

Reflections of the Class of 2003

By Anita Fleisher Zook

“Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning.” – Benjamin Franklin

“It's been a long road, but I am sure that it will be worth the effort that everyone has put in.” – John Marshall

These two quotes from the founders of our dear alma mater accurately sum up the four years we spent here and the 10 years since graduation.

We experienced a lot during our time at F&M. The Y2K hype of our freshman winter break was just that and thankfully the college wasn't affected. Neither was our ability to play Snood on our iMacs! During the fall semester of our sophomore year, the campus was buzzing about the Presidential Election. May we were excited to vote for the first time and Professor Friedrich's Campaigns and Elections class really came alive in more ways than one! We seemed to hold a collective breathe for days following the election until a clear winner was determined. That year we also declared our majors and decided whether to stay on campus or spend at least one semester studying abroad the following year. The Barshinger Center for Musical Arts at Hensel Hall was completed during our sophomore year.

A few weeks into our junior year, the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, Pentagon and Flight 93 in Western Pennsylvania. Former generations of alumni can say that they have similar memories of days that changed the world when Pearl Harbor was attacked or President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. Our generation of alumni were at F&M and heard or saw the news between classes on September 11, 2001. The College Center, Common Ground, Ben's Underground, Distler and the ASFC were some of the areas that were transformed with the addition of televisions where we could get updates between classes during the days and weeks following the attacks. All campus emails informed us of ways we could help through blood drives and plans for memorial services.

Our senior year began with the dedication of the Roschel Performing Arts Center. The year flew by and in addition to the normal coursework; we also found time to study for the MCATS, LSATS, and apply to graduate school. For those that planned to enter the workforce, we just wanted to find a job and an apartment! Once we knew what the post-F&M future held for us, we enjoyed our last Springs Arts on Hartman Green enjoying beverages in opaque containers and studied for finals.

But our years at F&M were more than just about classes and studying. To take our minds off the grueling workload, we enjoyed movies and concerts in Barshinger, performances and dance recitals in the Green Room Theatre. Some studied or caught up on sleep in the Science Library and Shaddy Fack, while others relieved stress at the ASFC. We also struck out into the Lancaster community by volunteering with multiple organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, went on trips to Central Market, the outlets and of course to check out the Amish community.

During the winter months we would enjoy snow days (although back then the college NEVER cancelled classes). So we would “borrow” trays from the dining hall and go sledding in Buchanan Park. We would also help each other shovel our cars out of the snow so they could be moved on street cleaning days.

The Lancaster Police Department didn't need any more of our hard earned work study paychecks for parking tickets. Sometimes these winter time activities led us to Appel Health Services to see Dr. Kelly, who always had time to attend to our health and injuries.

We volunteered our time writing for the College Reporter and College Dispatch, attended lectures, round table discussions in the Women's Center, and got to know our professors better through seminars, field trips and off-campus dinners in their homes. We listened to WFNM and enjoyed Spring Arts weekend on Hartman Green. Some of us became very involved with Greek life and made lasting friendships with our "brothers and sisters".

We ended our time at F&M the same way it started with convocation at the Alumni Sports & Fitness Center. President Kneedler's retirement during our junior year meant we were President Fry's first graduating class. Pennsylvania Governor Edward Rendell delivered the long and unmemorable commencement address. However, Governor Rendell did leave a lasting impression by leaving before our degrees were conferred to attend Gettysburg College's graduation where his wife was speaking.

We had a great time nevertheless and afterwards celebrated with one last slice of spaghetti pizza at My Place or one last drink at Hildy's. It would be a day we would never forget. To quote Reese Witherspoon's character in the movie Legally Blonde, "We Did It!"

Now as we look back over the past 10 years of our post-F&M life, we can be proud of our accomplishments because F&M prepared us for the "real world". We've been able to keep in touch with our classmates through social media and the alumni magazine and it is amazing what wonderful things our class has done in the past decade! We are F&M Proud!