

Reflections of the Class of 1966

By Reeve Askew, P'96

As I thought about what to say this morning, many ideas crossed my mind. I wondered how could you embellish on what was said 5 years ago on this same stage regarding what historical events occurred during our 4 years at F&M. History has been written and rewritten many times by many people about those 4 years.

But one facet that we have not discussed but certainly is still relevant today is the music which was part of our generation while at F&M. One song in particular stands out in my mind and that is the Rolling Stones all time classic hit "I Can't Get No Satisfaction." Think about it. We were in the midst of the Vietnam War which would last approximately another 10-11 years. We were protesting on & off campus. Our protest tree certainly attested to this fact. The country was in turmoil with no quick resolution in sight. We were all young and energetic. We were out to conquer and change the world and the establishment.

But even though many decades since graduation have passed, cultural, political, and economic transformation leads many of today's students, leaders, and common citizens to still cry "I Can't Get No Satisfaction".

In 1966 we looked at people celebrating their 45th Reunion and thought they must be in the twilight of their lives. Now we are one of them and we definitely share a different perspective. We feel we are in the early afternoon of our lives and now we are happy and delighted to share pictures and stories of our children and grandchildren and what we have accomplished since our last get together. No doubt some of us even wonder how we were able to get accepted at F&M.

But through it all, I firmly believe we all found, however you choose to define it, some form of "Satisfaction."

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Co-authored by Tim Armbruster and Bill Tuffiash May 18, 2006**

Somehow or other, forty years have slipped by since we began our four years together in Lancaster. But brief though they may have been, they were the time we began to shed adolescence and undertake our longer journey. As we celebrate the 40th year since graduation from F&M, we should take time to pause and remember our years there and how the world and the campus have changed.

We arrived on a sunny day in late August 1962, went through orientation with our beanies in place, and were taught the class cheer, "'66 REALLY CLICKS." Many of us were on our own for the first time.

Then it was off to the books and classes, our huge history class in Hensel Hall (Barshinger), and our smaller classes to fulfill our requirements for a liberal arts degree. It wasn't too long until the world was plunged into the Cuban Missile Crisis of October, 1962. With the world teetering on the brink of a nuclear confrontation between the United States and the USSR, we wondered "was there any point in studying for midterms?"

We returned from summer vacation with the words of Martin Luther King, Jr, and his historic "I Have A Dream" speech in August 1963 echoing in our ears. During that school year the great man came and spoke to the Lancaster community in Mayser Gymnasium on December 12, 1963.

However, the one event our generation universally remembers was the tragedy of November 22, 1963, when President John Kennedy was assassinated. It was about 1:00 PM on a sunny Friday afternoon, and I'm sure we can all remember where we were and what we were doing when the tragedy struck. College remained in session until Tuesday. We banded together in small groups to watch TV and mourn.

In 1964, Dick Kneedler, later President of F&M was co-editor of the Student Weekly. Mark Gittleman and Jim Sundheim were our class representatives to Student Council. Our classmate Seiki Murono was propelling the football team to new heights and a Middle Atlantic Championship.

Marc Silbert's byline in the College Reporter of February 1965 reported the transfer of students from Hartman Hall, home of the infamous "Snakepit," to the new dormitory on Race Avenue called the Benjamin Franklin Residences, and Peter, Paul, and Mary performed at Homecoming. Daisy Mae and the Kit Kats, Dave Brubeck, the Beach Boys, and James Brown with his 55 foot promotional trailer also made it to campus. Coeducation wasn't even a thought until President Keith Spaulding's comments in the College Reporter in 1965. Weekend bus caravans from Goucher, Hood, and Wilson Colleges made social life tolerable.

In 1966, our senior year, there was an SDS protest in Lancaster, and yearly tuition was increased to \$1,900 per year. "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" was produced by the Green Room, and Phi Kappa Tau sponsored a car smash day for charity. We graduated on Sunday, June 5, 1966, another sunny day, and went our separate ways. Our Class was unique because we spanned two generations. We were influenced by the carefree days of the fifties on our arrival and by the turbulence of the seventies on our departure.

Happily, a lot has remained the same at F&M. The students are still competitive and driven. The bookstore and café are back where they belong; the tradition of student-friendly faculty is stronger than ever. And the College is finally beginning to receive the recognition it deserves, as the good and special place it is, and was for us forty short years ago.