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Karol Crosbie

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COMING SOON

AN ADVENTURE IN EDUCATION

A new history of the College to debut this spring

Also inside

President Cornwell on the value of liberal arts
Learning to serve, serving to learn
The Value of Liberal Education

BY WILL LANGE ’57

The great virtue of a liberal education is that its graduates enjoy a well-rounded life. “We don’t teach you to earn a living,” claim its advocates, “but how to live!” Every school I attended was dedicated to Renaissance principles. From Bach to Basie, Chaucer to Cheever, Donne to Dickey, and Kepler to Koch—along with many bemused classmates—I’ve surveyed them all quickly, like horses on a carousel, and can remember little bits of information about almost all of them.

However, by a genetic quirk (I assume it’s genetic; I had only two classes of Mendel one semester), I have a brain like an attic, crammed full of unrelated and disorganized junk. Thus, as I pass through each day, with its successes and failures, dramas and drudgery, a stream of references and quotations keeps bubbling to the surface of my mind like noodles in a pot of simmering soup. A fellow worker drops a plank on his foot and I quote Lewis Carroll: “The Duck to the Kangaroo: ‘Good gracious! How you hop!’” I’m not sure this is what my professors meant when they spoke of living a richer life, decorated with the ornaments of the ages.

Those bubbling noodles are never more evident than during the annual winter bushwhack of the Geriatric Adventure Society, held in the northernmost wilderness of New Hampshire. This epic event, demanding resources from the deepest well of our abilities, normally evokes a flood of rhetoric, most of it, appropriately, from the heroic genre.

As the graying veterans of the Society, bent beneath their loads, begin the Friday afternoon ski through the snow into our camp in the forest, I hear again Joseph Conrad describing Napoleon’s retreat from Russia: “...like the doomed flight of haggard, spectral sinners across the innermost frozen circle of Dante’s Inferno.” They who escaped must have had their souls doubly riveted inside their bodies to carry them ... through that frost fit to split rocks.” Later, in the slowly warming cabin, as we sit around the stove, a ghostly Will Shakespeare joins us, speaking of “good friends, who look and talk alike and waste the time together.”

The conversation invariably turns to the next day’s bushwhack. Traditionally, the members propose an improbable itinerary and then next day, compasses hanging from their necks and skis crashing through the brush, set out to accomplish it. Only rarely have we failed.

Over the years our achievements have begun to approach the ordinary. This is the natural result of aging, but it’s hard to take, nonetheless. As the group this year debated the possibilities, Tennyson quoted our deliberations: “Old age hath yet his honour and his toil ... Some work of noble note may yet be done not unbecoming man that strives with gods.” We decided to attempt Mount Aziscoós, a 3200-foot monadnock a few miles’ ski across the state border in Maine. Those who felt at any point that they couldn’t make it could turn back, while the hair-shirt types pressed on (“Excelsior!” —Longfellow).

Next morning we struck heavy blowdowns on the mountain, provoking the reflection that this type of skiing wasn’t much fun. But George Mallory came to our rescue: “Why do we climb? Because it is there.” Then four members had an acute attack of intelligence and turned back (“Retreat, hell! We’re advancing in a different direction!” —US Marines). Five of us continued upward. The brush and blowdown thickened, till suddenly it came to us, as we wallowed in snow and fallen trees up to our waists, that we were in too deep to quit; that ... to turn back were as tedious as go o’er” —Shakespeare. It also occurred to me that there are environments not designed for human beings (“This is no place for men! Surely the gods live here!” —Kipling).

It was the nadir of a long day. We took off our skis and dragged them behind, floundering upward toward an unseen summit. I chanted softly an ancient Inuit mantra: “All true wisdom is to be...attained through suffering.” —Anakok Igjugarjuk.

Around mid-afternoon, pushing through thick spruces, we spotted a snow-covered mound higher than anything else around. I trudged toward it, quoting Sir Edmund Hillary: “Ahead of us the slope dropped away thousands of feet ...”. But the words died as I looked down at the snow. A moose in its random wanderings had strolled across the summit of the peak we had struggled so hard to reach. A moose!—arguably God’s dumbest and least prepossessing animal. Except, perhaps, for one...

No one has explained what the moose or the men were seeking at that altitude.
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On the cover
The story of the tumultuous creation of McGaw Chapel is included in the newest history of the College, to be released this spring.

Photo by Karol Crosbie
From our authors
(See adjacent page)

To have even one of my seven novels on the racks of the COW bookstore is an honor for which I can only hope to be worthy. Of course all of my books repose peacefully in the Andrews Library's Wooster Collection. In my magnum opus, The Court Martial of Robert E. Lee (Combined Books, Philadelphia, 1993; Taylor Trade Publishing, Boulder, CO, 2013, reprint), it was and remains my great privilege to pay appropriate tribute to the history department's Professor John Gates who introduced me to military history in general and to the Spanish-American War in particular. My last novel, A Mouthful of Dust (Nortia Press, Orange County, CA, 2012) is the direct result of Dr. Gates' expertise on the Spanish-American War, for which I remain forever grateful. When I think or speak of The College of Wooster, I remember always Daniel Webster's oral argument before the Supreme Court of the United States in 1818: "It is, Sir, as I have said, a small college. And yet there are those who love it." (Trustees of Dartmouth College vs. Woodward [1819], 17 U.S. 518, 4 L. Ed. 629.) I too love The College of Wooster.

DOUGLAS SAVAGE '73
CANTON, OHIO

Ever since I took Prof. Freddie Moore's creative writing class in 1948 I knew I wanted to write a novel and have it published. Well, the years flew by. One day I decided that I had better put the seat of the pants to the seat of the chair and write, if I wanted to check off this goal on my bucket list. So I did. Went to the Florida Writers Conference, found a publisher, and the rest is history. The Traveling Corpse is a murder mystery set in a retirement park in Florida and solved by seniors.

BETSY JONES HAYBA '49
THE VILLAGES, FLORIDA

Fact checking needed
(Regarding excerpts from student journals in the last issue's “Your Pain is Our Pain”) As someone who follows immigration and border issues quite closely, I read this poignant account with interest. I am wondering if anyone fact checked the statements: "...a 16-year old who had been shot by the American security guards 15 times for throwing rocks." "...Carlos LaMadrid, who had been shot in the back by a member of the American Border Patrol... he hadn't done anything wrong." Check out http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/federal-officials-close-investigation-death-carlos-lamadrid.

REV. LAWRENCE D. RUDD '58
NEW LONDON N.H.

Westminster pastor responds
As pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church, I want to thank the Rev. Rupp for reading the article "Your Pain is Our Pain" with such interest. In response to his letter I would like to note that Becca was referring to the shooting of José Antonio Elena Rodriguez, a 16-year-old unarmed resident of Nogales, Sonora, Mexico who was shot dead by a US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agent on Mexican soil, reportedly for throwing rocks over the fence. We do apologize as it appears José was not shot 15 times as Becca stated. USA Today (02/06/13) reported that "...entry and exit wounds suggest that all but one of as many as 11 bullets that struck the boy entered from behind, according to the report by two medical examiners working for the Sonora attorney general's office."

Regarding Mayama's quote regarding the shooting death of unarmed Carlos LaMadrid, a US citizen who was shot three times in the back by a CBP official for alleged transportation of marijuana: Her perception as an international student following an emotional vigil with Carlos' mother was that he did not do anything that would require the use of deadly force and that his race played a role in the amount of force that was used. Mayama's interpretation follows her distressing encounter with CBP officials when we reentered the United States after our stay at the Home of Hope and Peace (HEPAC) in Nogales, Mexico. These two young lives taken by CBP officials are not isolated incidences. According to the Southern Border Communities Coalition, since January 2010, at least 36 individuals have died with 31 deaths resulting from the use of lethal force. This statistic indicates the increased militarization and the resulting excessive use of force by CBP officials.

REV. ANDRIES COETZEE
WOOSTER, OHIO
Recently published books by alumni

Abu, Emily '67,


Recent recipients of the Donaldson writing awards

Stephen Donaldson '68, who was on campus last semester as visiting writer in residence, read passages from his latest work, *The King's Justice*. Donaldson, the author of the fantasy 10-book series, *The Chronicles of Thomas Covenant*, has established four prizes in the English Department for outstanding student writers.

**Fiction**
- Lindsay Neff, 2011
- Katherine Markovich, 2012
- Amanda Priest, 2013
- Aaron Winston, 2014

**Personal Essay**
- Alison Hornbeck, 2011
- Katherine Markovich, 2012
- Joseph Dziedziak, 2013

**Critical Essay**
- Alea Safier, 2011
- Jordy Nelson, 2012
- Aaron Winston, 2013, 2014

**Translation**
- Joshua Ware 2011
- Maria Ballentine 2012
- Jordy Nelson 2012
- Lisa Favichia 2013
- Ananya Shrestha 2014
Class of 2018 reflects old traditions and new trends

ORIGINS: A (more complete) snapshot

Our practice for the past six years has been to highlight our newest legacy students—first year students who are direct descendants of Wooster alumni. There is no bigger statement of confidence and trust in an alma mater than to send one’s children to the same school; we’re proud of the hundreds of families who have done so.

But that’s just part of the story. Wooster students who represent diverse socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds are creating a new cultural landscape. As we tell the larger story, we celebrate both the old and the new.

ORIGINS (1) The Class of 2018 has more international and American multicultural students than any in the history of the College.

- White American: 349
- Hispanic American: 29
- African American: 47
- American Indian: 2
- Asian American: 22
- Multicultural American: 21
- Not reported: 13
- Chinese: 21
- Indian: 12
- Vietnamese: 11
- South Korean: 4
- Thai: 2
- Pakistani: 2
- Japanese: 2
- Zambian: 1
- British: 1
- Swedish: 1
- Filipino: 1
- Nepalese: 1
- Lithuanian: 1
- Honduran: 1
- Ghanaian: 1
- German: 1
- Cypriot: 1
- Croatian: 1
- Bangladeshi: 1
- Dual citizens/ global nomads: 11
ORIGINS (2)

Following are students who are direct descendants of Wooster alumni

Roger H. An  Father: Richard An ’81
James Cooper Bay  Sister: Annelise Bay ’16;
grandfather: trustee emeritus Eugene Bay ’59;
grandmother: Jean Stobo Bay ’60; uncle: Walter Bay ’85;
aunt: Bonnie Bay Callahan ’88; cousin: Mike Bay ’17
Diana C. Bickmore  Mother: Teri Warden Bickmore ’83;
father: David Bickmore ’83
Madeleine Braver  Father: John Braver ’77
Benjamin Brady Bunnell  Father: Brent Bunnell ’89
Sarah M. Comstock  Father: David Comstock ’85
Sierra Dezbah Gonne Elrod  Father: Joshua Elrod ’94
Meghan A. Farthing  Father: Josh Farthing ’92;
mother: Karen McEwen Farthing ’90; aunt: Dori Farthing ’95;
aunt: Heather Vidmar-McEwen ’95; cousin: Mike Vidmar-McEwen ’02
Kyle A. Griffin  Mother: Angela Adams ’85;
uncle: Tony Adams ’88; aunt: Amy Lambert ’89
Rachel B. Haines  Uncle: David Haines ’64;
grandfather: Kenneth Haines ’58
Peter B. Hurst  Mother: Mary Barry Hurst ’81
Catherine Burden Kuzmishin  Mother: Lauran Burden Weber ’88; father: John Kuzmishin ’88; grandfather: George Kuzmishin ’52; sister: Alexandra Kuzmishin ’13; sister: Gwendolyn Kuzmishin ’16
Jason Charles Lillie  Father: Raymond B. Lillie ’84
Sonia Malik  Father: Usman Malik ’89
Regina O. McCullough  Mother: Sabra Aaron ’90
Paige E. McKeen  Mother: Ann McArtor McKeen ’89; father: Robert McKeen IV ’88; grandmother: Margaret McCulloch Null ’38
Kyle A. McNickle  Brother: Jordan McNickle ’14; father: Kent McNickle ’88; mother: Donel Hartswick McNickle ’88
Calvin L. Miller  Father: Russ Miller ’86
Robert J. Mueller  Father: Robert Mueller ’89
Danielle V. Muster  Mother: Mary Grace Vlahos Muster ’81
Trenton E. Pfister  Father: Charles Pfister ’81
Michael Phillips  Mother: Pamela Weiler ’82; uncle: Blake Moore trustee ’80; aunts: Cindy Weiler ’80, Rose Weiler Koch ’83, Judith Weiler Thompson ’85; cousin: Simon Thompson ’17
Emma Kate Schroeter  Mother: Sue Tindall Schroeter ’82; grandfather: Hiram Tindall ’41; cousin: Adrienne Livingston ’09
Taylor Sikich  Mother: Shelley Sybrandt Sikich ’87
Haley Elizabeth Skeens  Mother: Lisa Jones Skeens ’88
Drew Brian Tornow  Father: Brian Tornow ’91; mother: Rebecca Boyer Underwood ’79; father: David Underwood ’81; grandmother: Cynthia Cole Boyer ’48
Benjamin O. Webster  Father: Steven Webster ’84; mother: Marjorie Olivet Webster ’86
Ann Claxton Wilkinson  Father: John Wilkinson ’85
Emma Giliuson Woessner  Mother: Karin Riggs Woessner ’92; grandfather: William Riggs ’63
Abigail Burke Woltman  Mother: Susan Beavins Woltman ’90; father: Michael Woltman ’88
Board of Trustees welcomes newest members

The College’s Board of Trustees welcomed five new members. The Board’s 43 members serve staggered, three-year terms.

Bill V. Andrew ’85 is general partner at Inlign Capital Partners and CEO of Werdna Corporation in Chandler, Ariz. A chemical physics major, Andrew went on to earn a master’s and doctorate in electrical engineering from Arizona State University.

Donald R. Frederico ’76 is a partner and attorney at Pierce Atwood in Boston, Mass., where he specializes in representing defendants in class action litigation. An English major, Frederico went on for a law degree from Cornell University, where he was managing editor of the Cornell Law Review. He served on Wooster’s Alumni Board from 2010 to 2013.

Thomas R. Gibian ’76 is headmaster of Sandy Springs Friends School in Washington, D.C. Gibian became headmaster following a distinguished career in finance with Goldman Sachs, EMP Global, AIG, and Emerging Capital Partners, a firm he co-founded. A history major, he went on for an M.B.A. from the Wharton School of Business.

Michael Lauber ’80 is president and CEO of Tusco Display, a manufacturer of custom point-of-purchase displays in Gnadenhutten, Ohio. Lauber served on the College’s Alumni Board from 2004 to 2007 and the Parent Leadership Council from 2009 to 2013. An economics major, Lauber went on for an M.B.A. from Dartmouth University. In 2011, he received the John D. McKee Volunteer Award for his service to Wooster.

Robert M. Tull ’87 is vice president and senior managing director at Fifth Third Bank in Cleveland, Ohio. Tull directs the bank’s foreign exchange trading and sales functions for the FOREX and Commodity Derivatives Group. An economics major, he went on for an M.B.A. from Baldwin Wallace College.

Two milestones for new science building

Trustee Doon Allen Foster ’80 and her husband, John, have pledged $2 million to support the construction of the College’s new integrated science facility. Doon, a speech major, and John, a managing director of NGP Energy Capital Management, said their gift recognizes the critical role of science in society and Wooster’s historic strength in the sciences.

The College has selected EYP architectural firm for the project. Founded in 1972 and located in eight U.S. cities, EYP specializes in integrated, sustainable design. The project will involve a combination of new construction, renovation, and connecting new and renovated facilities into an integrated life sciences complex. The design process has begun and College officials say they hope to break ground in June 2016. The College has raised $14.3 million for the new facility.

They Might Be Giants

On March 18, 2011, PBS producer and journalist Chris Buchanan was sitting in a hotel room in Cairo, Egypt and found himself captivated by an online broadcast of Wooster’s epic 17-point comeback win over Williams College to reach the national championship game of the NCAA Div. III Men’s Basketball Championship. An idea was born—a documentary on the winningest NCAA Team of the 2000s.

From inside the huddle on game-day to practice sessions, team meetings, and everywhere in between, They Might Be Giants takes viewers inside a tradition-rich program that has reached levels of unprecedented success, entering the 2014-15 season with an .849 win percentage during the 2000s (387-69). It features interviews with alumni of the program, current and former coaches, local media members, and student-athletes.

DVDs of the film may be purchased at woosterbasketballfilm.com.

Hugh Howard, director of sports information
Rain gardens and butterflies

The College's nursery school, which has placed nature education at the core of its curriculum since it began 67 years ago, recently received recognition and support for its work. It was awarded a Wild School Site grant and certificate from The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife, in recognition of projects that benefit wildlife through habitat improvement.

The nursery school created a children's rain garden on the eroded hillside behind the Westminster Church House. The project also included planting native Ohio plant and raised crop gardens, nectar producing plants, and maintaining wildlife feeders and water sources.

The nursery school also received certification as a Monarch Waystation by the organization Monarch Watch. The Monarch lifecycle is shared each year with the children firsthand. “This year, we witnessed the return of butterflies to the school's milkweed plants,” said school director Joyce Murphy.

Wooster Chorus warms audiences

The Wooster Chorus was one of 11 finalists for The American Prize in Choral Performance, a national award that recognizes excellence in the performing arts.

“What seems to impress our audiences most is the warm, uniform, beautiful sound of the Wooster Chorus,” says director Lisa Wong. “That's what I believe allowed us to advance alongside many larger schools.”

To hear one of the submitted selections, a performance of Jake Runestad's “I Will Lift Mine Eyes,” go to http://tinyurl.com/o3pm06g.
The Value of a Liberal Arts Education:

Digging Deeper
Q&A

John Hopkins, associate vice president for college relations and marketing, recently sat down with President Grant Cornwell to discuss current issues relating to liberal arts and higher education.

**JH:** American higher education, and the liberal arts in particular, have come in for a lot of criticism of late—in the media, in Washington, in state capitals—with some people even calling into question whether a college degree is worth the cost. Why do you think that’s happening?

**CORNWELL:** Well, I think there continues to be a great deal of uneasiness about the state of the economy. Six years into what has been a weak and halting recovery, with labor force participation at its lowest level in decades and middle-class incomes stagnating, Americans look at the very substantial investment that’s required to obtain a college education, and quite naturally they want to feel confident that they will see a return on that investment. That return seems easier to quantify for a very focused, very job-specific degree like mechanical engineering or accounting, as opposed to, say, history or biology, and so traditional liberal arts colleges in particular are coming in for a lot of critical scrutiny. In addition, (and closely related) the very painful process of deleveraging that has occurred since the Great Recession, and is still going on, has left many Americans extremely nervous about taking on additional debt, including debt to help finance a college degree.

The concerns are very real, but some of the conclusions that have been drawn about the value of a liberal arts education, or a college degree in general, are not well supported by the facts.
JH: So how would you respond to those who say a college of
the liberal arts and sciences, like Wooster, is no place to pre-
pare for professional success?

CORNWELL: Well, listen to what employers themselves
have to say. According to a survey of more than 300 employ-
ers conducted by Hart Research Associates, 93 percent say
that a job candidate’s demonstrated capacity to think critically,
communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more
important than his or her undergraduate major. Eighty percent
say that all students should acquire broad knowledge in the
liberal arts and sciences and that colleges should place the
greatest emphasis on critical thinking and analytical reasoning,
complex problem solving and analysis, and written and oral
communication—precisely the skills and abilities honed by
liberal education. And nearly three quarters say they would
recommend such an education to their own child or a young
person they know.

But it’s not simply that these employers value liberal educa-
tion per se. When you ask them about specific educational
practices they believe prepare students well to succeed in
the workplace, their answers go right to the heart of a
Wooster education. Eighty-three percent cite the experience
of developing research questions and evidence-based analyses,
while 79 percent identify “completing a project prior to
graduation that demonstrates their acquired knowledge
and skills.”

A different survey, this one of more than 30,000 U.S. college
graduates conducted by Gallup and Purdue University, found
that you were twice as likely to be enthusiastically engaged
with your current work if you had an undergraduate mentor
or worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete.
So it’s not only a liberal arts education that has a powerful
impact, but Wooster’s particular approach to liberal education,
grounded in mentored student research, that evidence
suggests is the most powerful, most valuable kind of college
education available.

According to a survey of more than 300 employers, 93 percent say that a job
candidate’s demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and
solve complex problems is more important than his or her undergraduate major.

JH: How can we be sure that a Wooster education actually is
inculcating all those skills and aptitudes that employers say
are critical?

CORNWELL: The individual testimony of thousands of
our alumni is really the strongest possible proof that Wooster
delivers on its promise. I meet hundreds of them each year,
all across the country, and to a person they draw powerful
connections between their Wooster experiences—especially
I.S., of course, but also their co-curricular activities and the
mentorship of coaches, staff, and other faculty—and the per-
sonal and professional success they have achieved. Beyond
this, we are actively assessing the extent to which current
students are developing the qualities we want to distinguish
Wooster alumni. The faculty have explicitly defined the
desired outcomes of a Wooster education. We call them the
graduate qualities; they define our core purpose, and we want
to have clear evidence that a Wooster education has the
depth, breadth, and integrity that we say it does.

JH: The cost of a college education has risen dramatically
over the past two decades. Twenty years ago, Wooster’s com-
prehensive fee was $20,930 and today it’s $53,600. In the
view of some, these rising costs have called into question the
value of a college degree.

The individual testimony of thousands of our alumni is really the
strongest possible proof that Wooster delivers on its promise.
CORNWELL: In fact, the reality is quite the contrary. David Autor, an economist at MIT, examined more than 30 years of data, and last May he published an article in *Science*, in which he concluded that “the economic payoff to college education rose steadily throughout the 1980s and 1990s and was barely affected by the Great Recession starting in 2007.” He also found that for students who entered the labor market in 2008, the net present value of a college degree versus a high school diploma is triple what it was in 1965.

Yes, some of that increase is attributable to the fact that a larger percentage of college graduates go on to earn advanced degrees than was the case 30 years ago. But that in itself is really an additional benefit to earning an undergraduate degree: It paves the way to further specialization and skill development.

JH: Okay, so a college degree is still a good investment, but what about a degree in the humanities or social sciences as opposed to one in the life sciences or business?

CORNWELL: Well, there are a couple of ways of looking at that question. According to Census data, individuals who earn an undergraduate degree in the humanities or social sciences initially do earn less than those with a pre-professional degree like business, but by the time they hit their peak earning years, their positions are reversed. Again, part of that gain is attributable to also earning an advanced degree along the way, and both groups—humanities and social sciences, and pre-professional—earn less on average than those with undergraduate STEM degrees, but the basic point remains: Graduates with degrees in the social sciences or humanities do just fine and can be found in leadership positions throughout the economy.

The other thing to remember is that humanities and social science majors are much more likely to choose career paths, like social work, counseling, and other human services professions, that provide great value to society but simply do not pay as much as some other fields. Our economy and our society need well-educated citizens actively pursuing all callings.

JH: What can you say specifically about how Wooster students are faring after graduation?

CORNWELL: We survey each class one year after they graduate, so our most recent results are for the Class of 2013, 92 percent of whom reported being employed or in graduate school within six months of graduation. The five top fields in which they were employed and the average starting salaries for each were nonprofit/human services ($37,791), education ($40,337), research/sciences ($42,731), finance ($55,003), and technology ($58,547). The grad schools where some of them are continuing their education include Cornell, NYU, UC-Berkeley, Michigan, Dartmouth, and Columbia.

JH: We’ve spent a lot of time talking about the very practical outcomes of a liberal arts education. But traditionally, the *arles liberales* were more than that. They encompassed the knowledge and capacities necessary for a free citizen to take part in civil society. Is there still a place in the liberal arts for that broader conception?

CORNWELL: With all my heart, I believe that is true! As I wrote recently on the *Huffington Post*, liberal education is an expansion of consciousness. With every book read, every natural or social system grasped, every theory put to the test and employed, we become persons with greater scope and agency. Pursuing in earnest the personal and intellectual capacities that we say graduates should—indecent thinking, integrative and collaborative inquiry, effective communication, global engagement and respect for diversity, civic and social responsibility—amounts to a sort of soulcraft. In the very process of liberal inquiry in the arts and sciences, one creates an identity, not just with greater breadth and depth of understanding, but also with greater capacity for action, greater freedom and independence not only to pursue one’s own ends but to influence positively the well-being of the world.

And no college has a better claim to offering this quality of education than Wooster. Our distinguished approach to liberal education and our outstanding, nationally recognized faculty create an educational experience for our students the value of which is manifested over a lifetime.

*With every book read, every natural or social system grasped, every theory put to the test and employed, we become persons with greater scope and agency.*
An Adventure in EDUCATION

The College of Wooster From Howard Lowry to the 21st Century

by JERROLD K. FOOTLICK ’56

Published by Kent State University Press
“It feels odd to be sitting on this side of the desk,” says consummate interviewer Jerry Footlick ’56, as he prepares to be interviewed.  ■  Journalist, author, and editor, Footlick has spent his life digging into a wide range of topics—from crisis management in higher education to inner city education. He was an editor for 20 years at Newsweek, where he supervised education, justice, science, and medicine departments. He has authored six books, including a history of Queens University in Charlotte. He was a Pulitzer Prize finalist for his civil rights coverage.  ■  The College has long relied on the histories that preceded this one—the two volumes of Wooster of the Middle West by Lucy Lillian Notestein ’11 that cover 1866-1944. With firm nudging from people such as Hayden Schilling, professor of history, and the late Coach Al Van Wie, writing a history of the third stage in the life of the College became a priority, and emeritus trustee Footlick was identified as the logical author. “I was honored,” he says.
Almost four years ago, Footlick began camping out in the College library’s special collections department and conducting hundreds of interviews that would allow him to tell the College’s story from the arrival of President Howard Lowry in 1944 to Spring 2012. Special collections librarian Denise Monbarren notes, “This happened at the right time. A number of people interviewed have since died; their voices would have been lost.” Those voices include Viola Startzman Robertson, Al Van Wie, Ken Plusquellec, and Clare Adel Schreiber.

Three readers provided feedback throughout the process: emeritus trustees Gene Bay ’59, a Presbyterian minister and social action leader, and Robert Tignor ’55, professor emeritus of history at Princeton University; and Mary Neagoy ’83, vice chair of the College’s Board of Trustees, who has worked in corporate communications for institutions as diverse as Ms. Magazine, NBC, and the National Basketball Association.

Footlick was also guided in the process by a self-imposed rule. “This book would be fair, accurate, but would not embarrass the College or anyone connected with it,” he says. But he hastens to add that the book is not “peaches-and-cream-and-everything’s-wonderful.” He does not shy away, for example, from telling the stories of the financial crisis of 1966 or the failed presidential search of 1995.

One of his guidelines has changed slightly, he says. When he began the process, his goal was for his readers to be surprised by what they learned from the history. “I wanted them to say ‘Gee, I didn’t know that!’ at least 10 times. Now I want them to say ‘Gee, I didn’t know that!’ 100 times. I’ve been astonished at how much information has been available and how many times I’ve been surprised.

“I loved every minute of this enterprise—the interviews, poring over old Indexes and Voices. This has been fun.”

Jerry Footlick ’56 has completed work on a new history of the College, to be released this spring. PHOTO BY KAROL CROSBIE

“This happened at the right time. A number of people interviewed have since died; their voices would have been lost.” DENISE MONBARREN
A Few Excerpts

AN ADVENTURE IN EDUCATION

to be released this spring, will be available at the Wilson Bookstore, www.wooster.edu/offices/bookstore, The Wooster Book Company, and Amazon

A VISIONARY ARRIVES

From Chapter One

“We have never assumed here that a senior with a diploma is an educated man. Who, indeed, ever is? He is a potentially educated man, who knows how to continue his education to the very end of his life.”

HOWARD LOWRY, BACCALAUREATE, JUNE 4, 1967

This story begins with Howard Lowry. How could it not begin with Howard Lowry, who brought to The College of Wooster the academic standard that for nearly three-quarters of a century has distinguished it from other outstanding liberal arts colleges; the scholar admired and honored on both sides of the Atlantic; the orator with a baritone so mellifluous that his lectures sounded operatic; the nineteenth-century Romantic who cherished the company of attractive young women yet somehow could not bring himself to marry one; the stalwart campus leader who, as his intellect and very life ebbed in the mid-1960s, appeared perplexed by a new generation of students unappreciative of the stability offered by Wooster’s religious history and traditional calm.

Let us start with the story of how Lowry was almost accidentally offered the presidency of the College, third choice of a frustrated Board of Trustees to follow Prexy Wishart’s twenty-five year reign.

President Howard Lowry launched mentored undergraduate research at Wooster.
THE VETS ARRIVE—
AND I.S., TOO!

From Chapter Two

“There was a pleasant and secure feeling about the design of Wooster, a place where confidence in the past and present sometimes made innovation a bit difficult.”

WIN LOGAN

Most important to the new president was Independent Study. Having committed intellectually to his Independent Study dream, Lowry understood that it could be difficult to sell such an imaginative program to the institution—faculty, students, and alumni alike. The faculty, as faculties do, offered mixed views. They spent endless hours, as faculties do, in discussions about how to institute, then actually execute, this plan. Win Logan, then a young instructor in speech who over the years became one of the College’s most respected professors, described it in a later faculty evaluation as a threshold problem: “There was a pleasant and secure feeling about the design of Wooster, a place where confidence in the past and present sometimes made innovation a bit difficult.” But the real difficulties were obvious, starting with the fact that many on the faculty considered themselves overworked already, and some seemed—amusingly enough—troubled by the possibility that students would know more about specific parts of their subject than they did. A few called it placing the cart before the horse, scholarship without seasoning. As a pragmatic issue,
others wondered how they would fit this time-consuming effort into the curriculum, since in some departments required courses already consumed nearly two-thirds of the four-year degree requirement. And, quite troubling, would the library and the science facilities prove adequate to the increased research need? The possibility even existed that the challenges of I.S. might drive away both professors and prospective students.

As Lowry lobbied hard for I.S., his strength of personality counted heavily—he was confident and popular—and everyone was aware that the new leader had almost assuredly staked his nascent presidency on the concept. Lowry promised the faculty that I.S. would make them better teachers as they pursued, along with their students, the newest developments in their disciplines. The day of decision was April 16, 1945 (the day after the campus memorial service for Franklin D. Roosevelt, who had died April 12) at a two-and-one-half hour meeting whose minutes were “respectfully submitted” by William I. Schreiber, professor of German and secretary to the faculty: Mr. (Frank H.) Cowles, for the Planning Committee, moved, and Mr. (Roy) Grady seconded, the adoption by the Faculty of the recommendation of the Sub-Committee on Upperclass Years:

I. The sub-committee recommends that the program of “Independent Work” (if adopted by The College of Wooster) be required for all four-year students...
II. If the system of “Independent Work” be adopted... such Independent Work shall be understood to be the equivalent of approximately one-fifth of a student’s work...

(Note. No action was taken but it was generally agreed that the average “Senior Thesis” might be about 12,000 to 15,000 words—except for problems in the sciences—and that unpadded quality rather than length was to be desired.)

After it was explained to the Faculty that this plan ... was not to be an extra burden on the faculty ... the new plan was adopted.

Independent Studies in the art studio at Taylor: Donnie MacMahon ’50 works on a watercolor painting and Barbara Minnich (Hall) ’50 on a handbook for teaching art in secondary schools.

PHOTO 1950 INDEX

Lowry promised the faculty that I.S. would make them better teachers as they pursued, along with their students, the newest developments in their disciplines.
NOT AS QUIET AS IT SEEMED

From Chapter Three

The rules did not loosen over the decade. From the 1959-60 student handbook: "Each dance or party is to be chaperoned by at least two couples ... At all dances, at all open houses in the men's dormitories, and on all hay rides, etc., there must be a member of the faculty or administration among the chaperones." Intriguing rules applied to women's dress:

"Blue jeans, slacks, or Bermuda shorts . . . may not be worn to classes except for lab work and field study. They are not to be worn on Sunday at any time on campus . . . they are not to be worn to any meals in the dining halls with the exception of daily breakfast, Saturday lunch, Sunday breakfast and supper with long coat and daily lunches during examinations. Bermuda shorts are to be no shorter than two inches above the knees . . . Shorts other than Bermuda are not allowed on campus, except for the tennis courts and then a long coat must be worn to and from the courts.

And finally, Sun-bathing Rules –

a. Sun-bathing is permitted in the following places
   1. The balcony at Babcock; 2. The yard behind the French House; 3. The court at Holden; 4. The balcony at Wagner. Sun-bathing attire is limited to shorts and halter or bathing suit—nothing less.

b. The roofs at Scot Cottage and Westminster are not to be used for sun-bathing.

c. Only women are allowed in these places designated for sun-bathing.

d. Two demerits are given for sun-bathing in places not on the approved list.

e. Sun-bathing in Holden Court before 2:00 p.m. Sunday is prohibited.

Illustrative of the changing ethos on campus was the near quarter-century tenure, beginning in 1956, of Viola Startzman Robertson as the College medical director. . .

Startzman took on another task in the late 1950s and early '60s that was not in the job description: "Very little was known by the students about human sexuality. It was amazing how little they knew, really, and yet when you think of the society from which they came, no one else knew very much either. So I did a lot of counseling in the office and also had a few classes in which I would discuss human sexuality and human relationships and pregnancy, of course, and venereal diseases, and that whole kind of thing that we sort of take for
“Blue jeans, slacks, or Bermuda shorts … may not be worn to classes except for lab work and field study. They are not to be worn on Sunday at any time on campus …”

1959–1960 STUDENT HANDBOOK

“granted.” Was there any concern from Galpin Hall? “The thing that amazed me was how wonderful the administration was in never questioning what I was doing. Howard (Lowry) stayed away from students really. He liked students, but he didn’t know students, didn’t really know the adolescent or the young adult. So whatever I said or did was without question. Bill Taeusch [probably knew] and he went along with it.”

How did the classes come about? “One or two students would come and say, ‘Dr. Startzman, we don’t know how one gets pregnant. What happens. Would you come and talk to a group of us?’ So we’d have meetings in the dorms, late, like 9 o’clock. I’d sit with them in their rooms and we’d discuss it very informally. Eventually the boys got to know about it, so we’d have their meeting down at Hygeia. Then later we had (meetings) together … Bev Asbury (minister at Westminster who arrived in 1962) and I gave a once-a-week course (about) eight weeks, to engaged couples or couples who thought they were going to marry, and we gave them both the medical point of view and also the religious and theological point of view.”

Dr. Viola Startzman Robertson, the College’s medical director, believed that educating students about human sexuality was as important as treating ailments.

PHOTO 1958 INDEX
Ted Williams, professor of chemistry from 1959-2001, saw change occur both on campus and in the community.

The atmosphere at the College was unquestionably far more enlightened, but the fact was, it had never hired a black faculty member until Ted Williams joined the chemistry department.
THE JOURNEY TO DIVERSITY

From Chapter Seven

A turning point in this racial history—both for the College and for the city—arrived during the years 1959 and 1960. Here was a town of fourteen thousand, with a disproportionate number of PhDs—the College faculty and scientists at the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station on the other hill at the south end—and a limited number of black families, a few dozen, probably not as many as the number of churches in which the citizens took much pride. It was welcoming to the Amish families who shopped there—Wooster was central to the largest Amish population in the world—their horse-drawn buggies lashed to parking meters, filling the angled parking space on East Liberty Street on Saturday nights. Yet Wooster and Wayne County were not hospitable to all. When the Seventh Day Adventists held a conference at a downtown movie theater a few years earlier, protesters bombarded them with eggs until police finally stepped in. The atmosphere at the College was unquestionably far more enlightened, but the fact was, it had never hired a black faculty member.

John Chittum and his wife Alma were teatotaling Methodists and dedicated pacifists; one of their sons was a conscientious objector during World War II. They also stood firmly for human rights. As chairman of the chemistry department in the 1950s, Chittum believed it was time for Wooster to appoint an African American (or Negro, as the operative language had it) to the faculty. Setting out to find a chemist worthy of that fine department, he tapped logical sources, and at Howard University, the famous institution in Washington, D.C., he was directed to one of its stellar graduates who was completing his PhD at the University of Connecticut.

Ted Williams had considered a career in industry, but opportunities then for African Americans were, to say the least, limited. He had several offers in higher education, including one from Villanova, which his wife, Yvonne, had hoped for because she had grown up in Philadelphia. When he visited Wooster, he liked it, liked John Chittum, and bonded with Bill Kieffer; Yvonne resisted, but she agreed to give Wooster a two-year trial. There remained however, a problem: The application form included the question, “Do you use alcohol?” Ted decided he had to be scrupulously truthful and answer “yes,” because, as he told his wife, “all chemists use alcohol.” Chittum grilled him about the “alcohol problem,” but they worked it out.

The Williams family, the Chittum family, and others at the College were surprised, however, when Ted and Yvonne and their two young daughters found it difficult to find a home. One woman had agreed to rent to them, but when she discovered they were black, she withdrew the offer. Then Chittum learned that Pauline Ihrig, professor of French, was to go on leave to France, and she readily agreed that the Williams family could rent her home.

When Ihrig returned, and the Williamses needed to look again, Dave and Marty Moldstad, both in the English department and planning to be away for the summer, offered their house on Sherwood Drive in the northern part of Wooster. On Mother’s Day 1960, as the Moldstads returned from church, they were greeted by neighbors gathered next door to protest the renting of their home for two months to a professor at the College. The discussion was heated, the language harsh at times; Dave Moldstad suffered an anxiety attack and was hospitalized. Despite this outburst, the Moldstads were undeterred, and at first the Williamses thought they would accept. “But then I thought of myself with these two small children,” Yvonne remembered. “And I wasn’t going to have them holed up in a house all summer afraid to play in the yard.”

The Mother’s Day protest inspired a host of letters to the editor, all of them condemning the outburst, some citing similar incidents, some accusing the community of hypocrisy for its cultural self-regard. Without rancor, President Lowry wrote in the newspaper, “We believe it would help if before such persons are judged … they could become known to those judging them for what they are—cultivated, attractive and highly gifted human beings. We believe that, once they are known, they would be received in Wooster as first-class citizens and people it is a privilege to know.”

Then came an editorial in the Daily Record titled “The Time Has Come”: “The people who precipitated the Ted Williams demonstration Mother’s Day Sunday have forced the community to ask itself what its position is going to be on race matters. The fire burned slowly at first. Now people are talking and are frankly asking themselves how they stand … It isn’t right that a few people should be forever ‘explaining’ this community. The people should be compelled to look into a mirror.”
A CHAPEL FOR ITS TIME

From Chapter Twelve

“*The reason the interior of that building is so stark is because the people are the excitement in the building, not the walls and not the furnishings.*”  TED BOGNER

If McGaw Chapel was the most provocative structure at the College, Victor Christ-Janer was surely the most provocative architect. Among those most closely involved in his relations with Wooster he has been dismissed as “a fraud” by one highly placed administrator and accused of “selling a bill of goods” by another. He is said to have seduced College authorities, especially a professor or two in the Department of Religion, with his presentation connecting the chapel to early Christianity. “He was masterful,” said Ted Bogner, who witnessed the presentation and whose company constructed the building. “The entire idea of McGaw Chapel as he sold it was an extension of the Roman catacombs … McGaw was to be completely buried … the only

▲ McGraw Chapel, completed in the fall of 1971, was built upon a rock.
things sticking up, above the ground were the turrets... You walked into one of those turrets, you went down, and descended like you were going into the catacombs. The reason the interior of that building is so stark is because the people are the excitement in the building, not the walls and not the furnishings. He just spellbound everybody." Then the pièce de résistance.

"At the very last part of his presentation, someone asked him, Mr. Christ-Janer, what are we going to make this out of?" He waved his arms a little bit in the air, and he said, 'Oh, I don't care. You can make it out of feathers if you want to.' People were just awestruck."

Christ-Janer listened to the campus community and then shared ways in which representation could reflect contemporary campus thought and priorities... The interior, analogous to a womb, would be a communal space of reassurance and strength.

But what of the "catacombs" and the "womb"? Why does the building stand out as it does when its architectural raison d'être was that it be buried deep into the ground once occupied by Memorial Chapel? That part of the story began after workmen had unleashed their backhoes on the quadrangle turf. One day a backhoe operator yelled to Harry Ditch, Bogner's onsite construction superintendent, that he had struck something hard about eighteen feet below grade. Ditch and his team soon determined that they had hit solid, dense sandstone, which was clearly not going to give way to a backhoe. Ditch (a Wooster graduate and onetime football captain) called his boss, Pete Bogner. Bogner's on-scene confirmation led to a series of conferences among the highest officials of the College. "We knew there was rock there but we didn't know it would be as hard as it was," said Ted Bogner, Pete's nephew who succeeded him as president of the company.

In the twenty-first century, the rock could be cracked relatively easily, through a process called hydraulic fracturing (commonly known as "fracking"), but neither the knowledge nor the equipment was available at the time. Dynamite would work. But this was 1969, when political unrest was sweeping across college campuses (students with guns took over the student union at Cornell University that year) and rumors circulated that bands of radicals were journeying from one college to another, hoping to incite trouble. Garber Drushal, one year into his official presidency, did not want explosives on his campus. So the digging would stop where the sandstone lay. The chapel would drop underground to the sandstone. The rest of the structure—about 16 feet, as it happened—would stand above ground. To the public, the College announced that dynamite would not be used because it might damage Kauke or Taylor halls—unlikely but possible.

So the College was caught between a rock and a hard place. Without the chapel's major concept, its construction was now being done on the fly, or as Ted Bogner observed, "The whole thing goes to hell in a handcart."
Volunteerism is intentional at Wooster and is especially meaningful when it is integrated with living communities and social action clubs.

*story and photos by Karol Crosbie*
LIVING COMMUNITIES: WOOSTER VOLUNTEER NETWORK

Students living in the 17 houses administered by Interfaith Campus Ministries are required to volunteer eight hours every month and to participate in monthly reflection with their program advisor, with their agency contact, or in a large group with members of other houses. “The large group has been very successful,” says reflection coordinator Jillian Yoder, assistant chaplain, “because students can learn how their personal volunteering experiences compare to other kinds of volunteering.”

Local Roots

The six men and two women of Shearer House have chosen Wooster’s popular Local Roots Market and Café as the recipient of their volunteer hours. The group is an eclectic mix, with majors in chemistry, geology, physics, business economics, math, history, philosophy, and psychology, and their contributions are as varied as they are. Volunteer efforts have included organizing a fun run from campus to downtown, creating signs and banners, and waiting on guests in the café. “We’ve learned a lot,” says Libby McInturf ’16, who is in her third year volunteering for the market.

Group members are all juniors and hope to pass the Local Roots torch to incoming first-year students next year. “We want to spread the word about how this awesome business connects local consumers with local producers,” says McInturf.

▲ Libby McInturf hangs decorations for a Christmas open house at Local Roots Market and Café.
Westview Manor

The 11 students living in Troyer House devote themselves to volunteering at Westview Manor, a Wooster retirement community. Five have formed an impromptu musical group that performs every Monday afternoon at the Alzheimer’s Unit.

I took my love and took it down
I climbed a mountain and I turned around
And I saw my reflection in the snow-covered hills
Till the landslide brought me down

Oh, mirror in the sky, what is love?
Can the child within my heart rise above?
Can I sail through the changing ocean tides?
Can I handle the seasons of my life?

FROM LANDSLIDE
BY STEVIE NICKS OF FLEETWOOD MAC

The Monday afternoon jam session at the Alzheimer’s Unit at Westview Manor begins with “Landslide.” Audience members listen in different ways—with a gentle smile, tapping foot, or nodding head.

The five Wooster students plunge into a medley of tunes—from Irish folk, to American Negro spiritual, to contemporary blue grass. This is less about performing than it is about connecting, and sometimes the students search for words and pitches. And that, says group coordinator James May ’16, contributes to the joy of the experience.

Celia Connolly ’17, who had arrived on campus without her violin, found good reason to bring it back with her after fall break. May, an accomplished pianist, is learning to play the accordion, a recent gift

Members of the group include James May ’16, guitar, accordion, banjo, and piano; Josh Miller ’16, guitar, banjo, vocal; Celia Connolly ’17, guitar, violin, vocal; Gina Malfatti ’17, guitar, vocal; Phoebe Temple ’17 vocal.
A resident gives James May a hug, a well-known ruse for slipping him a tip. “I know you!” says a laughing May, who—with obvious practice—slips the tip back to an attendant.

from his grandmother. The group gets together for an hour or so every week in addition to their Westview time together, but preparing for a polished performance is not their goal.

“About half of the group are just now learning to play some of the instruments and what’s fun is learning while we’re doing,” says May, the only music major in the group. “Making something musical happen with people who don’t normally play together is so cool.”

“Play us a love song!” says one of their audience members, and the students scramble to supply one. A few students find lyrics on their smartphones.

Sunny Wells, a memory enhancement specialist at Westview Manor and the Wooster group’s main contact, sees daily evidence of the power of music to comfort and heal. “Our patients respond to it before anything else. I’ve seen it lift them from deepest sorrow.”

The hour of music is coming to an end, and May plays a movement from a Ravel piano suite—a benediction of sorts. “Come back, now,” says one of the audience members.

The students promise that they will.

4 Paws For Ability

In 2006, students began a program house that has become a beloved tradition—fostering young dogs on campus prior to their formal service dog training. This year, four dogs arrived from 4 Paws For Ability in Xenia, Ohio, and settled into two campus apartments and two houses. Their customary daily routine is to accompany one of their 16 collegiate caretakers to class or lunch, but approximately every week a play date is scheduled in the yard of President Grant Cornwell and his wife, Peg. Service vests are shed; a wild rumpus ensues.

Blarney, Yoshi, Walt, and Risa meet at the President’s house for a play date. Humans are invited to watch.


**Homework for Hoops**

*Every Tuesday, members of Lewis House help teens with their homework and then head to the Scot Center for a game of hoops.*

The small room at Lowry Center is stuffed with pizza, 10 Wooster students, and a half dozen pre-teens and teens. Although it is billed as a study session, there are wildly varying degrees of studiousness.

And that’s typical, says coordinator Wes Patterson ’15, who has volunteered with the program for four years. The program is in its 10th year on campus, partnering with Anazao, a Wooster human services agency that offers treatment, intervention, and prevention services. “There are some kids who never bring their homework,” he says.

But that’s okay. Connections come through one-on-one attention. On this particular Tuesday, there are a few reading and math sessions in process, as well as an exuberant game of sports trivia. Keeping order can be a challenge, says Patterson, and the Wooster team has initiated a behavioral contract with the kids. “We tell them, ‘We love having you, but you need to follow rules and live up to our expectations.’”

This is the last Homework for Hoops get-together for Patterson, who graduates this semester. He has seen the program grow and hopes to see it split into two houses—one serving girls, the other guys. Wooster students come away with new understandings about family dynamics and socioeconomic stressors that put kids at risk to fail, says Patterson.

“Knowing these kids gives us perspective and gives us empathy.”
LIVING COMMUNITIES: PROGRAM AND CHARTER HOUSES

Administered by the Office of Student Life, members of 13 houses choose a subject area focus and find creative ways to learn more. For example, bike repair, sustainable gardening, and editing the Goliard provide opportunities for learning and volunteerism.

Common Grounds

The 14-year-old institution offers alcohol-free fun to Wooster students, including live music, karaoke, great snacks, and coloring and games for relaxation.

by ANANYA SHRESTHA '16 | photos by CHELSEA CARLSON '16

It is almost 8 p.m. on a chilly November night, but Wooster’s Common Grounds crew is still hard at work. While one staff member straightens a towering stack of board games in the corner, another hangs paper ribbons on the doorframe, two others take their places behind the cash counter, and someone hooks up the sound system for student performers. The band comes to life, the espresso maker begins brewing, and one thing is clear—this is a delicious way to volunteer.

Located on the first floor of Gable House in College Avenue, Common Grounds provides an alternative night atmosphere for Wooster students—a safe, substance-free place for people to hang out. Great milkshakes, weekly traditions of “Wii Wednesday,” and Friday night student performances have earned Common Grounds the reputation as one of the College’s most enjoyable program house experiences.

The house is fully managed by current students, and each program house member works two shifts a night, two hours each. Additional jobs include secretary, treasurer, inventory manager, scheduling manager, health code coordinator, and Friday and Saturday night managers. “Each job has its own responsibilities,” says program coordinator Logan Honea ’16.

Of the 25 members in the program, only nine currently live in the house and none are paid. Crew members make the shakes and baked goods according to Ohio health standards (they renew their health license every year). The desk drawers are filled with deluxe-size Crayola boxes, paints, and craft supplies; the performing equipment and brand-new espresso machine are carefully maintained; the Wii collection is still expanding.

A nonprofit organization, Common Grounds charges less than $2 for baked goods and offers mochas less
expensively than many other coffee houses (including the campus C-Store). Honea attributes Common Grounds's success to financial support from the Campus Council, self-generated funds, and the sheer passion and enthusiasm of her fellow Common Grounds members.

“I love that we are nerdy and passionate about the things we love,” Honea says. “I like that we live together, work together, and volunteer together, and most of us don’t want to kill each other.”

Crew member Gregory Butler ’16 agrees. “I spent a lot of time hanging out there during my freshman and sophomore years because I didn’t want to do the party scene. I enjoyed the chill atmosphere, the group dynamics, and figured that the best way to support something I like is to get involved. Right now, I love our close community.”

CLUBS, FRATERNITIES, AND SORORITIES

More than 50 student-run groups, such as Students Helping Students, Greenhouse, and COW for Kids, result in strong friendships.

▲ J. Edmund Shi ’15 and Matt Germaine ’15 perform; Erika Daun ’15 creates.

▲ Margaret New ’15 and Abigail Daniel ’15, members of the Organic Gardening Club.
Jim Anderson died suddenly on Oct. 12 in a farming accident on his farm in Shreve, a few weeks after he worked with Wooster students and spoke with Wooster magazine. In his honor and memory, we’re telling the story as it was written and planned.

ORGANIC GARDENING CLUB; DELTA PHI ALPHA

Intergenerational gardeners, working together

Jim Anderson ’51 was worried. The 148 apple trees in the Wooster Community Hospital’s 40-acre volunteer Greenpoint Garden were ready to be picked and his scheduled volunteers had cancelled. Anderson, a retired teacher, local sheep farmer, and member of the hospital board, believed in the garden on that golden October day as much as he did when he proposed it in 2008 and planted it in 2009. The one-acre organic garden and orchard allowed the hospital to serve patients fresh produce and communicate an important message, said Anderson. “The garden put a different face on the hospital. It wasn’t just about getting well, it was about staying well.”

So they planted it and the volunteers came—members of 4-H, FFA, Triway High School; local retirees, like Brian Stevens ’72, who is there whenever he can make it.

But there is an impatient and stubborn streak to tomatoes, raspberries, blueberries, peppers, radishes, lettuce, broccoli, spinach, and apples. They won’t wait. Not for volunteers, not for anybody. And there never seemed to be enough volunteers at the right time. “Gardens in big cities thrive using only volunteers, but Wooster isn’t a big city,” said Anderson. “Here, everyone interested in gardening is working hard on their own gardens.” This past summer the hospital hired a full-time paid intern for the first time, and $14,000 worth of garden produce was harvested.

But on this particular crisp fall afternoon, the intern had returned to school, the scheduled volunteers had fallen through, and the Jonathans, Ida Reds, and GoldRushes weren’t waiting. And then a dozen strong, Wooster’s organic gardening club descended on the orchard. Members of Delta Phi Alpha, the women’s African American sorority, came the next day, and by the end of the weekend 65 bushels of apples had been picked.

Within days, they became 250 gallons of cider under the deft management of Jim Anderson. “When it works, it really works,” he said.
Harriet was the first member of the Steiner family to attend Wooster, but not the last. In 1929 Ivan ’33 joined her on campus. Julia graduated in 1948, John in 1950 after military service, and James in 1952. Harriet’s oldest daughter Elizabeth Sands Kocher was Class of 1955, and nephew Jeff Steiner graduated in 1974.

The life (so far) of

HARRIET STEINER SANDS ’31

STORY BY KATHERINE HARPER ’85
The autumn that Harriet Steiner enrolled in The College of Wooster, the United States was still abuzz over Charles Lindbergh’s recent solo flight across the Atlantic. *The Jazz Singer* was a month away from its public premiere. The country was riding giddily on a wave of speculation-based “Coolidge prosperity,” and no end to the good times seemed in sight. By 1931, when she accepted her Wooster diploma, American life had changed a great deal, and not for the better. But whatever difficulties she faced then and occasionally in the 83 years that followed, she never found it dull. Today, Harriet Steiner Sands, who celebrated her 105th birthday in late October, lives in a neat, sunny apartment in the Cleveland suburb of Rocky River. Although her hearing is no longer what it used to be, she has the direct gaze and steady voice of a far younger woman, and her memory can be formidable. She smiles with obvious pleasure whenever she speaks of the College and its namesake town, her home for more than half a century.
HARRIET, THE ELDEST CHILD of Ivan and Merle Holter Steiner, grew up on a farm in Wayne Township, two miles from Smithville and five from Wooster. Her father, an Ohio State University agriculture graduate, worked his land with a span of mules to grow the usual cash crops and raised pure-bred Guernsey cows; her mother gardened and raised chickens and children. Their home had no indoor plumbing, and Mrs. Steiner cooked meals on a coal stove.

Harriet and her brother Ivan Jr., two years younger, walked almost two miles to school; when the weather was bad, their father took them in a horse-drawn surrey. Harriet learned to operate a car at age 14 by jolting around an empty field. When the pair began attending Smithville High School, they were permitted to drive a 1914 Dodge that had belonged to their grandparents. “Ivan and I were both relieved,” Harriet remembers. Although their classmates were mainly Mennonites, “most people by that time [1924–25] were driving cars and we found it humiliating that we didn’t have one.”

At just under 5’6”, Harriet was one of the tallest girls in her class and a successful center on the girls’ basketball team. Harriet enjoyed her two half-year high school courses in cooking and sewing and told her family that after graduation she would like to go to Ohio State University to study home economics. However, in 1925 the Steiner family had grown with the birth of Harriet’s brother John, and sister Julia was noticeably on the way. (Youngest sibling James was still three years in the future.) Rheumatic fever had left Mrs. Steiner with a weak heart, and she and Mr. Steiner said that they needed their daughter to be closer to home. So Harriet enrolled at nearby Wooster to study English and Latin.

Although she had no money of her own, tuition was not a concern. She received financial help from an unexpected source—a childless aunt and uncle who paid her way for all four years. The cost was $125 per semester. Harriet was the first member of the Steiner family to attend Wooster but not the last. In 1929 Ivan ‘33 joined her on campus, also thanks to their aunt and uncle. Julia graduated in 1948, middle child John in 1950 after military service, and James in 1952. Harriet’s oldest daughter Elizabeth Sands Kocher was Class of 1955, and nephew Jeff Steiner graduated in 1974.

When Harriet first moved to campus, her maternal grandmother treated her to several weeks in Hoover Cottage, an attractive building that was a cozier house than the women’s dormitory. She later joined her fellow “freshers” at Holden Annex and eventually moved to Holden Hall, where she remained. She recalls enjoying the communal meals in each residence hall’s dining room. “The College provided everything—the cooking, the dishes,” she says, “but we ate together just like a family.”

In the beginning, she remembers feeling scholastically ill prepared. “I went to a country high school, remember. It was a good education, just not a deep one.” The College expected incoming students to have had four years of foreign language study and Harriet only had two, so she had to take several semesters of remedial French in addition to her four or five regular classes. Under the tutelage of professor Edouard Theis, she grew to love the language.

Harriet’s college days were lived in two separate worlds. From Monday through Friday she lived in the dormitory, attended morning chapel and lectures, and socialized with friends. She earned a magnificent 144 an hour at the reference desk in the college library basement handing out reserved reading materials. On Fridays her brother Ivan picked her up in the Dodge and she spent weekends helping her mother at home. The family attended services at Mount Zion Lutheran Church in Wooster, where Harriet and her mother sang in the choir. Following Sunday dinner, Ivan returned his sister to campus.

Harriet’s strongest college memories are of her English classes with a young instructor named Howard Lowry, a 1923 Wooster graduate who would become the College’s seventh president in 1944. Distinguishing himself from many of his peers, Professor Lowry saw the value in contemporary as well as classic literature and assigned his classes recent best sellers such as Thornton Wilder’s The Bridge of San Luis Rey. His arm-waving enthusiasm rubbed off on his students and turned many of them into voracious readers. Harriet took classes with several other legendary Wooster figures, including French and English literature with George W. Bradford, English literature with Waldo Dunn, geology with Karl Ver Steeg, and biology with Ralph Bangham.
“I wasn’t the best student,” she recalls, “but with such wonderful teachers I certainly did learn a lot about a great many things.”

As graduation approached, Harriet got up her nerve and auditioned for the senior class play, Philip Barry’s Holiday. She laughs as she recalls speech professor Delbert G. Lean’s reaction to her cold reading from the script, saying that he exploded, “Where have you been all this time?” She was too nervous about performing to accept anything but a small role as a servant but remembers the experience fondly. She brushes off her election by the student body as Senior Class Beauty, but the reason for the honor is obvious, both in contemporary photos and today.

Commencement ceremonies were held on the broad lawn in front of Kauke Hall. The 1931 speaker was C. Y. Cheng, executive director of the National Christian Council of China, whose address, “The Remaking of China,” spoke of his people’s determination to work until they had gained an education. Although Wooster was home to a number of Asian students, Dr. Cheng seemed an exotic figure to his midwestern audience and Harriet can still picture him in her mind. She collected her diploma from President Wishart a few minutes later and set out into what college students still refer to as the “real world.”

There had been 289 young men and women in Harriet’s entering class in 1927. The 176 graduates of the Class of 1931 were a record number at that time, but the group had dwindled in size in their junior year after the stock market plummet and ensuing economic crisis. Harriet Steiner saw little need to worry. She possessed a college degree with a major in English and minors in history and Latin. She had taken all of the education classes required to teach school.

After interviews with several districts she accepted an offer from her alma mater, Smithville High School, to teach English and Latin at a salary of $109 per month. She bought a used green 1929 Chevrolet coupe for $250 and looked forward to a lifetime of teaching.

But her budding career did not last long. Shortly after the beginning of the 1931-32 academic year, the school board informed Harriet that she would have to step down. With the country in the grips of the Depression, federal government regulations required that jobs go to people with families to support, one income per household. And Harriet had become engaged.

Harriet continued to sing in the choir at Zion Lutheran Church under the direction of COW music professor Dan Parmalee. At one rehearsal, a newcomer named Harry Sands joined the bass section. That was that. “My choir participation became part of my life. So was Harry—sort of a love at first sight,” says Harriet. She and Harry were married in November of 1932 and remained a loving couple until his death 58 years later.

Despite lean times, Harry’s salary as manager of Elliott’s Laundry and Dry Cleaning was sufficient to support the newlyweds and allow them to buy their first home on Gasche Street. The couple soon welcomed their first daughter, Betsy. In the years that followed second daughter Kathy was born; Harriet took over direction of the Wooster Public Library’s bookmobile and clerked at a downtown gift shop, and Harry became traffic manager with Wooster Brush Company. Oldest daughter Betsy attended and graduated from the College.

In 1969 Harry was promoted and the couple moved to Reno, Nevada, where Harriet became founding librarian at their new church. The couple helped to establish a new Presbyterian church in Reno and sang together in its choir every Sunday.

After losing her beloved Harry in 1990, Harriet returned to Ohio to be near her younger daughter. She participates in activities at her independent living center, participates in weekly Bible study and book discussions, and regularly attends church. A consummate reader, Harriet says her Wooster experience left her even more enchanted with books and a lifelong reader of several books a week. She recently revisited an old favorite, Gone with the Wind, and during a recent interview recalled details about the author’s life and her favorite characters. Her current selection, Condoleezza Rice’s autobiography, sits neatly bookmarked within arm’s reach.

“I wouldn’t be the person I am today had it not been for The College of Wooster,” she says. Then, with a sly sideways look, she adds, “I’d say that’s pretty profound, wouldn’t you?” And her sudden smile lights up the room.
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can Spring be far behind?
— From Shelley’s Ode to the West Wind
In Closing

Camel Caravan
Sahara Desert, Morocco

By Elle Tompkins '15

Elle Tompkins, an anthropology major from Harbor Springs, Mich., was one of 170 students to participate in a semester-long program through Off-Campus Studies during the 2013-14 academic year.

“The plan was for all 28 of us to take a camel caravan into the desert and camp for the night. Unfortunately there was a sandstorm the day we arrived so we were advised to stay in the hotel for the night. The next morning we all woke up at 4:00 a.m. and set out into the desert to catch the sunrise. This shot is of us returning from watching a spectacular sunrise over the seemingly endless dunes. I was at the head of the caravan so I was able to turn and capture this beautiful image. It was an experience I’ll never forget.”