

Frela Owl Beck, *living in Cherokee, NC, on the south edge of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. Frela recently lost her husband of 60-plus years.*

A quiet evening and I am musing about Northfield. My memories are all good; it was an uplifting and life changing experience. I believe it put my growing and maturing on fast forward.

I hadn't wanted to leave the Reservation, the only life I knew, but my Cherokee Indian Father was definite about his daughters experiencing "Boarding School". The meeting of other kinds of people and cultures, the early independence and the improved education all accomplished in a protected environment was what he had also experienced in his youth. He approved of the "sharing of the work program". I had a bit of a chip on my shoulder, feeling forced into another world, which took about a semester to disappear. Everyone was friendly and helpful after my arriving on the train, having traveled from Idaho at age 15. Even the maintenance man, Mr. Finch was kind; he learned his Army buddy was my Uncle.

Coming from public school, I was 3 credits short of being a junior. In December of my second year, I finally became a senior, having made up the credits I needed. (I didn't have the class identity/pride that some did.)

Highlights for me were the wider view of religion; I liked daily "chapel". My beliefs in our Lord were cemented as He helped me daily. I loved the music under Mr. Raymond; I learned how "to study" and I relished then and now, being invited to different classmates' homes for Thanksgiving and Easter where I had such positive experiences and still enjoy lifelong friendships.

The only negative memory is that I gained too much weight and did not realize it. I don't remember mirrors (except over the bathroom sinks) and I do remember the ice creams and their sauces and "hard sauce" which I thought were heaven on earth. I have coffee ice cream in the refrigerator today (minus the butterscotch sauce).

Ginger Roe Lang, *living in Concord, MA, not far from where she and husband John lived for many years. John passed away about 4 years ago. Her daughter, Priscilla, lives with Ginger and the two of them are still into gardening and plants whenever they have time.*

Big news - I am a first time grandmother as of three months ago!

I was the sole owner of a hiking/ snowshoeing business in Concord for over 25 years. An avid outdoors hiker, leading many Appalachian Mountain Club climbs, I launched area MA and ME hikes and weekends with historical and botanical lore along the way.

Also, I led hiking trips in Wales, Scotland and Madeira. My passion for the outdoors comes from my father's influence as a child, when he took us on nature walks in Northern Minnesota and told us the Latin names of plants or some similar wording.

Estella Loomis Lauter: *Lives in Door County, the lovely Wisconsin peninsula jutting into Lake Michigan.*

Despite the crushing early loss of our son, I have had incredible luck starting with my acceptance at Northfield, so it was hard to choose a moment to record for our reunion. But I have decided that it has

to be a conversation with the African American poet, Audre Lorde, in 1977 at a conference of the Midwest Modern Language Association.

I had just been part of a team at the University of Wisconsin Green Bay that had created a new minor in Women's Studies (a program that survives to this day) and I was wondering how we would represent the growing body of literature by Black women into it and into other general education programs or minors and majors with only one Black Professor (in the sciences) on the entire faculty of over 100 members!

I asked Audre Lorde this question at a reception where we had time for a real conversation. And she said, in brief, you do the same for African American literature that your profession has done for Shakespeare, who has less in common with you than any of your fellow Americans do. You do the necessary work to offer good courses that represent your passion for the literature. You learn the language, the history and biographies, and you keep up with the scholarship! Of course it is important to hire African American professors, but there are not enough Black academics to cover all the material that needs to be taught about Black experience in America. We need many people to step up to the plate.

So I did. It took a while. I think I offered my first course in Black American Women Writers as an Exchange Professor in Germany in 1986, and I was able to develop several others before moving to an administrative position in 1994. A German university student fell in love with this literature and focused her dissertation on novels about slavery by African American women. When I became Chair of an English department elsewhere, one of our first searches was for an African American person to do this work, but in retirement, I have offered several iterations of continuing education classes based on books by Black women around the world that did not yet exist when I spoke with Audre Lorde.

I love these books for so many reasons: their energy and honesty in the use of language, their creativity and skill in storytelling, their revelations of things not dreamed of in the mainstream culture of their time. They are among the best books ever written in my view, and I feel privileged to have read them and brought them respectfully to the attention of others.

I often give thanks to Audre Lorde for the words that propelled me into this work and for her willingness to cross the borders that have stopped so many from experiencing the whole range of human experience.

Thanks for the opportunity to share her spirit with classmates and maybe with some of their children and grandchildren as well!

Estella Lauter (Northfield 1957, University of Rochester 1961, 1966, and Professor Emerita, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.

Deborah Chater Richman *lives in New Jersey*

For the past 15 years I have been involved in volunteering for an organization called National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). I have been president of our local affiliate for the last few years.

This organization reaches out to families who have a loved one with major mental illness. We run support groups, lecture series, family educational programs, and groups for the afflicted family members.

This endeavor dovetails with the work in Social Work and family therapy that I was engaged in prior to my retirement.

Joyce Moore Arthur: *continues to travel between WI and CT. She and Darrell (Coop) Cooper, exchanged emails at all hours of the day right up until the day before the reunion. I guess one could say they co-chaired the reunion planning, but it really was a team effort - and a wonderful team it was. Many voices and many ideas, but the glue was Jeanne Magmer and her writing skills and Lloyd and Jeanne's computer skills. None of this would have come together if they had not mended and pieced together the ideas that surfaced along the way. Thanks to all who worked to bring us together at the NMH 65th Reunion!*

Although teaching at the university and volunteering to get out the vote have been important, nothing surpassed my joy of reading to Pre-K to 2nd graders over the years, pre-covid.

Education, children, travel, international cultures and nature have been passions throughout my life. As an educator and biologist professionally, my life touched on all four areas as well as my concern for the planet we live on.

A passion throughout the years has been sharing these four elements wherever possible. For years, I read to Kindergarten - 2nd Grade students in a program which assembled a wonderful collection of children's books from around the world, the environment around them, and the interrelationships between youngsters around the world.

When returning home, after a reading session, my family would remark..."I am not sure who gets more out of these readings or outings, you or the students!" It was a highlight to share my passions, experiences and time with these young, eager, inquisitive minds.

One of the joys of working on a reunion is the wonderful classmates gets to work with and the opportunity to talk to as many classmates as one has time to contact personally. If I miss you, I hope ;you may call me... 608-20708227...

Some classmates were unable to get registered as deadlines approached. A smaller, although no way exclusive, '57 class gathering is in the offing in NH in September. Watch for the announcement and plan on joining us.

Joyce Moore Arthur

Jeanne Schwarz and Marti (Betty) Welch Goldstone: *Both Jeanne and Marti were key partners in planning the 65th Reunion. Alas, when it came to Gill, MA, for the week-end of June 3-5, they opted to*

be climbing in the Italian Dolomites! We missed them... but they both participated in the class Zoom call, inspite of its late hour for them.

Welcome home..

We'll miss seeing you Reunion weekend. We'll be in Italy, hiking in the Dolomites with 18 other women, staying in castles and enjoying Mediterranean cuisine and local wines. We're both doing well, staying active as volunteers, enjoying family and friends in Oregon (Jeanne) and Washington, DC, and Maine (Marti). Our best regards to all of you. See you for our 70th. We intend to stay healthy and active.

Martha Johnson, who lives and writes in Holyoke, MA, was not able to join us at NMH. However, not a day goes by that she is not writing her memoirs, making a video to leave her heirs, or gathering like-minded residents to talk about the future and how to prepare.

Below is a page from her "Glory Years" when she was a successful life coach and was creating new ways to analyze what clients needed to move forward in their life endeavors.

Martha's Memory Projects

Martha is at a point in life where she is looking back....a lot.

It started when I turned 80 in January of 2020, just six weeks before the "covid lockdown." This calamity forced serious reflection time, and, enjoyable writing time. I had been given the gift of uninterrupted time to sort, review, and toss the files of a lifetime.

In September of 2020 the first of my unexpected contemplative "look- back" projects emerged.

It was a **100-page review** of the activities and highlights of each of my seven decades. One of those highlights occurred from 2005-07, preparing for our 50th year Northfield reunion. This event coincided with the closing of our Alma Mater. We women made the best of it, talking and crying a lot. Initially folks didn't want to come to a Northfield Reunion at Mt. Hermon. Then, supported by our male classmates whom we barely knew, we worked through our emotions, and together planned a well attended gala.

Since then, the women and the men are all proud graduates of NMH and many of those relationships have remained intact as we now prepare for the gathering to celebrate our 65th. My lockdown decade-by-decade project, **Who was Aunt Martha anyway?** has already been delivered to the Johnson Family Archives. I hope this document for my siblings, and their progeny gives a clue to who I am, and who I have been.

What my archival document doesn't address are the current movements. We are the first generation to become widely conscious about our unacknowledged white privilege. I, for one, am reading and learning...and crying. Nor does it address our unanticipated gift of longevity and the new possibilities for the conscious and fulfilling elderhood we never planned for. No more "retirement, just figuring out how to live fully, age gracefully, befriend our inevitable deaths, and serve along the way. I believe we have a new task: ENCOUNTER AGING in a world which needs our generational wisdom and skill and is only starting to realize that.

Last year, in 2021, another idea bubbled to the surface. I felt called to focus on what I now call **My Glory Years.**

Martha's Memory Projects

This still evolving retrospective will be *in video format* covering the years when I discovered the career love of my life: training, organization development, and convening conversations that matter. This started at the end of my 30's, ending in my 50's. My 40's were wonderful years filled with my calling for Personal Mastery, which evolved into my business Growth Dynamics .

The Glory Years tape will include excerpts from found videos of speeches from 40 years ago. I was promoting what at the time I called Thought Selection. I was having great fun with this new calling....adopting the early versions of positive thinking as an approach to changing one's life and getting better results.

The Glory Years ended during the last years of my 50's when I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. At that point, pain, grief, and loss predominated. So here we are in **2022. My next invitation to myself is to explore the years of pain.**

You don't get through life without suffering loss and one's losses can be overwhelming. For me the short list from 2000 - 2006 includes a marriage crumbling, and the loss of a business identity which had become my personal identity. And, the loss of my anticipated future of tennis and ballroom dancing, the loss of my very active mother at 90, a major move from my home and friends and colleagues of 30 years in Washington DC, a very uncertain health condition, a divorce... etc.

This major healing journey of **Breaking Open ... and Coming Home** was ultimately a gift, and was comprised of overlapping stages that took 18 years. The first 6 years were tough.

1. I grieved the losses in two ways. I cried and cried and cried. I expressed feelings I had kept blocked and hidden for so many years. While I had never seen myself as a **writer/poet**, I would wake up each morning and a poem was ready to be recorded. Due to the encouragement of friends, those writings which I called "musings" made their way into two self published volumes I titled *Musing Along the Way*.

Martha's Memory Projects

A BAD DAY

In these seemingly joyless times
how do I string together the moments
of pleasure, joy, even,
that make getting out of bed
a worthwhile endeavor?

DESPAIR FOR LUNCH

Yesterday, I burned a pot of lentils.
Today, hoping to redeem myself,
I set to boil a pot of black beans.
I burned them too.

Not only was I grieving with “poems” , I was tearful with color and paint. Again, something unexpected, as I had never thought of myself as an “**artist**”. Yet, with a kindergartner’s paint set, scissors and colored paper, I was driven to express the ups and downs of the journey, the darkness and the light and the beginning of a new person emerging. (And, 20 years later, to my surprise, they have been shown.)

Sarah (Terry/ Zara) Drew Reeves, lives with her husband David in Norwich, VT. Terry is an avid gardener and frequently teaches New Testament short courses in the area’s Adult Education program. Unable to attend reunion, we missed her leadership at the memorial service. Seven women from our class have passed away in the last 5 years from our 60th Reunion.

A friend of mine has a daughter who is entering as a freshman in the fall, and so I checked out the NMH webpage carefully. I was encouraged by the extent to which the education of the head, hand and heart, -- and the motto, "grounded" reflect something of what we're about in a new key. We've integrated the sense of spirituality that we experienced then, with now, in being rooted in the earth, our home, and the interweb of relationships, which includes what we experienced and cherished, --part of it the honoring of each person, --now seen in more complexity, part of it our sense of spirituality, with a view from space, more global awareness, and awareness of indebtedness to former travellers, from indigenous, to African American and all the different races, and with an integration of science and spirituality, as experienced in mindful practices,

With all the beauty and trauma and crises we are in right now we, our generation, needs to keep simply doing our part whatever it may be, Joanna Macy's *Active Hope* is one source I'm delving into now.

May the mystery of love, everywhere and within each of us, abide
Shalom

Sue Tower Hollis: Sue provided lovely music at the memorplaying her recorder.
Below is the Northfield Benediction sung at the finale of the service:

Sue Tower Hollis, managed to fit in the reunion between trips and dives with her daughter. A retired professor at SUNY, Sue led the Memorial Service with David Williams, providing the music with her recorder. The service concluded with the prayer below and singing the Northfield Benediction.

- **THE NORTHFIELD BENEDICTION** All sing
Susan plays once through, then all sing, and Steve

PRAYER:

**O THOU IN WHOM WE LIVE AND MOVE AND HAVE OUR BEING,
THOU, SOURCE TO WHOM WE RETURN,**

**WE GIVE THANKS FOR THE GIFT OF LIFE,
AND FOR THIS MOMENT
WITH TALL PINES ABOVE US
WITH ROLLING HILLS, REACHING DOWN TO THE RIVER
WITH GOOD EARTH BENEATH US,
HOLDING THE RESTING PLACE OF OUR SCHOOLS' FOUNDER**

HERE, WE THANK YOU, TOO, FOR THE LIVES OF OUR CLASSMATES WHO CANNOT BE HERE TODAY,

**AS WE REFLECT ON THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY, WE THANK YOU FOR THEIR LIVES AMONG US,
AND NOW, KNOWING THEY LIVE NOW IN US, IN OUR MEMORIES, OUR THOUGHTS, OUR ACTIONS**

WE ASK YOUR BLESSING ON US ALL, LIVING AND DEAD,

AS WE SING TOGETHER THE NORTHFIELD BENEDICTION

Ellie Gross Pendleton: *Escaping the heat of Phoenix, AZ, Ellie and Bill flew to New England to gather with us at NMH. A few days later, after visiting with N friends and area relatives, they returned to the land of triple-digit summer temps. Ellie has arranged trips for residents in their senior complex for a number of years. She has lessened her ambitions but in no way has called it quits! Bill should have been awarded "spouse of the 65th" as he listened to N'er friends talk endlessly with Ellie. By the third day, Bill emerged with a voice... and we were glad to hear from him!*

Cynthia Chutter Kahn: *She has been actively trying to assure the Denver School District that students without a permanent home or considered homeless must be accounted for. We had a wonderful conversation... connect with Cindy to get the full picture.*
