurable outcome of the educational enterprise in Decatur.

Apart from the validation that establishment of a Phi Beta Kappa chapter or of Mortar Board conferred on the school, McCain surveyed the personal and professional outcome of our graduates as reinforcement of the case for supporting the College. For example, he reported in 1955, during Wallace Alston's presidency and McCain's active retirement, that of our 10,000 graduates, two thirds had married, one third had gone into educational work and 10 percent of these had gone into business.

He reported 20,000 donors, cumulatively, to all of the fund-raising campaigns so that he could state proudly, "Agnes Scott has been made possible by the sacrificial giving on the part of people of very moderate means." To illustrate his point, he added later that even with the bequest of Frances Winship Walters in Coca-Cola stock valued then at \$4.5 million, only half was to come to the College right away. The second half must be matched "dollar for dollar" in order to come into the College's portfolio. Thus, Mrs. Walters' transforming gift was meant to stimulate the earnest and sacrificial giving of people of moderate means over the next nine years of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Campaign.



### The Drive for Greatness

In his *President's Report of 1957*, President Wallace Alston noted that of the 1,800 institutions of higher education in America, only a very few had achieved "greatness." His report defines what makes an institution truly great, chief among them a faculty of teacher-scholars and a highly selective student body.

But when he wrote in his annual report that "we deeply desire, as an educational community, to achieve greatness," he indicated that the imperative of greatness led him to say, "This [desire for greatness] will mean dealing with the need for adequate financial support on a continuous basis through a development program that is realistic, intelligently aggressive and integral to the administrative structure of the College. To secure the money to finance a first-class college is, then, imperative if Agnes Scott is to deserve to be called a great College."

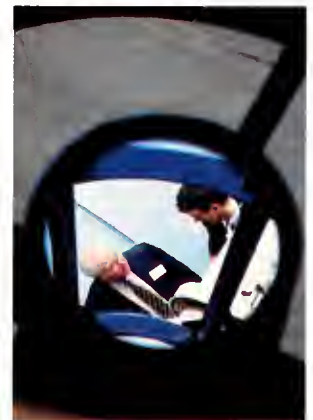
Almost 75 years into the history of Agnes Scott, Alston reconfirmed the original vision of a College with the highest ideals and, as a counterpart, the always-present ambition to achieve greatness by matching those ideals with a vigorous fund-raising program.



# NEW ANSWERS TO OLD QUESTIONS

Words spoken at the dedication create excitement about new frontiers.

By Christopher De Pree



**B**radley Observatory and the spaces in it are at once old and new. The familiar shape of the old building is now complemented by the octagonal form of the new planetarium. The old pathway in front of the observatory has been enlarged and formalized with the addition of a new educational observing plaza. And the shape of the curved wall that once cradled the old planetarium has been reproduced in the curved walls of the back foyer. The dedication of Agnes Scott College to excellence in women's science education is old. The opportunities that this observatory will now provide to women interested in astronomy are altogether new.

In this observatory, students in collaboration with



scientists from the Georgia Tech Research Institute will be able to probe the atmosphere monitoring pollutant levels above Atlanta with a powerful laser. They will be able to view a pristine night sky, filled with 7,000 stars, as seen from any location on Earth at any time. Students will be able to guide remote telescopes from a desktop computer. They will be able to observe the night sky with one of the largest telescopes in the Southeast. And they will be challenged, whether they are majoring in astronomy or history or philosophy, to think creatively about our place in the universe.

When this observatory was first dedicated in 1950, there were no satellites; humans had not walked on the moon; the solar system was unexplored by robotic probes; and pulsars had not yet been discovered. What astronomical discoveries and milestones will the next 50 years bring? Human settlements on other planets? The imaging of extrasolar planetary surfaces? The discovery of life on Europa, one of the moons of Jupiter? Of course, we cannot know. All we can be sure of is that the next 50 years will provide new answers to old questions.

As we begin a new era in Bradley Observatory, it is my hope that this building will continue to be a meeting place for science, music and art, and to be more than simply the sum of its parts. I trust that what will make it more is the daily interaction between people—between teacher and student, artist and scientist, musician and child—that can take place here.

Words written by T.S. Eliot fit the possibilities inherent in the Bradley Observatory of today.

*We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time*

For those new to Bradley Observatory, this will be a place of exploration. Those who have been here before will, on returning, know this place anew.



GARY MEEK PHOTOS







# A STELLAR VIEW

Her love of Agnes Scott College and of astronomy fuels campaign leadership.

By Jennifer Bryon Owen

**H**er family knows well the love JoAnn "Joie" Delafield '58 possesses for the world of astronomy because they are frequently pulled out of bed at all hours of the night to look at the sky's stellar offerings. She has a telescope in their apartment in New York City and another at their home in the Adirondack Mountains.

"In the Adirondacks it's spectacular. I'm often calling the whole family out when it's 20 below zero to watch something special," says Delafield, who says she loves gadgets, anything technical and all the sciences. "I'm a technical person, but it's taken me 64 years to realize that."

A decision to take one astronomy course at The American Museum of Natural History in New York City subsequently led to Delafield taking all the astronomy courses they offered. She learned how to use a telescope and what to look for when doing so and also attended monthly astronomy meetings at New York's Hayden Planetarium.

"It just became a real hobby," says the co-chair of The Campaign for Agnes Scott College. "It's the literature I read all the time."

Delafield and her husband, Dennis, contributed to New York City's new Rose Center for Earth and Science, which houses the Hayden Planetarium. The opportunity to contribute to Agnes Scott's new planetarium was a natural progression in their interest.

"In our family, Dennis and I have always been open in communication about our charitable contributions. So, I had no concern in expressing my desire to contribute to the planetarium as a way to celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary. Dennis thought about it and decided to fund the entire project. He really loves Agnes Scott."

She believes his attraction is based on what Agnes Scott means to her, on his fondness for many of her classmates and on his devotion to the College's president and her vision for educating women for the 21st century. "Her leadership speaks loud and clear to him."



Dennis and Joie Delafield in the planetarium with the Zeiss projector.

CAROLINE JOE PHOTO

"If you believe in why you are raising money and for whom you're raising it, then it's very easy to go out and find it. If you have a good story to tell, and you believe in it, you can't fail."

—Joie Delafield

The Delafield family's gift to Agnes Scott helped make possible the new Delafield Planetarium, a part of the renovated Bradley Observatory.

The Delafields discussed their donation with their children because it is part of their inheritance, and they were supportive. Instructions were given to the children that the commitment should be fulfilled if anything happened to Joie and Dennis before it was completed.

The Delafield family and the Delafield Fund of The New York Community Trust awarded the College a \$500,000 gift toward the planetarium at the Bradley Observatory. The 70-seat planetarium was opened during November ceremonies marking the re-opening of the renovated observatory and was named in recognition of the extraordinary gift by the Delafields. The Delafield Planetarium houses a 10-meter AstroTek dome and a computer-controlled projector built by Zeiss Instruments, maker of the world's finest planetarium projectors. Only nine other sites in the country and 23 in the world house such projectors.

"I have been very interested in this planetarium and the Bradley Observatory," says Delafield. "This is one of Mary's [Bullock] strengths. She quickly picks up on someone's real interests, so she has always connected me with the people at the observatory, always made sure I saw what was going on there and that I met Chris De Pree (Bradley Observatory director) when he came on board. He is dynamic, as is the entire faculty in the

physics and astronomy department."

At Agnes Scott, Delafield majored in chemistry but says she specialized in sports. "That's where I spent a lot of my time. When I graduated, my mother asked why only the athletic department was sorry to see me go!"

She has served as a College trustee and was on the presidential search committee that selected President Bullock and a dean search committee. "It's been a marvelous experience since day one when I came as a student. To be part of it now is so exciting because in our president we have someone who has the vision to take Agnes Scott where it needs to be. And that's what we're doing. What we've accomplished in five years is the result of the team that she has built and the manner in which they all work together—the faculty, staff, students and alumnae."

Although she knew well the commitment of time and energy that would be involved in co-chairing a campaign such as the one the College was about to undertake, Delafield's love for the College and her excitement over its future compelled her to take on the task.

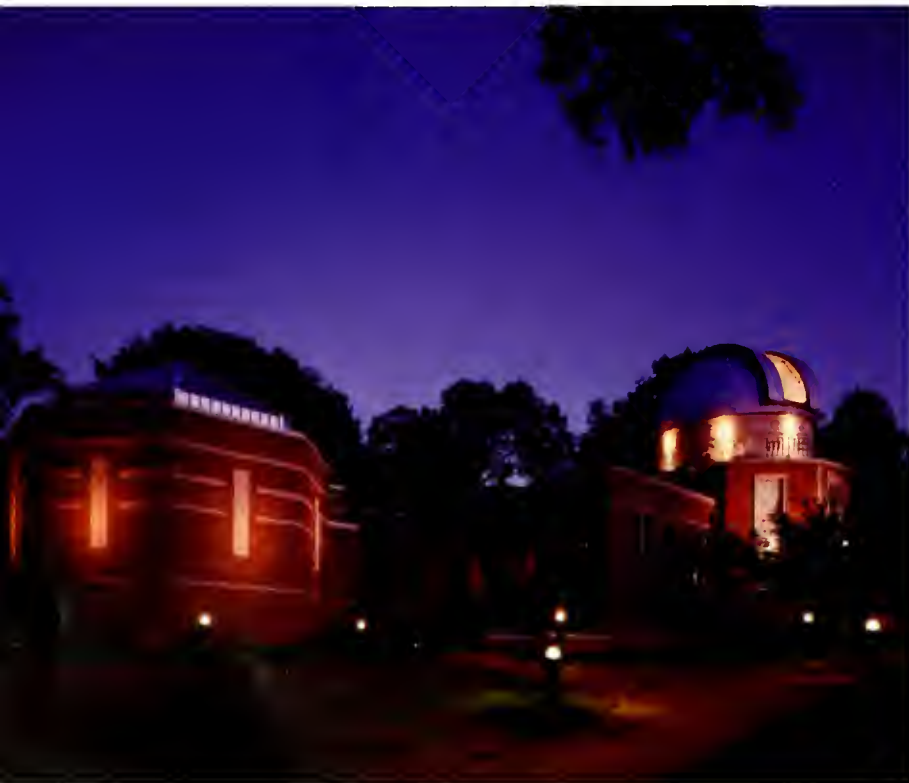
This amateur astronomer brings extensive volunteer and fund-raising experience to her role as campaign co-chair—she headed the New York City YWCA's capital drive, which raised \$8 million—and finds the task easy if you love the cause.

"If you believe in why you are raising money and for whom you're raising it, then it's very easy to go out and find it. If you have a good story to tell, and you believe in it, you can't fail."

Frannie Graves '63, also a co-chair, works with alumnae in Atlanta and Georgia, and Delafield with those in the rest of the country. "We are a wonderful team. We do things differently. We give out the message in a different manner, but it all comes from the same base of loving the College and what the College is doing in building the number of students, providing them with the facilities and faculty that they need to be educated for today's world, and all the while keeping true to the mission of the College."

Delafield is optimistic about raising the money to meet the Campaign goal but fully recognizes its challenges. "We'll raise it, but we also want to raise the percentage of giving to the Annual Fund. And I want to find the next volunteer leadership for this College."

She believes Agnes Scott has a wonderful story to tell, and in telling it, she is applying the same persistence she employs in sharing her findings in the night sky.





# IT ALL ADDS UP

An alumna finds out just what can happen from "a very small beginning."

By Dolly Purvis '89

Photography by Gary Meek



"My six years as College trustee has been the most totally joyful job I've ever had," concludes Lou Reaves.

As long as there is a tower over Main, I know there is something good in the world," says Lou Reaves '54. She loves the College and has spent her adult life cultivating a scholarship fund to enable other students to participate in the Agnes Scott experience.

"My time at Agnes Scott gave me a place to learn who I am and gave me a place to meet people and make friends," says Reaves. "There's no way I can ever repay it; it's something I have to pass on."

This desire coupled with another—honoring her mother—developed into providing vital assistance to numbers of Agnes Scott students through the years. Reaves began donating to a student scholarship fund.

Caroline McKinney Clarke '27, Reaves' mother, is known as the historian of Decatur, Ga., and she loved the College as much as its city. "Her philosophy was that if you have something, you share it," says Reaves. "She was a real giver who also knew how to receive."

What Reaves did not know when she decided to start her donations is that her gifts to Agnes Scott for a scholarship would grow into a significant fund from "a very small beginning." Reaves' ultimate goal when she began the fund so many years ago was to reach \$25,000, "which was a lot back then." She has watched the fund grow beyond her ability to give, and she credits this to the College's stewardship.

"This was before I was able to give gifts of stock," Reaves says. "It had multiplied far beyond the money I had given. I had no idea how much I would be able to add each year," Reaves says. "My additions were very small amounts, but I'm still adding to it. All I know is that when I'm dead and gone, it will continue to its limit."

Reaves characterizes herself as a "modest giver" and says that she "did not have the kind

of cash" one typically associates with endowing a scholarship. But she has persevered throughout the years, adding what she can, and now that her stocks have increased, she reaps benefits from donating them (avoiding capital gains taxes).

Each year, Reaves receives a letter telling her how much the scholarship has grown, and she attends the College's scholarship dinners and meets each year's recipients.

"I have friendships with many of the students, and we stay in touch," she says. "I want each of them to know something about my mother, and we often just talk about them. I am impressed with each of them as constructive members of the entire community as well as students. It's been my pleasure to get to know them."

## The Results of Giving

A look at some of these scholarship students provides evidence that Reaves' investment is reaping generous rewards.

Sue Feese '84, a tax attorney with King and Spalding in Atlanta, was in the first class to receive honors scholarships and hers was enough to pay for her entire education.

Without that scholarship, she says she would not have attended Agnes Scott. After majoring in physics and astronomy and economics at Agnes Scott, she graduated from Yale Law School in 1987.

Feese now, like Reaves, is a strong believer in giving back to the College.

"I firmly believe in giving to Agnes Scott," says Feese. "I had a very quality experience; it was a highlight of my whole life. It completely prepared me academically for the pressure at Yale and gave me deep friendships and relationships with teachers. It carries over into what I do now because I have the ability to think analytically, to reason clearly and to write well."

Feese's involvement also goes beyond the



Outside the new Alston Campus Center, Holly Davis Dyer '97 and Lou Reaves '54 renew their friendship, which grew out of Reaves' donations to scholarships at the College.

monetary. She gives speeches when called on by the Office of Admission and serves on the Annual Fund Alumnae Committee. She plans to be active in the comprehensive campaign, although she has not yet decided if her gift to the campaign will be focused on a scholarship or on supporting outdoor adventures at Agnes Scott.

Holly Dyer Davis '97, assistant director of admission at the College, not only had her undergraduate financial burden eased because of a scholarship, she also developed a friendship with Reaves that continues.

"We were always paired up at scholarship dinners," says the music major. "If it were not for my scholarship, I would not have been able to attend Agnes Scott. I could go on forever about what I received here. I got to study abroad, I received a women's college education, and I gained the confidence and became the person I am today."

If Davis could say a single thing to Reaves it would be "a huge thank you for the commitment she has given to Agnes Scott so that women like me can attend the College."

"Thank you is probably understated because not only is Lou a true friend of the College," says Davis, "she is also a true friend of mine. I think of her a role model because I know she is admired by so many people. She is someone who is involved with her church, someone who is dedicated to giving back to the College and someone who makes a true effort to keep in touch with friends."

Davis says she will probably choose to contribute to a scholarship fund so that she may help other students find what she has.

#### Getting To Know You

According to Reaves, getting to know the scholarship students has helped her keep in touch with the College as it has moved into a new century. As a trustee of the College, she has found this information invaluable.

"I've been out of campus life for a very long time, and my perspective is still that of a student in the '50s. I have spent six years as a College trustee and it is the most totally joyful job I've ever had. I will be truly, truly sad when I rotate off the Board," Reaves says.



# WAYS TO GIVE TO ASC

*A gift to Agnes Scott College can be made in various ways. One or more may be advantageous to you at a particular time in your life. Consult with your attorney or financial adviser as you make your plans, and feel free to call ASC's Office of Development at any time for information.*

## OUTRIGHT GIFTS

### ■ GIFTS OF CASH

Gifts of cash include checks (payable to Agnes Scott College) and credit card gifts that can be made through a secure Internet connection at [www.agnesscott.edu/campaign](http://www.agnesscott.edu/campaign).

### ■ GIFTS OF SECURITIES

In most cases, an outright gift of appreciated securities entitles you to an income tax charitable deduction for the fair market value of the securities, and, in the case of securities held for more than one year, the avoidance of capital gains tax. Your broker can transfer securities to Agnes Scott College. Gifts of marketable securities will be credited at fair market value, equal to the average of the highest and lowest price on the date of transfer to the College.



### ■ CORPORATE MATCHING GIFTS

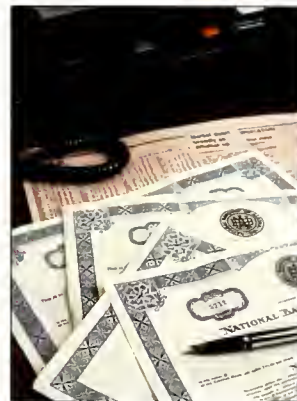
You can often double your gift to Agnes Scott College with matching funds provided by your employer. Your company's personnel office can tell you if your company offers a gift-matching program. Gifts matching a donor's pledge payment will receive full credit toward fulfillment of a pledge, at the donor's request.

### ■ REAL ESTATE GIFTS

You can make a gift of certain types of real estate allowing you to take a charitable

deduction for the full fair market value of the property. You may contribute real property to Agnes Scott College, including a personal or recreational home, a farm, a commercial building, undeveloped property, or a fractional interest in property. In the case of a personal residence or vacation home, you or your spouse may even reserve the right to occupy it for life.

Agnes Scott also may accept gifts of tangible personal property and will provide you with a tax deduction for the appraised value of the gift on the date the gift is made. For example, you may receive a charitable deduction equal to the asset's full value for works of art or gifts of scientific equipment. Donors are responsible for providing the College with a current appraisal.



## PLANNED OR LIFE INCOME GIFTS

Agnes Scott offers several planned gift instruments that allow you to make a gift to the College and still receive income during your lifetime or the lifetime of a spouse or designated beneficiary. Planned gifts will be credited at the fair market value of the contributed assets.

## CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES

You make an irrevocable gift of cash or securities, and the College agrees to pay you a guaranteed percentage of the asset annu-



ally for life. A gift annuity can also have more than one income beneficiary.

## POOLED INCOME FUNDS

Your gift of cash or securities is invested by the College along with the gifts of others, and the College will distribute income from the pooled gift assets to participants based upon performance of the fund.

## CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUSTS

You contribute assets, such as securities, to Agnes Scott, while retaining the income for yourself or others for life. A remainder gift permits you to take an income tax deduction for a portion of the value of your gift. You will receive Campaign credit for the fair market value of the contributed assets.

**GIFTS FROM ESTATES:** You may include a bequest to Agnes Scott in your estate plan. A bequest may be made for a portion of an estate, a percentage of an estate, or for a specific amount.

## GIFT DESIGNATIONS

### ■ ANNUAL FUND

Annual Fund gifts provide the College with unrestricted support for faculty salaries, teaching tools, scholarships, library resources, classroom equipment, campus maintenance and technology needs. The Annual Fund supports the College's annual operating budget, providing critical yearly support for the College's highest priorities.

### ■ FACILITIES

One of Agnes Scott's top priorities is ensuring that our students have state-of-the-art facilities to support academic excellence. Like the endowment itself, our campus buildings are vital, permanent assets of the College. Current top priorities include a new science building, a new chapel, the Bradley Observatory and the Delafield Planetarium, the McCain Library and the Alston Campus Center.



### ■ ENDOWMENT

A gift of \$25,000 or more can establish an endowed fund at Agnes Scott College, providing long-term support for faculty resources, educational programs or scholarships. Endowed funds may be added to at any time by the donor. By College policy, endowed funds generate 4 percent in earnings for the stated purpose of the fund. The following are amounts necessary to endow certain priorities of the College:

**Full Professorship:** \$1.5 million

**Associate/Assistant Professorship:**  
\$750,000

**Visiting Professorship:** \$500,000

**Full Scholarship:** \$500,000

**Full-tuition Scholarship:** \$250,000

**Research or Departmental Program:**  
\$100,000

**Partial Scholarship:** \$25,000

**EXPENDABLE PROGRAM FUNDS:** On occasion a donor may wish to make a one-time commitment in support of such initiatives as faculty development, collaborative faculty/student research, student travel, or departmental or interdisciplinary programming. These funds typically involve commitments at meaningful levels that are designated and spent in their entirety for the selected program.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Office of Development  
141 E. College Ave.  
Atlanta/Decatur, GA 30030-3797  
(404) 471-6302 or (800) 868-8602  
[www.agnesscott.edu/campaign](http://www.agnesscott.edu/campaign)





# WORLDVIEW

*Deirdre LaPin is guiding a revolution in corporate community development.* By Chris Tiegreen



## A NEW DAY FOR NIGERIA

*In today's world, the private sector is the dominant engine of growth, the principal owner of value and managerial resources. If the private sector does not deliver economic growth and economic opportunity—equitably and sustainably—around the world, then peace will remain fragile, and social justice a distant dream. This is why I call today for a new partnership amongst governments, the private sector, and the international community.*

—Kofi Annan, secretary general of the United Nations, 1997

*This is the first experiment of its kind in the world where a major MNC has created a community development business.*

—Deirdre LaPin '67

As a first year student at ASC, Deirdre LaPin '67 recalls sit-ins at segregated restaurants and marches through downtown Atlanta with prominent civil rights activists: Julian Bond, Ralph Abernathy, sometimes

even Martin Luther King Jr. And as she reflects on those experiences, she notes that the tolerance of ASC's administration—despite its discomfort with civil disobedience—demonstrated courage, discipline and commitment to principle.

Years later, those values permeate LaPin's work. She is still somewhat of a social activist—principled, persistent, and by no means immune from controversy. But the controversy is different and the environment more unlikely from the college campus of the late 1960s. She works for a large multinational corporation.

LaPin is corporate community development adviser for Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) of Nigeria, implementing Shell's community development programs in the Niger River delta. In an era in which large corporations—and

especially oil companies—are perceived as exploiters of their communities and of the environment, SPDC is the largest single social donor to Nigeria, pouring \$63 million into community development projects last year. LaPin helps Shell partner with communities, non-governmental organizations, foundations, donors and the government to use Shell resources as a catalyst for development assistance. She works with 140 full-time staff members to support community services in health, water and sanitation, education, business development, women's programs and



## WORLDVIEW



agriculture. She promotes the corporation as a social, as well as economic, institution. And she insists that corporations, like any social institution, can change.

**L**aPin majored in French at Agnes Scott and then earned a master's degree and a doctorate in African languages and literature from the University of Wisconsin. Her master's thesis was the first ever to be written on Nobel Prize-winning author Wole Soyinka and led to field research in Nigeria on Yoruba oral literature. She spent roughly a decade in academic employment, lecturing at the University of Ife (Nigeria), Emory University, the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Arkansas.

Tenure at the latter institution was not enough to

keep her in the United States.

"I missed Africa," she says. She went to work with UNICEF in Benin and then Somalia, where she stayed until the Somalian civil war forced UNICEF to close its offices there in 1990.

Committed to community development, she sought further education for the task. After attaining a master's degree in public health from The Johns Hopkins University, LaPin was hired by USAID (United States Aid in Development), which eventually sent her to Nigeria in 1994.

Soon after LaPin returned to Nigeria with USAID, a dramatic shift in international aid to Nigeria occurred. Under Sani Abacha, who had come to power in 1993, the military regime grew increasingly oppressive, and

the execution in 1995 of Ogoni writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa along with eight others drew international criticism by the United Nations and numerous governments and human rights organizations. The result was an imposition of limited sanctions on Nigeria by much of the developed West, including the United States. American aid dropped from \$24 million to \$6 million almost immediately.

While conducting research to assist Congressional decision-making, LaPin discovered that oil companies were making considerable investments to communities in their areas of operation. These investments were substantial in quantity, but not always efficient, often cultivating dependency rather than the self-reliance of the communities. Shell

was "still viewing their projects as short-term compensation for oil exploration and production rather than as a social investment that could truly develop the region and improve people's lives on a sustainable basis," she says.

Discussions about this with Shell management led to a proposal by LaPin and a job offer by Shell. LaPin made some recommendations based on research that "let the people speak for themselves." The company accepted her development plan.

"I welcomed the challenge of building the largest community development 'business' inside an oil company," LaPin says. "Here was a real test of what the private sector could do to promote economic development and social justice in a politically difficult developing country."





Deirdre LaPin and Mark Malloch-Brown, administrator of the United Nations Development Program, discuss collaboration between Shell and UNDP.

# NIGERIA

LaPin readily acknowledges the controversial role Shell has played in Nigeria over the years, but says the company has come a long way since her first contact with it in 1997.

Most of the recent controversy—aside from environmental concerns that are inherent in any extraction of natural resources—has focused on the villages of the Niger River delta, an area the size of Virginia where most of Shell's on-shore production takes place. The roughly 1,500 communities of the delta, it is argued, have sacrificed land and labor for oil without reaping many benefits of the industry. With oil representing 60 percent of Nigeria's gross domestic product, more than 85 percent of government revenue and more than 90 percent of income from exports, even small percentages of that

income poured into delta communities would presumably have positive economic impact. Yet many, like Ogoni activist Saro-Wiwa, questioned whether any economic growth in the region could be tied to the industry.

Protests over inequitable profit distribution have targeted Shell, in part because of its visibility on shore and because of its relationship with the Nigerian government. Shell and the government are separate and distinct, but because natural resources are state-owned, they are joint venture partners. As Shell was more likely to respond to demands for justice than the military dictatorship, protests lobbied the company to pressure the government for change. Though the regime has since changed—elections in 1998 ushered in a democratic civilian government—resentment



toward the oil industry has persisted.

Concerns that communities have not reaped substantial benefits from oil are valid, LaPin points out, because past governments have misappropriated revenue from oil, and because past investments by Shell and other oil companies have often been unilateral efforts.

"Communities did not regard themselves as owners of donated projects and they therefore did not cherish them," she says.

"All the roads, bridges, electrification systems, health centers and schools that Shell could afford to give would be insufficient to stem the tide of social decline in the region. A new

approach was needed."

So Shell consulted communities through focus groups and interviews and, based on its findings, changed its approach. The result is a strategy that Shell and LaPin call "the leveraged buy-in," by which the company's resources become a catalyst for others' investments in the region.

Whereas most companies, Shell included, have historically had a direct philanthropic role—building bridges, roads and schools and providing scholarships (SPDC sponsors roughly 3,000 scholarships per year), for example—the strategic investment of the leveraged buy-in goes further by seeking a high-impact ongoing



return for society that can multiply in value over time. Shell's approach engages other actors—government, donors, non-governmental organizations—in creating an environment compatible with

partnering approach with communities and other donors.

SPDC's investments support community services in health, water, sanitation, education, business development, women's programs and agriculture. Examples of partnership investments that LaPin facilitates include SPDC's work with state governments to train teachers; cooperation with NGOs and state governments to start major campaigns to improve women's awareness in reproductive health, business management and water maintenance;

and partnerships with agricultural NGOs in fisheries, seed multiplication and crop disease control. An initiative with SPDC, UNDP and a German government development agency has recently begun extensive vocational training in the Ogoni area, among others.

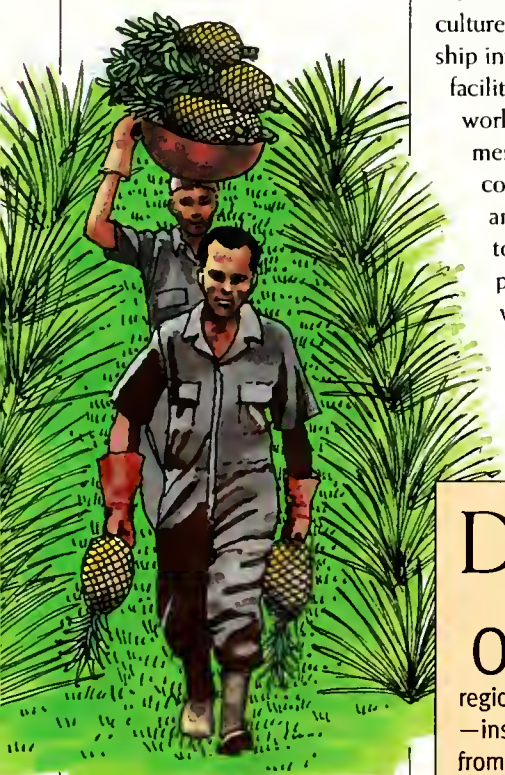
And the list goes on.

With the advent of a civilian government and the major shift in Shell's approach, LaPin says the region is noticeably more peaceful than it once was, as community conflicts and disruptions to the oil production process have decreased by more than 40 percent

since 1997. Anecdotal evidence, she says, suggests that the company's approach is creating more self-reliance in communities.

"Putting a human face on the corporate culture has required real work," she says, "because it means changing the minds and hearts of oil workers who see the community as a hindrance rather than a potential partner in the field."

But changing minds and hearts, whether in downtown Atlanta in the 1960s or a multinational corporation in the new millennium, is, in a sense, what social activists do.



both business and human development while emphasizing the self-reliance of communities themselves. LaPin calls Shell's new approach an evolution from "corporate citizen" to "social investment partner."

Last year, SPDC hosted a donors' roundtable with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) that was attended by senior officials of 20 development organizations and six oil companies. The event aided future planning and networking for development of the often neglected delta area. Now 80 percent of Shell's 400-plus annual projects are done by a

## DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Oil was discovered in Nigeria in 1956, but many Nigerians from oil-producing regions—the Niger River delta, in particular—insist that they have seen little benefit from the industry's profits.

Reasons for this abound, but two of them have been the mismanagement of government revenue and the lack of awareness among oil companies until recently of "best practice" community development. Deirdre LaPin '67 notes progress on both fronts, in Nigeria and worldwide.

In Nigeria, Shell is 30 percent owner and operator of a joint venture that also includes the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (55 percent), Elf (10 percent) and Agip (5 percent). Shell also invests around 3 percent of its total operating budget of more than \$2 billion on community development. But its social investment impact could be much greater through strong partnership with the Nigerian government. It pays a profit tax of 85 percent to the federal government on its share of oil revenues. In addition, Shell employees pay 20 percent in income taxes to the states in which they work.

Companies are playing more of an advocacy role with the Nigerian government than in the past, trying to ensure that returns from the industry help create an enabling environment for socio-economic development, LaPin says. "Like the World Bank, the private sector now recognizes that good governance—not merely government income—is the key to development."

Nigeria's new constitution requires that 13 percent of funds derived from natural resources be re-invested in their areas of origin, as oil companies have advocated. (Disbursements from this requirement began in January.)

In addition, Shell helped prompt the creation of a Niger Delta Development Commission that would use funds from oil companies and other sources to undertake development projects. The commission is scheduled to begin work once its members are appointed and approved by the National Assembly.

"Shell hopes that its development approach will serve as a model for the commission's future programs," LaPin says.



*Aiding the healing process, reading, writing and hope, a lifetime of service.*

## BY THE BOOK

**E**dna Gray Farrar '85 has experienced a parent's worst fear—the death of a child. Farrar's 4-year-old daughter was with her when she discovered her baby had succumbed to SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).

Some months later Farrar overheard her daughter discussing the baby's death. "I wanted to help her through this. She was a beginning reader, so I looked for children's books on death and grieving. But I couldn't find any books for my child," says Farrar. Determination kicked in, and Farrar intensified her search for suitable materials.

Working with librarians, searching book catalogs, and making inquiries to the National SIDS Resource Center, Farrar began discovering books that addressed the tough topic. She decided to share her information with other parents.

"Language opens doors. As you read, you help your child heal. As you do that, you also heal yourself," Farrar explains. Her desire



Edna Gray Farrar '85 pioneered a national program, KIDZ BOOKZ.

to develop a comprehensive book list deepened her search for "boy books." "Boys don't talk about emotions as directly as girls. They need books geared specifically for them."

Gradually, Farrar compiled a list and categorized it for age appropriateness. When she offered her findings to the local SIDS support group, the idea quickly went national and is now a program called KIDZ BOOKZ. Its purpose is to distribute children's books on the subject of coping with grief and loss and to distribute the *SIDS Survival*

Guide to parents. As a result of KIDZ BOOKZ, helping kids heal has been better addressed and support groups such as SIDS Alliance and Rainbows are working closer with one another.

Farrar's aid to families didn't stop with books. She has spoken with authorities on improving treatment of families after a SIDS death. She involved people in a memorial quilt-making project to honor their children. Whether it's fund raising, taking photographs, or acquiring flowers for SIDS support group gatherings,

Farrar has stepped in to help. Her efforts at transforming pain into healing for herself and others were recognized recently when she was named "Volunteer of the Year" for Georgia at the National SIDS Convention.

Farrar says her Agnes Scott education helped her tackle big projects by proceeding from small to larger concepts. To her way of thinking, however, friendships formed at college are of greater significance. "If not for my college friends, I wouldn't have made it through this ordeal," Farrar

PHOTO BY GARY MEER

states. One classmate in particular helped Farrar navigate the grieving process. "Laura Jones had taken a college course on grief and grieving and had donated a copy of the *SIDS Survival Guide* to Agnes Scott. Through that book, I became aware of support groups," Farrar says.

—Nancy Moreland

Farrar encourages families who have experienced SIDS to contact the national information number and hotline at 1-800-221-7347 or to log on to [www.sidsalliance.org](http://www.sidsalliance.org).

## CHANGING LIVES THROUGH LITERACY

When Bessie Murphy Lee '60 became director of the Greenville Literacy Association in 1980, circumstances were hardly auspicious. The association had a budget of less than \$25,000, partial classroom space in an abandoned school and two part-time employees.

But what she lacked in resources, Lee made up in dedication. The Greenville Literacy Association is now one of the five largest in America and a recent campaign raised about \$2.4 million for program expansion.

Lee and her husband



Bessie Murphy Lee '60 has been recognized for her literacy work.

moved to South Carolina in 1967. With a psychology degree from Agnes Scott in hand, she pursued her master's in education at Furman University. She spent three years teaching math at Greenville Technical College, then took a career hiatus for motherhood.

Illiteracy issues caught Lee's attention while attending a church supper. As a woman spoke of her efforts to promote literacy and described people who couldn't order off a menu, Lee recalled a family maid. "She signed her name with an X," Lee says. A few weeks later, Lee answered an advertisement for the directorship.

When she reentered the workforce, she discovered that nonprofit organizations had developed hidden tal-

ents. "You learn money management on a shoestring and learn public speaking," she notes. Her mission was to recruit and train volunteer teachers, recruit students, coordinate between students and volunteers and raise funds.

Convincing communities to address illiteracy was her favorite challenge. Greenville's transition from mill town to high technology center made the lack of literate, skilled workers painfully apparent. "The public outcry helped our cause," Lee says.

Transforming lives through literacy has been a highlight of Lee's career. Two noteworthy examples are a former mill worker turned teacher and a Russian immigrant who became conductor of

Greenville's symphony.

Her fondest memory is of a distinguished elderly man. "Mr. Pace learned to read the Bible so that he could preach," Lee says. He taught more than gospel, however.

"The United Way asked us to do a commercial. I immediately thought of Mr. Pace's charisma. Whenever the TV spot aired, our phones rang off the hook," she says. When NBC's president saw the commercial, he ran it on his network, and established Pace as a national literacy spokesman. "He met with literacy advocate and then first lady Barbara Bush, appeared on Oprah and won community awards," Lee recalls. Pace also carried the message beyond the spotlight, visiting prisons throughout the state.

Reflecting on progress eases Lee's transition to retirement. Earlier this year, the governor gave her the Order of the Palmetto, South Carolina's highest honor award. "It has been a privilege to devote my life to this work," she says.

This statement echoes her feelings about her Agnes Scott experience. "When I was there, young women learned duty and commitment to people who



didn't have our opportunities." Lack of opportunity, according to Lee, is the biggest factor contributing to illiteracy. Fortunately for many, Lee established an example of duty and commitment to those without opportunities.

—Nancy Moreland

## A LIFETIME OF SERVICE

Elizabeth Warden Marshall '38 was a Girl Scout, spent time as a camp counselor during her college years and had a 40-year career in social work. Her commitment to service continues well into her retirement years as she volunteers for several community organizations.

"When I attended school, women could marry or teach. I didn't want to do either," Marshall states. (She did marry 12 years after graduation.)

Graduating during the Depression might have limited her options even more, but where there is hardship there is opportunity to serve. "Dr. McCain was College president then. When I graduated, he got me a job at the Department of Public Welfare. That was the beginning of a wonder-

ful career," Marshall remembers.

About 500 students were on campus in those days. For Marshall, the College's size lent itself to meaningful relationships and closeness. "We had a sense of the individual's importance in the community."

As have many Agnes Scott students, Marshall developed lifelong friendships with fellow Scotties. In the 1960s, alumna Mary Virginia Allen '35 got her interested in helping establish a shelter for the DeKalb Humane Society.

Marshall served the organization in various capacities—board member, newsletter writer and community outreach person. Pet therapy—taking animals to visit nursing home patients—was a beloved endeavor. "The residents' faces just light up," she says.

Currently, she teaches children the importance of properly caring for animals.

"What we see at the shelter is heartbreaking. We have an obligation to educate the public about abuse and neglect."

A Brownie group that she recently addressed became interested in a blind cocker spaniel at the shelter that could see again if it received the proper surgery.

The young girls donated about \$500 from their cookie sale toward the surgery.

She volunteers at the Humane Society's semi-annual fund-raiser as well as finding time for water aerobics twice a week. Marshall also volunteers in the office of Decatur Presbyterian Church and arranges doctors' office transportation for residents of a local

retirement home.

For one who did adoption placements in the Depression, Red Cross work during WWII, and now works with abandoned animals, heartbreak was always close at hand. But Agnes Scott "taught what we could accomplish in the world," so a concern for people and animals keeps Marshall motivated.

—Nancy Moreland

Elizabeth Warden Marshall '38 and friend Jodi teach pet care.

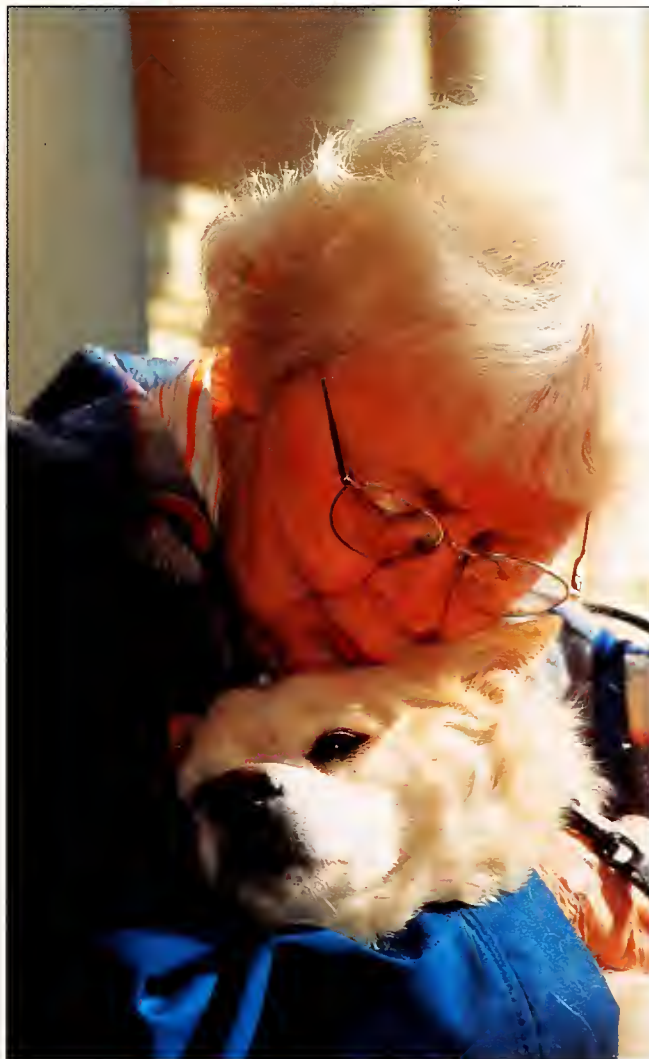


PHOTO BY GARY MEIK

# LETTERS

To the Editor:

There is a peculiar consequence that results from the transition of student to alumna: a belief that nothing about Agnes Scott can change from the way she was when we knew her, perfect yet flawed, frozen in time. Hearing of professors' retirements, staff changes, office moves, even witnessing the destruction of the Alston Center this past summer have all been blows to my image of Agnes Scott.

When I heard that Mary Alma Durrett was leaving Agnes Scott, I felt that same shock and disbelief. Mary Alma is part of what Agnes Scott means to me. Working for her and with her in the publications office for four years, through many changes and crises, she came to embody many of the qualities I associate with Agnes Scott, including personal honor and integrity, persistence, and joy in life. I admire her professionalism, her devotion to producing a quality publication, reporting both the events of the Agnes Scott world and connecting her audience to the problems of a broader world, and her personal interest in the problems and successes of all those she came across. She was always interested in the latest paper I was writing or book I was reading.

As a student, I could have found easier jobs, work over the breaks that paid more, but part of what kept me in publications was Mary Alma. I thought if she could come

back for another year, continue on for another issue of the alumnae magazine or *Main Events*, or even Public Safety's Parking Guidelines brochure, then so could I. With Mary Alma moved out of her office, there is one less person for me to visit, one more change moving Agnes Scott on and away from the college that lives in my (still very recent) memories. She is one of the best parts.

Working short-staffed under more stress and frustration that most people realize, Mary Alma did much to keep the publications together. I see her contribution, her words and images, every time I look at Agnes Scott. Mary Alma, thank you.

Jennifer M. Odom '98

To the Editor:

The new AGNES SCOTT ALUMNAE MAGAZINE came today. I have just read the

excellent letter from my classmate, Frances Puckett, and feel strongly the need to respond.

I have returned to live in Decatur after 30 years in one of the most beautiful parts of England, Herefordshire. Many people who knew where I lived there have wondered why I came back home to retire. Frances' letter helps explain many of the reasons. However, I do want to add another observation.

Our country seems to me to be unique in its acceptance of so many people from so many places. I tried to be accepted as English and at home in England for all the 30 years I lived there, but never made it beyond being "the American at Brobury." Here in the United States, we think of people as "Americans from ... Hungary, Ethiopia, Spain, etc.," not "that German in Atlanta."

This makes all the difference.

We are still a melting pot. We still welcome those who want or need to come here. True, often people begin living here in enclaves of their own people, but usually they advance beyond that as their children grow. There is an inclusiveness in our national thinking that is good. I believe that in nearly every other country in the world, an immigrant continues to feel separated from the indigenous population.

Today we are going through a post-election trauma nationally, and everywhere I look I see changes from 30 years ago. Some of them really bother me. But I am sure that if any people anywhere can hope for a sound future, we can in this wonderful America.

Margaret Andes  
Okarma '52

## CONTRIBUTORS

Christopher De Pree is assistant professor of astronomy and director of Bradley Observatory at Agnes Scott College.

Tish McCutchen '73 is a freelance writer living in Longview, Texas.

Nancy Moreland is a freelance writer based in Woodstock, Ga., whose work appears in trade and mainstream publications and on the Internet.

Jennifer Bryon Owen is director of

creative services and editor of the AGNES SCOTT ALUMNAE MAGAZINE at Agnes Scott College.

Celeste Pennington, a former editor of the AGNES SCOTT ALUMNAE MAGAZINE, now manages several publications.

Dolly Purvis '89, former manager of news services in the Office of Communications at Agnes Scott College, is editor of *The Champion*, a DeKalb County newspaper.

Lizanne Stephenson '84 is executive director of The Zeist Foundation, Inc. and former director of advancement for The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta.

Lewis Thayne is vice president for institutional advancement at Agnes Scott College.

Chris Tiegreen is editor of *Main Events* and senior writer in the College's Office of Communications.

*The AGNES SCOTT ALUMNAE MAGAZINE is recipient of the Award of Excellence for Alumni Magazines in the CASE District III Advancement Awards Program 2001.*



# GIVING ALUMNAE

*Depression-era values inspire practical philanthropy for Mary Reimer.*



CHRISTIE GREEN PHOTO

As a child of the Depression, I have great respect for money and practicality," says Mary McConkey Reimer '46. Despite limited finances during her childhood and adult years, Reimer consistently contributed her time, talent and money to various organizations including Agnes Scott College where she is a long time Annual Fund donor and volunteer.

Her most recent gift was in response to a unique reunion class challenge. A classmate committed herself to giving \$25,000 to the Annual Fund if five other people gave \$10,000 each. Reimer accepted the challenge. "I'm glad I am able to make a one-time gift at this level in support of reunion giving and the Campaign."

As the mother of six children, she lived volunteerism, helping out with everything from Scouts to field trips. Oakhurst Presbyterian Church valued her church activities, which included a 20-year stint as treasurer, so much that they celebrated Mary Reimer Day in her honor. She also received the Valiant Women Award from Church Women United of DeKalb County.

Currently, she is executive secretary and program coordinator at Decatur Area Emergency Assistance Ministry. This, too, began as a volunteer endeavor, but evolved into a salaried position.

"Helping people in need is both rewarding and discouraging. It's difficult when people need help with exorbitant bills, and they don't know how to manage their resources."

Reimer is such a familiar face during Agnes Scott fundraisers that she received the 1997 Outstanding Alumnae Award for Service to the College from the Alumnae Association. She has served as fund chair, volunteers at Annual Fund phonathons, and, at one time, solicited contributions by writing personal notes to more than 100 classmates.

"Now, I write one letter, which the College copies and mails," she explains. She actively promotes her upcoming 55th class reunion as an occasion to give. "It's great when people give to their children's and grandchildren's colleges, but I feel the first priority should be to one's own alma mater. Any time spent at ASC should be a valuable learning experience, so even if you didn't graduate from here, what you received as a student is worth a few dollars a month in contributions."

This ongoing contact with the College enriches Reimer's life. She enjoys the college's close-knit community ties and the cultural opportunities it offers.

The math and physics major has a self-professed "head for figures," and she knows the value of a few dollars. Reimer, the first college graduate in her family, and her husband put their six children through college on one salary. She recycled before it became popular. "I drove my station wagon full of glass to the Coca-Cola glass plant. They paid a penny a pound."

Given these stories, Reimer's reasons for supporting the Annual Fund are no surprise. "This fund appeals to my practical side. It pays for nuts and bolts expenses like teachers' salaries and books."

— Nancy Moreland



AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE

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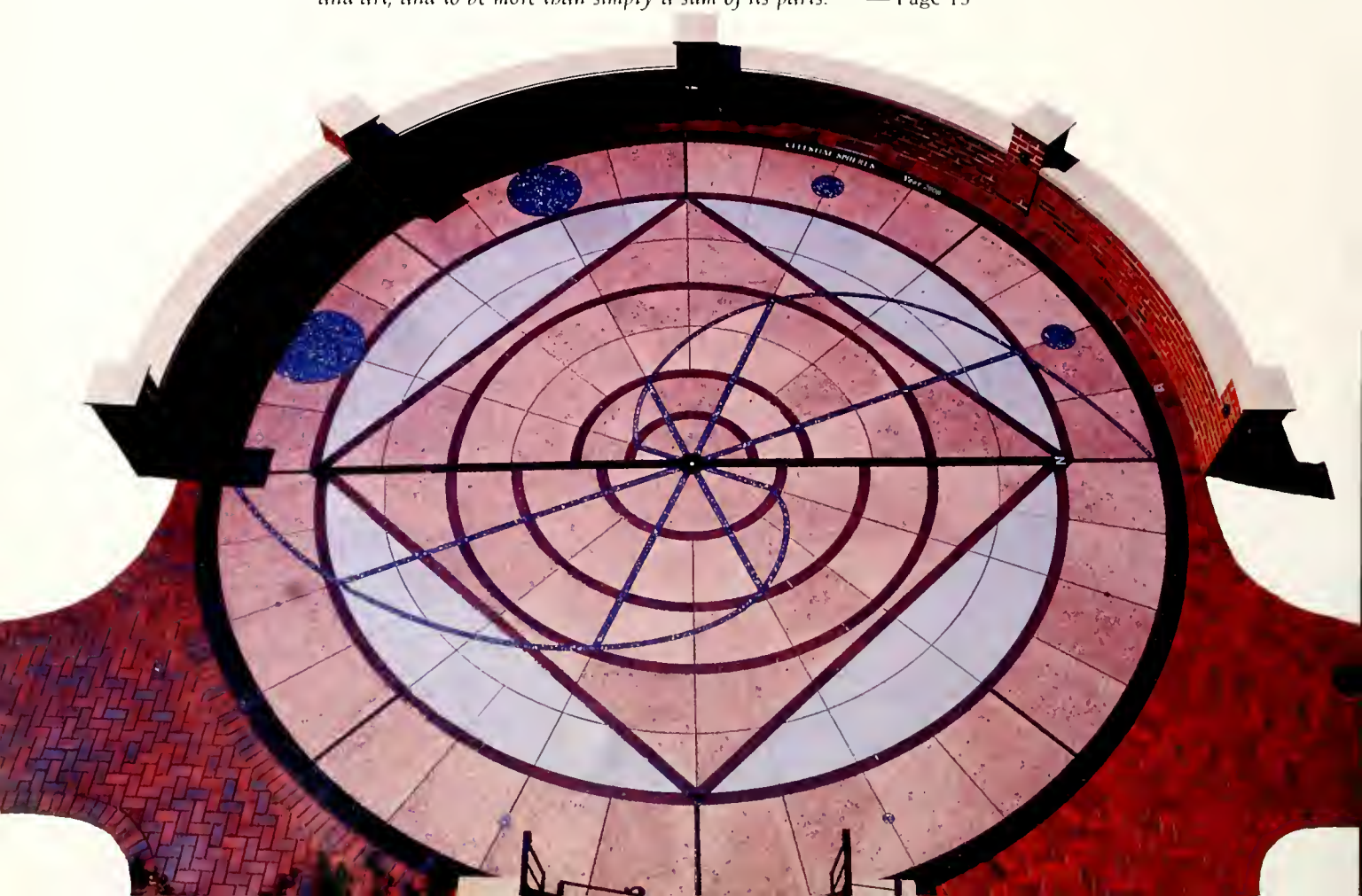
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## STAR GAZING

*For students and visitors to ASC's renovated Bradley Observatory and new Delafield Planetarium, looking up may be more common than looking down. But this view of the heavens, taken of the new teaching and viewing plaza, is just one surprise. The plaza, titled "Celestial Spheres" and designed by Christopher De Pree, assistant professor of astronomy and observatory director, and Terry McGehee, professor of art, is an artistic representation, in various colors of granite, of the solar system and the Milky Way galaxy. "It is my hope," says De Pree, "that this building will continue to be a meeting place for science, music and art, and to be more than simply a sum of its parts." — Page 13*





# AGNES SCOTT

ALUMNAE MAGAZINE

Spring/Summer 2001



Robert Frost



# GUEST COLUMN

*Agnes Scott's love of the written word continually enriches and nourishes the life of the campus community* • Christine S. Cozzens

"Miranda wasn't listening to her father's speech."

"Yes, she was listening, Prospero was at fault because he kept pushing her."

"But Miranda was a boy, and boys goof off when they should be listening."

No, this conversation overheard in Evans Dining Hall last fall was not an analysis of some weird new reality program on television. The students were talking about the latest Blackfriars' production, a reverse gender version of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* directed by theatre professor David Thompson.

The play has only one female role and so was ripe for a challenging transformation that would give students many more interesting characters to become and lines and lines of Shakespeare to memorize.

With more than 250 first-years reading the play in English class and attending *en masse* on opening night, Shakespeare returned to the College stage after a 13-year absence (the Blackfriars' produced *Comedy of Errors* in 1987). The production was polished, the interpretation controversial, and the Shakespeare buzz on campus spilled out of the theatre and classrooms, proving to anyone listening that literature is alive and well at Agnes Scott.

In literature departments, the faculty are always glad when students turn their passion for reading into majors, but we are also delighted to note that even in times of economic pressure, there is a pre-med student who simply must study Wordsworth, a math major who wants to become a playwright, or a future law professor who learns about legal complexity in the fog-befuddled world of Charles Dickens' *Bleak House*. A biology major told me the other day how thrilled she'd been to meet Sharon Olds at this year's Writers' Festival; the student had her books autographed and offered the gracious Olds two papers she'd written about her poems.

Literature makes its way into courses on many subjects: history classes read novels to capture the spirit of an age; psychology students study the personalities of literary figures.

Literary life on campus extends well beyond the classroom. The Writers' Festival drew wide attendance from students, faculty and staff and an astonishing number of alumnae who were perhaps drawn by the performances of two of their own, Anjail Rashida Ahmad '92 and Marsha Norman '69. Literature welcomes students to Agnes Scott and stays with them long after they graduate.

Last fall, as in years past, new students read a work of literature (this year's choice was *The Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood*) as a way of stimulating dialogue on a common subject and infusing those first bewildering days with ideas and excitement. In December and January, 26 students and two

faculty members spent three weeks abroad studying Ireland's literary landscapes. And book discussions continue to be a favorite topic for alumnae group meetings all over the country.

As Agnes Scott women, our students are not content merely to read: they must write. More students are majoring in English literature and creative writing than ever before, choosing courses in poetry,

fiction, nonfiction and dramatic writing. At our Writers' Festival's statewide contest, the visiting writers award a first-prize in each genre; this year, there were two home-grown winners, Caroline Murnane '01 for fiction and Sarah Worden '03 for the one-act play. The *Aurora*—an entirely student-run creative writing magazine—produced a beautiful issue last year with a cover design celebrating the increasingly diverse image of the Agnes Scott woman. Besides housing fine offices for student publications, the new Alston Campus Center offers exciting spaces for literary coffeehouse nights, poetry slams and student readings.

The most dramatic transformation to the spaces in the newly renovated McCain Library and to the landscaped areas on campus is all the new places designed for sitting at a table, flopping in a chair, or stretching out on a bench—with a book.

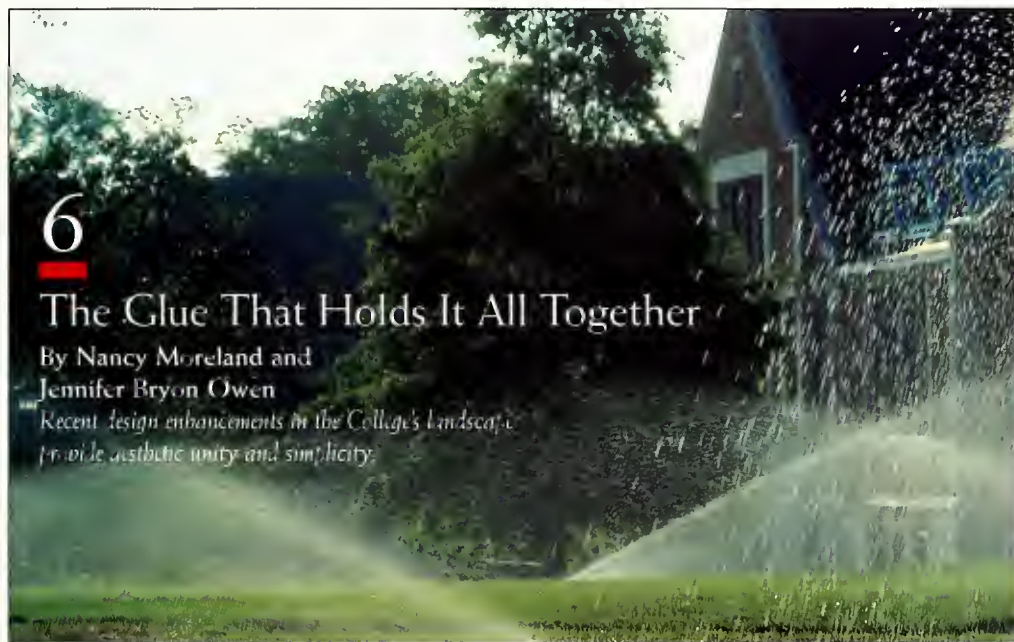


*Christine S. Cozzens*



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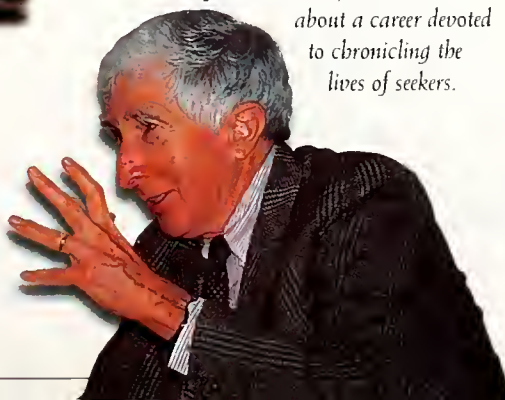
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Robert Frost, a frequent visitor to  
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in the Alumnae Garden.

CHRIS TIEGREEN PHOTO

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# ON CAMPUS

*All about weddings, a Russian graduate, and a challenge to end "women's oppression."*

## HERE COMES THE BRIDE—ORGANIZED

Lara Webb Carrigan '94 offers everything a prospective bride needs in order to beat the prematrimonial jitters in her witty text, *The Best Friend's Guide to Planning a Wedding*.

The book's clever advice comes from the first hand experience of a now happily married woman whose ambition and dream was to write a mystery novel.

But that plan changed

when Carrigan became engaged.

"I went to buy a book for myself and there really wasn't anything that spoke to me, so I decided to do one of my own," says the Athens, Ga., native.

Carrigan majored in English literature and creative writing and Latin. With the encouragement of professors Bo Ball and Christine Cozzens, she honed her talents and shaped her future as a writer.

Immediately after graduation from Agnes Scott,

Carrigan went to Boston for Radcliffe's summer publishing course where she also participated in a career fair for the course's graduates. Through this, Carrigan subsequently found a job, moved to New York, and began her career in publishing with Random House. She later worked at *Playboy*.

Carrigan recently autographed her book at the College bookstore when she returned to campus to participate in Celebration Weekend.

"I learned to write at Agnes Scott," says Carrigan.

The entire process from research to publishing *The Best Friend's Guide to Planning a Wedding* took two years, during which she kept detailed records of her own wedding plans and interviewed dozens of brides.

"The strangest wedding I learned about was the scuba diving one. I don't know who they got to officiate it, a minister or a judge or what, but I think it was thumbs up for 'I do' because it was just a bunch of bubbles. I don't even know if they could hear anything," says Carrigan.

"One of the most memo-

rable weddings I attended was my cousin's. My cousin, an American marrying an Italian, held the wedding in Greece. The Italians didn't speak English, the Americans didn't speak Italian, and nobody spoke Greek. Then, midway through the week, my 60-year-old aunt went over the cliff on a motorbike." Both the author's aunt and the wedding ceremony survived.

In light of these and many other experiences she uncovered in her research, Carrigan's sage advice is "Don't sweat the details—have fun."

After all, the book's purpose—to help the prospective bride with how to find a dress, return the shoes, hire a caterer, fire the photographer, choose a florist, book a band, and still wind up married at the end of it all—covers the details.

*The Best Friend's Guide to Planning a Wedding* is Carrigan's first published book, but she plans at least one more of the same type. And of course, there's always that mystery novel waiting in the wings.

—Victoria F. Stopp '01



On campus to talk about her fledgling writing career and successful first book, alumna Lara Carrigan '94 signs copies of her wedding guide.



## FROM AGNES SCOTT WITH LOVE

Olenegorsk, Russia, is a world away from Agnes Scott College. Located above the Arctic Circle, this small industrial town was home to Elena Kutuzova Venuti '01 for 17 years. This spring, Venuti graduated from Agnes Scott, a journey she probably never would have made without an alumna who this year celebrated her 20th reunion.

Jennifer Giles Evans '81 and husband, Rob, spearheaded the exchange student's entrance into American society when they became her host family during her senior year in high school. Venuti was a regional winner in an English skills contest sponsored in conjunction with the Freedom Support Act, and the three-part competition required students to write an essay to an American family.

Reading the essay, the Evanses felt connected to this girl living thousands of miles from their North Carolina home. Within a few weeks, they picked her up at the airport. "Our first meeting was a little awkward because of the lan-

guage barrier. Here was a teenager who had traveled halfway around the globe to meet a family she would live with for a year," Evans recalls.

Venuti's experience of being in unfamiliar surroundings echoed Evans'. "I was a country girl from Carroll County, Ga. I spent my childhood playing with other white children. The world opened up for me at Agnes Scott. At first, I was so scared, but the student hostesses, some of whom were black, made me feel welcome. Meeting foreign students and attending cultural events also introduced me to opportunities I never knew existed."

Soon after Venuti's arrival Evans' mother died, and Venuti attended the funeral with the family. Driving home they stopped by Agnes Scott, planting a seed for Venuti's future.

"The campus was beautiful, really impressive. I never imagined I could be a student there," she recalls. Back in North Carolina, Venuti attended high school, participated in extracurricular activities and went to church with the Evanses. Soon, it was time to return to Russia, but before leaving, she expressed an interest in Agnes Scott. That was all Rob Evans needed to hear. "Rob is one of those great Scottie

husbands who is a cheerleader for the College. He got the ball rolling," says Evans.

Venuti's visa required a two-year stay in Russia before returning stateside. Her American family nourished their friendship through correspondence and e-mail, much of which centered on the College. "Rob completed financial forms and made sure that application deadlines were met," Evans notes. In the meantime, Venuti studied at Russia's St. Petersburg University.

"A small women's college was a novel concept for Elena," says Evans.

"Compared to St.



Russian student Elena Venuti '01 receives her degree from President Mary Bullock '66 in spring ceremonies at ASC.

CHRIS TIEGREEN PHOTO



Elena Kutuzova Venuti '01 (seated) and alumna Jennifer Giles Evans '81.

Petersburg, Agnes Scott was much more personal."

Venuti concurs. "Having close contact with professors was really special. It was nice to be able to call them at home if necessary."

Husband Rob initially had some reservations about Venuti attending Agnes Scott.

"Being from Russia, her situation was so desperate that she could not afford to earn a degree in liberal arts without definite business skills," he points out. "My wife was an English major, which is fine in the U.S. but would not put food on the table for Lena in Russia. I

encouraged her to take the hardest classes Agnes Scott offered, which she did and has done well—rivaling what I had at Georgia Tech.

"I was worried also about Lena adjusting to Atlanta after growing up in a small town near the North Pole. Fortunately, that's where Jeni's college roommate took over. In fact, many of my wife's classmates have lent a hand in taking care of our 'exchange' daughter."

While Evans purchased college supplies and helped set up the dorm room, her former roommate, Melanie Merrifield Podowitz '81, became a vital link.

"Melanie provided whatever I needed—whether it was a coffee maker or advice," comments Venuti.

Another alumna, Betty Derrick '68, special assistant to the vice president for student life and community relations, offered mentoring through the Alumnae Association's "You've Got a Friend" program. She often took Venuti to art galleries and restaurants. "Because Betty had been a history major, she helped deepen my understanding of the United States," says Venuti.

Rob Evans' fears about Venuti getting a job after graduating with a liberal arts degree proved unfounded. The alumnae penchant for networking opened doors. Venuti spent her first summer as an Agnes Scott student doing Web design for an alumna. Through Rosemary Cunningham, economics professor, Venuti found a job her second summer working at the Federal Reserve Bank in Atlanta.

When alumna Shalia Stephens '95 visited campus to recruit for her employer in Germany, she secured Venuti a summer internship developing an e-business marketing strategy. The same company offered Venuti a job as a marketing research assistant when she

graduated. Recently married, Venuti and her husband will work in Munich, Germany, for two years before returning to Atlanta.

She has no regrets about the drastic change she made from Olenegorsk to Decatur.

"I'm glad I came here and I'm grateful for my Agnes Scott education. It improved my work ethic. I feel there are more chances for leadership at a small college, too," says Venuti, who developed leadership skills as president of the College's International Student Organization.

According to Evans, this young woman makes the most of opportunities that come her way. "Give her a little shove and she'll go with it. Rob and I did the shoving, as did other ASC graduates."

Husband Rob offers his perspective. "This story is one of a young woman embraced by Agnes Scott women at all levels to make sure she was educated, comfortable, skilled and employed. It is a great story about Agnes Scott graduates working together for someone they hardly know except that they all wear the same onyx ring."

—Nancy Moreland

*Editor's Note: Our appreciation to Rob Evans for bringing this story to our attention.*



## FEMINIST SPEAKS OUT ON WOMEN AND OPPRESSION

Egyptian feminist Dr. Nawal El Saadawi's résumé includes director general of the Health Education Department (Ministry of Health, Cairo), head of Women's Program in the United Nations, professor, medical doctor—and prisoner.

According to El Saadawi, she was imprisoned for "believing Anwar Sadat" that he would run a more democratic government and allow criticism of his policies. This led to a charge of "crimes against the state" and she was not freed from prison until after Sadat's assassination. Her captivity along with her many experiences with oppression has led her to speak out against crimes of injustice. Forcibly circumcised at an early age, El Saadawi has overcome both physical and emotional oppression to become a successful medical doctor and feminist leader.

El Saadawi presented a public lecture and dined with a group of students and faculty at Agnes Scott this spring.

Her speech, originally titled "Women, Creativity and Politics," became more of a speaker-audience dialogue than a lecture. "I don't like to talk at people. I like to talk to people," said El Saadawi.

And talk to people is exactly what she did. For nearly two hours, she presented her theories and ideas on women's oppression, discussed her experiences as an oppressed

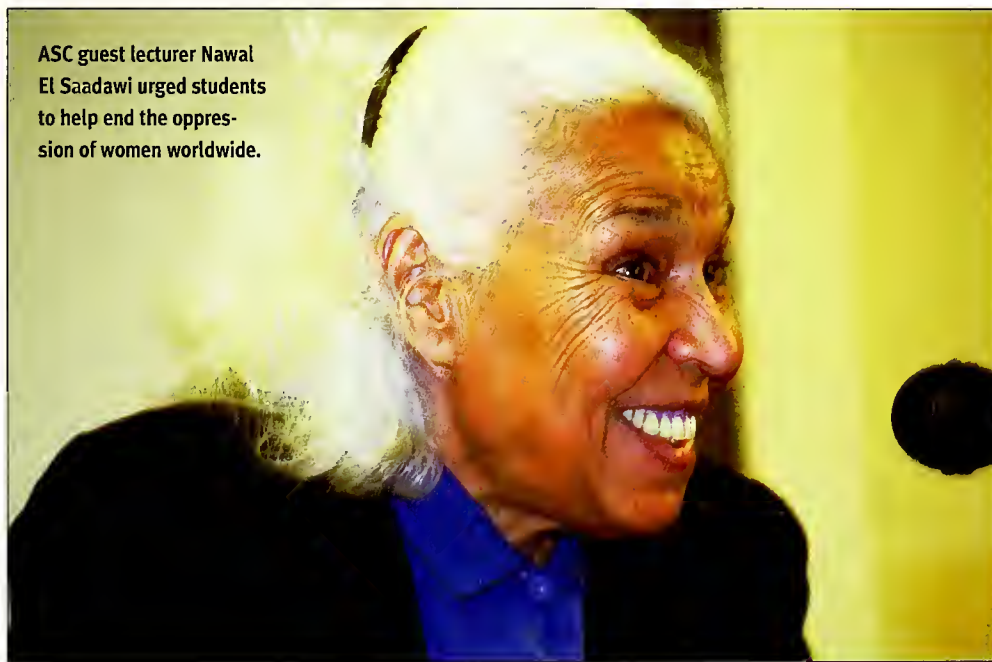
also agree in the attribution of masculine characteristics to God," says El Saadawi in *The Nawal El Saadawi Reader*. This disapproval of the societal role of organized religion was a focal point of her dialogue at Agnes Scott.

El Saadawi also expressed her distrust of and uneasiness with the American government, in contrast to her affection for American citizens. Her dis-

the sixth international conference of the Arab Women's Solidarity Association being held in October in Cairo, Egypt, and which will focus on "Arab Women and Global Change." She believes that ending the oppression of Arab women is an important step in ending the oppression of women everywhere.

In *Memoirs from the Women's Prison*, El Saadawi

ASC guest lecturer Nawal El Saadawi urged students to help end the oppression of women worldwide.



MARILYN SURIAN

woman and presented some of the recurring themes in her books.

"The oppression of women is not essentially due to particular religious ideologies. The great religions of the world uphold similar principles as far as the submission of women to men is concerned. They

trust of the American government supports her idea of lay people mobilizing for change. She stressed the importance of "globalizing from below," or increasing power among local oppressed people in order to overthrow their oppressors.

El Saadawi encouraged audience members to attend

recounts her arrest, imprisonment and eventual release. She dedicated her book "To all those who have hated oppression to the point of death, who have loved freedom to the point of imprisonment, and have rejected falsehood to the point of revolution."

—Victoria F. Stopp '01

Recent design enhancements in the College's landscape provide aesthetic unity and simplicity.

By Nancy Moreland  
and Jennifer Bryon Owen

**O**n college campuses, the students, faculty and staff pursue their own interests, many times in different buildings and on different schedules. Some rarely encounter each other. Yet, their paths do cross, so to speak. According to Carol Johnson, a college's landscape pulls these various parts together.

"The landscape is the glue, the unifier," says Johnson, an award-winning landscape architect. "Everyone crosses the Quad at Agnes Scott. That's the one common thing all share. That's why I was so keen on simplifying."

Johnson and her firm, Carol R. Johnson Associates Inc., of which she is founder and chairman of the board, were enlisted to bring the College's landscape into the 21st century as part of the expansion and renovation program begun about five years ago.

President Mary Brown Bullock '66 made the landscape a priority.

"During our master plan process we realized the significance of our space," says Bullock. "We decided a landscape plan was essential. A serious long-term enhancement was needed to preserve, sustain and renew our precious landscape."

#### Trees, Tours and a \$10,000 Dogwood

**A**gnes Scott has a tradition of beauty and of caring about its environment. One tree, in particular, is legendary. The College's second president, James Ross McCain, set a precedent for tree preservation in the '40s when plans to relocate Presser Hall required felling a mature dogwood. McCain spared the tree by ordering a redrawing of architectural plans at a cost of \$10,000. The president's bold move inspired the nickname "\$10,000 dogwood" and is still talked about.

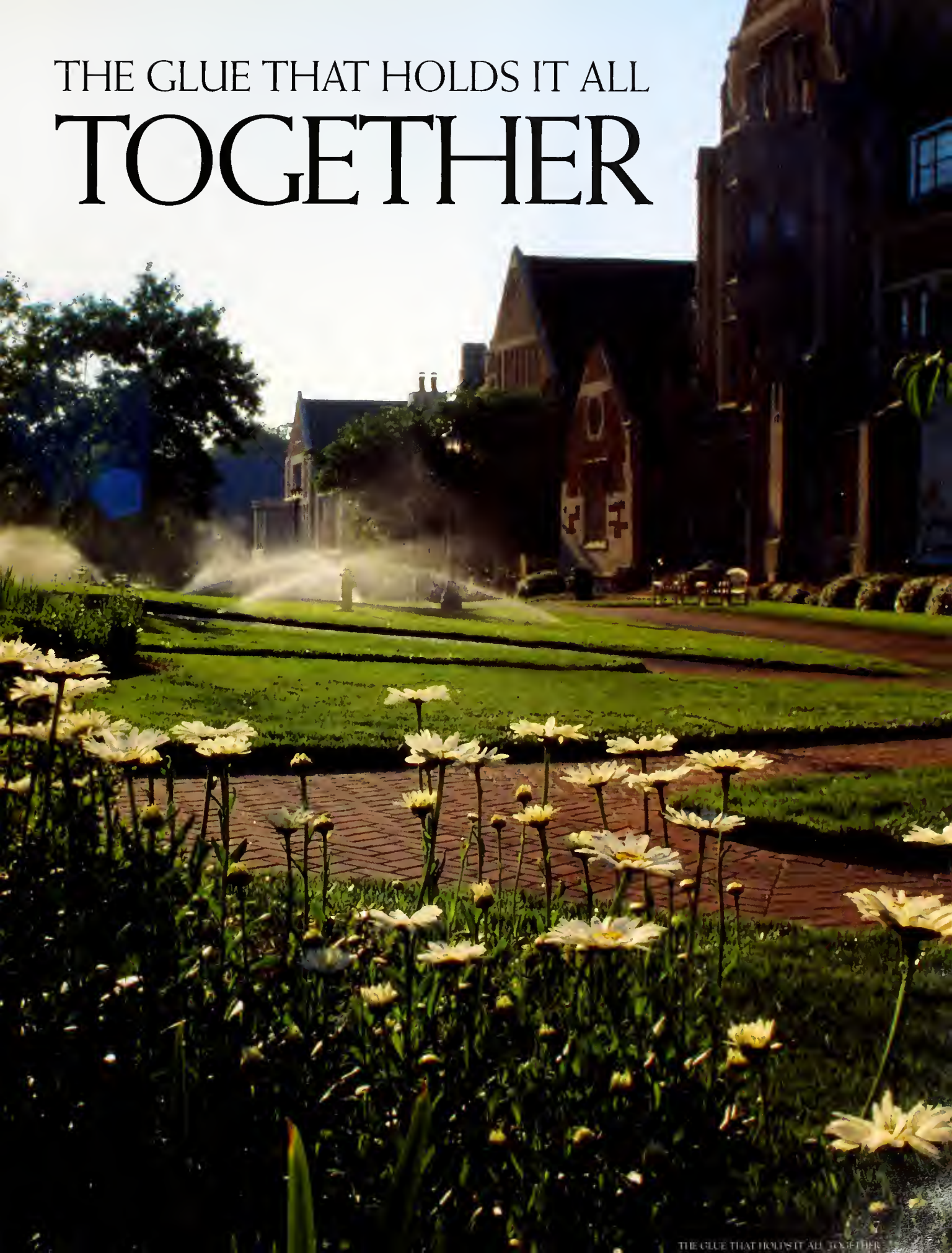
Although age eventually claimed the dogwood, it has been honored in art. Douglas Ellington, husband of deceased alumna Sherry Ellington '84, commissioned an artist to craft four wood-turned bowls and pens from one of the limbs. One of the bowls was presented to the College in memory of Ellington and is dis-



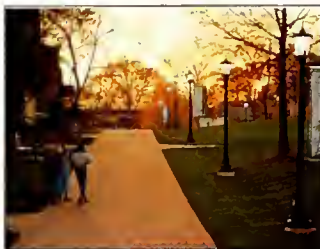
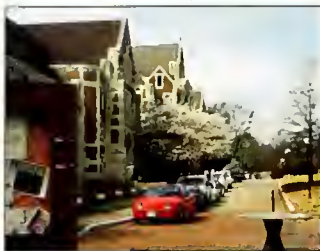
CHRIS TIEGREN PHOTO



# THE GLUE THAT HOLDS IT ALL TOGETHER







**BEFORE & AFTER:** Buttrick Drive from the Quad looking West

played in the Office of the President.

In past years, the College had a self-guided tour, highlighting several significant trees and through which visitors learned about urban forestry and the diversity of tree species. Betty Derrick '68, special assistant to the vice president for student life and community relations, hopes the tour will be reinstated one day. She believes trees not only beautify the grounds, but are a reflection of those who planted them. "Mary Stuart McDougall taught biology here from 1921 to 1954. She took a cypress sprig from a Christmas arrangement and planted it by Campbell Hall. Today, that 'sprig' stands 38-feet tall," says Derrick.

The College's trees find themselves on tours organized by various groups. For several years, Trees Atlanta has sponsored a Mother's Day tree tour, which includes Agnes Scott. Participants in the Decatur Tour of Trees walk through the campus as part of that event.

Observing Arbor Day is a College tradition. This year's ceremony included the presentation of the Al Thomas Hays and Virginia Pearson Hays Award for an outstanding student gardener to first-year student Maria Zambrano. The children of Virginia "VeeCee" Hays Klettner '53 and S. John Klettner planted a Florida dogwood in the Alumnae Garden in honor of their parents' wedding anniversary. Concluding Arbor Day festivities was the raf-

fle for four camellia bushes in honor of retired professor Kate McKemie, whose commitment to the College's landscape resulted in her recent donation of seven camellias from her own garden to the Alumnae Garden.

The College works closely with the City of Decatur's Tree Preservation Ordinance to be sure that what is done on campus complements the community. Under the landscape architect's direction, the College began a major tree renewal program. Approximately 135 trees have been planted during the past two years. Gué Hudson, dean of students and vice president for student life and community relations, had a hand—literally—in this effort on a snowy day last December when she put shovel to soil in a joint tree-planting ceremony on campus with Decatur Greens.

### Choice Trees and Buildings

**I**t was this reputation for beautiful trees and buildings that Johnson wanted to build upon and enhance. "The first thing I do is evaluate the resources that exist," says Johnson. "Agnes Scott has choice architecture and trees, so that's the basis for the landscape plan."

That's where she started to simplify.

"There were so many little, overgrown plantings that were removed. You don't want to clutter these choice elements."

Agnes Scott students relax and study on the College's newly planted green grass on the lawn along College Avenue. The fescue grass is a special variety that thrives in shade such as that on the tree-covered campus.



GARY HECK PHOTO



# A PEACEFUL SPOT

Gardens for Peace, an international non-profit organization dedicated to promoting gardens as a place of meditation and peace selected Agnes Scott in 1992 as the location for its first garden on a college campus. A scenic path through the Alumnae Garden serves as the College's Garden for Peace.

Laura Dorsey '66, co-founder of the gardens, became interested in the universal healing power of gardens after her husband was wounded in the Vietnam War. She went to Japan to care for him, and the beauty and solace she experienced in the Japanese gardens allowed her to feel peace despite the conflict around her. Dorsey attributes her love of gardens to her mother, Laura Dorsey '35, with whom she founded the Gardens for Peace program in 1984.

To be considered for membership in this international network, the garden must satisfy some basic standards, such as offering feelings of peace, tranquility, safety and refuge. A sense of enclosure, multiple types of stimuli, complexity and mystery are also considered. The first and foremost requirement is that the garden be open to the public.

Agnes Scott's Alumnae Garden met these criteria. "The meaning of the garden at Agnes Scott and the quality of the education there meant a great deal to Gardens for Peace from the beginning," says Dorsey. "The support and enthusiasm of the College greatly contributed to the project."

—Victoria F. Stopp '01



Simplification included the whole plant palette of the campus. In an attempt to control and focus the maintenance in high use areas, huge overgrown plants were removed and native, dwarf and low-growing plants were employed. "I hope the whole plant palette will be simplified and planting beds made smaller," says Johnson. "The use of spring-flowering bulbs gives the campus a lot of show for less maintenance, for example."

A goal was to reinforce plant beds where appropriate as a focal point or where necessary for screening, safety or ease of maintenance, and to remove plant beds where possible to emphasize the dominant structure of large canopy trees and lawn.

## Green Grass Year Round

According to Johnson, a key decision between her, her associates and the College was that they wanted green grass all year. Few grasses thrive beneath mature trees, but with determination and

some research assistance from the University of Georgia, the College found a fescue grass that grows in such conditions. "Having green lawns all year long requires a lot of extra care. It shows a substantial commitment from the College to have large grassy areas, and I'm very pleased that this was a priority," says Johnson.

She points out that green grass year round gives great pleasure to students and is an amenity for students. It also gives a sense of order, which is important also to student life. Additionally, it is a tradition of many other college campuses.

"Some were skeptical about all the grass and irrigation we installed, but today people love it," notes Bullock.

Providing the irrigation through the completion of a storm water management system was one of the largest projects to date. Connected to an existing underground spring, a detention basin collects storm water and runoff. A pump pushes water back

"Agnes Scott has choice architecture and trees, so that's the basis for the landscape plan."



up for irrigation of the campus, a form of water recycling that allows for more effective maintenance. Located south of Gellerstedt Track, the basin project was designed by U.R.S. Corporation, an engineering firm.

Although Johnson's firm did not do the

work on this detention pool, she hopes to further improve the surrounding area through planting for a wildlife habitat. Also, students engaged in the new environmental science program have hands-on learning opportunities through the resources provided by the detention pond.

## THE CAROL R. JOHNSON FILE

**C**arol R. Johnson is the founder and chairman of the board of Carol R. Johnson Associates Inc. For 41 years she has maintained a diversified professional practice in the areas of landscape architecture and site planning. Typical work that she has overseen within the firm includes site development, open space and recreation planning, master planning and urban development for municipalities, schools, colleges and universities, corporations and public agencies.

According to Agnes Scott Trustee Harriet King '64, chair of the Board's buildings and grounds committee, the College was impressed with Johnson's previous work.

"Her conversation expressed an understanding of the local materials with which she would work, and her form of presentation engaged all of us in the excitement she felt for the potential contribution the landscape/hardscape would make to the success of our vision for the campus," says King. "We all believed that some of our students would find her to be so

captivating that they would expand their educational experience to include time with her and would come away enriched by the experience—if not on the way to landscape architecture training."

Johnson's career includes an impressive list of accomplishments and contributions. She frequently writes and speaks on landscape design issues, serves on numerous boards and is the recipient of outstanding awards. For example:

- Harvard University, Master in Landscape Architecture, 1957
- Wellesley College, Bachelor of Arts in English, 1951
- 2000 recipient of The Massachusetts Horticultural Society's Gold Medal, which recognizes horticultural accomplishments and outstanding service to the Society
- 1999 recipient of the Brick Industry Association's The Brick Paving Design Award for the U.S. Federal Courthouse in Boston, Mass., with Olin Partnership, Philadelphia, Penn.
- 1999 recipient

of the Brick in Architecture Award for the U.S. States Federal Courthouse in Boston, Mass., with Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, Architects from the Brick Industry Association and The American Institute of Architects

- 1998 recipient of the American Society of Landscape Architects; ASLA Medal, the society's highest honor
- "Carol only takes on one

new project per year," says the College's Vice President for Business and Finance William E. Gailey. "So we were very pleased that she chose Agnes Scott."

In addition to her work at Agnes Scott, Johnson has ongoing projects on the campuses of Gettysburg College, Juniata College, Grinnell College, Rollins College, The University of the South, Babson College and Bowdoin College.



SUE CLIFTS PHOTO





Woodruff Quadrangle's facelift included removal of the granite sitting wall, which "opened up the area, unified the campus character and created a more gentle, green space," says landscape architect Carol Johnson.

### The Heart of the Campus

Agnes Scott's approximately 100 acres are defined by three quadrangles that divide the space into more intimate areas. "Quads are the heart and core of a campus. They give colleges identity. Students use, enjoy and remember them," Johnson points out. Woodruff Quadrangle in the heart of the campus received a major facelift.

Significant in this was the removal of the granite sitting wall on the site of the former "Hub," which Johnson says obstructed a nice vista directly to the campus center and library. "In removing it, we opened up the area, unified the campus character and created a more gentle, green space and added wooden benches. I worried that students would feel deprived of their amphitheatre gathering space, but we seem to have provided something students can use," she notes.

Johnson is proud of the foyer entry walls on Buttrick and Evans drives where distinctive fences, signage and plantings offer a welcome to the Quad and emphasize its importance.

"This main quad needed definition," says Johnson, "but it would not have been worth defining if we hadn't removed the wall."

One of the big issues was making the campus a more pedestrian-friendly space. Johnson notes that when the College was built, mixing cars and pedestrians wasn't a big issue because there weren't that many vehicles. However, she believes pedestrian-friendly communities will gain increasing importance in this new century.

To that end, Woodruff Quadrangle was

pedestrianized and Buttrick Drive converted to a brick-paved walkway with retractable bollards at the entrance to allow room for emergency vehicles.

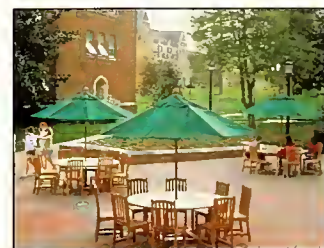
### The Public Face

If you're coming to a campus, you should know by looking at spaces what they are," says Johnson. "Just as the Quad should indicate that students cross it, the north arrival space at Agnes Scott should be welcoming. One of the first changes Johnson made at the College was to remove the holly hedge along the campus front, symbolically opening the campus. "Also, we want to make a good impression on that family arriving to campus with the student."

Although much remains to be done along the perimeter of the campus, significant changes have been made to enhance the College's public face. The landscape plan contains provisions for a decorative edge around the campus. Materials, lighting and signage need greater consistency, says Johnson. "The whole perimeter treatment is dependent on burying overhead utilities along South Candler Street," she notes. "The College must work with the city to address utility and signage issues."

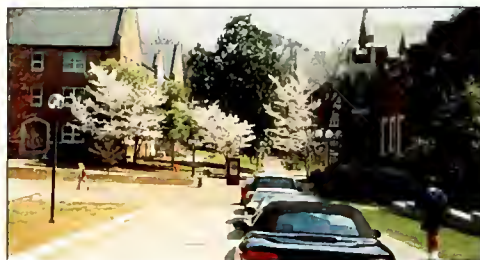
The College's respect for nearby residents is evident in design features. Plants help screen the parking lot along South Candler and the South McDonough parking facility. Glare from lighting was minimized, and deck materials carefully chosen to harmonize with surrounding school architecture.

### BEFORE & AFTER: Evans Terrace





**BEFORE & AFTER: Buttrick Drive**  
from the the entrance looking East



"We try very hard to create a welcoming atmosphere, for both students and the city," states Gué Hudson. Community feedback reflects this. After seeing recent landscape improvements, a city official and a downtown developer told Hudson, "This place looks like a first-rate college. You've done an outstanding job here." Neighbors frequently stop President Bullock on the street to comment on the beauty of the campus.

### It's Not All Plants

Many small-scale refinements add to the school's aesthetic appeal. Campus unity was achieved through standardized lighting, brick pavers on walkways and a consistent plant palette. When in place, uniform signage will be a key component to overall appearance. New lighting was installed in the commencement area located in the Presser Quadrangle, and plans are underway for irrigation in this area as well.

Plant material isn't the only item of consideration when landscape improvements take place. Hardscape features that connect architecture with exterior areas also come into play. The south patio of Evans Hall was "invigorated." Grading eliminated the steps and solved drainage problems. More outdoor furniture was added, pavers reset and some areas replanted. This increased the flow between indoors and out by creating "spill out" areas. The new Alston Campus Center also has patio dining areas, creating a "cafe atmosphere."

The landscape plan's intention to create outdoor spaces and connect buildings is seen in the area between the Alston Campus Center and McCain Library. The Elizabeth Cameron Reading Terrace of the library has a wisteria arbor and other elements that relate to the east side of Alston, which also has an arbor. The Secret Garden, formerly a part of the library, is scheduled to be moved to another part of the campus as buildings and landscape develop.

**BEFORE & AFTER: The front of**  
campus along College Avenue



### A Garden Respite

The spirit of Agnes Scott College is felt strongly in the Alumnae Garden. The new millennium saw a fresh start for this space. Mature camellia shrubs, donated by retired staff and faculty members Bertie Bond and Kate McKemie, have been planted. "These camellias are a great start in improving the winter blossom color in this area," says Johnson.

Additional lighting now extends the garden's nighttime use and creates an inviting glow. Pathways were repaired and the pool is undergoing renovation.

A crowning touch for the Alumnae Garden was the recent donation by Susan Gamble Smathers '75 and Bruce A. Smathers of a life-size statue of Robert Frost, which commemorates the poet's strong attachment and commitment to the College. The poet and Agnes Scott shared a unique relationship that spanned almost 30 years, and it was common to see him on the campus. While some students report being a bit startled to find a man sitting on a bench when they walk through the garden at night, the statue is appropriately placed, surrounded by nature and close to the hub of lively discussion and learning.

### Meeting the Challenges

Colleges have different landscape needs from those of businesses or residences, according to Johnson. "There's a very intense use of the landscape."

The rhythm of a college's calendar affects the landscape and its use. College campuses have public faces and private faces, and according to Johnson, most focus on the public face. Landscape designers must be sensitive to the needs of students who come and go as well as to those of faculty and staff who stay and the entire campus community.

Considering these elements, Johnson's



goal at Agnes Scott was a simple, clear landscape treatment that made the entire campus environment more intelligible so that simply by looking at the spaces one can tell how they are used.

Bullock says it is all coming together with "an elegance and simplicity that highlight

both the trees and historic buildings." With so many changes now in full bloom, she contends that the disruption and upheaval have been worth the effort.

"Like Thomas Jefferson, I believe that the natural environment has a profound effect on learning and morale," says Bullock. ■

JERRY HOWARD PHOTO



## THE STUDENT VIEWPOINT

*While a student at Agnes Scott, Morisa Scalera '98 served as an intern with Carol R. Johnson and Associates. After graduating with a major in art and a minor in French, she earned a master's degree in architecture from The University of Georgia. The comments below about uses of key spaces on the campus are from work she did for Carol Johnson.*

**The Commencement Area**  
The Buttrick-Presser court-

yard is used for commencement and for receptions after particular convocations or for special events. On a daily basis, it is a place for just passing through, stealing a quiet moment or for an unplanned rendezvous between students and faculty.

### **The Woodruff Quad**

Special uses of the Quad include TGIF picnics, movies, the occasional carnival or social gathering. Day-to-day, it is a place for passing

through, studying or reading, catching some rays, socializing, playing Frisbee, even holding class on a nice day.

The quad is the heart that pumps the blood through the College. Students, faculty, staff and visitors all pass through this space to the buildings along its borders as well as those beyond.

### **Between Alston Campus Center and Winship**

On a beautiful day this space is used by students to study,

read, chat, eat lunch or a snack or to just soak up the sun. Also, it is used as a pathway between the Quad and Winship.

### **The Alumnae Garden**

Alumnae parties and other formal get-togethers are held here. This space also contains the goldfish pond into which students (and faculty!) are thrown, per tradition, should they become engaged. Students come here to sneak a brief moment of quiet.

# "THAT'S ME LEAVING TRACKS"



## AND AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE

By Margaret W. Pepperdene

All Photographs of Frost from the Agnes Scott Archives

When President Bullock asked me to speak on this occasion honoring the founding of Agnes Scott, she suggested that I talk about Robert Frost, specifically about his long-time association and his unique relationship to the College. With that focus of the subject understood, since I make no claim to be a Frost scholar, I accepted President Bullock's invitation, agreeing to talk about Frost the man and the unusual place he devised for himself in the life of this institution.

While I did not have any special friendship with Frost, I did know him for a period of six years, having spent many hours with him on his visits here. It fell my lot, as the newest member of the English department, to escort him to his appointments and meetings and to take post-prandial walks with him, if he were so inclined. I also spent a long summer afternoon and evening with him in his cottage on the Homer Noble farm where we talked about everything from teaching to the care and feeding of schnauzers (three of them played rowdily around us the whole time we talked). There I met the Morrisons, Ted and Kay, who were the people closest to Frost from the time his wife died in 1938 until his own death in 1963. Kay was his agent-manager-caretaker for 25 years.

I do not think any other person, not even Elinor Frost, knew the poet and the man as well as she did. So, this morning I would like to talk with you about the Robert Frost that I knew—the poet who came to Agnes Scott to read for 20 years and the man who in the privacy of his own home, the cottage where he lived and wrote, identified himself as a teacher and named this College as his academic home, an identification that merely confirmed what his campus visits had already revealed.



Dr. Alston frequently spoke of "Agnes Scott's love affair with Robert Frost." I would like to suggest that it was not so one-sided a relationship, that the affection was not just on Agnes Scott's part—in Lawrence Thompson's (the Frost biographer's) description of it as a school-girl crush by "women ... who adored and idolized him," that instead it was a feeling duly reciprocated by Frost, his own "love affair with Agnes Scott." This was a relationship, to use the current locution, between two consenting adults and it was long-term, as we shall see.

I met Robert Frost in January of 1957, the first year I came to Agnes Scott to teach. By that time, he had made fourteen visits to the College—the first in 1935, then again in 1940 and 1945; after that he came every year until he died. These annual visits took place at the same time each year, during the last ten days of January when he was on his way to a winter stay in Miami. These dates were held open for him, and he would choose the time and notify the College. The person whom he would contact during the first years was the one whose energy and persistence had brought him to Agnes Scott in the first place, Professor Emma May Laney of the English department. She became henceforth his unappointed sponsor and his self-appointed caretaker during every visit until she retired in 1956. She met him at the train or plane, took him to his lodgings, which for the last ten visits was the home of the Alstons, instructed Mrs. Alston about his dietary wishes, saw to it that he wore a coat properly suited to the weather, made him put on his overshoes when it rained and set aside time for his daily nap. Frost confided to Mrs. Alston, "She tries to mother me," adding with obvious pleasure, "but she's a nice girl. I like her." (I met Miss Laney just once, when Dr. Alston invited her back for Frost's visit the year after her retirement, but even that brief encounter told me that not many people would dare talk about her like that!)

Frost's first visits, those in the early forties, were short ones. He would come in early in the morning, read or lecture in the evening, and leave the same night. By the time of his annual visits, he stayed much longer, often as long as a week, but always three or four days. During these times, he moved freely about the campus, mingling with students, talking to members of the faculty, becoming part of the academic rhythm of the College. The formal schedule for these visits, in time, came to follow a pattern that suited his desire to "duff into" (as he might put it) this particular place.

There was always a session with the students who came together, usually at the Alstons' home, and formed a small class. They had been reading some of Frost's poems and brought questions about them. Most of all, they just wanted to hear him talk—about the poems they were reading or the ones he was making. Not infrequently he delighted in creating a little academic mischief by questioning some of the interpretations of his poems which the students offered; he assumed they would take his remarks back to their English classes. They

did. Some of their teachers used the occasion to remind them that the poet is not always the best critic of his poems.

A special night was set aside for the faculty to meet with him, always at the Alstons. Faculty members would gather around 8 o'clock in what was then the sun room of the president's house and take their seats in chairs arranged in circular fashion—almost no one missed those gatherings. Then, Dr. Alston would bring in Frost, seat him in a chair of the circle, and turn to him with, "Mr. Frost, here is your faculty." These were always his words of introduction, and (as is the way with words) they carry their own force—affirming his academic connection to the College. Next, Dr. Alston would get him started on his evening's monologue. These get-togethers were called "Conversations with Robert Frost," but that is a slight misnomer. The format was not particularly conducive to conversation; besides, Frost liked to do most of the talking. Since by this time in the visit, Dr. Alston had learned what was on Frost's mind, what he had done of late that interested him, he would begin by asking about that.

For instance, in 1957 (the first time I was at one of these meetings), Frost had just returned from receiving honorary degrees from Oxford and Cambridge, and during his stay in England had been feted by everyone from E.M. Forster and W.H. Auden to T.S. Eliot. He was brimming with stories about the whole English journey. The next year (1958), he was touting his role in the Pound affair, gaining the poet's release from the government mental hospital, St. Elizabeth's, in Washington. Although Archibald MacLeish was the initial, and remained the persistent, mover in this effort, he got Ernest Hemingway, T.S. Eliot, and Robert Frost to sign the letter which he (MacLeish) drafted to the Justice Department, making the case that Pound should be let out. He also saw to it that Frost was the first signee of the letter because MacLeish knew of Frost's connections with Sherman Adams and others in the Eisenhower administration. In the closing weeks of the endeavor, Frost did have an increasingly visible role to play, but by the time Pound got out and Frost got to Agnes Scott, he was taking credit for the whole thing—and that was his topic for the year.

In the visit of 1961, of course, he could talk of little but the Kennedy inauguration and he read both "Dedication" (the new poem he had written for the occasion) and "The Gift Outright" (which Kennedy had asked him to read at his evening performance).

With events like these to choose from, Dr. Alston would begin by asking Frost to comment further. Frost, then, would talk and talk until he ran down. Dr. Alston, ready with another question, would wind him up again. There were always questions and comments from the faculty interspersed here and there, but by and large these were evenings given over to a master storyteller/teacher who held his audience/class captive.

Each visit included, too, a lunch with the English department, which Frost took to calling "his department." (As those of you who recall members of that English faculty can imagine, there was not common glee over this claim.) We met in the President's Dining Room in Evans Hall. The talk at table varied; very



*Author Margaret W. Pepperdene, professor emerita of English, recalls the College's special relationship with America's poet laureate in her February 23, 2000, Founder's Day speech at the College.*



Frost with English professor  
Emma May Laney, 1935

often there was a carry-over from the evening at the Alstons. I recall there was lively discussion of the Pound story, most of it centering on the personal relationship between the two poets, for theirs had been an uneasy friendship at best. For the most part, these luncheons were rather formal, proper affairs, untouched by academic argument, even of the pleasant variety. However, there was one exception that broke the

mold, brought something of a breach between Frost and "his" department, and created a modicum of notoriety. It happened during Frost's last visit in January, 1962; the conversation was taking its usual course about his recent activities, when, for some reason, Frost began to talk about Coleridge, specifically about some aspect of his criticism and delivered himself of certain unflattering opinions on the subject. At first no one at the table said anything—needless to say his remarks carried no invitation to response; but then there was a ruffle from the end of the table and Janef Preston, who taught Romantic poetry at the College for years and who not only resented any criticism of the Romantics but took such as a personal affront to, not to say attack on, her, spoke up and took firm issue with Frost's remarks. Not a little taken aback, he answered her briefly but dismissively; she persisted. The exchange seemed to last longer than I am sure it did. Finally, Frost changed the subject, but he was puffy for the rest of the meal. He once wrote Louis Untermeyer, "I hate so to be crossed. I have come to think not being crossed is the one thing that matters in life." Miss Preston had crossed him and he was not pleased.

Nobody thought very much of the incident. In fact, Frost and I took our usual walk after lunch and talked of many things, but he made no mention of his words with Miss Preston. We were to learn, however, that when he got to Florida a few days later, he told Lawrance Thompson he had not been treated well by the English department at Agnes Scott. He said he thought we did not like him anymore and he was not going back there again. Obviously his momentary puffiness had turned into a full-fledged peeve, a condition apparently not unusual in Frost. Kay Morrison tells of a time when she and his doctor were trying to get him to go to hospital for tests. Frost walked out of the room and retreated to his upstairs bedroom. The doctor followed, found him stretched out on his bed, immobile, refusing to speak. When the doctor returned, he told Kay:

He won't talk to me.  
'Where is he?'  
'On the bed.'  
'Face up or face down?'  
'None on the pillow.'

'In that case,' said Kay, 'it will be three hours before I can get him to hospital. I wish it had been the other way.'

Thompson wasted no time in coming to the College to tell us of Frost's hurt feelings and of his decision not to return for his visit next year. He came, by the way, of his own volition, just a few weeks after Frost had left, on what turned out to be more an errand of mischief than one of mercy. Dr. Alston, when he heard from Thompson of Frost's reaction to the incident at lunch, was concerned but not particularly troubled. He made his planned trip to Washington for Frost's 88th birthday party in March, where he talked with the poet, smoothing some ruffled feathers and ascertaining that he would make his customary visit to Agnes Scott the following year; but when January came around, Frost was ill and died the week he was due to arrive.

The highlight of every Frost visit was the night of the public reading/lecture. The whole campus and the entire Decatur/Atlanta community were caught up in the occasion. The students would begin to line up outside Gaines—the line eventually winding through the campus—by 4 o'clock in the afternoon of the reading. They had all been issued tickets, but got in line early so as to get the best seats—middle section, down front, right under Frost's podium. By starting time, 8:15 p.m., the hall was packed, the stage filled, even an auxiliary hall upstairs pressed into use where the program was carried. Having been present at six of these readings, I can vouch for the waiting's having been worth it. Frost never gave a bad performance. At the start, he would adjust the lamp on the podium and then fiddle with the microphone—Dr. Alston said that was his way of getting started. Next, he would talk for a while to the audience, informally, on any subject on his mind. During these opening remarks, which the students called "Mr. Frost's nuggets," he often made some of his most memorable comments on poetry or people or politics. Then, he would begin to "say" his poems—a mixture of the old and the familiar like "Birches" or "The Road Not Taken" or "Stopping by Woods" and the new, finished but not yet published, ones. About midway through the reading, he would lean out over the podium and address the students sitting in the large main section of the hall, telling them he was going to say a "new" poem for them, one he was in the act of making. He would instruct them to get out their pencils and paper, which they dutifully did—they always came prepared for this moment. Still leaning over the podium as if watching their actions, he would say

Frost with students, 1935





the poem carefully, pausing frequently, and slowly repeating the lines so that they could take them down. That "lesson" of the night done, he returned to his reading.

Through it all, he kept the beat of the poetry, making sure that his audience knew and felt that rhythm. Kay Morrison said that

Frost used to conduct himself when he read his poetry. He had a style, a strong emphasis for us on the beat, the sheer beat of meter, because he was conducting.

Those were memorable evenings of pedagogy and poetry. This Robert Frost who paddled around the campus in his "tennis pumps" (as the students called them), who dominated faculty conversation and colloquy, who conducted himself in resounding poetic performance was the public man—charming, cantankerous, self-centered, witty, full of wry, often sly, humor, a marvelous performer off stage and on. There was another Robert Frost, the private one, a quieter, more reflective man, one more accessible to his companion of the moment, delighting in what the Irish call "good crack," good talk (real conversation), revealing a simpler, less certain self, the one hidden by what he called "my kind of fooling." In a letter to his daughter Lesley, he wrote, "No matter how humorous I am, I am sad, I am a jester about sorrow ... I am prepared for any sadness in the structure of the universe." Dr. Alston often remarked on the sense of aloneness that emanated from Frost, a reflective side that accorded with one "Acquainted with the Night."

This was the Frost I spent some time with in the summer of 1961 at his small cabin on the Homer Noble farm in Ripton, Vermont. The occasion for this visit was that I happened to be going to New Hampshire for a summer holiday just at the time when our librarian, Edna Byers, was readying for publication a bibliography of the Frost holdings in the Agnes Scott library. (The Frost collection was begun by Professor Laney and Mrs. Byers in 1944. Frost himself contributed generously to it, sending first editions of his poems, hard-to-come-by translations of them, complete sets of his Christmas cards, and handwritten copies of poems in the process of composition. He took great pride in the holdings and often complimented Mrs. Byers on her efforts to assure its quality.) Since my destination in New Hampshire was Lyme, a village not very far from Ripton, Mrs.

*He concentrated on teaching, on what being a teacher meant, on his affinity for institutions where students and faculty "gladly lerne and gladly teche." He said he always thought of himself as a teacher.*

Byers asked if I would go over to the Homer Noble farm and get releases from Frost for the holographs of poems she planned to reproduce for inclusion in her little volume. She gave me carbon copies of these handwritten poems for him to sign.

When I got to Lyme, I called Kay Morrison, told her what I wanted, and asked for an appointment with Frost.

She told me to come the following week for an afternoon meeting with him. As scheduled, I drove to Ripton and to the farm. Both the Morrisons, Ted and Kay, met me at the gate, and Kay took me immediately to Frost's cabin, a few hundred yards up a hill behind the gleaming white farmhouse. On the walk up, she told me that Robert was in grand form: Louis Untermeyer had just left after a day and a half visit, which had left him (Untermeyer) exhausted but Robert raring to go. When we got to the cabin, Kay left and I went in to find Frost sitting in his Morris chair with his writing board on his lap. His little schnauzers were romping around the room. He greeted me graciously; I told him my mission from Mrs. Byers, thinking he would look the copies over, sign them and I would be on my way. He was in no such

hurry and asked if I could stay a while; I settled in. He spoke briefly about his recent time with Untermeyer, amused about how anxious his friend was to get the volume of their correspondence ready for the press: "Louis is afraid I am going to die on him before we get it finished."

Speaking of publications reminded him that his new volume of poems, *In the Clearing*, had just gone to press. This reference to his book brought his attention around to the reason for my coming—to get the releases signed. He picked up one of the copies and signed it, at the same time making clear that I understood none of these released poems could appear in the Agnes Scott book until after *In the Clearing* came out. That was no problem because Mrs. Byers' bibli-

Frost at the unveiling of his portrait, 1959







Frost holding court in the library, 1962

ography was not due out for months.

I assumed he was ready to sign the other copies, but he had something on his mind. I soon learned that that "something" was teaching and Agnes Scott. He began by asking me what I taught at the College. When I said Old and Middle English literature, he turned the conversation to his friend F.N. Robinson of Harvard and inevitably to Chaucer. It came as no surprise that Chaucer's poems, especially the tales by that "companye/Of sondry folk," were favorites of Frost. From this point on, he concentrated on teaching, on what being a teacher meant, on his affinity for institutions where students and faculty "gladly lerne and gladly teche." He said he always thought of himself as a teacher, (and my mind went back to those evenings at the Alstons but even more to the way he turned a formal reading into a classroom recitation). He took particular pleasure in recounting the story about one of his first teaching jobs. It was at a Normal School (or teacher's college); he was, he said, an instructor in "education." The first assignment he gave his class of would-be teachers was Mark Twain's "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County." The students were mystified by the assignment. When class met the next day, he said he asked them what they had learned from the story that would be valuable to them as teachers. The students were silent; they had no idea what he was talking about. So, he told them. You will recall the story. It is about a contest between two frogs; one, owned by Jim Smiley, who bet forty dollars that his "edercated" frog named Dan'l Webster could "outjump any frog in Calaveras County"; the other belonged to a stranger who took Smiley up on his bet. Before the event, the stranger managed to put a teaspoon of quail shot down Dan'l's throat, "that filled him pretty near up to his chin.

When the contest began and the starter "touched up" the frogs from behind, the stranger's frog "hopped off" but Dan'l "couldn't budge." What Frost said he wanted his young teachers

to learn was that there are two kinds of teachers: those who fill their students with so much quail shot they cannot "budge," and those who give them a "little punch behind" and they go "whirling in the air like a doughnut."

From these reminiscences about his own teaching, he seemed to turn naturally to his visits to Agnes Scott. He spoke of his admiration for the teachers he had come to know—George Hayes, Ellen Douglass Leyburn, and of course, Emma May Laney. He talked a lot about Ferdinand Warren, who had done his portrait, about what a fine piece of work he considered it. He told Warren at its unveiling in 1959, "You have more of me in that than there is of me in me." His praise of Dr. Alston was unstinting, honoring him as a man and as a scholar. Most of all, he talked about how his regard for and attachment to the College had grown and deepened through the years until now he felt himself a real part of its academic life. Alston's "Mr. Frost, here is your faculty" and Frost's own appropriation of the English department as "his" had new resonances in Vermont on that summer afternoon. Visibly moved by his memories and his own words, he paused for a moment and then added, "You know, I have two colleges, Bryn Mawr, Kay's college, and Agnes Scott."

He was ready now to turn to Mrs. Byers's business and to sign the copies. He looked at each one carefully and then put his name to it. Everything was going along smoothly until he came to the copy of "Peril of Hope," which he had written out for Mrs. Byers while he was still in the act of making it. It showed tell-tale signs of its composition: mark-throughs and cross-outs and word substitutions. When he saw the copy, Frost put his pen down, turned to me and said, "Where did you get that?" He was not rude—just startled. I told him I had got it where I got all the others—he had written it out and Mrs. Byers had given it to me. Then wryly, with something of a smile breaking across his face, he said, "That's me leaving tracks." I did not think of it at the time, but remembered later on the drive home that Frost never liked anyone to think that he worked over or revised his poems; he preferred to create the impression that they came full blown and final in a burst of inspiration. He quietly put aside the copy of "Peril of Hope," talked amiably as he signed the remaining poems, but never came back to that one. In the meantime, Kay brought dinner for us (and the dogs), and we talked into the night, until I had to leave for Lyme.

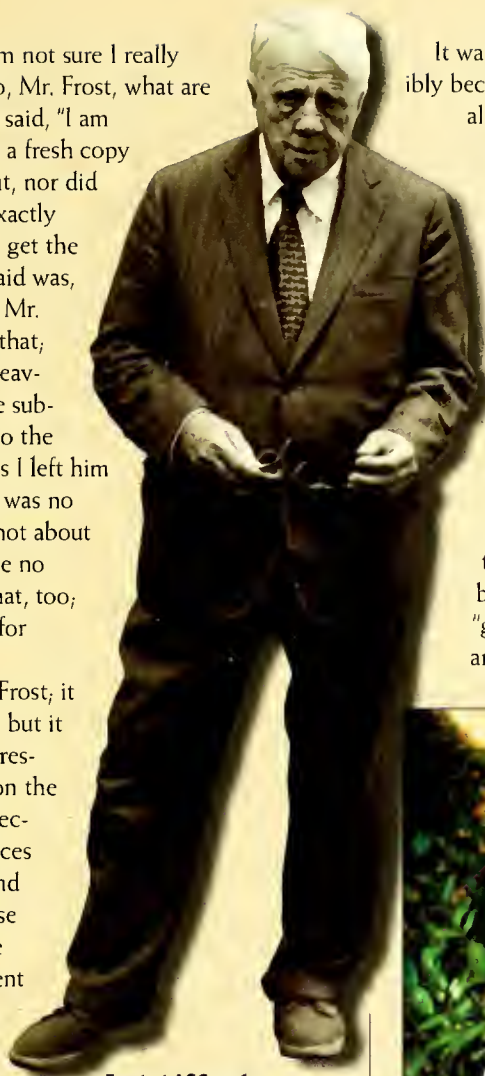
The rest of the story of "Peril of Hope" was to come the following January when Frost came to the campus for his usual stay. I went to pick him up for lunch with the department. We talked about things inconsequential on the way to the dining room. What struck me as strange was that he made no mention of our meeting at Ripton the previous summer. I did not get the idea that he did not remember it; I just felt that he did not want to talk about it. After lunch (this was the day of the Preston revolt), as we headed back to the Alstons, he suggested that we take a walk. Again, the conversation was easy and pleasant. He was looking forward to the grand birthday celebration being planned for him come March in Washington; the new book of poems, *In the Clearing*, would be coming out the same day. The talk about his new poems, perhaps, touched a memory, or at least provided a frame for what followed. He turned to me and said, "Do you know what I am going to do for you?" (One's



immediate instinct: "No, but I am not sure I really want to know!") I answered, "No, Mr. Frost, what are you going to do?" All smiles, he said, "I am going to go to the library, make a fresh copy of that poem (he did not name it, nor did he need to, for we both knew exactly what he was talking about), and get the old one back." As I recall, all I said was, "That is very thoughtful of you, Mr. Frost, but you don't want to do that, you know, we don't mind your leaving tracks." He smiled again; the subject was closed. He did not go to the library, but I did—just as soon as I left him at the Alston door. There really was no need to worry. Edna Byers was not about to let that original go, and I have no doubt that Robert Frost knew that, too; but, you cannot blame a fellow for trying.

That was the last time I saw Frost; it was his last visit to Agnes Scott, but it was not the last time he was a presence here. He had left "tracks" on the little poem safe in the Frost collection; but he left more lasting traces of himself woven into the life and the story of the College he chose to make his own. In 1974, those "tracks" were everywhere apparent when, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of his birth, Agnes Scott held a two day celebration of Robert Frost, honoring the person, the teacher, and the poet—those "traces" of himself which he had so singularly imparted to this place. The Morrisons, Ted and Kay, his dearest friends in whose company he had spent the last years of his life, came to talk about that life. An unexpected treat was Ted Morrison's reading of several of Frost's poems, among them many he had often read here. If one closed one's eyes, one would swear it was Frost himself speaking, so alike their intonation and rhythm. Dr. Alston returned for his first official visit since his retirement. To a packed house in Gaines, he lectured on Frost's visits to Agnes Scott, describing the life Frost brought to and lived in the days he spent here each year. The talk was in perfect Alston pitch: true to himself, seeing the truth in his subject, saying that truth with candor and grace. Cleanth Brooks joined the group to speak on Frost's poetry—the teacher talking about the teacher. To end the celebration, "To knytte up all this feeste, and make and ende," as Chaucer would say, Richard Wilbur honored Frost the poet by reading his own poems, thereby reminding us all that

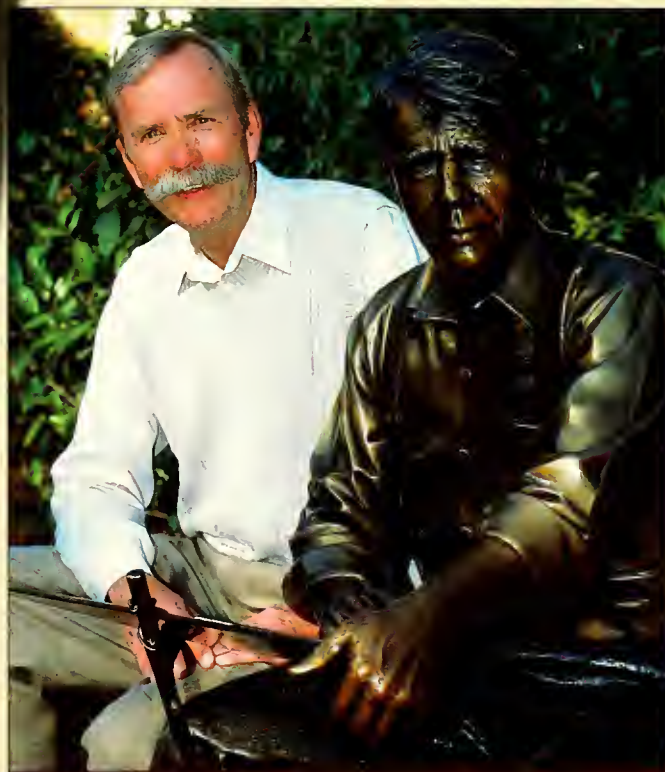
... poetry makes nothing happen; it survives  
In the valley of its making where executives  
Would never want to tamper: flows on south  
From ranches of isolation and the busy griefs,  
Raw towns that we believe and die in; it survives,  
A way of happening, a mouth.



Frost at ASC, 1962

It was a very special time, when those "tracks," visible still, visibly became Frost's "bequeathment" to Agnes Scott's learning life, already being tacitly realized in all those who came after him for long and recurring visits: in Sir John Rothenstein who for years, came to teach, quietly connecting his classroom in Dana to the art world of the Tate and beyond; in Josephine Jacobsen, poet-novelist who for a decade was the stable and sensitive center of the Writers' Festival; in Richard Wilbur who made visits frequent and extended, as a poet and teacher, reading in Gaines of an evening and teaching Milton's "Lycidas" in class the next morning; in Eudora Welty who came so often she herself lost count of the times, but never forgot her part in the continuing story of this place.

We could go on and on, following those "tracks" now turned tradition, for they are still here. They have brought us to this room this morning to remember the "gift outright" from Robert Frost to the College we love and honor today. ■



SUE GILES PHOTO

## THE FROST STATUE

The sculpture of the young Robert Frost in the Alumnae Garden was created by George W. Lundeen and depicts the poet writing "Acquainted with the Night." This poem was selected by a faculty and staff committee to commemorate Frost's legendary love for walking the Agnes Scott campus late at night. Lundeen received his B.A. from Hastings College and his M.F.A. from the University of Illinois and studied at the Academia de Belle Arte in Italy. The recipient of numerous awards and honors, he was named "Distinguished Nebraskan" in 1995. Two additional Lundeen sculptures reside in Decatur on the Courthouse Square.



Frost in Gaines  
Chapel, 1960



during those Alston-Frost years, I find my feelings to be an odd wash of then and now. Tangible objects ground my memories. On a wall in the entry, hangs a picture taken the very evening of that last reading. I recognize the students who face the camera, and I know, too, that one of the backs photographed there is mine. That evening, then, was real—a very much younger me met the poet in that house.

At home I have my little Modern Library text signed by Robert Frost. It will never be of any monetary value because my scribbled notes from his readings desecrate its pages. I have a copy, too, of the

Christmas card that Frost sent to the college in 1962. Jane Pepperdene, I believe, saw that I was given one of the duplicates from the Frost collection soon after I came back to teach.

I feel an obligation now—with every class of first year students that I teach—to haul out the fraying 16mm documentary about Frost

that was compiled in 1962. Tight-haired young women at Bennington in straight skirts and loafers laugh with love at the poet, just as we did at Agnes Scott. Eager male students, visiting in coats and ties, seem peculiarly awkward in the rustic environs of Frost's cabin, though Frost, the teacher, works to make them comfortable. In frames to follow, the casually clad Frost pads around his simple domain, heating a tin coffee pot on a small enamel stove of the 1930s. Next, the man-of-the people Frost, wearing a hard hat, tours a factory, and the public-spirited Frost christens a ship as a host of reporters and sailors look on. And finally a scene stuck in the memories of all of us old enough to have watched the occasion that was televised to the world: Frost, Kennedy's spokesman for the arts, tries to read a new poem at the president's brutally cold inauguration. His text whipped by the wind, the enterprising Frost abandons the new piece and recites by heart "The Gift Out-right," an old familiar, but a perfect choice for this event.

Contemporary students find these glimpses of the past quaint—but I love this old film, and I'll continue to show it as long as I teach—and so long as Agnes Scott maintains a projector of the ancient type required.

This college isn't mentioned or shown in that documentary, alas, and I have often lamented that Robert Frost's Agnes Scott was not captured and cherished in celluloid as we might have wished. Frost visited other colleges, some of them quite regularly. But I think it unlikely that he left such a lasting impression upon them as he has upon us. His legacy here is not limited to the walls of the president's residence or to the books and pictures in the special Frost collection in McCain Library, though Ferdinand Warren's remarkable portrait captures the poet's singular essence perhaps as effectively as film footage. Nor is Frost's influence at Agnes Scott confined to his immediate impact upon individuals like me.

Robert Frost energized Agnes Scott in perpetuity with his immense, earth-rich spirit. Doubtless, in 1962 and for all the years of his annual visits, he was the most evident reason that Agnes Scott students and area residents alike recognized the College as a place that provided quality encounters with the great and the talented. In ongoing tribute to Our Poet, it is similar experiences for students and friends—opportunities for living life with poetry—that the College continues to provide, provide. ■

*Robert Frost energized  
Agnes Scott in  
perpetuity with his  
immense, earth-rich spirit.*



CHRIS TIERRE PHOTO





During his last visit to the College in 1962, poet Robert Frost is escorted around the campus by Edna Byers, librarian (*left*), and Margaret Pepperdene, English professor.



# A LIFE TOGETHER

From their perspective as stars and civil rights activists, Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee talk on the effect of fame on race.

An interview by Willie Tolliver Jr.

Photography by Marilyn Suriani

**T**his year's guest speakers for Agnes Scott College's Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration were the esteemed husband-and-wife acting team, Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee. Stars of stage, screen and television, they have been performing together for 55 years. Their distinguished body of work has garnered many significant awards including the NAACP Image Award Hall of Fame, the National Medal of Arts, and most recently an award from the Screen Actors Guild for lifetime achievement. Before and during their visit to Agnes Scott, they graciously participated in interviews on the subject of my current research: race and celebrity. In this project I investigate how our society's cult of celebrity complicates our discourse on race.

The particular focus of my study is on the effect of fame on those figures who become racial icons. This is a subject that both Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee have reflected upon often and about which they had much to say that was enlightening and provocative.

**Willie Tolliver:** What degree of influence and power do you think celebrities have in today's society?

**Ossie Davis:** Not as much as it would seem. Celebrities are a kind of shorthand to call attention to whatever it is that the ven-

dor has in mind. The use of celebrities by the advertising industry has made the celebrities into sort of a commodity. But we look at them, and we appreciate them, and the gossip in our lives is fine, but I don't think the public is really swayed heavily by what the celebrities think or do.

**Ruby Dee:** I quite agree. I think that celebrities [serve to] measure what's happening in society and the world. We have something against which to measure ourselves. It helps to keep things in perspective. I think that's what this business of celebrity





# N THE SPOTLIGHT

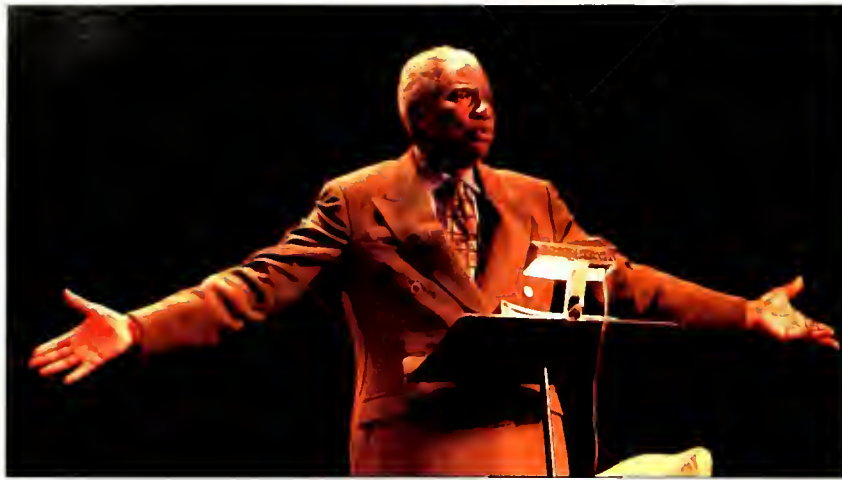
helps us to do and it gives us, gives us standards and rules and levels and things by which we can measure our own progress. Celebrities help spell the times.

*Tolliver: To what extent are you conscious of your own influence as public people?*

Davis: We are conscious to some degree that we circulate in the celebrity atmosphere, that people will tend to listen and pay attention to us to some degree more than they would to somebody that they might not know in the same kind of way. We are aware of it, but once again, we try and always understand that it's a minor kind of relationship. It's not a fundamental relationship between us and the rest of humankind. It's kind of surface rather than substantial, but we are aware that we are thought of in the industry and in the public as celebrities.

Dee: And that's kind of a rewarding thing when people think of you as worthy, praiseworthy, ... to like you and appreciate what you do. [It's] like a ... stamp of approval, and it means you must be doing something right ... I think it's like a pat on the back when people say ... how much they appreciate you.





Martin Luther King Jr.  
knew he was famous,  
that he was popular ...  
was beloved, but he did  
not hesitate to give up his  
right to public adulation  
on the basis of principle.

*Tolliver: In my teaching of black American literature, I notice how the careers of different writers are affected by their public status—people like Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, and so forth. And I wondered how the system of fame, even back in those days, affected them in their ability to represent the race. Speculate on what happens when race and celebrity come together.*

*Davis: I think, first off, I would like to differentiate between celebrity on one hand and fame on the other. To me fame is based on substantial achievement or substantial importance to the public. Fame belongs to Frederick Douglass. Fame belongs to Malcolm X. Fame belongs to Martin Luther King Jr., because of what it is that they did. Celebrity on the other hand is more for surface. It doesn't have as much to do with substantial activities.*

*Now, a man like Frederick Douglass who goes out into the world would help change the world's opinions of slavery and acquires a fame, acquires a celebrity, acquires even notoriety ... can use that fame to get the attention of people that might otherwise not listen. And once he has their attention, use the connection with the public to make a persuasive argument of what it is that he thinks is important or what it is that he wants them to do.*

*Malcolm did it, Martin did it ... Mary McLeod Bethune did it. Paul Robeson did it. They were famous because of the importance of what it was they thought or said or did, and they used that fame as a part of the struggle to get increased recognition about the value of the humanity of African-Americans in American society.*

*Tolliver: Can you speculate a little bit more about how Martin Luther King Jr. might have been affected by his own legend and mythology?*

*Davis: I think anybody who knew Martin could understand that he had a very, very sober concept of who he was and who he*

*remained. He knew he was famous, that he was popular ... was beloved, but he didn't hesitate to give up his right to public adulation on the basis of principle. For example, when he attacked the Vietnam War, he went against a lot of people who admired him before that time, but changed their minds about him because of his stand on the Vietnam War.*

*Robeson, for example, was loved and adored and worshipped by masses of people. And yet when he stood for principle, when he confronted power, when he insisted on trying to get an anti-lynching bill, when he insisted on friendship with the Russian people in spite of the threat of what they said about communism, he lost his popularity, and he knew it. But he had the principles of a hero, and he would've stood [his ground] had he lost his popularity totally.*

*Of course, he didn't lose his popularity with everybody. There were those that loved him for his celebrity who walked away because he was no longer their favorite motion picture star. But there were those who also appreciated him for his fame and for the basis of his work, who appreciated it even more that he would risk the loss of his popularity in order to defend a principle.*

*Dee: That makes a great deal of sense.*

*Tolliver: I'm particularly curious to know what you think about today's young black stars. Do you see them as breaking new ground in creating new and different kinds of racial images?*

*Dee: I must say that I haven't done a study of them, but I'm glad to see that they're on the horizon. From the glimpses I get in the newsreels, and magazines and television, they remind me of young people who are struggling to do the best they can to be as meaningful as possible. Those who pay more attention to the struggle seem to relate more closely in their work to the reality that they find.*

*That's not to say that those who don't bring the realities into what they do aren't paying attention. But I'm pleased. There's vocal concern going on, and the time is far more complicated than when we were coming along and getting more and more complicated all the time. So, it's not fair for us to make judgments on their address to the current level of problems. But, you [see they've] been paying attention. In time of crises ... they come out ... those who are intimately concerned with the challenges of the moment [are] citizens of the world.*

*Davis: Once again, I insist on making the difference between celebrity and fame. Young*



people are celebrities, and they get to be celebrities to some degree because the industry needs them as commodities to sell to the public. It doesn't mean that they have power. They have celebrity. They cannot walk into the halls of power in Hollywood and change things. They're only made to seem to have that kind of power. There are limits to what they can do. Spike Lee, who wants to make a film about Jackie Robinson, has not been able to do it. He hasn't got the power to do it.

So, when we look at the young celebrities today, we have to understand sometimes that even they do not understand. What they have is celebrity, but what they do not have is power and clout. The two things very seldom go together. So, when I look at the young people today, I don't blame them for what has happened. This is how they fit into the economic interests of Hollywood and the radio and television [industries]. This is how they make their living—being used by people who take celebrity and market it. Even the culture, the hip-hop culture, is based much more on the ability to use celebrity as a selling tool than it is on the recognition of the artistic merit of those that perform.

So, these people, the young people by and large, come into the industry trying to establish a foothold wherever they can, as best as they can, and for us to blame them without bringing the whole civil rights struggle into their own independent desires to make a living for themselves is wrong. We're asking them to do what we should be asking other forms of leadership to do. We can help these young people understand clearly, as Ruby said, the nature of the struggle in which we all are involved. We can show them how we can be participating in that struggle, [and how to] become stronger ... [and] much more purposeful. But to blame them, I think is wrong.

**Tolliver:** *Was there a defining moment when you realized that you had made a transition from being a purely private individual to being a public figure?*

**Dee:** I've lived a few years, and I've done a few things, but I hardly consider myself a public figure, like a Michael Jackson or a Maya Angelou, in terms of this kind of wide acceptance. I call myself, to some degree, a celebrity, but not enough to really make me stay up nights contemplating my crowd of two that might surround me when I go out someplace. I've got a long ways to go before celebrity even becomes a factor in my comfort. That's the truth.

**Davis:** Was there a moment when you rec-

ognized you were a public figure? No, not in my case. There was no moment when I was "Oh, look." Whatever happened to me, gradually came. If recognition gradually came, it came ... The fame ain't got here yet, but maybe one day it will come. There was no pleasant, slapping on of the light, saying, "Oh, look. I am now a public figure."

**Dee:** I travel in comfort on the subways. I might meet one or two people who will give me a second look, but I can go on buses and walk the street. You know what I'm saying. So, I have a comfort level as a human being and only on special occasions when somebody puts on an affair, calling attention to the fact—"Oh, we have a celebrity, and you better be a celebrity, because we gotta raise these funds. And we invited you, you celebrity, you."—[laughing] [at those times], depending on the cause, I wish I were a fan dancer or had some notorious thing about me that could attract attention. I wish that I were notorious enough to get the attention to raise the funds that the organization needs, especially if I believe in what they're trying to do. Maybe I could do something outrageous

The work that we've done, we've felt has been something that people have wanted to witness or be part of, so they invite us to do that work. So, we have our suitcase, and please let us give out our cards ... like we have a product to sell, and hey, don't you want to buy it? Oh, this is a very good turnout. I feel like a celebrity at that moment [laughing]. But, if you do a movie and nobody comes to see it, the celebrity ... doesn't matter. I think that it's something that people need for you to be for them, not for yourself.

Some need that you have to satisfy outside of yourself. You just become the flypaper [laughing]. You become the magnet for the moment ... the momentary magnet for that cause. And I think that's good when celebrity can be made to benefit somebody and some cause, some nations.

And when it's successful, I feel like a celebrity. When it's not, I'm just another person getting on the subway. So, it's all relative. ■

"The work we've done, we've felt has been something that people have wanted to witness or be part of, so they invite us to do that work."



# THE SEARCH FOR GOD

A literary icon muses about a career devoted to chronicling the lives of seekers.  
By Lisa Ashmore

CHRIS TEGREEN PHOTO



John Updike at ASC:

"I've become a 20th-century author, when that no longer is the latest kind of author to be. The 20th century is old hat, it's gone. It's like a door slammed shut in my face."

John Updike may be the writer whose work best illustrates that the imperfect and adulterous are searching also for God, whether they recognize it or not. Being branded on a 1968 *Time* cover as "the crown prince of the affair" fails to supercede the stream of wonder and seeking God in his work. For those who know him as a satyr, it was something to hear him say "making your way in a godless universe is a thought too abysmal to consider."

During a March reading before an audience of more than 800 at Agnes Scott's 30th annual Writers' Festival, Updike said faith and sex have more in common than rightly acknowledged. "They're both forms of wanting more," says the author. "They're both ways of saying 'yes' to life."

While many bad writers have written about infidelity, Updike's gift is putting thoughts into the minds of middle-class, earthbound characters whose revelations near epiphanies, and who still remain completely believable. The precision, uncommon delight in words, the occasional cutting comments that hold those stories together are the mark of writing that have won Updike most of the major prizes in American literature.

The same is true off stage. A kind conversationalist, Updike's words in a private interview flew out with a poet's ease in pulling out just the right word. They were witty, but occasionally measured.

Updike had just celebrated his 69th birthday Sunday before his arrival at the College for his second visit to Agnes Scott. The author notes that the sense of leaning into another thousand years, while being forever chained to the last, was a little gray cloud lodged on his horizon.

"I've become a 20th-century author, when

that no longer is the latest kind of author to be," says Updike. "Suddenly all my experience and my knowledge belonged to the 20th century ... and the 20th century is old hat, it's gone. It's like a door slammed shut in my face. I'm looking at this blank door of the 21st century, and I don't know a thing about it."

The thought may have trailed from that morning's work at the breakfast table, where he and a panel of writers were judging young writers' work. The contest, held in conjunction with the festival, culminates in a bound edition of the best entries, selected from student submissions throughout the state.

"I think it would be very hard for a young person now to duplicate my career, just because the circumstances have changed; there's less leeway in the system. There's less opportunity. *The New Yorker* really was a fat magazine that needed a lot of prose to fill it; and I was happy to be a provider of that prose."

The child of that success is the burden of being an elder statesman. That means he has less freedom to risk publishing a bad book, which could be his last.

"If it's by me, it ought to be pretty good to be printed at all," he says. "I'm no longer at the stage where I can afford to write a bad book or one that's clearly bad because I'm a young man. So in a way it's inhibiting to be me. You try to shake that off and I probably will, because what else am I going to do in the morning?"

Given Updike's voluminous work in fiction, criticism and poetry, poking around in character analysis seemed hopeless. So he addressed a writer's ability to thrive after making the first hurdle of publication.

"In all the arts there's this terrible tendency for the first to be best," says Updike. "Your





Novelist John Updike  
strolls across the Agnes  
Scott campus with Linda  
Hubert '62, professor of  
English, during this  
year's Writers' Festival.

GARY MEEK PHOTO



first novel—how many first novelists are there that never measured up? That first decade, when you first sort of get the tools in your hand, is like getting a driver's license. "Boy, I can make this thing go!" he laughs. "It's hard to keep that forever."

"I think the problem that any writer has, is that the world that is the most vivid and meaningful—fraught—world is the world of your first 20 or maybe 30 years."

Updike's middle-class Pennsylvania childhood has been scoured for clues and written

useful, I think, for a prose writer to try and handle language at that level. The precision and concentration to make the words count in a big way."

He believes that with the advent of the word processor, it's too easy to turn out ribbons of prose. "It just comes out like ... talk. Whereas poetry, to some extent, keeps you honest and gives you sort of a mark in your mind. So I try to write prose that can be re-read with some interest. I mean, it will have secrets that it unveils to the second reading,

CHRIS TIEGREEN PHOTOS



"I try to write prose that can be reread. I mean, it will have secrets that it unveils to the second reading, like as a poem; a good poem always rewards rereading. I hope my prose has that compression and charm."

about by several writers, including his own account in the memoir *Self-Consciousness*.

"I had an extremely stable childhood in that I went to a school system from kindergarten through 12th grade, all the way; with the same people basically, some additions, some subtractions. But I had a continuity that I don't think too many, particularly young people, or even people from my generation had. That was both a handicap and an advantage. It's a handicap in that there's a lot you don't know; there are a lot of places you haven't been. But you have been that place at least in the same way Faulkner really was in Mississippi. But you kind of use up that advantage early on, writing about it. I'm always aware in myself of ignorance," says Updike.

The biggest requirement, possibly, is the combination of imagination and discipline that creates inspired writing. Although he's known for novels and short stories, a useful tool for Updike has been his faithfulness to poetry.

"My first book was a book of poetry, and my latest book [*Americana and Other Poems*] is a book of poetry and I've never quite given up on it," stresses Updike. "But of course I haven't the energy, or really the will, to become a career poet."

"It comes second to the prose and it's prose that makes the money. And prose is what has made my name. Nevertheless, I've never stopped writing poetry intermittently. It's very

like as a poem, a good poem always rewards rereading. You'd hope that your prose has some of that compression and charm."

Charm may explain why Updike has had such success in seducing America to read highbrow lit, even during the '80s decade of the airport bestseller and genre thriller. On the surface, he reflects some of his characters' tendency to cling to senses and memory—the way Rabbit notes how certain trees unfold first on the sunny side in spring, along side a weird mix of wistfulness, cynicism and optimism. Not that he doesn't see his role as chronicler of the unbuckling of America, and the wrath and rejection of the Eisenhower era.

"Just in reading these stories by young people [from the writing contest judging], I am struck that many of them are really very angry at their parents," he said. "Our own vitality . . . requires in some way killing our parents, so we can have room to breathe. The Greeks wrote about this, and Shakespeare, too, so it's not like it's specific to this time."

"The '50s vision of the house in Levittown and the mother in the apron raising little kids in these safe streets, what did it produce? It produced the rebels of the '60s, and Molotov cocktails and wild sex and you know, hatred; a kind of hatred of the establishment, which amazed me, being kind of at that point, in my 30s, of the establishment. And I couldn't believe that people were talking about America, this kindly, loving well-intentioned



country, so viciously."

Asked whether author Joan Didion's statement "writers are always selling someone out," was true, he hesitated and qualified.

"To some extent you're tied to your own experience, and your own experience doesn't occur in a vacuum," says Updike. "Well, you try not to be wounding, but on the other hand your main duty is to your audience, to deliver some truth, and not to please your relatives. It comes up again and again in a writer's life. The people you know best, and mean most to you—family—are usually not writers. And they can feel to some extent exploited. And I guess they have been exploited, but I like to think exploited in a larger cause, the cause of delivering a little light or truth to the reader." Further qualifying he says, Didion was much more of a journalist "and she's got a wicked ear."

He holds up the painters Vermeer and Richard Estes—known as realists with an arresting eye for detail and beauty—as models for writers. This selection suggests Updike's ability to write about passion and sorrow in the everyday, without the affliction and misery that seem to haunt so many American novelists.

"By and large, a lot of the wounding has not been the fact of being a writer. Maybe the writing gives you a kind of mental license to indulge yourself and self-indulgence as we all know leads to heart attacks, and loss of efficiency, and the fact that Hemingway's later writings really do show a certain lack of focus," says Updike. "And Fitzgerald had a very truncated career."

That isn't the case in England and France, he notes, where the approach to being an author is based more on scholarship than upheaval. "I've tried to approach writing business-like, realistic—as my chosen vocation at which I work hard—but it is a profession and not a priesthood," says Updike.

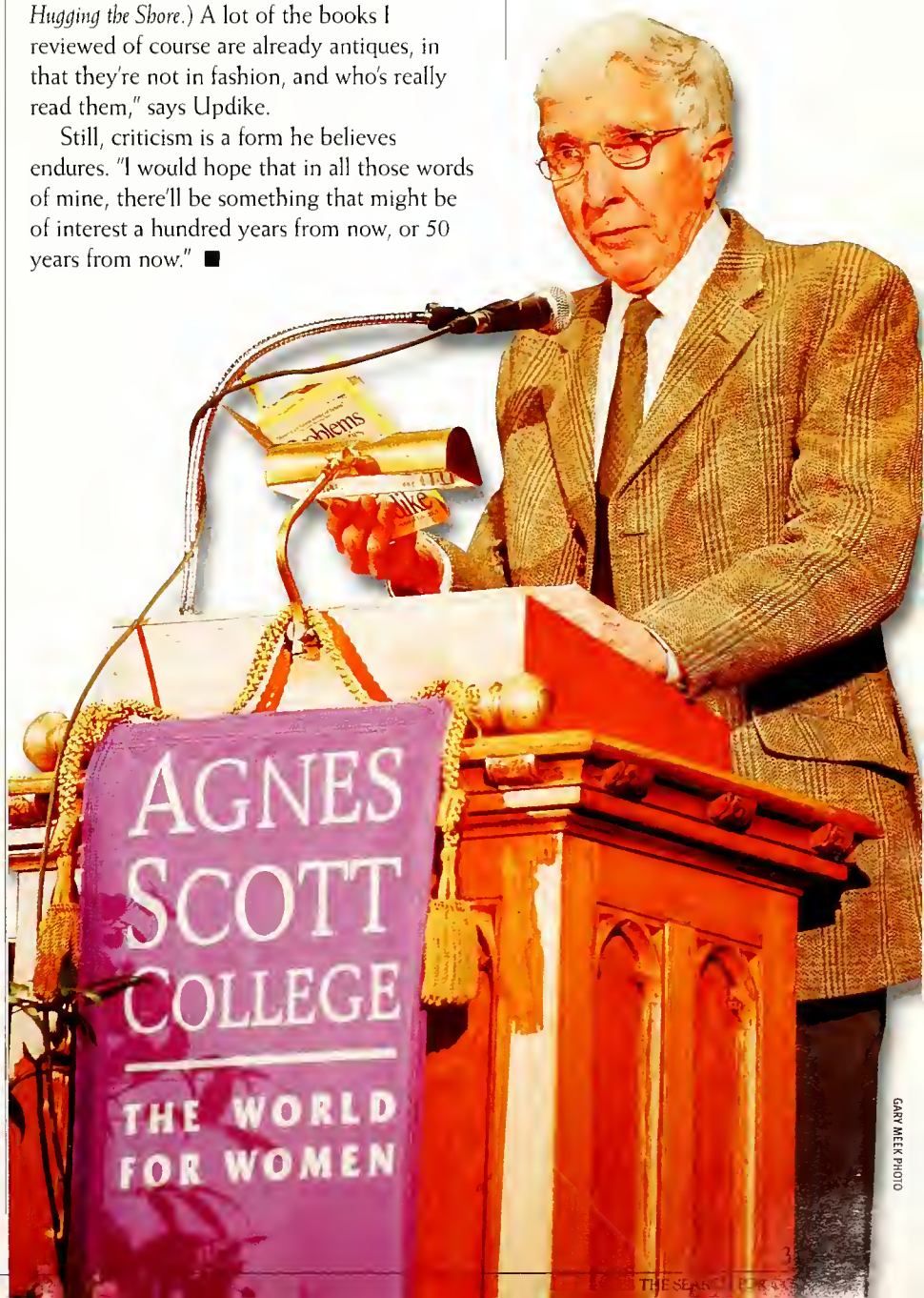
"In a way, this is kind of an anti-American thing to say, because I believe we like to see our writers and artists burn themselves up; we like to feel like they're in touch with the lightning and mostly fizzle out. I didn't have the kind of experience that Hemingway did by 18. Heaven knows what had happened sexually to him, but he certainly nearly died, so that he emerged before he even began to write at all, in a sense; he had become a man. The early Hemingway—you wouldn't want to give him back—but he achieved those marvelous effects in the first four or five books at a price he paid for the rest of his life."

Agnes Scott English Professor Chris Ames calls Updike one of our greatest critics, words that Updike takes soberly. Still, Updike believes the criticism has suffered.

"I don't feel that my criticism is now as good as it was. This is not an admission an author makes willingly or blithely, because you hope in some ways you're getting better, or at least maintaining your standards," he says. "I do the criticism now basically as a way to get into print, and a way to force myself to read contemporary writing, that I probably would not read otherwise. I certainly care enough about my criticism that I've carefully put it into these big books that have come out periodically, so I obviously hope that somebody will find it useful and informative someday. (He considers his best collection to be *Hugging the Shore*.) A lot of the books I reviewed of course are already antiques, in that they're not in fashion, and who's really read them," says Updike.

Still, criticism is a form he believes endures. "I would hope that in all those words of mine, there'll be something that might be of interest a hundred years from now, or 50 years from now." ■

"I've tried to approach writing business-like, realistic—as my chosen vocation at which I work hard—but it is a profession and not a priesthood."



# OBSTACLES CREATE PATHWAYS

Disability provides opportunity for ASC poet.

Poet Anjail Rashida Ahmad '92 knows about overcoming obstacles, and her most recent one affected her life's work in a major way—a few years ago she began losing her sight. Her vision loss became so severe that for a time she didn't write at all. Ahmad has since learned to navigate the world with a cane, and with the help of technology, she is able to share and record her creativity, teach and even read others' work. Computer programs allow her to scan documents into her machine and have them read aloud to her.

One of the most important things that Ahmad has learned through her struggle

Columbia. Her area of study is creative writing, concentrating on African-American works with a minor in 20th-century American poetry. After completion of her degree, which is scheduled for this summer, Ahmad plans to teach college-level English and creative writing classes, and Atlanta is on her list as a priority teaching destination.

She is of the first generation in her family to graduate from high school, college and graduate school. In addition, she believes her unique experience with triple marginalization—as an African-American, as a woman, and as a person with visual impairment—will make her more than just a generic instructor in the classroom.

"My presence would have great value for many reasons, especially so that someone else would know that he or she can, too. I believe that everything we do is energy based," continues Ahmad, noting that positive energy is essential to achieving positive results and that people experience their days based upon what they put into life and what they expect to receive.

Perhaps it was such energy that drew her to Agnes Scott as a Return-to-College student. Ahmad began her academic career at Georgia State University, but says the impersonality of the school was not what she was looking for in a college. She promptly transferred to Agnes Scott, where, although her interest was in banking, she was offered the opportunity to take a creative writing class—something she'd always wanted to do. That class was Professor Steve Guthrie's introductory poetry class, and Ahmad was quickly converted to a major of English literature/creative writing.

Ahmad returned to campus recently as a guest of the 2001 Writers' Festival, where her poetry reading kicked off the event. She mesmerized the audience with her intricately crafted poems, including "the thorn in the side of the rose," "namesake" and "in late august before sputnik orbits its great metallic eye over the earth." Ahmad's collected poems, *Necessary Kindling*, will be published later this year. —Victoria F. Stopp '01



Poet Anjail Rashida Ahmad '92 returned to campus recently as a guest of the 2001 Writers' Festival, where her poetry reading kicked off the event.

with blindness is that people who can't see have dreams too. She recognizes that her biggest mistake in the beginning stages of her blindness was imagining her situation from the perspective of a seeing person—not from that of the visually impaired person she had become: "I wasn't thinking as a person who doesn't have full sight." She quickly realized that the key to recognizing her potential lay in picturing the world around her as someone who relies on senses other than sight.

In doing so she is able to continue unimpeded on her path to achieving her goals.

Ahmad is now well on her way to a Ph.D. from the University of Missouri-



# LIFESTYLE

*Teaching and writing fulfill dreams.*

## ALUMNUS REACHES GOAL

**A**l Carson M.A.T. '01 has gone full circle in finally completing his peripatetic search for a teaching career. Several careers ago he graduated from Campbell High School, in Smyrna, Ga. Now he has returned to Campbell High School—this time as a teacher.

And he loves it.

Agnes Scott's Master of Arts in Teaching Secondary English (M.A.T.) program, of which Carson is a recent graduate, made it possible for him to achieve this life-long desire.

Carson teaches both advanced and "on-level" students at Campbell. He has an 11th-grade International Baccalaureate class, as well as 9th- and 10th-grade regular students.

With a grin, Carson implies that it may be just as well for him that there are no teachers from his own student days still at the school.

However, it has taken him more than a few years to make his way back to Campbell. Carson majored in English at Davidson



Al Carson M.A.T. '01 has changed professions and fulfilled a long-time dream, thanks to ASC's M.A.T. program.

College (N.C.), intent on pursuing a high school teaching career. He wound up in the U.S. Army and in Vietnam instead.

His Army stint over, he enrolled in the University of Georgia to pursue a master's in English, still determined to teach.

Obligations to a new family derailed him again, and he spent 14 years with Sears, Roebuck and Company, working in Georgia, Maryland and finally Florida. He resigned from Sears in Florida to open his own business. When a competitor made Al an offer he couldn't refuse, he sold it and returned to Atlanta. After a few more detours

and a careful examination of the educational opportunities in the area, he chose Agnes Scott for his master's and teaching certification.

A number of the College's more than 100 M.A.T. students have been people like Carson who are changing careers and entering the teaching profession. Also like Carson, a number of them have been men who have found this graduate program a good one for reaching their goals.

(For a women's college to offer the M.A.T., law required that any graduate programs must include men. The first males graduated from Agnes Scott's program in 1994.)

"I have always had some vague 'teaching philosophy,' but Agnes Scott helped me refine and articulate it. I feel that if a student is not learning, it is because the teacher is not teaching. We must be advocates for the kids," says Carson, who is dedicated to the idea of being a life-long learner.

Carson claims that he also acquired an attitude at Agnes Scott that may be more important than a specific philosophy. He describes this attitude as the "assumed pursuit of excellence." He looked at a number of schools before picking Agnes Scott.

Nowhere else did he

find this nearly palpable attitude that the pursuit of excellence was a given. Carson is trying to imbue his high school students with this same attitude; he admits that this is a challenge, but it seems that only makes it more fun for him.

Having a father who returned to school at a relatively "advanced age" had little impact on his family, according to Carson. His children were used to these things. Carson's wife just finished law school and is a prosecutor in Cherokee County.

—Phil Amerman, M.A.T. '02

## TEACHER USES ASC AS MODEL

Sylvia Martinez '96, M.A.T. '98, not only appreciates but also mirrors the blending of past and future, of preservation and progress, that one finds on the Agnes Scott campus. Her past as an Agnes Scott student is a strong influence on her current work as a teacher.

While taking an education class as an undergraduate student, the San Antonio native discovered her passion for teaching. "I remember walking into a classroom the first time and



Ideals and concepts learned at Agnes Scott are the teaching model for Sylvia Martinez '96, M.A.T. '98.

instantly feeling like I was at home. It was the same feeling I felt when I first came on campus the summer before I started at Agnes Scott. I just knew. It's that feeling, that gut feeling. I knew I wanted to be a teacher."

Following graduation, she entered the intensive Master of Arts in Teaching Secondary English (M.A.T.) program at Agnes Scott. She is finishing her fourth year of teaching at Campbell High School in Cobb County—a school at which she is very proud to teach. "We have great teachers and a phenomenal, diverse student body," Martinez says.

Martinez spends long hours at Campbell, where in addition to teaching, she spends her "free time" proofreading essays, assisting with assignments in English and other subjects, and offering an ear to students who need guidance and comfort. Not only has she made teaching more than a career, she has made herself more than a teacher. She considers herself a counselor, comedian, mediator, big sister and diplomat. Having real relationships with the students is what has made Martinez a memorable and meaningful teacher. "My students trust and respect me because I trust and respect them."

This philosophy of mutual respect is one she gained during her time in college. From the kinds of relationships her professors developed with her to the nature of the curriculum, she uses Agnes Scott as a model for education. "I want to give my students the kind of challenging and encouraging atmosphere I had here," she explains, "because I'm very confident about my education." The most rewarding part of her profession, according to Martinez, is having students who are people—who hug her, who are honest with her, and who are in process.

Agnes Scott provides her with more than an edu-



cational model; the attitude and example of many people on campus make it a model for self-discovery.

"Agnes Scott gives you the formula to find your voice," she explains; she strives to offer this formula to her students as well.

Her students aren't the only ones who have recognized her teaching talents. She was chosen recently from educators across the country to be one of 30 trainers for the College Board Pacesetter Program. The Pacesetter program is a course of study with a national curriculum that examines the idea of "voice" through the different mediums of essays, poetry, novels, film and the media. Like the Advanced Placement Program, Pacesetter culminates in a national exam. "I found the Pacesetter course to be an exciting and effective program, and I look forward to training new Pacesetter teachers," says Martinez.

Having found her own passion in teaching, she has shaped a new ambition. This summer Martinez will begin writing a book about this passion for teaching, in which she plans to incorporate the narratives of other teachers.

—Erin Davis Desmarais '00

## FROM GRANT WRITING TO WRITING GRANT

Ann McMillan '74 is passionate about medical history. For years she carried around a book, *The Horrors of the Half-Known Life*, about the development of obstetrics and gynecology in the 19th century United States. Another of her favorites was *The Serpent and the Rainbow*, a title about Haitian plant poisons. This passion—combined with her love of writing—has made her a published author.

McMillan has written four books, the most recent of which is a mystery, *Civil Blood*. Thirteen years after graduating with a major in English, she published her first book, *Chaucer's Legend of Good Women*.

"At the time I began writing I was working part time as a grant writer. I've done a lot of grant writing on subjects ranging from neurosurgery to library collections. Now that fiction writing is my job, I work at home with some travel for research, talks and book-signings."

Her current focus is a series of mysteries set in Civil War-era United States

and published by Viking Penguin. McMillan struggled with the setting of her Civil War novels. "Since I grew up in south Georgia in the 1960s, I experienced the nostalgia for the Old South, and the last thing I wanted to do was romanticize the period, especially since in Richmond, where I live, the war is still being fought."

McMillan decided to paint a full and honest picture of the time by developing several viewpoints—a white widow who becomes a Confederate nurse, a doctor who was a free black woman and a female British journalist. By characterizing people of very different backgrounds, McMillan hoped to show the many pieces in the Civil War puzzle. Her research has uncovered numerous interesting, but little-known, medical facts that she finds

fascinating and many of which find their way into her novels. For example, McMillan discovered the price that medical schools paid for the body of an infant—\$4.

A native of Columbus, Ga., she fell in love with the picture of Agnes Scott College in a Presbyterian magazine. "I remember Margaret W. Pepperdene as a life-changing professor for me and for many others. The entire English department—in fact, the entire faculty of Agnes Scott—was incredible. How lucky we were!"

Recently, McMillan's attachment to the College has surfaced in another way. "I feel closer to Agnes Scott now that my old college roommate, Marianne Bradley '74, is employed there in the library."

McMillan lives in Rockville, a Richmond suburb, with her husband, Randy Hallman, an assistant metro editor with *The Richmond Times-Dispatch*, daughter Hunter and dogs Flora, Mary Thing and Henry. She is continuing her mystery novels. "I have plenty left to learn and more than enough challenges to keep interested in continuing the series."

—Victoria F. Stopp '01



Novelist Ann McMillan '74

# EXCERPTS

## Dixie Rising?

*Democracy Heading South: National Politics in the Shadow of Dixie*  
by Augustus B. Cochran III  
(University of Kansas, April 2001)

In the wake of the 2000 presidential election, *Democracy Heading South* may verify your worst fears about the condition of politics in the United States. Gus Cochran writes convincingly on the connection between national and regional politics and the strong resemblance between our present political institutions and those of the old "Solid South." Cochran grew up in Athens, Ga., received his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and has been teaching political science at Agnes Scott College since 1973.

Cochran quotes V. O. Key Jr., a leading political analyst, who in 1949, wrote *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. Key pointed out that racism, violence, illiteracy, inadequate health care, poverty, depleted natural resources and a degraded environment were critical problems in the South, and postulated that responsible politics could solve these problems.

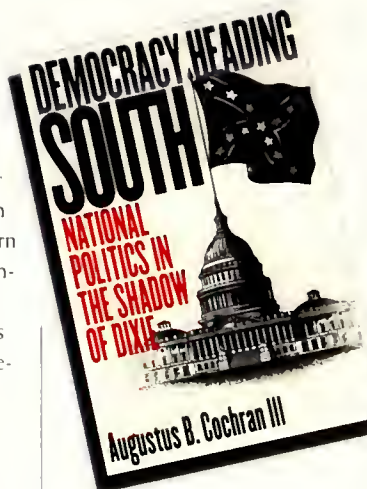
Instead, the South responded, with a few exceptions, with political demagoguery that perpetuated racism and disenfranchisement, an inadequate public school system, a repressive criminal justice system and economic policies that benefited only the planter-industrialist elite. Fifty years later, Cochran notes the familiar ring to these problems and cautions us about the present when "national leadership has passed into almost exclusive Southern hands."

Cochran maintains that the

past 40 years, from Lyndon Johnson to George W. Bush, have shown this shift of power in politics and that even Nixon and Reagan pursued a "Southern Strategy." He describes the convergence of Southern and national politics to show changes caused by the civil rights movement, the end of segregation and the shift in the South toward two-party politics.

At the same time, Democrats' influence dwindled nationally and a conservative movement, supported by the religious right, began to emerge.

In this movement, Cochran predicts the advent of "partyless politics" with no connection to an electorate or the needs of constituents. Rather, the game is the three M's—money, marketing and media. Sums spent on political campaigns continue to rise, and millions of dollars given to campaigns are beyond public regulation and accountability. Political candidates and their messages are marketed to the public based on survey and polls, and mass media attempt to entertain the public rather than to help educate or enlight-



en the audience on political issues.

We are asked to question whether the future of democracy is truly bleak in light of our national politics and a changing global picture. Are we moving toward an oligarchy where function and institutions have the trapping of popular sovereignty but are distorted to maintain "behind the scenes control by a powerful elite"? In the final chapter, citizens are urged to take a different path and are given suggestions for action: campaign finance practices cry out for reform; voting must be made easier for all citizens; minor-party activity should be encouraged; a revitalized labor

movement must once again organize workers and form alliances with activists and students and even with groups beyond our borders, considering the powers of globalization.

Cochran's substantial research is revealed in a bibliography ranging from political science and history books to biography to newspaper and magazine articles. His notes are enlightening, and his persuasive presentation of ideas, along with an entertaining writing style, make the book accessible to a broad audience.

This book, in no way, can be considered "South-bashing"—nor is it a political tirade against the right. Instead, Cochran condemns certain political institutions of the Old South and hopes that its discredited politics will stand as a warning against the trends that increasingly taint our national politics. We are called to action—to rally against these trends that threaten "what has always been and remains today America's grandest experiment and noblest aspiration: democracy."

—Constance Curry '55

## CONTRIBUTORS

Phil Amerman M.A.T. '02 is a graduate of Princeton and a former CIA employee.

Lisa Ashmore is manager of news services for Agnes Scott College.

Christine S. Cozzens is associate professor of English and director of The Center for Writing and Speaking at Agnes Scott.

Constance Curry '55, a lawyer and civil rights activist, is the author of *Silver Rights* and the author of a chapter as well as editor of *Deep in Our Hearts*.

Erin Davis Desmarais '00 is a participant in the College's M.A.T. program.

Linda L. Hubert '62 is professor of English at Agnes Scott and director of the College's Master of Arts in Teaching Secondary English program.

Nancy Moreland writes regularly for the American Nursery and Landscape Association and authors their national newsletter. She also writes for the Georgia Green Industry Association and is a member of the Garden Writers Association of America.

Jennifer Bryon Owen is editor of the AGNES SCOTT ALUMNAE MAGAZINE and director of creative services at Agnes Scott.

Celeste Pennington, former editor of the AGNES SCOTT ALUMNAE MAGAZINE, manages several publications.

Dr. Margaret W. Pepperdene is professor emerita of English at Agnes Scott College. She is a 2001 recipient of the Phebe and Zephaniah Swift Moore Teaching Award from Amherst College.

Victoria F. Stopp '01 was the Office of Communications intern before graduating with a major in English literature and creative writing and a minor in religious studies.

Willie Tolliver Jr. is assistant professor of English at Agnes Scott.



# GIVING ALUMNAE

## *Banking on an ASC Education.*

**M**ary Gay Bankston '74 smiles slightly as she recalls the moment: She was a young Agnes Scott economics grad among 21 M.B.A. graduates in a commercial credit training class at C&S Bank (now Bank of America). "I sat at the top of the class. It was the moment of realization that my education was different from the others'."

Embracing that gift, along with the understanding that "there are no limits to what a woman can accomplish," Bankston deftly moved up through the ranks at C&S in Atlanta, later at Los Angeles' Lloyd's Bank of California and First Interstate Bank where she was senior vice president of marketing and planning. In 1991 she moved to Southern California Gas Company to serve as vice president of planning. Since the mid-1990s, Bankston has transformed her career into a successful consulting practice.

"At Agnes Scott, you do get a sense that you can do anything," she says. "It's the culture. It's the belief expressed by your professors, and it's inspiring. It's also a community steeped in integrity and excellence. I think there's always going to be a need for a place like this."

To that end, Bankston invests in the College. Since graduation, she has contributed regularly through the Annual Fund with her level cur-

rently at the Presidential Circle. Early in Bold Aspirations: The Campaign for Agnes Scott College, Bankston stepped forward with a generous gift. Now as co-chair with Jeanette Wright '68 of the California campaign committee, she will invite alumnae to give.

They will bring together alumnae from far-flung parts of Southern California to re-establish connections with one another and the College. Bankston relishes the opportunity.

"We are a great group! No matter what decade we represent, I believe there's a common experience here that is priceless."

She also believes that there is good news to share as they reacquaint California alumnae with the campus. "The growth of the student body at the same time the College is raising the academic qualifications is terribly impressive. Mary Bullock is the right leader. This is the right time. This is the time for alumnae to step up to the plate and do something special with their gifts."

Both Bankston and husband—who has served as California campaign chair for his alma mater, Georgia Tech—are partners in philanthropy, whatever form it takes. "Some people will have more money than time, and others will have more time than money," believes Bankston.

"Everyone should give what they have. Both are needed. In fact, by contributing her time an alumna may raise as much money for the College as someone else who pulls out her checkbook."

—Celeste Pennington

**Bankston talks with Edmund J. Sheehey, vice president for academic affairs and dean of the College, during Celebration Weekend.**



CAROLINE DOE PHOTO



# AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE

THE WORLD FOR WOMEN

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CHRIS TIEGREEN PHO



During ceremonies held on Alumnae Weekend, Agnes Scott College dedicated a life-size statue of the young Robert Frost, which resides in the newly landscaped Alumnae Garden. The statue commemorates the more than 30-year relationship that Frost had with the College. To read more about Frost and Agnes Scott College, read "That's Me Leaving Tracks" on page 14 and "The Last Frost of 62" on page 20.