

Reflections of the Class of 1971

By Tom Lashnits '71

It was a turbulent time. The Vietnam War. The Draft Lottery. Black Power. Women's Lib, Kent State. And Closing Down the College

And the personal recollections . . .

During our four years, the Protest Tree was filled with signs and comments about the pros and cons of coeducation (and a lot of other issues like the Vietnam War.) The Class of 1971 was the first in the 200+ year history of the college to truly enjoy the benefits of co-education, beginning in our Junior Year. It was approved by the Board of Trustees and in the Fall of 1969, about 100 women showed up on campus and lived in Marshall Hall. Approximately 40 women graduated in our class. The odds on campus were 18 men to 1 woman and there would often be only one woman in a class! Lots of adjustments were made to the physical buildings, rules and policies, social atmosphere, extra-curricular groups, and the dating scene (Little Sisters initiated into Phi Sigma Kappa).

How many of us studied, or napped, on the comfortable couches in the Reading Room of Fackenthal Library?

Ray Zuschlag took freshman Bio (an 8:00 a.m. class!) and learned the genus and species name of every tree on campus by Dr. Shively reciting the names of all trees passed during periodic walking tours throughout campus. History classes with Dr. Thurman (Pall Mall) Philoon, an entertaining lecturer who did amazing things with his Phi Beta Kappa key.

Prof. Robert Russell died recently. Many memories abound. Harry Newbury took a Freshman English Composition course and remembers his vibrant personality. He was Vickie Ball's advisor and favorite teacher. She was always amazed that he recognized her footsteps when she walked down the hall and called out to say hello! Bill Avery only took one class with Professor Russell, "Eminent Victorian Writers" along with Jon Healy and Vickie Ball. It felt like Oxford College - a very small group around a single table, reading, writing and talking. Bill was so inspired that, after completing one writing assignment, he felt compelled to write another 1,000 words on a related subject - extra effort! Prof. Russell commented on the extra piece much more than the one assigned. Three years later, Bill applied to San Francisco State University's Radio and Television M.A. program and somehow briefly saw his application folder. As he flipped through the file, out popped an amazing letter of recommendation from Prof. Russell. Not only had he remembered Bill, the class, and the extra effort, he referred to the piece in more detail than Bill even could recall. He was very touched (and was accepted). "What a memory, what a mind, what a man."

Economics Professor Norman exposed students to "the real world" by having groups of students in his Business Management class become entrepreneurs and create mock businesses with business plans, financial projections, and detailed concepts. Students interviewed businesspeople who attended presentations to serve as judges and advisors. Now it's common practice in most colleges.

Can you picture Sandy Pinsker's pipe and dickies and Henry Mayer holding class (and picnic lunches) on the lawn in front of Fackenthal after he had been fired in the spring of 1970? Bruce Frankel's favorite S&M (Stan Michalak) story was when "Bullshit" was stamped on every page of a research paper. Ironically, Bruce's new book just won a prestigious writing award!

We were the first class to implement a Pass/Fail grading option instead of taking a grade and many took advantage of the new option.

A short-lived exchange program with Wilson College sent a few Fummers to Chambersburg, Pa., and brought a handful of women to Lancaster. Our class inaugurated the now-common practice of off-campus study. We participated in The Washington Semester, where two of us worked for U. S. Congressmen and entered into a relationship with Lancaster University in England to send students there for the year in 1969. Three classmates crossed The Pond. David Eisenberg boasts, "I had the greatest time of my life that year, cruising around Lancashire on my motorcycle . . . and I even went to a few classes!" Another one has a different boast—Ron Jarashow came back with a girlfriend and they're still happily married.

Other memories...

Hoagies at Maria's in the wee hours. (Rumors freshman year that she ran a bordello upstairs.) Hildy's Bar almost any time of afternoon or night. A professor even held class there. Creating a 4-foot-deep Olympic-size pool on the second floor bathroom of Schnader North, when the shower was jammed with a piece of plywood. Later, the same guys moved all of the dorm counselor's furniture into the shower. "Don't ask me how I know," says Ray Zuschlag. "I just know." A single pay phone per floor freshmen year. We were lucky to make one call home a week, if that. The August 23, 1967 letter from President Keith Spaulding with 1967-68 Tuition and Room and Board rates for F&M compared to 17 other colleges listed to explain the need for the increases. From 67-68 to 68-69, tuition went up 16%!

Coeducation brought cheerleaders and a fire-baton- twirling head majorette and more fans to the sports experience. In four years, Men's sports posted a slightly better than .500 record with 222 wins. Tennis with Coach Glenn Miller (27 years at F&M) and Cross Country with Coach Bill Iannicelli garnered 41% of all the victories. Al Sykes was Captain of the Football Team with Coach Don Pooley when somebody quit the football team and ran around the track during a game to protest the war in Vietnam. Other coaches were George McGinness (Swimming), Chuck Taylor (Basketball), Ron Gray (Wrestling), Ron Sachs (Lacrosse), Nowell Hoover (Soccer) and John Pittenger (Squash).

Waking to the F&M radio station playing either Claudine Longet ("Here, There, and Everywhere") or John Sebastian and The Lovin' Spoonful singing "The Doctor Sez Give 'Em Jug Band Music." "Tommy" blaring out of the Phi Kappa Tau windows day and night. The Glee Club performing Stravinsky's, "Oedipus Rex" our Freshman year. Such great Green Room productions. "A Thurber Carnival." The amazing production of "The Kidd Affair," written by Bruce Stutz '71. Ibsen's "Peer Gynt" featuring Treat Williams and Shakespeare's "Love's Labor's Lost" in the spring of 1970. Deborah Slater's first theatrical performance in the "Death of Kuhulain," directed by Prof. Gordon Wickstrom. She performed the first 'Modern Dance' concert

at F&M in a carpeted classroom, to a poem by Theodore Roethke, read by her husband, David Freedman, son of Prof. Jake Freedman and costumed by her mom. There's now a thriving Dance Dept. at F&M!

Prof. Sid Wise introducing the films at Hensel Hall. "King of Hearts," "Jules and Jim," "Breathless," Catherine Deneuve in Roman Polanski's "Repulsion," "Pierrot Le Fou" and many more. Dan Cohen and Prof. Wise continued the town/gown film series for over 30 years after Dan graduated. It was \$3-5 a ticket with often 500 movie lovers each week! Other memorable movies during our four years in the local theaters were "The Graduate," "Love Story," "Bob, Ted, Carol, and Alice," "A Space Odyssey," "Rosemary's Baby," "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," "Midnight Cowboy," "Easy Rider," and "Ryan's Daughter."

Freshman year we turned the dance space in Hartman Hall psychedelic, complete with revolving mirrored ball and enjoyed a spirited social life with mixers with Hood, Wilson, Bryn Mawr, Beaver and Goucher. Concerts through our four years were the Grateful Dead with first-act New Riders of the Purple Sage, the Young Rascals, Jefferson Airplane, James Brown with his full entourage plus capes and rocking horn section, Simon & Garfunkel, Santana, Three Dog Night, Joe Cocker and the Englishmen, Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention, James Taylor and unknown Carole King. Pretty incredible line-up, thanks especially to Ashok Sikand and the Concert Board members – with their brown armbands and flashlights managing crowd control, Frisbee-tossing, and pot-smoking.

A bomb scare before the James Taylor concert in Spring 1970. Mayser Gymnasium was totally evacuated and the crowd stood in the rain threatening a riot while a bomb squad checked the building. In a ploy to get the best seat in Mayser for the April 10, 1971 Grateful Dead concert the Saturday night before Easter, Jim Sarnoff donned a white Easter Bunny suit with ears and hopped across stage offering candy from his basket to the band. He saw the rest of the concert seated on stage! The wrestling coach's office was turned into a temporary EMT unit for drug-related emergencies and was very busy throughout the night. Someone even broke into the basement of the gym to see the concert.

Birth control had been available for only a couple years but was changing society values and behaviors between male/female students. Nickel bags of MJ cost \$5 and were not very strong. Deborah Slater lived in a commune at 335 W. James Street. Folks would come and go and they fed anyone who showed up and housed a couple of runaway high school girls till they had their babies and then went home. "Like nothing had happened. Strange times." She also lived on 'The Farm' with a lot of musicians (Cottonmouth.)

October 1967 Anti-War March on the Pentagon. Not many of us went. But those who did brought back word. Lines were being drawn. In spring 1968, students gathered in front of Hartman Hall and shaved off their facial hair to "get clean" for antiwar candidate Gene McCarthy. The quiet spread of word that Martin Luther King had been slain on April 4, 1968. Nothing was said or done on campus to note it. Rather, there was a kind of collective holding of the breath as riots began in Washington, D.C. and came within blocks of the White House. Buildings burned. Crowds of more than 20,000 overwhelmed police. The inner city was devastated. Riots erupted around the country. Two months later, Robert Kennedy was shot. After

the summer of Woodstock, which David Eisenberg attended, Fall 1969 brought coeducation to F&M. Also, guerrilla theater in front of the gates to Hamilton Watch, which made the timing mechanism for bombs. Many antiwar F&M students disrupted parades in Lancaster. In December 1969, we crammed in front of TVs with faces reflecting fear, shock, relief and anger to sweat out the draft lottery. Plastic capsules with numbers inside were drawn out of a glass bowl -- the sooner your birthday came up, the more likely you were to get drafted.

May 4, 1970. Four students were killed at Kent State. All over the country, it was a chaotic and bewildering time. Students were crying, they were scared and angry and felt powerless. Such disbelief! They didn't know what else the government or police might do. F&M joined a nationwide strike of mobilized college students. We closed down the school and didn't take our finals. Buildings were chained and padlocked. In most courses, the final grade was the one we had earned by the time school had closed. Over 100 students took over the President's Office for two days to protest campus and national issues. Dean O.W. Lacy brought in food and a birthday cake for one of the protesters and served as communications link to the administration. Busloads of students traveled to Washington, joining 100,000 Americans protesting President Nixon's bombing of Cambodia.

For the "real story" of those turbulent times, Bruce Frankel later covered the Westmoreland v. CBS libel trial in the 1980s and heard a parade of generals come forward to testify how the military "cooked the books" to make it seem as if we were winning the war in Vietnam by inflating the Vietcong body counts. Or listen to the White House tapes of Richard Nixon talking with Spiro T. Agnew in the behind-closed-doors reality of their mix of racism, anti-intellectualism, and anti-democratic pathology.

In April 1971, before graduation, F&M students again went to Washington. This time there were half a million protestors. But while it would be two more years before the peace accords were signed, American soldiers had already started to come home. And the F&M class of '71 was moving on -- but not before doing its part to stop a war and to change America, bringing more opportunities for women and minorities and securing many of the individual freedoms that today we take for granted.