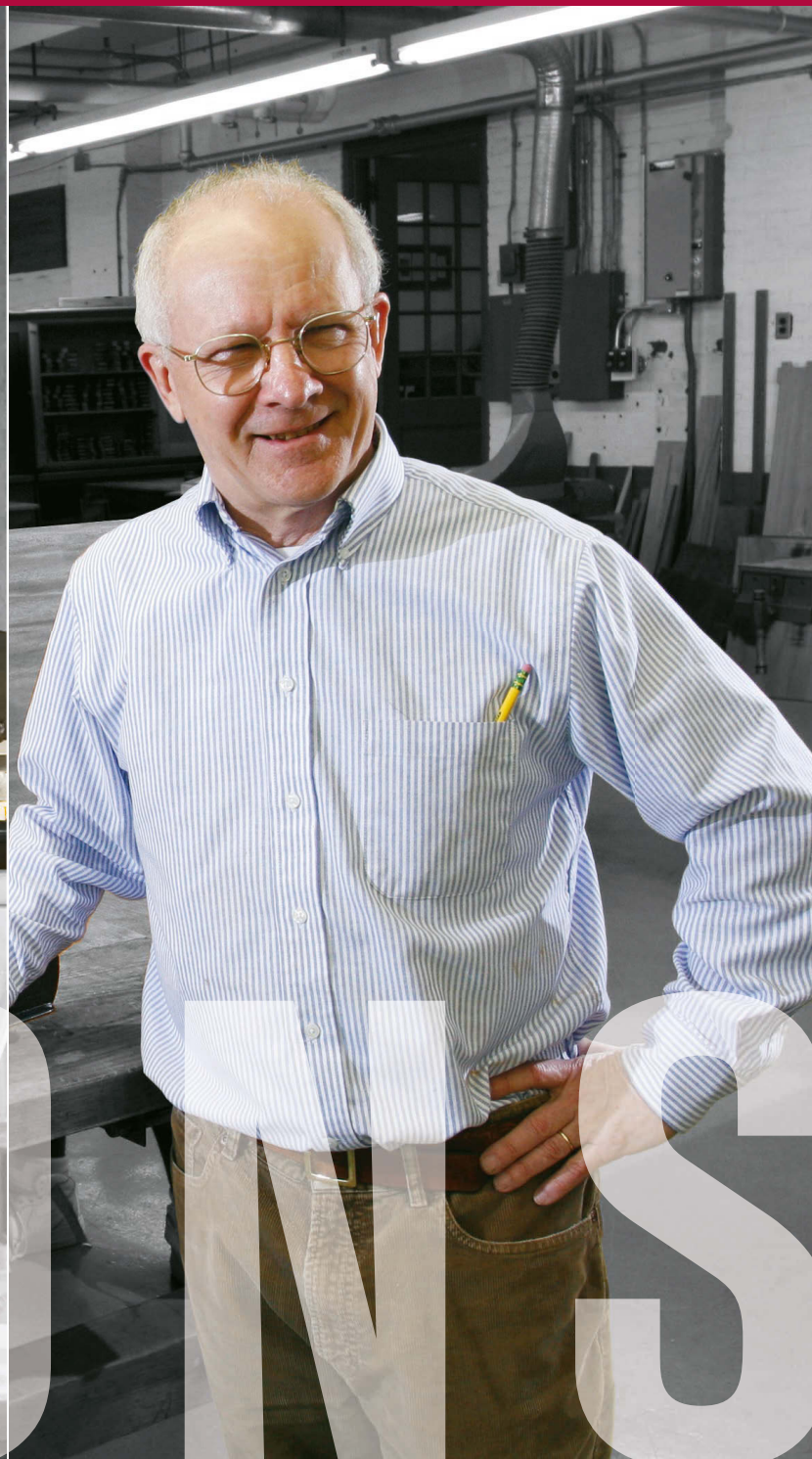


Groton School

The Quarterly • Spring 2021



Celebrating the Impact of Andy Reyes '80 and Doug Brown '57



Groton School

The Quarterly

Spring 2021 • Volume LXXXII, No. 2

Shop Master

Woodworking teacher and archivist Doug Brown '57 says goodbye to Groton after fifty-one years. Former students share memories—and furniture, lots of furniture.

page 14

A Classic

Dr. Andy Reyes '80 has guided generations of Grotonians with his kindness and inspired them with his intellect.

page 40

High Standards

Many would say that Ellen Rennard taught them to write.

page 49

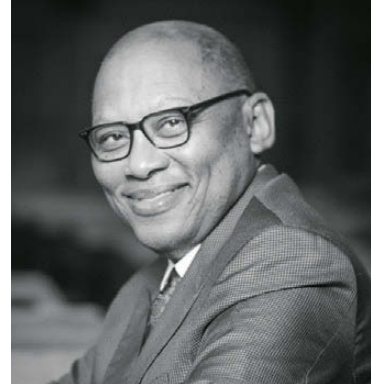
The Boys of '64

Groton's First Henley Regatta: A Memoir

page 52

DEPARTMENTS

- 2** Message from the Headmaster
- 3** Circiter/Around the Circle
- 7** Personae/Profiles
- 58** Voces/Chapel Talks
- 68** De Libris/New Releases
- 70** Grotoniana/Arts
- 76** In Memoriam
- 79** Form Notes



Message from the Headmaster

I HAVE OFTEN said that Groton is a better school because of our Inclusion Scholars. One recent week in April reminded me how very true that is.

When GRAIN (GRoton Affordability and INclusion) took root in 2014, a key component was the addition over time of twenty Inclusion Scholars—applicants of special merit deemed likely to further both our spirit of inclusion on campus and Groton’s legacy of service and achievement in the world.

In the span of just seven days, I saw inclusion and belonging through the words and actions of three Inclusion Scholars, who each unintentionally, but decisively, reaffirmed the power of this program.

It began on April 8, when one Sixth Former gave a moving chapel talk about the complicated notion of home. She told the community that she was grateful for the chance to begin anew at Groton. People may think of our Inclusion Scholars in terms of bringing racial and socioeconomic diversity to campus—and that is true. But we think of inclusion in broader terms of belonging, and this student’s sentiments made clear how much she feels a part of Groton School: “The Circle is mine,” she said. “The Schoolhouse is mine ... This Chapel is mine.” A sense of belonging is the whole point of inclusion; it is the end game, beyond diversity and access.

The palpable influence of our Inclusion Scholars continued on April 13, when a 2019 graduate, now a sophomore at Stanford, organized and moderated a panel called “The Power of Access: The Intersection of Education Inequity and Systemic Racism” for a mentorship organization. She had invited me to be on the panel, which more aptly might have been titled “Optimism in Education.” This Grotonian’s remarks highlighted GRAIN, the importance

of its funding in perpetuity, and what the initiative is accomplishing. She demonstrated that GRAIN is indeed much larger than Groton—that our Inclusion Scholars carry the message beyond Groton and that they understand the importance of inclusion to society and the world.

Two days later, on April 15, the message of inclusion rang through our Chapel again as another student discussed her not entirely welcome transformation at Groton, highlighting in her story the importance of inclusive curricula. She explained that an English elective, “Passing” in Literature, helped her to embrace all of her identities after “passing” at Groton as white, as non-Mexican, as preppy, and even using a nickname she did not prefer, one far from the “Amorcita” her mother called her. “Amorcita would have jumped at every opportunity to embrace her Mexican heritage,” she said, adding that she would not even attend a meeting of the Groton Mentorship Program for domestic students of color, something she regrets.

Our students are speaking, and our students are listening. We couldn’t ask for better role models than these Inclusion Scholars to trumpet the message of inclusion and the story of GRAIN. GRAIN is an evolution and a revolution. I remain forever grateful to those who support it and to those, like these three Inclusion Scholars, who embody it.

Temba Maqubela
Headmaster

Editor
Gail Friedman

Design
Irene HL Chu

Senior Editorial Advisor
Elizabeth Wray Lawrence '82

Form Notes Editor
Jessica M. Hart

**Photographer
& Editorial Assistant**
Christopher Temerson

Advisory Committee
Amily E. Dunlap
Kimberly A. Gerighty
Allison S. MacBride
John D. MacEachern P'10, '14, '16
Kathleen M. Machan

Editorial Offices
The Schoolhouse
Groton School
Groton, MA 01450
978-448-7506

Send feedback, ideas,
or letters to the editor to
quarterly@groton.org.

Other School Offices
Alumni Office: 978-448-7520
Admission Office: 978-448-7510

Groton School publishes the
Groton School Quarterly three
times a year, in late summer,
winter, and spring, and the Annual
Report once a year, in the fall.



Printed on paper
made with post-
consumer waste

AN ADMISSION SEASON LIKE NO OTHER

Groton School is celebrating ninety-six newly enrolled students and a record-breaking admission season.

Applications to Groton were up 20 percent to a record number at 1,505, and only 9 percent of applicants were admitted, a drop from last year's 11 percent admit rate. Forty-four percent of the new students will receive financial aid—a reflection of Groton's commitment to enroll the most qualified students, regardless of their families' financial standing. Of 141 admittees, the 96 who chose Groton—68 percent—represent a record yield for the school and a yield about 10 percentage points higher than fifteen years ago.

In this competitive season, the school's mission and values remained at the heart of the process. "We focused on drawing students who exhibited the qualities of kindness, perseverance, and intellectual engagement," said Dean of Admission and Financial Aid Ian Gracey.

The number of full-pay applicants from the United States increased by 38 percent, a notable rise even in a year when

pandemic-related school closings drove more families to consider independent schools. Of those newly enrolled, 22 percent self-identify as Black or Latinx, including biracial and multiracial students.

The Admission Office interviewed a total of 1,432

applicants—12 percent more than last year—and all of the meetings were virtual. Pre-pandemic, in 2020, only 106 applicants interviewed virtually, and 1,172 came to campus.

In this unusual pandemic era, the outstanding admission season reflects the hard work and creativity of the admission team, faculty, coaches, and most of all, Groton students, who acted as tour guides and created videos for the Groton "Drive-In."

Forty-eight families toured Groton's

campus—without leaving their cars—at the "Drive-In," an innovative combination of student videos and a visit to campus. Admitted families also attended virtual events, from cooking classes to history paper presentations to athletic captains' meetings to a Spanish class.



An innovative approach to a closed campus

AN INTERNATIONAL DEBATE CONTENDER



Jiacheng Kang '22 competed in the World Individual Debating and Public Speaking Championships April 23–26, a rare feat last accomplished by a Groton student fifteen years ago. At the virtual competition, Jiacheng qualified for the finals in three of four events—debating, persuasive speaking, and interpretive reading.

"The debating was very paradigm-shifting," he said of

the international competition. "In my first debate, I was paired with a student from Lithuania, and I debated against students from South Africa. Throughout the debate, students from the two different countries brought up examples that I was not familiar with, and I learned a ton about Lithuania from my own partner."

One topic for debate was whether the Confederate flag should be banned in accordance with a law passed in Germany that prohibited the swastika. "Hearing how students from other countries think about issues such as freedom of expression vastly expanded my worldview," Jiacheng said.

Qualifying for Worlds is not easy. "A debater in our league needs to place as the best advanced speaker at a qualifying tournament sometime during the fall and

winter terms," said Michael Gnozzio '03, Groton math teacher and debate advisor. "This means besting approximately one hundred other competitors. Jia managed to tie for first place at the Loomis Chaffee tournament in January and was one of only twelve Americans to qualify for the tournament this year."

With the help of a group of dedicated Fifth and Sixth Form students, Jiacheng was able to hone his skills via weekly Zoom practice debates last summer. His hard work paid off in consistent successes in smaller debates throughout the fall.

"Jiacheng keeps the flare, puts things into perspective, and doesn't get bogged down in the semantics," said Groton Debating Society president Samarth Agrawal '21. "He's super strong rhetorically, really good at leveraging what his opponents have said against

them, great at emphasis, and always grabs the crowd's attention."

If not for the pandemic, the competition would have been held in a major international city. This year's virtual championship was hosted by South Korea. Stephen McCarthy '06 competed in the 2005 World championship in Cyprus. The last Grotonian to reach Worlds, Sebastian Osborn '06 in 2006, had the mixed blessing of competing in his home state of Connecticut.

"Even though I didn't end up winning in any of the categories, the whole experience was full of fun and learning," said Jiacheng, "and I cannot thank Dr. Reyes, Mr. Gnozzio, and Steven Pang '22 enough for their help and support in my preparation for the tournament."

—Alexandra Karr '21

MUSICAL ACCOLADES FOR GROTON VIOLINISTS

Two Groton musicians, Allison Jiang '22 and Eric Ge '24, have earned accolades for their outstanding performances on violin.

Allison Jiang '22, concertmaster of Groton's Chamber Orchestra, placed second in the senior (19 and under) division of the Society of American Musicians Competition and also advanced to the finals of the Chicago-based Sejong Cultural Society's Music Competition.

Eric Ge '24 placed first in his age group in the American Protégé International Concerto Competition. He will perform at Carnegie Hall in 2022.



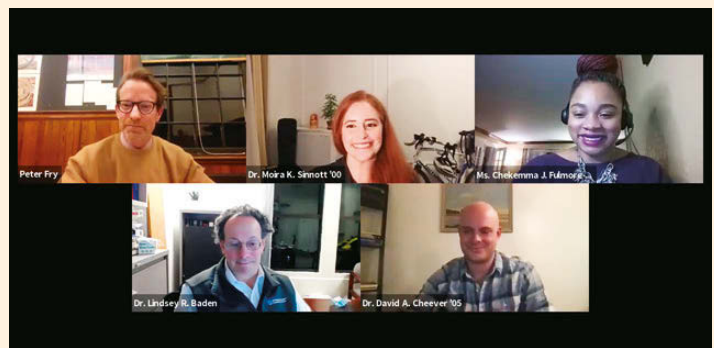
GROTON STUDENT WINS RECOGNITION FOR DOCUMENTARY IN C-SPAN CONTEST

Fourth Former Michelle Kim won an honorable mention in C-SPAN's StudentCam competition, which challenges students in grades six through twelve to create short documentaries on issues of political and societal importance.

Michelle and a partner answered this year's challenge—"Explore the issue you most want the president and new Congress to address in 2021"—with a film titled *The River of Change: Fighting Corporate Dominance*. The short documentary tackles the corporate world's role in and responsibility for the globe's environmental challenges. Among the interviewees: environmental science teacher **David Black '80**. "We decided to shine a spotlight on corporations and their complicity in furthering the dangers of climate change—something that does not get talked about enough," Michelle said.

More than 2,300 students entered the StudentCam contest, submitting entries from forty-three states, the District of Columbia, Singapore, and Pakistan. Of the entries, 150 received recognition.

On February 1, Groton students and faculty gathered for a virtual Circle Talk with four panelists who are on the front lines fighting COVID-19 in hospitals and communities: Dr. Lindsey Baden, an infectious disease expert at Brigham and Women's Hospital who worked on the Moderna vaccine trial; Dr. David Cheever '05, an emergency physician at the Gallup Indian Medical Center in New Mexico; Chekemema Fulmore-Townsend '97, president and CEO of the Philadelphia Youth Network; and Dr. Moira Sinnott '00, a pediatric dentist and anesthesiology resident at St. Barnabas Hospital in the Bronx. English teacher Peter Fry moderated the discussion.



JOURNALISTS KRISTOF, WUDUNN SHARE INSIGHTS AT SPRING CIRCLE TALK

On April 22, the Groton community attended a virtual Circle Talk featuring Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists and spouses Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn.

Student moderators Derek Hu '21, Naomi Boateng '22, and Trey Whitehead '21 introduced the speakers and managed the question-and-answer format, asking student-generated questions on topics ranging from police violence and inequality to women's rights in Senegal and U.S.–China relations.

First, Naomi relayed a question from a Second Former asking if, in Ms. WuDunn's opinion, the state of women's rights had improved since she and Mr. Kristof published *Half the Sky* in 2009. Ms. WuDunn said that women's rights were moving in generally the right direction, citing how her grandmother was a victim of the now obsolete practice of foot-binding in China. She also noted more recent declines in maternal mortality rates and ongoing efforts to curb the practice of female genital mutilation.

Another student, referencing the speakers' 2020 book *Tightrope: Americans Reaching for Hope*, asked whether inequality in the rural United States contributes to the current political polarization. Mr. Kristof replied that while growing up in the small town of Yamhill, Oregon, rural America "seemed to epitomize opportunity and upward mobility." Over time, however, good working-class jobs there disappeared, and, tragically, a quarter of his childhood classmates went on to die of causes related to drugs, alcohol, or suicide. Desperate people, he said, are more likely to listen to anyone who promises to bring back factory jobs, making them vulnerable to political polarization. But the problems extend beyond factory closures to neglected educational and health care programs and inadequate job training and addiction treatment. The COVID-19 pandemic has only magnified the inequities, he added, as six million children without Internet access were left behind when classes went online.

The journalists' deep experience in China resulted in several questions about U.S.–China relations. Asked how the Chinese



Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn

Communist Party has changed since the Tiananmen Square protests and massacre, Ms. WuDunn and Mr. Kristof said that the increased repressiveness of the Communist Party, combined with lower levels of hunger and poverty in China, make pro-democracy protests less likely going forward. In a colorful detail, Mr. Kristof, who covered Tiananmen Square, recalled the heroism of rickshaw drivers who transported the injured and dead to hospitals amid the violence.

Mr. Kristof blamed a confrontational Communist Party for increased U.S.–China tension and warned that a minor military confrontation could some day escalate toward war. Ms. WuDunn argued that the anti-Chinese rhetoric of Trump, as well as his ill-advised trade war with China, were the key factors in the deteriorating US-China relationship. The U.S., Mr. Kristof added, will need to address inequality and public education to improve its economic and scientific standing compared to China.

On a timely domestic topic, a student asked about lasting impact from the conviction of former police officer Derek Chauvin for the murder of George Floyd. Ms. WuDunn said that a change in police culture is possible with funding for improved training and oversight at higher levels of government. Mr. Kristof noted progress on police accountability due to the proliferation of cell phone cameras and body cameras, but grimly concluded that injustice in policing will continue as long as racial inequality in

America persists. "What troubles me is that I don't see progress on some of the engines of greater equality in the country—in particular, education," he said. "We obviously need fairer policing, just as a matter of justice. But if we're going to achieve a more fair society, then we have to have an education system that builds more economic and social equality." Partly to blame, he said, is the localized nature of school funding, which results in well-resourced schools in affluent communities and poor school funding in many communities of color.

In closing remarks about the challenges facing a free press, the journalists reiterated the repressiveness of the Chinese Communist Party and discussed Hong Kong journalists who have been imprisoned. Obstacles to a free press in the U.S., they said, include the spread of false information, Trump's characterization of the press as "the enemy of the people," and the collapse of the traditional newspaper business model and closure of many small newspapers, making it difficult to hold leaders accountable.

Students found the Circle Talk engaging despite the online presentation. "It was very exciting and inspiring to be able to interact with such learned and experienced journalists," said Naomi. "The fact that it was Q&A-based made it more palatable and less like a lecture. Many students watched actively and spoke to me after about it."

—Christopher Temerson

GROTON GIRLS SQUASH STANDOUT WINS NATIONAL AWARD

Katherine Sapinski '21 has received the 2021 DeRoy Junior Sportsmanship Award, given by U.S. Squash to only one girl and one boy in the nation each year.

The winners are high school seniors who, according to U.S. Squash, "display exemplary on- and off-court behavior while competing at a high level of squash."

Katherine, co-captain of Groton's girls varsity squash team, competes at a high level indeed. She is ranked number 8 in the U.S. for U19 (and has ranked as high as 7). According to Groton squash coach Mike Tootill, Katherine spearheaded the team's 2020 Division 3 win at the U.S. High School Team Championships.

During that entire season, Katherine lost only one match. Due to the pandemic, she unfortunately had no interscholastic competition this year, but she plans to play at Princeton University next year.

"Her determination and inner strength to be the best she can be is very admirable," said Coach Tootill. "It is not easy chasing a little ball around, in an enclosed box,

getting in each other's space, and, all the while being graceful and respectful while you are pushing yourself to your limit physically and mentally. Groton squash and I are very proud of her."

Katherine said she is honored. "Showing my opponent the utmost respect by always giving 100 percent effort in every

single point has been a top priority of mine throughout my squash career," she said. "I'm so very happy, and humbled, to be accepting the 2021 DeRoy Junior Sportsmanship Award."

Coach Tootill said that Groton School has had one previous winner of the DeRoy Junior Sportsmanship Award, Alia Aziz '06.



Jon Chase

A STAY-CATION FOR MODEL UN/CONGRESS

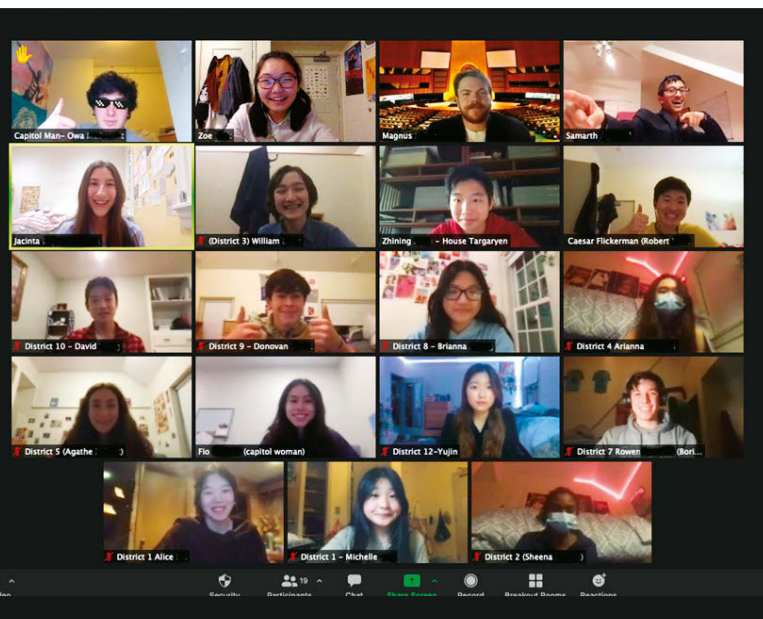
Groton's Model UN/Model Congress club (GMUN/GMC) held a virtual, in-house conference in early February with approximately fifty students, some veterans of past conferences and others new to the experience of role-playing United States senators or United Nations ambassadors.

GMUN/GMC club heads opted to organize the in-house conference at Groton when the annual conferences that they usually attend in person, hosted by Harvard University, were moved online in December. The student leaders developed two concurrent conferences, one for a Model UN and one for a Model Congress.

The Model Congress group created two Senate committees, the Intelligence Committee and the Foreign Affairs Committee, and assigned students roles as current senators. Student participants held lively debates about U.S.-Iranian relations and domestic terrorism.

The Model UN group decided to be less traditional and developed a theme based on *The Hunger Games*, with students representing the various districts of Panem, a fictional country.

—Tommy Lamont, Model UN/Model Congress advisor



Eloise P. Lawrence '91

Housing Rights (and Wrongs)

On Sundays after chapel at Groton, **Eloise Lawrence '91** and her formmate **Elizabeth Dodge** would go to the home of Maureen Beck, her Third Form Latin teacher, to bake bread.

It wasn't a cooking lesson. They were baking for a Fitchburg homeless shelter that they visited regularly with Groton Community Service. Eloise went on to intern at the St. Francis House in Boston—the largest shelter in New England—the summer before Fifth Form.

Well before attending Groton, Eloise had strong feelings about homelessness, civil rights, and poverty. "For me, there's always been this deep sense of... my friends would probably call it self-righteousness," she laughed. "But it's moral outrage, at the inequities. Feeling fundamentally that it's immoral for some people to be without a home. It's not just unfortunate or inconvenient. It should not be allowed to happen. I feel it as strongly as I did arguing with formmates thirty years ago. That hasn't left me."



Eloise speaking with her students



You bring together tenants to understand their collective power and preserve the community that's getting rapidly changed."

Today, Eloise brings that passion to her work as a housing rights attorney and deputy faculty director of the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau (HLAB), the oldest student-run legal aid clinic in the country, founded in 1913 by students with a desire to use what they were learning to help low-income Bostonians. When it became problematic that students weren't in fact members of the bar, faculty lawyers began working alongside them. The opportunity to have a collaborative relationship with faculty at HLAB became a privilege for law students, like being in an honor society with a mission.

"I think the model works to really force us to take on the social justice issues of the day," said Eloise. "Each generation comes in and pushes the organization further than older folks more set in our ways would do."

HLAB protects people from getting evicted, working to keep them in their homes while their rights are being examined and defended. In some cases, Eloise and her team are fighting a landlord or a "flipper," an investor who buys a building to rehab in a neighborhood on the cusp of gentrification and kicks out the tenants. In other situations, they are advocating for homeowners who have fallen on tough times and are struggling to make mortgage payments, often to predatory lenders who placed them in loans doomed to fail.

"These cases can be so devastating and debilitating to families. We try to flip that script and collectivize a problem happening to so many people," Eloise said. "It's not their fault, but they feel deep shame about the fact that their house was foreclosed on, or that they do not have the funds to keep up with rising rents."

The successes, when they come, go a long way toward keeping the faith. At Nubian Square, in the heart of Boston's

Roxbury neighborhood, a speculator bought a run-down apartment building in a gentrifying community that had previously been redlined, intending to flip it. He offered the tenants, all people of color, \$500 to \$1,000 to leave, Eloise said. But without security deposits, solid credit ratings, or affordable options in the area, tenants had few alternatives.

"These folks came to us and we started working with them to fight these evictions," she said. "They formed a tenant association. 'We're willing to pay rent,' the residents told the new landlord. 'Just give us a fair shot.'" The new landlord refused and pursued evictions against all the tenants who had joined the tenant association.

The first eviction case ended in a jury trial, where HLAB students won the tenants a monetary reward and, more importantly, the right to remain in their homes. In exchange for damages, the tenant association secured a five-year contract with affordable rents and a complete renovation of the dilapidated building. Eloise is on the board of the Boston Neighborhood Community Land Trust and is working to get the property out of the speculative market and categorized as permanent affordable housing before the five years is up.

"These are the cases I'm most proud of because you bring together those tenants to understand their collective power and preserve the community that's getting rapidly changed," she said. "The heart of the

Black community is getting hollowed out very quickly. Condos in Roxbury in the last five years have gone up more than 250 percent. People think these movements within speculative markets are natural forces, but they're not. We're taking a basic necessity and treating it like a commodity to enrich investors at the expense of the people who need to live there."

While Eloise does teach at Harvard Law School, she spends most of her time "in the trenches" and thinks of herself less of a Harvard professor and more of a lawyer advocate, working hand-in-hand with community organizers to make their legal cases a way to build power in low-income communities of color.

She calls this type of community lawyering the "sword and the shield" model. "The sword is the people organizing, and the shield is the legal defense. In other words, we, 'the shield,' provide the tenants and homeowners the time and space to fight for their homes and their communities. But we, the lawyers, are not the leaders. The people who are most affected—the tenants who will live with the consequences—must lead."

As an undergraduate at Stanford, Eloise took every class she could on housing issues and worked with homeless people and panhandlers through the Stanford Homeless Action Coalition. She thought becoming a lawyer would be the key to climbing inside the system to achieve her goals, but during law school classes at

Northwestern University, the letter of the law started to feel more like a paper airplane—movement without the real substance to get anywhere.

That became even clearer during a fellowship in 2002 with a not-for-profit that had filed and won the landmark Gautreaux housing discrimination case against the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA). Eloise learned that not much had changed in the forty years since the ruling—almost all of Chicago’s public housing was still deeply segregated. During her fellowship, the CHA was engaged in a “Plan for Transformation,” which meant that instead of building public housing in white areas, as they were ordered to do, the CHA tore down all the public housing in the Black neighborhoods of Chicago.

“When they tore down the high-rises and were throwing people out, they gave people few options as to where to go,” she said. A so-called “desegregation plan” actually moved Black tenants further out to poor segregated Black neighborhoods. “The case can technically be over, fully litigated, and you’re in the remedy stage. But the remedy phase can go on for a very long time—especially when there is no political will to make the legal ruling a reality.”

Eloise hopes the pandemic has made people re-examine the centrality of housing to the health and well-being of society and to the quest for racial justice. “We have been reminded that evictions do not just affect tenants, but all of us—it is why the Centers for Disease Control in both the Trump and Biden administrations banned evictions for most of the pandemic.

“I am hopeful that this moment has made us finally realize that all people need a home,” said Eloise, “regardless of their ability to pay for it, the color of their skin, or the language they speak.”

—Nichole Bernier

Courtesy of City Live/Ida Urbana



Lynn United for Change



Eloise at a recent protest outside of Boston’s Housing Court (top), and with co-counsel and clients after an oral argument at the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court



Adeiyewunmi Osinubi '14

An Eye on Maternal Health

The current address for **Adeiyewunmi Osinubi '14** is technically Brown University Medical School. But in truth, she lives at the intersection of medicine, media, and maternal health for Black women.

Ade does not envision a traditional medical career path. She is passionate about the reproductive health of women, especially Black women, whose rates of mortality and infertility far outpace those of white women. And she has used her journalistic storytelling in film and photography to spread the message, which this year took the shape of a documentary she independently directed and produced, *Black Motherhood Through the Lens*, shown at Brown's



School of Public Health and several film festivals, national conferences, and other events.

"It's about four Black women navigating the reproductive health system, infertility, childbirth, and postpartum mood disorders. In the media, we hear about the Black maternal mortality crisis, and Black women do experience disparities," Ade said. "Black mothers in the U.S. die at three to four times the rate of white mothers. Maternal mortality is very important, but my film sheds light on other reproductive disparities that exist. I wanted to showcase what Black women's experiences are."

Ade is currently in her third year of medical school, but her seventh at Brown. She applied early decision to the Program in Liberal Medical

Ade with Yoonyoung
"Katie" Choi '14 (center)
in Ethiopia, filming a
documentary on obstetric
fistula in 2012



Education (PLME), an eight-year track that sends undergraduates directly to medical school at the university.

Women's health issues first came to Ade's awareness as a middle schooler, when she attended a medical conference with her mother, who is a physician. The conference, focused on maternal medicine, was the first time

In Fourth Form, Ade cofounded the Iris Fistula Project with her friend **Yoonyoung "Katie" Choi '14**. They traveled to Ethiopia for three weeks—thanks to a grant from Groton's John Endicott Lawrence 1927 Global Scholars Fund and additional Rotary Club funding—to work with Healing Hands of Joy, a rehabilitation and advocacy organization. While there, they made a documentary on the impact of obstetric fistula on women's lives, the stigma, and the recovery. Back in the U.S., they used the film for education and development, raising

\$20,000 to help women in rural areas of Ethiopia, where the disparity is most pronounced.

"In rural areas, they don't always have the highest levels of obstetric care or many providers who can do fistula repair surgeries, and women are ostracized by their families and communities," Ade said.

She knows firsthand about medical disparities, particularly within a West African country. Ade's parents came to the U.S. from Nigeria in the nineties. Already professionals, they knew the route to success in their adopted country was through attending good schools.

Ade credits Groton with creating an environment that encourages students to discover what fascinates them—to nurture and develop these

interests, then find ways to establish them firmly in their future. "At Groton I was able to develop passions that I continue to have—medicine and health, film and photography," she said. "I owe Groton a lot for supporting me and supporting my passions and projects with resources, and I was able to continue to build off that."

With one year to go in medical school, Ade's residency and route remain unmapped. But role models such as ER physicians Uché Blackstock, who founded an organization dedicated to racial health equity, and Darien Sutton—medical contributors to MSNBC and ABC News respectively—represent the kind of multidisciplinary career that she finds appealing.

"I do want to continue with film and photography, and I want to pursue a career in medical journalism. There's a widespread misconception that racial disparities in health are explained away as 'biological differences.' But that has been discounted a number of times," she said.

Ade does see improvement in Black women's maternal health, and the potential for more. "I do see the medical community doing better," she said. "Not just acknowledging that Black women are more likely to die of maternal complications, but putting in the work to eradicate these disparities."

—Nichole Bernier

Ade credits Groton with creating an environment that encourages students to discover what fascinates them."

Ade heard about the shocking realities of women's reproductive health—from female genital mutilation to postpartum hemorrhaging and obstetric fistula—and the racial disparities in outcomes. "I knew from a young age that I wanted to be a doctor like my mother," she said. "But that's what really got me interested in women's health in particular. It gave me my 'why' in medicine."

At Groton she delved into research on obstetric fistula, an injury caused by prolonged and protracted labor that causes chronic incontinence. It's not much of an issue in most of the U.S., where physicians are experienced in the procedures to repair it. But it is devastating for women in other parts of the world.

Jonathan T. Erichsen '68



Scientific Vision

More than three thousand mostly watery miles stretch between Groton and Cardiff, Wales, where **Jonathan "Jon" Erichsen '68** lives in a restored stable alongside the moat of a medieval castle. A cluster of iMac computers dominates a corner of his dining room, which has doubled as a Zoom classroom and home office for more than a year.

The journey that led him to Cardiff in 1995 was circuitous—fueled by curiosity, serendipity, and what Jon calls a “nerd-like need to understand things.” Now a professor of visual neuroscience at the Cardiff University School of Optometry and Vision Sciences, he is the coauthor of more than one hundred scientific papers that have been cited more than one hundred times.

At Cardiff, Jon is helping to unravel the mysteries of a rare, lifelong eye condition called infantile nystagmus, which usually presents shortly after birth and causes the eyes to oscillate quickly and uncontrollably.

“The phrase ‘he’s made a difference’ has become a bit of a cliché, but in Jon’s case it was no exaggeration,” said John

Sanders, who has the eye condition and is a former chair of the Nystagmus Network charity in England and Wales. “Jon is one of a handful of vision scientists and medics who have hugely raised awareness of nystagmus in the last two decades. In the 1990s, very few people knew anything about—or were interested in—nystagmus.”

Jon said he had an edge when he began studying the condition. “The advantage I had was that I had no preconceptions about it,” he said. Before arriving in Cardiff, he had devoted a twenty-three-year academic career to studying animal behavior and vision—an interest he credits to a talk during his junior year at Harvard by Nikolaas “Niko” Tinbergen, a biologist and ornithologist who helped establish the field of ethology (the study of animal behavior), for which Tinbergen won the Nobel Prize in 1973.

“It was like a religious conversion,” recalled Jon. “I thought, this is how I want to spend my life.” So the lanky, six-foot-six biology major set his sights on Wadham College at the University of Oxford, where Tinbergen

was teaching and overseeing what Jon calls “arguably the world’s best animal behavior group.” With support from a Marshall Scholarship and a Danforth Foundation Fellowship, he went to Oxford and spent 1972–79 earning his doctorate in zoology and traveling throughout Europe in his spare time.

His field of study was birds—specifically, mourning doves, great tits, and pigeons—with a particular focus on

vision, suggesting that evolution has come up with a better design solution.

Curious about the workings of the bird brain, Jon moved back to the U.S. in 1979 to become a postdoctoral fellow in the lab of neurobiologist Harvey J. Karten, who was investigating the neuroanatomy of the avian visual system at Stony Brook University in New York. There, and later at Cardiff, Jon researched how the brain controls the lens and the pupil of birds.

“His neuroanatomical studies in birds and mammals form the basis of our understanding of the neural control of these systems,” said Craig Evinger, professor emeritus of neurobiology and behavior at Stony Brook.

During his sixteen years in New York, Jon collaborated with Evinger and other scientists on studies of vision in birds, monkeys, cats, and rats. Yet when he was offered a more secure, tenured position at Cardiff University in 1995, he did not hesitate.

“When I look back on my life, there are these serendipitous moments of timing,” he said, explaining that he had left his resume in the hands of an acquaintance at Cardiff’s optometry school the year before the job offer materialized. “I’ve just learned to trust.



Jonathan meeting Prince Charles at a 60th anniversary celebration for the Marshall Scholarship

Basically, I don’t fret. If something is going to happen, it’s meant to be.”

The eldest of three brothers who all attended Groton (**David ‘70** and **Peter ‘74**, a Groton trustee), Jon was passionate about the humanities during his high school years. But he also took the then-elective science sequence and said his Sixth Form biology teacher, Joe Broyles, “was truly an inspiration to me. By the time I finished biology, I had become enamored of the whole philosophy of trying to understand things going on around us.”

All these years later, that drive to understand is as strong as ever. After he gave a talk in Kazakhstan five years ago, “a number of students came up to me afterward and said they found it very inspiring because up till then, they never really thought somebody could make a career in science just being driven by curiosity,” he said. “One thing just organically led to another.”

—Kathleen Clute

Ground-foraging birds, unlike humans, have varifocal eyes that enable them to focus clearly on objects that are close, such as food, and faraway—perhaps a predator—simultaneously.”

how they see. He is particularly proud of his discovery that ground-foraging birds, unlike humans, have varifocal eyes that enable them to focus clearly on objects that are close, such as food, and faraway—perhaps a predator—simultaneously. This wide-angle view appears to be free of the normal distortions that characterize man-made optical systems or even human peripheral

Photos by Jonathan Erichsen

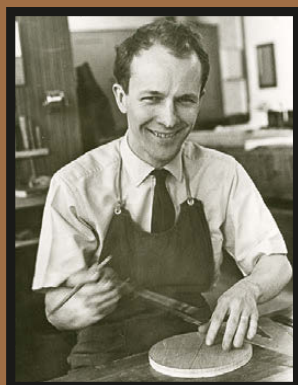


Jonathan resides alongside this castle, in the restored stable (right).



SHOP MASTER

The hard-to-believe—and harder to accept—retirement of Douglas Van Dyck Brown '57



IT IS almost impossible to imagine Groton School without Doug Brown.

A graduate of the Form of 1957 and a Groton teacher since 1970, Mr. Brown has somehow managed to be one of the quietest as well as the most ubiquitous faculty members, known to most as a woodworking teacher, to many as the

(continued)





school's archivist and its exhaustive institutional memory. Over the years, he also was a dorm affiliate and faculty advisor, chaired the Arts Department (for a mere nineteen years), and edited the *Groton School Quarterly* (for six).

After tending the school archives for more than thirty years, Mr. Brown quite simply knows everything about Groton. Ask about an event that happened decades ago, and a story—an accurate story—slips out without hesitation. Show Mr. Brown a relic and he knows where it came from and what it means to Groton.

Mr. Brown lived on campus until a few years ago and took meticulous care of the original, crumbling Gardner House, preserving it well beyond its expected life span. But his second home was always the shop, and when the space was moved during the 2014 Schoolhouse renovation, it was designed to mirror the original, in size and layout, under the shop master's watchful direction.

As the tributes that poured in for Mr. Brown illustrate, while the furniture is exquisite and still sits in homes all over the country, much more than furniture-building went on in the wood shop. For some it was a refuge from a pressured day, for others a chance to learn about persistence, about resilience, and about themselves.

We will miss you, Mr. Brown. You've made no secret of how much you love Groton. Have no doubt: the feeling is mutual.

Would you like to share a tribute to Doug Brown? Please email quarterly@groton.org.



Gail Friedman



Christopher Temerson



Annie Card



Annie Card

Mr. Brown, helping students understand the importance of detail; top, with a harpsichord he built

“Doug did more for us than just teach shop. He would think nothing of driving a few of us into Boston to hear Julian Bream play a lute and classical guitar concert.”

Engrained in Groton

GROTON WILL not be the same without Doug Brown on campus and in the woodworking shop. After fifty years of service to the school, he is a true Groton institution and very much part of its core fabric. And he leaves a wonderful legacy that includes furniture masterpieces made by his students that could fill several museums, a full archive, many words of wisdom told to students over the years, a range of great stories about Groton and his own experiences, and of course his love and dedication to his art, his students, and to Groton.

I met Mr. Brown in the fall of 1973 as I decided to take shop as my Third-Form arts elective. I so enjoyed my experience that I was a devoted shop student for my remaining three years. All of us who took shop learned all the basic skills around woodworking, which have certainly served me well throughout my years after Groton. Yes, I can still do dovetail joints. But I am also convinced that the discipline, patience, focus on detail, and commitment required to make a piece of furniture, from initial drawing to finished product, helped me develop as a student and as a person.

Imagine the sense of accomplishment and pride to see a piece of furniture at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, come back to Groton to draw it out, choose the wood, figure out how to build it from joinery to finish, and then make it into a finished product, all under the watchful eye of Doug Brown. In his quiet way he inspired us to do our best, to stretch, and of course to put in all the extra hours that it takes to complete a major piece. Many graduates that I have spoken to over the

years share my experience and look back on their time with Mr. Brown as one of the special memories of Groton, and we all have pieces of furniture in our homes to remind us every day. It was not just about the work, it was also about the camaraderie that we all built while spending all those hours working on our furniture. It was not uncommon during spring term to have the shop full of students on weekends and even Saturday nights, working to make sure their piece would be finished by Prize Day.

Doug did more for us than just teach shop. He would think nothing of driving a few of us into Boston to hear Julian Bream play a lute and classical guitar concert at the New England Conservatory of Music. As an aspiring guitarist myself, those trips and exposure meant so much to me and in fact led to my decision to learn how to play the lute in college. Doug also imparted some life lessons along the way, some very practical and others more profound and far-reaching. I remember him saying that the sign of great craftsmen was not that they made everything perfect every time, but that they knew how to find solutions to problems when they inevitably arose. While he may have told me that after I made some incredibly egregious mistake, nonetheless those words have come back to me often during a difficult negotiation, challenging business issue, or even a tough life experience.

We all know Doug cares deeply about



Ben Pyne remembers using mahogany, curly mahogany, satinwood, and Hollywood veneer on this tambour desk, which sits in his New York City living room, a beautiful and functional reminder of shop class with Mr. Brown.

the school, and one additional way that has manifested itself is in the history and memorabilia that Doug has compiled over many years as the school's archivist. Being a graduate himself, he seems to know everyone and everything about the school and has created a rich collection of information that will be relevant for a long time. As Groton embarks on a new history book project, his own personal experiences and recollections, along with all of the information and knowledge that he has collected, are incredibly useful.

While we will all miss him as part of the daily life around the Circle, I know that he will never be far from Groton, nor will Groton be far from him. I certainly thank him for the impact he had on my life, and I know that I am only one of many. Groton is so lucky to have had him as a faculty member and part of its community for the past five decades, and we all wish him and his wife, Jane, all of our best and look forward to seeing them at many Groton events in the future.

—Benjamin Pyne '77, P'12, '15
Groton School Board of Trustees President

“ He certainly had more faith in me than I had in myself.

BETWEEN COLLEGE and veterinary school, I returned to the Circle and worked with Doug Brown as an intern in the wood shop for a half year. Mr. Brown wrote to me in 1989 when I was debating whether I had enough expertise to help in the wood shop. His support came at the right moment of my life and was just what I needed to overcome my doubts and head to the Circle in 1990.

While interning, I had some spare time to work on my own project. And, with Mr. Brown’s coaching, I was able to complete a grandfather clock in a few months for my sister’s wedding. It was a unique project because it was a clock made to a specifically short height so that it could fit into the small rooms of a New England house. Mr. Brown and I had quite a time adjusting the clock dimensions to fit the inner workings and maintain the proper look of a slender grandfather clock. My sister’s soon-to-be husband



Tiff with the tambour desk she built in Sixth Form

Painted the unique clock face.

Doug Brown has always had the ability to see the potential in every student, the ability to lead the student well beyond what that student might have imagined for themselves, and to let these high expectations guide the students to incredible accomplishments. He certainly had more faith in me than I had in myself, and my tambour desk stands as a daily reminder that I, too, am able to soar

to great heights. I am eternally grateful for his support, respect, and high expectations.

Congratulations, Mr. Brown! May you enjoy retirement as much as you enjoyed every moment in your fabulous wood shop! And may you finally have time to finish some of your own projects waiting in the wings.

—Tiff Bingham Cunningham '85, P'24

DOUG TALKED me into becoming the sports editor for the *Quarterly* some time in the early eighties. He never said much about the articles I turned in faithfully each season. Once, however, he told me that he liked my articles because they didn’t sound at all like the sports pages of a newspaper. I was never quite sure how to take that compliment.

Over a span of many decades, I admired Doug for his brilliant end-of-term comments (short and to the point), for his institutional memory (always the go-to person for facts about the school’s history), and for his consistency (routinely in the same spot at Tiny’s for breakfast). But, above all, I have appreciated the genius of a dedicated teacher who taught generations of students skills that have stuck with them forever. Doug is one the giants of this faculty. I can’t believe that he is retiring.

—John Conner P'11, '14, '16, '19, Dean of Faculty

Five Life Lessons

I TOOK shop as a Third Former and again as a Fifth and Sixth Former, dedicating my Upper School years to building a slant-topped, blockfront desk. I spent a lot of time with Mr. Brown, and I share here five lessons that have stuck with me.

1) *Mistakes are puzzles to be solved.* At those moments when I tried to assemble some item only to discover that the piece I just cut proved useless, Mr. Brown would become interested. He would reverse-engineer my error, thinking his way through to my mismeasurement or flawed cut. He seemed genuinely curious, rather than annoyed. I found I worried less about my mistakes and could get back on track.

2) *Keep a cool head around a whirling blade.* Working with the table saw Sixth Form year, I tried to trim a fraction of an inch from a large drawer bottom for my desk. The wide piece pinched against the fence, popped up, hit the blade and then shot halfway across the shop. Mr. Brown reacted quickly, turned off the saw, checked no one had been hit, and then calmly talked with me about the actual way to make the cut. He never raised his voice, never seemed ruffled—a very useful model for crisis response.

3) *Bad design needs decisive corrective action.* I had carved scrolls on the ogee feet made for my desk. I had no template and worked from photographs. When I fitted them, something was off. While I was convincing myself it was good enough, Mr. Brown arrived with the largest chisel in the shop and drove it into the bulge of the S-curve, a detail I had spent a week “perfecting.” I was speechless. By the time I could think of something to say, he had recurved the scroll and I matched the other side to it. To this day, I look at my desk and am grateful for the elegance he bestowed on it.

4) *The DJs at WAAF and WBCN have questionable taste in music.* Mr.

Brown kept the radio in the shop dialed to WCRB, the classical station. The moment he left, we would switch it to either WAAF, “The Rock ‘n’ Roll Airforce,” or WBCN, “Boston’s Stereo Rock.” Upon his return, he silenced Led Zeppelin, Journey, or the Stones. Once, when switching the station back to classical, he observed to me that those artists never finished their songs. I still sometimes listen to the end of a song to see if I could argue the case with Mr. Brown that this rock classic actually had an ending.

5) *Mid-morning, around 10:30, is a good time for a milk-and-cookie break.* During Upper School, I learned to anticipate when the Third Formers would be finishing up in Mr. Myers’

cookie line at the table outside the shop and then tag along to get snacks for myself. Years later, when I was writing my doctoral thesis, I found that I habitually left my apartment at 10:30 every morning, went down to the store on the corner, and bought a cup of coffee. I had recreated a writing routine in the image of a furniture-building one. And it turned out, it took me the same number of months to complete my dissertation as my desk, fifteen months.

The habits of discipline, attention, curiosity, and perseverance that Mr. Brown taught in the shop have been essential for my subsequent work as a scholar and anthropologist. I draw upon them every day.

—Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld ’83, P’14, ’21



Rudi, his dog Glitter, and his cherished desk



Says Ann: "I love my desk, but I am more grateful for the time with Mr. Brown."

A Space Unlike Any Other

IT'S HARD to find the right words to explain my time in Doug Brown's wood shop. It is unlike anything else, and I am forever grateful for it. Mr. Brown's standards were exacting, whether those standards were for my work on dovetails, my sweeping of the sawdust, or my committing the time and effort to do things right. However, whenever you most needed help, Mr. Brown was there to show you how to cut a difficult shape on the jigsaw or finally get the drawers to fit. I remember one occasion when I despaired for my desk and left for the night without finishing my task. I arrived at the wood shop the next day to find a piece glued in place—and hope for success sprung anew. When you made a mistake in wood shop, the only option was to find a fix or live with it, and Mr. Brown helped me decide which was better in each situation. I still remember the time that he praised my carving of claw-and-ball feet as one of my great moments of pride at Groton because he didn't hand out false praise.

Looking back, I realize that Mr. Brown understood all of us better than we could have imagined as teenagers. The time in that room filled with tools, noise, and endless hand-sanding was also time with a wise and caring teacher who not only taught us to create amazing furniture but also made us better people. Mr. Brown created in his wood shop a space unlike any other at Groton, and he gave me the time, guidance, and confidence to be a better student and community member at the school I loved. Sometimes when I look at my desk thirty years later, I can't believe I built it. I love my desk, but I am more grateful for the time with Mr. Brown.

—Ann McGowan '88

"My desk is one of my proudest achievements. It is the centerpiece of our family room, and making it helped define who I am."

I WANT to take a moment to thank Mr. Brown, and Mr. Polk, for the opportunity to build both my tripod table and slant-top desk. The experience in the shop gave me a big shot of self-confidence as a young man, which paved the way to many successes in college and beyond. The shop offered a respite from the direct academic challenges of Groton while still maintaining the rigor and thoroughness that imbues the school. Both of these qualities were expressed by Mr. Brown's attitude of quiet support, which helped us all. The shop was an amazing environment where we all helped each other while also focusing on our own projects.

Of course Mr. Brown's craftsmanship was amazing, but it was his patient guidance that I describe to my family and friends when they ask about the desk. I particularly note his long-term support as I explain that the desk took me three years to design and build, including a very intense Sixth Form year. Along with that, I mention how he always was there late helping us finish up our projects. Thank you for guiding, advising, and helping us grow. My desk is one of my proudest achievements. It is the centerpiece of our family room, and making it helped define who I am.

—Michael Tedeschi '89



Michael's desk: a proud achievement and the centerpiece of his family room today



Cannon with her clock today and (top) crafting it at Groton

SHOP WAS my favorite thing about Groton, and Mr. Brown the only teacher I sought out when I returned. Mr. Brown, please come back for reunions. You are beloved by so many!!

—Cannon Quigley Campbell '85

I DID *not* win the Shop Prize that June day in 1983.

To all who know me, you were not surprised. But I built a desk. Actually, I built a Governor Winthrop, slant-front, four-drawer, mahogany desk with two secret compartments. The back of the desk is signed and dated by me. It has beautiful, hand-made brasses that we chose to match the quality of the desk. I did it in one year without any previous experience or particular skill. And I loved every moment that I spent in the shop that year. It was unforgettable.

When I first showed up as a Sixth Former in the shop in the fall of 1982, I could not even lift the planks of wood that I chose to use for my desk. Mr. Brown said, "If you can't lift it, you can't build it." So I dug a little deeper, and I moved what I needed. Through the year, Mr. Brown guided me with the skill of a master craftsman, the knowledge of an erudite historian, and the wisdom and patience of Job. His standards were high, his commitment and support were without question, the process was well defined, mistakes were adapted, and my progress was required. No questions asked.

I can hardly imagine Groton School without Mr. Brown. Even after I graduated, I sent him letters with stories of how I used my shop training to tell off foolhardy antique dealers who should have known better. He always wrote me back. On visits to campus, I made a beeline to the shop to make sure that it had not changed and that Mr. Brown was still there, helping students to finish their impossibly ambitious (and exquisite) projects.

So, with a teacher like Mr. Brown and a desk to prove it, I believe I did win a shop prize.

Thank you so much, Mr. Brown, for everything you showed me and taught me. It is immeasurable.

—Sarah Barnes '83, former trustee



Not just a desk, but a Governor Winthrop, slant-front, four-drawer, mahogany desk with two secret compartments



NOT UNTIL recently have I finally been able to understand the significance Mr. Brown played in enabling me to grow while at Groton. I loved wood shop. I loved finally finding something creative that didn't quite require an imagination (having definitively proven I am terrible at drawing). I loved going into the shop late at night to work on my Upper School project when I was tired of whatever else was going on.

Shop was meditative. I was not aware of it at the time, but Mr. Brown created an oasis for his students. Our projects required complete attention and focus in order

not to destroy them with a single error, say, the wrong saw cut or chiseling. The classical music was the perfect white noise background.

Shop was the ultimate escape. Learning from a true master of craft, hearing about how Mr. Brown taught himself to produce harpsichords, and being trusted with the kinds of heavy machinery I had only ever seen my dad wield was a wonderment I needed.

To this day, the chair Mr. Brown mentored me through provides me with a tangible source of pride, a "hey, I did that!" Thank you, Mr. Brown, for giving me and every other Groton student you looked after so carefully a space to escape to, learn within, and grow from.

I wrote my college essay, way back when, about learning from Mr. Brown. Here is a small excerpt:

If he reaches for the pencil, sitting in his breast pocket, to shade in the errors on the wood, then I went to him too soon. Mr. Brown once told me that nothing can be fixed if you are focused on everything at the same time. When Mr. Brown is satisfied, he does not say much, but his silence speaks. For three years Mr. Brown has guided me through my mistakes by allowing me to make and fix them. He told me that shop is logical; each step in the process is doable as long as the means to the product make sense.

I needed something logical in high school, and I needed a class where I could prove myself. Thank you for that forever gift, Mr. Brown.

—Chloe Fross '12



Carving Out a Legacy

DOUg BROWN has carved out years at Groton with precision and care, a plane life as useful and, in its own way, as decorative as the antique reproductions he produces in the shop. No chiseler, he drives a plumb line from Tiny's for breakfast and to lunch at 1:30 every afternoon in the Dining Hall, as if it were lined by his router. Never one to saw off more than he can chew, he is famous among his colleagues for the terseness of his comment slips, his occasional remarks anticipated for their wit. Though he maintains a wooden

expression, he has always delighted us, and has been a valued colleague for the standard he sets, for his appreciation of what is graceful, for his knowledge and love of the traditions and history of the school, and for his masterful teaching.

A first rate archivist, Doug has organized and has read much of the material housed in the archives. Occasionally he would send me a note attached to a document he had unearthed. One note read, "And you think you have problems." Attached was a letter from the Rector to a doctor requesting his

statement on the negative health effects of lollipops, a statement he wanted before banning lollipops from the campus. This made my problems seem minuscule!

When Lori Hill '88 once asked Doug if he was going to do anything special during the upcoming vacation, he said, "I'm taking my wife to a play, *The Miserables*."

Lori replied what we all know about Doug: "You are an original, Mr. Brown."

—Bill Polk '58, former headmaster

DOUG BROWN'S shop course made a strong impact on me at Groton and in the years afterward. I loved the craftsmanship he taught, the importance of care and precision, the lesson that ongoing commitment was critical to success (the shop had a number of never-finished projects from classmates who didn't learn that lesson), and the resulting bit of furniture that may last generations.

Decades later, when I had the means, I started outfitting my own shop and over the years I have completed many personal projects. These include a Hepplewhite dining table, floor-to-ceiling bookshelves, various desks/tables/bookshelves, and a fireplace mantle. I have returned to Groton several times over the years to confer with Doug as my sensei on projects, most recently an antique Dutch grandfather clock. All the best Doug! Come and visit me sometime!

—David Howe '75, P'14



David with his cherry lowboy

DOUG BROWN'S teaching has had a tremendous influence on my life. I will always appreciate how he valued problem-solving and hard work. He held me to a very high standard in his wood shop, where I had to practice much patience and precision. I believe that the culture of Groton School was deeply enriched by his presence.

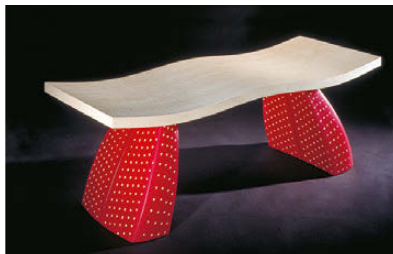
—Danielle Nunez '98



Danielle in Fifth Form finishing her chair, and her children Xavier and Gabriella enjoying the rocker today



For William, shop class with Doug Brown led to a career of craftsmanship and original pieces like this strawberry bench.



“Doug is responsible for starting me on the path of my forty-year journey in the arts.”

DOUG BROWN inspired my career in furniture-making and design. He and his legendary wood shop were also the shining star of my Groton experience. I spent every extra hour I could in the Groton shop, so much so that Doug gave me a key and let me proctor as an upperclassman. It was the perfect place to unleash the impulsive energy to build that I had shown as a child. The bench shown here was not made at Groton but afterward; a copy of it is in the Fralin Museum at the University of Virginia. It illustrates how my experience with Mr. Brown led to a lifelong passion for making and realizing new forms of furniture.

Doug Brown was the most patient mentor and showed me every detail he could about furniture-making. He spent countless hours with me one-on-one, allowing me to explore this amazing medium. Making furniture in the Groton shop gave me both confidence and recognition.

In the very beginning, he explained that I could make anything I wanted and gave me some books to look through to see if there was a historic piece I liked. He also showed me various pieces around campus and pointed out details of construction and artistry. It was amazing to see this door open. Doug would also include me as a helper on various “missions” around campus, especially when things needed to be repaired.

One time, during the fall of my Fourth Form year, he took me to the Chapel tower to replace a broken stave in the belfry. He explained that an overly enthusiastic bell-ringer had snapped it off during practice by pulling on the sally too hard, sending the bell spinning on its



axis and swallowing the bell rope through its hole in the ceiling. He said it was better for the bell to break the stave and spin rather than for it to pop off its axle and come crashing down through the floors of the Chapel tower. He explained that the bells could weigh thousands of pounds. We had to climb into the belfry carrying tools and the new stave, balancing on the beams that formed the bell cage. It was dark enough so you could see the light coming through the holes where the ropes hung down to the ringing chamber. It was a privileged moment. It felt like an honor to help him with such an important and specialized job, and it seemed dangerous and exciting and not something the other students would typically engage in.

Doug is responsible for starting me on the path of my forty-year journey in the arts. It has sustained me since Groton. I owe him my profound gratitude and wish him serenity and happiness for his retirement. Thank you, Doug Brown!

—William Bancroft '77

HOW CAN you not admire, open mouthed, the work that our shop students produce under Doug's careful eye? His method is to encourage, to ask questions, and to step in to help if they can't solve a problem themselves. They learn so much in the shop, and it's a different type of learning and problem-solving, but having had two of my children study under him, I can say that it absolutely complements the learning that

they do from books and discussions.

Doug is also, of course, the go-to guy about school history and traditions. Is there anything he doesn't know about the school? If there is, he can always look it up and get back to me.

I also had the pleasure of being tutored on how to take care of the Schoolhouse clock. I got this introduction twenty or so years ago, when one winter I remarked that it

was a shame that the clock was broken; it had been stopped for a couple of weeks.

"It's not broken," Doug said. "It's just too damn cold to go up there and wind it." I volunteered and have been helping the master ever since. Doug makes things work. Luckily, he lives nearby and will continue to help with all manner of things.

—Andy Anderson P'15, '17, '20,
Associate Head of School



I'VE BEEN thinking a lot about Doug Brown and what a special human he is, and how blessed I feel to have somehow fallen into his orbit way back when. It's hard for me not to think about the chair (above) that I spent two years making, especially since it has become my COVID office chair that I sit in every day at home.

—David Saltonstall '82



Kara with her son, Seth, and her Shaker desk

I TOOK shop during all five years at Groton, and during the last two-and-a-half, I made a Shaker desk and a striped wooden egg, which both sit in my living room. Mr. Brown was an inspiration and is someone I will never forget. He has a way of combining talent, incredible competence, and quiet kindness. I don't believe I had much of a talent for shop, but I loved it and what it taught me about the power of working hard. It's difficult to think of Groton without Doug Brown; I don't know that I ever will.

—Kara Miller '96



Katherine with her daughter, Elizabeth, and her blanket chest (or as Mr. Brown called it, her “big box”)

“My Absolute Comfort”

I RECENTLY came across a high school report card from spring of 2000, my Fifth Form year, a time that was particularly confusing and challenging. That might be an understatement—I remember that year as one of the toughest I’ve experienced, and it was hard to read the report even twenty years on. In it, various teachers pointed out my challenges getting to class on time and my noteworthy lack of preparation. Many expressed concern for me, and most suggested what I might do to change things. My grades were lower than they had been. But in shop class I was in the high nineties and, in about two sentences, Mr. Brown commended me on an excellent season.

Shop was my absolute comfort. I had decided to take it that year for the first time because I loved the dust and smell coming from the shop, and the community I could see through the windows looked so purposeful and happy, like some Renaissance guild. I chose to make a blanket chest, noting that Mr.

Brown seemed a bit underwhelmed, more partial to elaborate pieces like the reproduction of the Gardner desk another student was building. He referred to my choice periodically as “a big box” when he introduced me to some new step in construction, and indeed it was. But I couldn’t get enough of shop. I spent hours and hours there, when I should have been studying, packing up to move to a new dorm (ours had termites), or on the weekends. I loved the music, and Doug Brown’s stories—about furniture, wood, history, the history of furniture, or just the history of nails (I was a truly rapt audience). I took pride in seeing I could learn something quickly by looking over a craftsman’s right shoulder, even if I felt like a less successful student elsewhere. Most of all, I loved and needed the repetitive movement of my hands and the sensation of the wood as it changed under my labors. I thrilled at the freedom of finding that hidden key, especially when the shop was empty.

THE SHOP was a haven for all of us who were Mr. Brown’s students. When you walked into the shop, you were instantly transported to a place that was worlds apart—it smelled different (of fragrant wood) and sounded different (classical music). In the shop, Mr. Brown worked his magic, teaching us how to transform wood into beautiful pieces of furniture. When our projects inevitably broke, he (usually overnight) repaired them beautifully.

The lessons Mr. Brown taught me and countless others continue to serve me well: attention to detail, perseverance, and the ability to start working on projects that seem insurmountable, one step at a time. I am proud to be a woman who is comfortable using tools. And I still work to classical music.

—Isabelle Kinsolving Farrar ’98



Isabelle’s desk, as enduring as the lessons it provided

THE GRANDMOTHER clock (right), dining table, and small table I made while at Groton are very dear to me. Every time I walk by these pieces of furniture, I am reminded of the many fond memories of shop class and all of the wonderful talks with Mr. Brown.

Thank you for everything, Mr. Brown. Your class meant a lot to me.

—Katie Stovall ’20

“I really worshipped that blanket chest. When it came time to wax it for Prize Day, it seemed to have its own life, as if I hadn’t made it at all.

I was soon coming down the home stretch on my blanket chest, long before springtime. Mr. Brown had me pick the fancy feet so I could learn more, and then he had me hand plane the top, old school. It took forever, and I planed it to perfection. I really worshipped that blanket chest. When it came time to wax it for Prize Day, it seemed to have its own life, as if I hadn’t made it at all. I will never forget how I felt when Mr. Brown spilled the beans to me that I would win the Shop Prize that year, “for my efforts,” saying it quickly and succinctly and then disappearing just as fast, as I awkwardly marveled at the news. It meant so much, and still does, to have earned that recognition, at that time.

I have to share one more memory of Mr. Brown, although there are many. At the winter formal that year I gave up on having any kind of satisfying experience and bailed, perhaps to find a place to cry. I ended up in the shop, where I turned on the lights and visited my work. It’s obvious to me now why Mr. Brown might have wondered who was in there and gone to make sure all was shipshape, but at the

time I was completely taken by surprise. I was standing in my very sober-feeling formal dress, which I recall was an ignore-me-please kind of black velvet, and I was wearing uncomfortable pantyhose and heels because that all seemed necessary to be chic. It occurred to me that no outfit could be more suited to collecting shop dust. Mr. Brown didn’t scold me, and he didn’t ask why I was there (I think he understood). He just said hello and told me a few stories; in fact that might have been the time he waved a card at me demonstrating American nails over the ages. I knew I wasn’t really supposed to be there, so I left. I felt seen in that encounter, accepted for just who I was, and valued.

When my husband and I married eight years later, Mr. Brown sent us a well-made comforter. I will never forget his kindness and guidance in matters pertaining to life and to craft. He is truly owed a joyous and fulfilling retirement.

—Katherine Collier Spencer '01



Katie's clock, one of her three shop projects

WOODWORKING SHOP was one of my favorite courses at Groton. I was not great at it, but I learned how to concentrate to create and achieve goals. Doug Brown taught me how to be a craftsman and explained every aspect of furniture-building. By the end of my Sixth Form year, I had created five pieces of furniture (including the Queen Anne chair, right), all of which I still use today. I learned so much from Doug Brown—not only about the art of woodworking, but also about discipline, hard work, and repairing mistakes, no matter how bad they might be. When I did not know how to do something, Doug either explained it to me or showed me how to do it. I shall always remember him for his incredible skills and patience as a teacher and coach (as well as a loyal soccer fan!). He certainly enriched my experience at Groton.

—Larry Chao '76



Larry's chair, one of his five shop pieces, all still in use today



Peter and Courtney: a marriage built on five years in the wood shop

Building a Future

PETER TULLY '04 and I first met in shop class eighteen years ago. I think Mr. Brown could tell we liked each other when we would show up during one another's class periods and there was more chatting than chiseling being done. We would both go on to take shop for all five years at Groton, creating everything from wooden bowls to bureaus to a grandfather clock. Over the many hours and countless dovetails, Mr. Brown was always there with a steady hand and a dry wit, unknowingly helping us make some of our favorite memories from Groton. Thank you, Mr. Brown, for everything you have given to the school and to us—including each other!

—Courtney Bowen Tully '06 (and Peter Tully '04)

Splendid Furniture, Even Dearer Memories

IT IS through Mr. Brown that I learned the joy of woodworking. Creating a piece of furniture out of rough panes of wood is a slow and arduous process: the pine and mahogany planks need planing into smooth pieces and dovetailing into drawers, rectangular prisms of wood need turning on the lathe into legs, and fancy knees and tabletop edge curves require scraping and sanding to flourish into existence.

I'm so grateful to have been able to take shop the full three years I was at Groton. With Mr. Brown teaching and guiding each step, I built a Queen Anne side table during Fourth Form and a serpentine front bureau throughout the remaining two years. During the fall of Sixth Form, when it came time to decide on the foot style for the bureau, I met with Mr. Brown to talk through the options and got totally hooked on the claw-and-ball style. Mr. Brown generously and kindly arranged for me to travel to southern Maine and spend the afternoon learning the technique from expert carver Al Breed, and then supported me as I painstakingly and terrifiedly carved the remaining three over the coming months. The furniture is splendid and holds with it the even dearer memories and experiences of building under Mr. Brown's tutelage.

Through Mr. Brown's careful guidance and immense experience, I learned the sustaining excitement of returning to the same project day after day, with small bouts of progress toward a final product. With his gentle guidance, I experienced the unparalleled wonder of watching oil seep into the wood of the final piece and highlight its beautiful grains and patterns. Under his care, the wood shop became a haven for me and other students alike to think in new ways, build complex projects, and have our stresses and worries fall away, lost among the wood shavings. Thank you, Mr. Brown, for your incredible service to Groton and the impact you've had on students like me!

—Julia Metzger '11



Julia, her bureau, and (right) its carefully built legs





Ham and his Second Form shop project

WHAT CAN I say? Mr. Brown was a great mentor and teacher. I met him in the fall of 1980 as a new Second Former. I had some experience working with wood at Greenwich Country Day school, yet he taught me so much in my five years at Groton. I was honored to receive the Upper School Shop Prize for my desk.

I have so many items from my days in wood shop at home, which I cherish every day. So many people say, “Wow, did you really make this?” and I’m proud to say I did. Without the tutelage of Douglas Brown, I could have never achieved these goals.

Thank you, Doug, for your help and care during my five years at Groton, which I’ve carried with me through the years. Happy retirement!

—Ham Bullard '85



Chris and his drop-leaf table

DOUG BROWN taught this then fourteen-year-old how true quality required craftsmanship in the hidden corners no one would ever see—a lesson that has since often saved me when shortcuts beckoned. This drop-leaf table has been in long-term storage during my Foreign Service overseas assignments and needs some spiffing up, but I am still so proud of it.

—Chris Dorn '82



John with one of his two shop projects, both still in use

MR. BROWN’S mastery of woodworking enabled generations of Groton students without any background in craftsmanship to build beautiful pieces of furniture. But I remember most clearly his kindness, generosity, and wisdom, which he demonstrated in all of his relationships with students.

—John Playforth '02

MY FAVORITE part of Prize Day weekend has always been seeing the shop projects in the hall outside the Schoolroom. How odd it will be not to see Doug on the ground floor of the Schoolhouse. And to whom shall we go when we are looking for some bit of Groton history?!

—Kathy Leggat, Academic Dean

IN THE five years I took shop, I was fortunate to learn a great deal from Mr. Brown. His lessons were not limited to the skill of woodworking. Mr. Brown promoted a culture of hard work, time management, commitment, and self-motivation as staples of his shop. Perhaps the most valuable lesson was that if you put your mind to it and really pushed yourself, you could create something beautiful from nothing. Starting with a slab of wood and some basic hand tools, the intricate furniture that Mr. Brown's shop turned out year after year all reflected this same lesson, something that his students have surely carried on into their own future careers. I am forever grateful to Mr. Brown for the lessons taught and the values imparted.

—G. Gibson McCullagh '07

THE TRUTH is, Doug Brown has a kind of genius, which is a description that would make him profoundly uncomfortable. But bear with me for a moment. Think of Doug's remarkable fluency in woodworking, his ability to conceive of how things are created and then to create them. (It's an ability, by the way, that extends well beyond woodworking.) The pieces of furniture that Doug has made, or helped others make, over the course of his time at Groton are works of art. We may not appreciate them as much as if they were paintings, or poems, or mathematical equations—there's something about woodworking that makes us think of it as a rough trade—but we should. Which invites the question: How many practitioners of an art form at this level spend their careers sharing that gift with students?

Like so many others, I was a beneficiary of Doug's genius. I had never done any woodworking before taking shop at Groton, and never have since. But thanks to Doug, I have in my home several pieces of furniture that I still look at and think, "How did that happen?"

Doug's legacy goes beyond the tangible; it's also in his modestly delivered wisdom. I'll share one example. In a shop class in Fourth Form, I was sanding the top of a beautiful piece of mahogany, a future table top. The board in question was a rarity, wider than you can find in today's trees, with a brilliant grain. Having sanded it down to a state of delicacy, I turned it over on the blanket I was using to protect it, and somehow managed to flip it right onto a small wood screw that then rolled for about six inches. The resulting blemish in this perfect surface left me distraught. I asked Doug what could be done to cover it up. "Not much," he said. "Think of that as this table's first step on the way to becoming an antique."

Really, every time something has left a scratch—and in the following decades, there have been plenty—I think of those words.

—Richard Bradley '82

Mr. Brown taught with a keen attention to detail: note the handle on the side of Richard's desk.





Steven and his bombe chest

I LEARNED many important lessons from Mr. Brown that have served me well in life:

- *the importance of attention to detail*
- *respect for craftsmanship and technique*
- *the ability to achieve excellence with the application of effort and persistence*
- *the value and satisfaction derived from creating and building*

The time that I spent in the shop was the most rewarding part of my Groton experience. Mr. Brown's unfailing good nature, willingness to share his deep knowledge, and dry wit provided a refuge from the difficulties of adolescence, which I will always treasure. I want to thank him for that gift and wish him the very best for a happy and satisfying retirement.

—Steven Stone '78, P'08

DOUG BROWN'S shop has occasionally served as a quiet refuge for me, and I suspect that generations of Groton students have felt the same way. In the midst of a busy week, it is a treat to find Doug alone in the wood shop. Our conversations typically begin and end with the progress of current Groton students, but in between, they range far and wide. I never come away without feeling I've learned something from Doug, although the topic of my new knowledge could be anything from techniques used to forge tools in colonial

Doug has the rare ability to be completely frank and, when deserved, critical—without ever a hint of judgment or unfair bias.

times to the personalities of bygone generations of Groton teachers.

When dealing with both students and colleagues, Doug has the rare ability to be completely frank and, when deserved, critical—without ever a hint of judgment or unfair bias. His candor and generosity come shining through Doug's written student comments, which are among the briefest imaginable yet invariably include all that needs to be said about a student's effort, progress, and conduct.

However, I have never known Doug to address the quality of a student's work. Perhaps he takes for granted the astounding results which we all get to appreciate at the end of each school year, when the front hallway of the Schoolhouse is lined with lustrous mahogany furniture boasting tight dovetail joints, cabriole legs, and countless other indications of quality craftsmanship. I can hardly imagine how many Groton graduates feel a tinge of pride and nostalgia each time they pass by a beautiful piece of furniture which they created under Doug Brown's guidance.

—Dave Prockop P'15, '17,
Science faculty

“He was the main reason Groton was such a special place for me.”

I LOVED shop—Mr. Brown and all it taught me (not to mention the ability to build the bombe secretary). For many years after graduation, Mr. Brown and I corresponded via letters, and I still have them all. He was the main reason Groton was such a special place to me, and I will never forget the wonderful memories of working in the shop with him.

—Bruce Crane '91



Above, Bruce's bombe secretary; right, introducing his children to Mr. Brown



Gretchen and her majestic clock

I MADE a clock with Mr. Brown during my years at Groton, 1989–92. Mr. Brown taught me so much, certainly about woodworking but, when I think about the true lessons I gained from him, they were really more about the power of slow: the values in thinking long term and making steady progress—day by day and month by month—toward real and tangible results. He taught me that Rome was not built in a day (nor was a clock, it turns out). He taught me that for large projects, it often does not matter if you do a lot or a little on a daily basis—that the real measurement lies in the fact that you are getting closer to your goal every day, and that incremental goals will get you where you want to go. That the point is steady progress, not immediacy. And to break a challenge into pieces that you can get your head around and accomplish this smaller,

visible project, whatever it is, by taking one step at a time.

Although I have not done any woodworking in years, it is these life lessons, especially when taken from the perspective of this “now” culture, that speak to me daily: that good things take time, to respect the process, and to allow yourself to make steady progress. What a profound thing to carry with me through the years, and what a privilege it was, therefore, to have had Mr. Brown as my teacher.

All that said, I still love the fabulous clock that I made, which turned out (rather astonishingly) majestic, even with its imperfections and nicks and even a few stains inside, where I spilled a coffee one autumn afternoon. So here's to Mr. Brown, for his twinkly eyes and his spritely energy. Thank you!

—Gretchen Maddox Trusted '92

BEING A shop student always felt like you had joined a secret club at Groton. Doug Brown led our little gang with his quiet way. He knew just when to step in to save you from a disastrous cut on a project. He always had the best advice for us all, and made the shop one of the most fun places at Groton. Many of my most memorable moments at Groton were in the shop with Mr. Brown.

—Sarah McGowan '95



Sarah and the desk she built

Saturday Shop Visits

IF YOU wander down to the shop around 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, and if you're lucky, all of the Third Formers will have cleared out and you can catch Doug Brown alone. Of course, there's always a chance he'll be helping an eager student finish a dovetail, or keeping a delinquent student busy sanding, or maybe on the phone fielding questions as Groton's archivist. But if you're lucky, you'll catch him alone.

Over the years many of us have been lucky. The shop smells of mahogany and pine, classical music wafts through the air unless it's drowned out by the dust collector, and you're greeted by the pursed lips and squint of the shopmaster's eye as he evaluates who you are and what you want.

First as a student, then as a history intern, and still as a graduate and friend, I've been lucky to catch Doug in that 11:00 a.m. hour. I like asking him questions that might lead to greater insight about the fine points of furniture, about teaching, or about Groton's history, all gleaned from more than half a century at the school. The right inquiry can turn a quizzical gaze into an animated story about Endicott Peabody, amusing commentary on the ways of Groton students, or some pithy advice. It can be a magical hour.

For instance, fourteen years into my own career as a teacher—inspired in no small part by Mr. Brown—I often recall to younger colleagues advice Doug gave me during my first weeks as a Groton intern. The job turned out to be more difficult than I had anticipated, and I was having trouble keeping up with the scope of our U.S. History survey. I approached Doug and cautiously admitted that I wasn't sure if I knew enough history to teach at Groton. Doug gave me

a skeptical look as his eyes narrowed. Then he said: "Look, never forget you're the expert—because you know more than your students. It doesn't matter *how much* more you know; you're still the expert." It meant a lot coming from Doug because he is the expert as you and I know the word. In that moment and throughout the year, Doug helped my confidence and teaching enormously.

Working with Doug underscored something I learned after graduating from Groton: a diploma does not mean the end of his generosity. Since 2003 we've regularly written to one another, by hand, about all sorts of things, but mainly I've sought Doug's insight into the rhythms of life. In many ways, his letters are the written version of our 11:00 a.m. conversations. At this point they could constitute their own miniature archive which, come to think of it, ought to be housed in my chest of drawers. Over the same span of time I've also had the pleasure of joining Doug and his wife, Jane, for many meals at local restaurants like The Phoenix in Shirley. As a student, I only knew Mrs. Brown as the sternest of our SAT proctors. Little did I know then that she had one of the best senses of



John's Sixth Form shop project

humor on campus and plenty of Groton stories to boot. I could fill another drawer with her witticisms.

There's no place I'd rather be at 11:00 a.m. on a Saturday than the shop. And it may be best that this secret isn't widely shared before Doug retires, as he probably wouldn't want too many people lining up to chat. After all, sometimes that squinty look means it's time to lock things up and head to lunch.

—John Nagler '03

The Meditative Healing of Woodworking

I AM probably not alone in sharing that my Groton experience was that much better because of the shop and Mr. Brown. His understanding of wood and craftsmanship has been matched by his sagacity, dry wit, and insight into teen angst. By intuitively providing just the right amount of oversight and guidance without being too intrusive, Mr. Brown made the shop a refuge on so many levels.

My shop story in building a desk is, I believe, emblematic of the Doug Brown experience. I spent way too much time carving four very detailed claw-and-ball feet and wound up finishing my desk at 4:00 in the morning before Prize Day. I would not have completed it without the help of fellow shopmate and formate Sarah Barnes, who crafted the back panel. Years later, after visiting the amazing Americana collection on the seventh floor of the State Department, I asked Mr. Brown why he let me spend so much time carving all four feet when only the front pair were usually detailed. His response was typical: "If I remember correctly, your parents were going through a nasty divorce, and I figured you needed that focus time."

Indeed, the meditative healing of woodworking is something to which I have turned repeatedly since leaving the Circle, particularly while navigating my son's six-year cancer battle. What's more, by letting me learn the hard way, Mr. Brown indelibly imprinted the importance of time boxing when managing projects, a skill that has been invaluable across my three careers.

Doug is dismissive of any extra attribution beyond providing a place for young people to delve into working with their hands on something more than a birdhouse. Yet even today, I turn to him for counsel and perspective, which he graciously provides with a healthy dose of sardonic humor. Truly he has earned the title shop master.

—Trux Dole '83



Trux and his reverse serpentine, claw-and-ball foot desk, with tapered layer interior



Page and her desk

LIKE MANY of Doug's former students, I found a haven in the shop at Groton. The second I entered those double glass doors, I left behind whatever anxiety or exhaustion I was dragging around everywhere else. I can remember going there on the weekends or in my free time (ha ha) to clear my mind and find some quiet. My favorite moments were when Doug was there working on one of his special projects (anyone else remember the harpsichord?), and we could just work in silence with the sunlight streaming in through those huge windows.

Mr. Brown is what made the shop so special. He brought his authentic self to school every day, and I think that's what made so many different kinds of people comfortable in his realm. I'm grateful for his mentorship and for his peaceful kindness. I'm looking forward to keeping in touch!

—Page Cassin '03

WHEN I think of my time at Groton, I immediately think of the woodworking shop. It goes without saying: it was my favorite class—I somehow was able to convince my advisor and Mr. Brown to allow me to take shop as a double credit my Sixth Form year. I am truly grateful for the skills and knowledge I was able to learn from Mr. Brown, in addition to the beautiful furniture I treasure. Thank you, Mr. Brown. Best wishes in retirement.

—Trevor Smith '00



Trevor, above right, with his table; above, other memories of shop at his home

“It goes without saying: it was my favorite class.”

GUS HARWOOD '07, Bo Harwood '12, and I all built lowboys during our Fourth Form year, under the guidance of Doug Brown. Mr. Brown—not a day goes by in my house when we aren't reminded of you.

—Terry Harwood '81, P'07, '09, '12

Terry Harwood '81 and his son, Bo '12, with their lowboys and a third made by Gus '07



Shop-portunity

AS A student at Groton, the shop was an incredible resource and outlet for me. Mr. Brown fundamentally made it the place that provided so much opportunity. He was the soul of the place. The shop was certainly the setting where I felt most in control of what I could do and achieve as a student.

I was very fortunate that Mr. Brown allowed me to pursue a few projects that I think were not typical

at the time. Finishing my Third Form coffee table quite early in the year, I came up with the idea of designing/building an electric guitar, which he approved. Then in Fifth Form, after finishing my grandfather clock project, rather than take on some of the other amazing but more canonical projects, I came up with the idea of building a partners desk. With development drawings, I was able to proceed and bring it to fruition as a Sixth

Former. I recall that one challenge was implementing three leather-covered panels inset into the desktop. Mr. Brown helped me come up with a plan for how to adhere the leather to plywood panels. I remember that there was some frustration and a couple of attempts were required to do it well, with a first attempt leading to Mr. Brown pulling up the leather and indicating that I should do it again and modify the method. It all worked out! During a reunion visit, I was amazed to come across another partners desk in production. I had the good fortune of meeting the student working on the project. It was most gratifying to see the seed of something I had done long before in the work and enthusiasm of a current student.

The skill and knowledge I learned in the shop under Mr. Brown's guidance allowed me to spend about two years designing and building furniture in New York City after college — one of my most valued work experiences — before ultimately deciding to attend graduate school at MIT's School of Architecture and Planning.

Mr. Brown and the shop at Groton provided a unique experience that I think would be hard to find elsewhere, particularly for that age student. I am so grateful for the opportunity to have been a student of Mr. Brown's and for the learning experience provided by the shop.

—Jack de Valpine '85



Jack with his grandfather clock; under the tutelage of Mr. Brown, he also built a coffee table, a desk, and an electric guitar. What he learned in Groton's wood shop inspired additional furniture-making, including the chair at left, inspired by a Benjamin Henry Latrobe Greek Revival design.



David compared the process for building this secretary desk to “woodworking chess.”

“Mr. Brown and his student would work together to research and solve the challenges of reproducing the original.”

DOUG BROWN is in the pantheon of Groton’s great teachers. He is a world-class woodworker himself, and he has been able to share his talents and insights with his students while inspiring them to do their best. Building a piece of furniture that was new to Mr. Brown was particularly rewarding, as Mr. Brown and his student would work together to research and solve the challenges of reproducing the original. I had the privilege of building the first secretary desk by a student, so I got to experience this relationship firsthand. Together we would plot out the steps required to complete the secretary top, in painstaking detail. It was woodworking chess, as it were.

Thank you, Mr. Brown, for sharing your remarkable gifts. I feel lucky and privileged to have been one of your pupils. And of course, nothing could be better than the decades of friendship that have ensued ever since my Prize Day.

—David Wilmerding '79, P'09

IN THE three years I spent in Mr. Brown’s shop, I discovered interests and abilities that continue to be central to who I am and what I do today. In particular, building this chair (below) was eye-opening. I had just completed a desk for which every dimension was determined from Mr. Brown’s vast experience with similar projects. The chair required that we work together to design it with research, drawings, and mock-ups. I can still remember opening the filing cabinet in the shop office and pouring through the old magazine clippings of examples and sketches that Mr. Brown had gathered at the MFA. I trace my current work in architecture back to those moments of exploring how to go from an idea to a physical thing in the world.

—Nathan Brown '95



Not only a chair, but a journey of discovery that led to Nathan’s architectural career

Mr. Brown and the program he built, nurtured, and loved are indeed a sacred piece of Groton's history.

Hal and his clock, designed to fit his parents' ceiling height; right, the lowboy he built in the Groton shop



DOUG CREATED a haven in the woodworking shop at Groton. I studied under him all five of my years, and the skills I acquired have been with me ever since.

After completing an ornate mirror Second Form year, I began to work on my grandfather clock. The challenge was the overall height of the clock—it needed to fit in my parents' living room, which had 7' 4" ceilings, much lower than a true grandfather clock's dimensions. I will never forget walking around campus with Mr. Brown to take measurements of all of the clocks on campus in order to acquire reference measurements to design my unique clock.

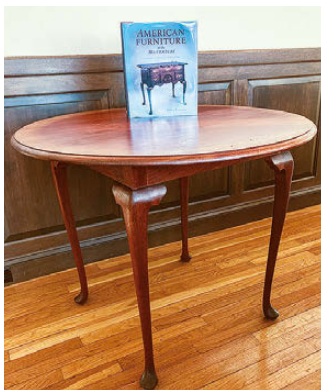
Today, when I am not teaching mathematics at Milton Academy, I run my custom furniture design business, HIPdesign. I fondly remember Mr. Brown as I turn a mahogany table leg on the lathe or inlay some maple with highlights of purple heart or lacewood. Mr. Brown and the program he built, nurtured, and loved are indeed a sacred piece of Groton's history.

—Hal Pratt '85

MY BIGGEST regret over the last twenty years is that I did not dress myself up as a Third Former and audit Doug Brown's shop class. Each year at Prize Day, when I see the beautiful pieces produced by easily distracted fourteen-year-olds, all lined in the main hall of the Schoolhouse, I vow once again to make the time the coming year. It seems that Doug has called me on my foot-dragging, but I also know how deserved this retirement is.

I also would like to thank Doug for all his work as school archivist. Whenever I had a question about school history—while writing a chapel talk on the Vietnam War, for example—Doug could tell me wonderful anecdotes otherwise lost to time. Maybe he could be convinced to write his own history of Groton—if written in the style of his end-of-term comments, it would be pithy, honest, and wry. Congratulations, Doug!

—Jennifer Wallace, History faculty



Piers, his table with a Crokinole board, and another table he built in the wood shop. On the table is the book, *American Furniture*, that he received along with the Shop Prize on Prize Day.



WOODWORKING HAS remained a passion of mine ever since Groton, and I have made a whole host of other pieces including twelve crokinole boards, an electric guitar, rattles, a mancala board, cutting boards, and lathed bowls. I will never forget Mr. Brown and I know he will be sorely missed at Groton.

—Piers MacNaughton '08

THIS PIECE is one of the highlights of my time at Groton. It took me an entire year to make it, and I learned a lot about how to fail in this process. However, every time I thought I made a mistake that would completely ruin my table, Mr. Brown would fix the issue in a matter of minutes. Conversing with Mr. Brown was always a highlight of my day, and wood shop was the only class I actually looked forward to attending. I wish Mr. Brown the best in his well-deserved retirement. I know he will miss his wood shop!

—Jonah Gold '19

Jonah, Mr. Brown, and Bennett Smith '19



A Classic

Scholarly and whimsical, erudite and down-to-earth,
there is no one quite like Andres Reyes '80.

Dr. Reyes began teaching at Groton in 1993. He is departing
this year to continue research at Oxford University.
Generations of Groton students have been guided by his kindness and
inspired by his intellect. For Dr. Reyes and his students,
learning was joy.

BY BOLEK KABALA '99

PRIZE DAY came and went, and a number of us remember thinking that whatever was not comprehended about our experience at the institution that shaped us so profoundly, in work and play, would become clear with the passing of time. And it has. In reflecting on first driving through the fog and seeing the Schoolhouse spire and surrounding athletic fields come into focus ahead of Second or Third Form, the high school journey that followed, and the years since, of one thing we have grown certain: that Dr. Andres T. Reyes taught us about friendship and mentorship and hope in surprising and unsurpassed ways. We are saddened by the news of his retirement but celebrate a new beginning, and are grateful for the opportunity to write a few words in tribute.

For so many of us, Dr. Reyes was everywhere at Groton. In the Classics, certainly: it was in his second floor classroom overlooking the Circle that he taught us to read, write, and think with the Romans and Greeks. One line at a time, of course. And not without a lighter side, which delighted in Bob Gula's Latin vocabulary book and showcased a flare for macaronic doggerel. It was in leading more advanced classes and directed studies on subjects ranging from the Church Fathers and the Inklings to the archaeology of the Middle East that he

conveyed, without apology, a high view of the life of the mind. Mercifully for a number of us, it was also on the Soda Series soccer field that he made his presence felt. "A brisk walk in the woods would do the boys and girls good," if memory serves, was Dr. Reyes' idea of a perfect athletic policy.

Andy, additionally, restored Groton debate to a place of prestige. Here we are able to offer additional personal reflections, as Dr. Reyes always encouraged and cultivated the side of us that, consistent with John Stuart Mill's precepts (and our teenage proclivities), saw an adversarial clash of ideas as a sure and reliable path to truth. Andy Reyes never ceased to be unfailingly polite, but he also recognized that debates sometimes hurt feelings. And he appreciated an exchange that brought down the house. This happened regularly after Thursday sit-down dinner (the time for our verbal agonistics).

Even more importantly, Andy's combination of wit, good humor, and kindness touched anyone who came into contact with him, including rascals, and took off pressure in an intense environment. This was a gift to those of us not equipped to deal with adversity at the age of 15 and 16. In so doing, it also illustrated a civil way to disagree. If anyone suggested that he needed to "loosen up" and dress less

formally, quietly if not out loud, Andy was able to respond that he had lost a leg in the Burmese civil war. Rumor has it that, confronted by impertinent Third Formers questioning the veracity of this experience, Andy Reyes banged his leg against a desk in a way that produced a surprisingly wooden sound.

Dr. Reyes was, on top of all this, a wonderful host, bringing together different students across multiple forms. The point was great conversation, carried on by interesting people. "Interesting" referred to one kind of status alone. This was the ability to think, or to attempt to think, freely—Andy saw it as transcending any particular viewpoint. To enter his world was to converse in a charmed circle with P.G. Wodehouse, C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Virgil, and other interlocutors whose greatness was



apparent on every page. To speak with him for any length of time was to shed the privilege of the present, or assumption that birth today makes us morally superior to those here yesterday.

I learned later the full story of Andy Reyes' Groton hire: the encounter in Crescent City Books in New Orleans with Groton Classics teacher Hugh Sackett, where an offer to join the Groton faculty was reiterated. Then the verbal promise to teach, made to Bill Polk and honored even after UVA presented Dr. Reyes with a tenure-track faculty job. After that, the speed with which Groton decision makers realized that Andy Reyes should be permanent faculty. Norris Getty, one of Groton's famous Latin teachers, who grew up on a farm in Nebraska, once commented that William Polk was destined to be headmaster.

Surely, the same has been said of Andy Reyes as a schoolmaster.

Warren Myers points out that the Greeks had a special word, *kairos*, referring to serendipity, or "the happy coming together of fortunate things." One sees *kairos* at work in contemplating the twists and turns that led Andy Reyes away from a career in the law to a Rhodes scholarship, away from professionalized academia to a one-year appointment at Groton and, finally, to a full-time position at Mr. Peabody's school. *Kairos* also comes into play in the ways Andy Reyes has stayed in contact with Groton graduates, speaking comfort and sense into their tragedies and triumphs. If there was a pensiveness to him, it is surely because he saw the former as well as the latter. As he explains in his edition of C.S. Lewis'

translation of a part of the *Aeneid*, the author of *The Chronicles of Narnia* was drawn to Virgil for this very reason: "Costliness is the key ... Lewis had served in combat ... He not only understood, but felt the truth of Virgil's description of war and death." Dr. Reyes knew, as did C.S. Lewis, that fortune is not always serendipitous. I remember Andy Reyes briskly communicating, with words or without them, that to lose hope is not an option.

At the beginning of this next stage of his storied career, Andy Reyes turns to his archaeological work and unfinished projects editing the papers of C.S. Lewis. This lion of a man, who made Grotonians of all stripes feel that they truly belonged, now heads to England and the Middle East. Godspeed, Sir. You will be sorely missed.

I CAN imagine Dr. Reyes, a man of incredible intellect and talent, in many historical milieus: trading quips with Boswell and Johnson, exploring Middle Eastern archaeological ruins with T.E. Lawrence, and, of course, translating the *Aeneid* with C.S. Lewis.

As the advisor of the Debating Society, Dr. Reyes channeled chatter-box Second Formers toward lifelong interests in public speaking, national affairs, and good conversation. Guiding garrulous Grotonians with his quick wit and even temperament, Dr. Reyes showed precocious and prolix students like me that successful public speaking required strong preparation and sound structure. Through fun debates, Dr. Reyes illuminated ways of writing and thinking that remain with many graduates.

Dr. Reyes was equally gracious in teaching Greek and Latin to students who lacked his legendary command of Classics. I recall his kindness when I concluded a Greek exam by drawing a toga-clad Athenian with the caption, “It’s all Greek to me.”

As a popular advisor, Dr. Reyes offered wise counsel, patience, and an open door to his classroom. At advisee dinners, we all strove to emulate Dr. Reyes’ irreplicable erudition and humor, though we could never match the master.

After graduation, Dr. Reyes was a warm, welcoming host in his classroom, campus home, and summer residence in Oxford. The latter offered a window into Dr. Reyes’ other life as a world-class archaeologist. I extend my gratitude to Dr. Reyes as he pursues his archaeological adventures in the coming years.

— Ted Leonhardt ’11



I TOAST Dr. Reyes—one of Groton’s greatest teachers and greatest coaches—on his retirement. His uniform—the perfectly tailored suit—was not ideal for blocking and tackling, but for those of us who never warmed a varsity bench, Dr. Reyes was the academic leader we needed most. From literature to archaeology, linguistics, history,

theater, or the Beatles, we could bring any cultural interests to him for exploration and encouragement. Formally, I studied Greek and Latin with him for two years, but I don’t remember a time at Groton when I was not learning from him—whether in spare moments between classes, hanging around the library, or as we traded music practice time in the Chapel. He was always there to boost our studies—and also, in my case, a morning chapel performance of “Let It Be,” where his (quite unexpected) organ solo stole the show.

—John DeStefano ’97



I REMEMBER Dr. Reyes telling our Latin 2 class: “You should always have a book you’re reading for pleasure. Keep it on your nightstand. Even if you only read two pages a day, you should read for pleasure every day.” Every day since, that advice has enriched my life.

—Meghan Greenberg Lockwood ’01



LOOKING BACK on my time at Groton now, when I think of Dr. Reyes I think about a thirteen-year-old Pat Florence struggling in Latin. Dr. Reyes could sense that I was having a hard time with Latin and the school in general. He focused more on treating me with respect and being a friend first, and then we focused on Latin. He impacted me in such a kind way, and I never forgot it. Thank you, Dr. Reyes, for being such a great friend to so many of us.

—Pat Florence ’12



AMONG ANDY Reyes’ many interests and talents is a discriminating view of murder mysteries. A Friday night dinner conversation in the Dining Hall with Andy, LuAnn Polk, and Mike Tronic, also devotees of the *oeuvre*, became an exploration of the merits of Agatha Christie, Tony Hillerman, P.D. James, Donna Leon, Robert Parker, Dorothy Sayers, and many others.

Be it murder mysteries, archaeological digs, Greco-Roman history, Greek and Latin languages, or current

events, Andy has a scholar’s knowledge. Like every great teacher, he has the gift of sharing his knowledge in a way that is clear and understandable even to the novice. For many, he made what some call a dead language come to life.

Do not make the mistake of underestimating this man: his quiet demeanor belies a sense of confidence as well as values that are generous and true. As a testimony of affection and respect for their Latin teacher, members of the Second Form arrived at Roll Call one morning dressed in suits and maroon sweaters, the Reyes uniform! Groton will miss the man in that uniform.

—Bill Polk ’58, former headmaster



ONE OF the most important things Dr. Reyes taught me was that the best salad is made of cucumbers, mangoes, lettuce, and tomatoes with a dressing of three parts olive oil to one part balsamic vinegar.

—Ivana Primero ’17



DR. REYES (even now that I am older than he likely was when he taught me at Groton, I hesitate over first names) had a profound impact on my experience at Groton School and continues to be a source of academic inspiration, consultation, and friendship. When I was in Fourth Form he offered his students the choice between sitting for an exam and memorizing a long passage of the *Aeneid*. Perversely, I chose the memorization, and while not every line remains etched in my memory, many do. Dr. Reyes also introduced me to the words of William Johnson Cory, whose words on education “nor need you regret the hours you spent on much that is forgotten, for the shadow of lost knowledge at least protects you from many illusions” allow me to hold on to my partial recall of these lines with joy.

Throughout my adult life, as a college athlete, through graduate school, and in the face of challenges that life presents, I have returned to the words that I memorized (an act that took far longer than exam preparation would

**Many have mentioned
On Education by
William Johnson Cory,
required reading for
Dr. Reyes' students:**

"At school you are engaged not so much in acquiring knowledge as in making mental efforts under criticism. A certain amount of knowledge you can indeed with average faculties acquire so as to retain; nor need you regret the hours you spent on much that is forgotten, for the shadow of lost knowledge at least protects you from many illusions. But you go to a great school not so much for knowledge as for arts and habits; for the habit of attention, for the art of expression, for the art of assuming at a moment's notice a new intellectual position, for the art of entering quickly into another person's thoughts, for the habit of submitting to censure and refutation, for the art of indicating assent or dissent in graduated terms, for the habit of regarding minute points of accuracy, for the art of working out what is possible in a given time, for taste, for discrimination, for mental courage, and for mental soberness. Above all, you go to a great school for self-knowledge."

have, but that has also extended its benefits to me over many more years). When Aeneas encourages his remaining men, in the face of the death of so many of their friends and colleagues, he tells them that "perhaps one day it will please you to remember even these things." (*Aeneid* 1.203) And several lines later he directs them to "endure" (*Aeneid* 1.207). That *durare* has gotten me through many challenges, big and small, and I take its plural voice as a reminder that we are never alone in what we face.

As an adult and now professor of art history, I discuss work regularly with Andy, and he has graciously commented on my work-in-progress, including an essay on feminist translation that includes a section on the *Aeneid*. The long weave of these stories, threaded together over decades, began in the Schoolhouse and over dinner with a small group of students at Dr. Reyes' flat, and through his role as a coach to my dear friend Pia Hargrove and others in Soda Soccer, and has continued through invocations of Andy in his physical absence over dinners in Paris with other alums and Madame Coursaget, and through the community and camaraderie he has built. While I am sad for future students that they will not have the direct benefit of Dr. Reyes' teaching, I am confident that his impact at Groton will endure, as will our friendship.

—Jennifer Stager '96



WHILE I never took a class with Andy as a student, he was like a second advisor to me. Our long bus rides back from debate tournaments somehow became an extended discourse on religion, philosophy, and science, and while this mostly seemed to me like fun argumentative banter at the time, I now realize just how significant these conversations were in shaping the overall way in which I view the world.

Beyond being a mentor, though, Andy has very much been a role model for me as I've reflected on my own position as a teacher at Groton. Always willing to make time for students,

embodying the value of true scholarship, and deeply committed to the traditions and values of the school, Andy has exemplified for me what it means to live our school's motto while working on the Circle. He frequently used to joke that he was going to retire from teaching as soon as he got high enough scores on the Monk Aptitude Test to get into his top choice monastery, but now that the occasion of his actual retirement has arrived, I think I can speak for generations of Groton boys and girls in saying how thankful we all are that the Benedictines never realized just how much Andy would have brought to their community.

In some of the more absurd conversations that Andy and I have enjoyed together, textual analysis of the hymn "Come, Labor On" has led us to many a tongue-in-cheek dispute. Even as I continue to find myself lacking an adequate retort to Andy's witty claims about these lyrics, I can think of nobody more deserving than Andy of the congratulatory remarks contained in the last verse's final few words.

—Michael Gnozzio '03, *Classics faculty*



IT'S DIFFICULT to put into words my gratitude for all of the life lessons learned from Dr. Reyes over his home-cooked *bolognese* or chicken dinners. No one else combines such wit, intellect, and kindness, and he has never lost his place atop a very short list of my all-time favorite dinner companions! Thank you, Dr. Reyes, and congratulations on a well-deserved retirement.

—Ginger Cutler '07



"ALL THINGS that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realization and embodiment, of thoughts that dwelt in the Great Men sent into the world." When Thomas Carlyle said that in the 1840s, he might as well have been speaking of Dr. Reyes.

Over his decades at Groton School, Dr. Reyes has sent his thoughts into the world in ways that shaped the lives of hundreds of students. It is not simply

that we learned from him. Rather, we took on his character, and his ideas, in ways that left us fundamentally different and better than we were before. He gave us the pleasure of finding things out. He gave us a sense of humor that delights in shared and obscure knowledge, that welcomes the audience in with a wink and a secret handshake. He gave us what William Johnson Cory called “arts and habits”—and most of all the habit of attention, the art of expression, and the art of assuming at a moment’s notice a new intellectual position. He gave us Wodehouse; he gave us Tom Lehrer; he gave us Churchill’s recipe for a gin martini. And he discovered those who shared the same joys and gave us to each other.

—Vernon Peterson-Cassin ’00



FOR ME, many of my formmates, and I am sure the majority of people who have been fortunate enough to share the Circle with him, Dr. Reyes is synonymous with Groton. I graduated almost exactly four years ago, but the impact of having Dr. Reyes as a teacher and, in my eyes, a mentor remains. When I have to speak in public, I remember the William Johnson Cory recitation he made all of his students perform. When I write, I remember his lessons on the power of language, the importance of diction, and the subtle implications of each word’s etymological history.

While his time on the Circle has come to a close, every day, each of Dr. Reyes’ students summons forth and preserves the precious lessons he generously gave us during the years he devoted to Groton. He was a parent figure on the Circle—someone to whom we could run after a bad grade, a breakup, a college rejection. He will be remembered for his selflessness, his awe-inspiring brilliance, his unwavering compassion and thoughtfulness, and the way he taught us all what it meant to be a part of a community.

Dr. Reyes, thank you. Blueberries and vanilla ice cream will always be the taste of home.

—Frances McCreery ’17



Tom Kates

Dr. Reyes with Alaric Krapf '15 and Ross Ewald '16



WHEN I think of Andy, I think of the good man’s life, of his “nameless, unremembered, acts of kindness and of love.” From Andy, I learned to love learning and ideas for their own sake, of books high and, more often, low, about Oxbridge correspondence and justly obscure pastiches. He has either given me or inspired much of what mental furniture I have, and I know in this I’m not alone.

I consider myself very lucky to have first passed through Andy’s classroom—may it never change—more than twenty years ago. He was more or less unique, even then, for strictly imparting knowledge rather than credentials. But it is Andy’s friendship outside of school that I most cherish.

Future Grotonians will have teachers and figures who nudge them onto interesting and edifying paths. But there will only be one Andy.

—Max Carter ’04



THE ONLY hope I had for adequate words on Andy’s retirement was the *sortes Virgilianae*. Although possibly less reliable than a volume containing all of Virgil’s works, I thought it appropriate

to use A.T. Reyes, ed., C.S. Lewis’s *Lost Aeneid: Arms and the Exile* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011). My result was Aeneid II.267: *caeduntur vigiles, portisque patentibus omnis*, which Lewis translates as “[they] cut down the guards; fling open all the gates.”

The context is the Trojan Horse story as told by Aeneas at Dido’s request. The Trojans, believing the Greeks had retreated to Mycenae, drag the horse over the city’s threshold; the guards fall asleep after a drunken celebration of the war’s end, only to meet their fate at the hands of Ulysses and his comrades.

On their surface, the words are rather gruesome, but the *sortes* demand an openness to stretched metaphorical meanings. *Caeduntur vigiles*, literally, “the alert ones are cut down,” must refer to the dozens if not hundreds of students (yours truly included) who, despite hours of preparation and utmost care, failed to earn a single point of extra credit on the Greek I final exam. *Portisque patentibus* are the doors to the apartment at Parents House and the house on Peabody Street that were open to students (again, frequently including me) in want of a cup of tea and a sympathetic ear. *Omnis* requires an assist

from the next line to give us *omnis* / *accipiunt socios* (Lewis seems to read *omnis* to modify *portis*, a mistake an attentive student of Andy's might try to cover up by arguing that Virgil is employing the literary device of enallage; he is not): "they take in all their friends."

Andy, your welcoming nature has brought countless students into fellowship and lifelong friendship with you and with each other. I will always be grateful for your tutelage and especially your kindness. Congratulations on your retirement.

—Swift Edgar '03



DR. REYES is the best educator I've ever had. Granted, I'm awful at Classics and am confident that I could not conjugate a verb to save my life today. However, he demonstrated the value of a good education.

I remember in the Second Form when we were asked to memorize a letter from the English poet and educator William Johnson Cory. At the time, I stood before the class—ready to say the thing—and then completely forgot. I sobbed before everyone, which is an embarrassment that is now mostly amusing. However, despite forgetting it on that day, part of Cory's letter still sticks with me:

"You go to a great school not so much for knowledge as for arts and habits; for the habit of attention, for the art of expression, for the art of assuming at a moment's notice a new intellectual position, for the art of entering quickly into another person's thoughts, for the habit of submitting to censure and refutation, for the art of indicating assent or dissent in graduated terms, for the habit of regarding minute points of accuracy, for the art of working out what is possible in a given time, for taste, for discrimination, for mental courage, and for mental soberness."

This tidbit has stayed with me throughout my journey in higher education, both as a student and now as a therapist at UNC Chapel Hill. I could go on and on with additional memories: countless dinners at his

house (with his signature pasta dish and mango salad), the time he let me use his house as a sewing shop, a get-together in London when we ate pancakes and perused the British museum (I still have that Rosetta stone paperweight, by the way) ... but, the above memory, somewhat bittersweet, feels most appropriate.

Dr. Reyes taught me how to think critically. He taught us with humor, style, and patience. He was also an incredible advisor to me and guided me through multiple tough spots. I am incredibly appreciative and grateful to him. Groton School will miss you.

—Zoe Silverman '11



NISHAD AND I met Andy in Cheltenham, England, twenty-two years ago, at the house of a mutual friend and colleague, Don Barnes, who knew Andy from sabbatical stints he had done at Groton. Andy, the eternal raconteur, told us later that he'd been sent to "recruit" us, and if this were true, Groton couldn't have sent a better ambassador. This initial meeting turned into a lifelong friendship, and our time at Groton was marked by dinners at Andy's delightful house, lined from top to bottom with bookshelves of varying length and breadth, so much so that it looked as if the house itself was propped up by books.

Andy would greet us in his signature Snoopy apron, whipping up a meal effortlessly as he kept us entertained with stories of Groton over the ages. Our children grew up referring to his house as "the Snoopy house" because Peanuts memorabilia gifted to him by students and advisees occupied what little space was left by the stacks of books. The evening would end with us signing his "visitors' book," and we would add our names to the long list of students who too had spent many a memorable evening in the warmth of his house.

While on dorm duty, I listened to a group of Sixth Formers tell me about the maneuvering they'd undertaken to get a tutorial passed with Andy so they could have him as a teacher one

last time before he departs. What is the particular quality that defines Andy as a teacher, the quality that makes students clamor to be in his class? Perhaps it's the impish sense of humor that he brings to words ("kirkle" not circle, "lysdexia" instead of dyslexia, "Yarvard and Hale," "Superb Owl" instead of Super Bowl) or that he delights in spinning fantastical yarns that leave his students in stitches, or that he makes the study of Latin an adventure of self-discovery, a journey into who they are as students and who they can be. Or that he makes teaching and learning a form of joy.

Andy's absence will be felt years from now, not only by the countless students who were transformed by his scholarship, but by those of us who were lucky enough to know him, his old-fashioned gentility, and his impeccable collegiality.

—Sravani Sen-Das P'16, '19, '23,
English Department Head



DR. REYES was my advisor during my Fifth and Sixth Form years at Groton, and without his relentless kindness, brilliance, and humor, I would have had a much less fulfilling final two years on campus. My sister, Bridget, planned to have Dr. Reyes as her advisor, but the timing never quite worked out for her. When Dr. Reyes returned to campus my Fifth Form year, she urged me to switch to his advisory despite the fact that I'd never met him. I followed her guidance, and turns out—she's sometimes right!

Through weekly meals and frequent check-ins, Dr. Reyes became an essential part of my Groton experience. He always made me feel heard, valued, and smart—though of course he challenged nearly every word I said. Through his engaging conversation, he made thinking critically, reading critically, and writing critically seem fun, even exciting. Advisory dinners often turned into spirited debates.

During my Sixth Form spring, my roommate and fellow Classics enthusiast, Annie McCreery, embarked on a journey with me to set up a tutorial

focusing on Greek and Roman philosophy. We knew Dr. Reyes needed to be our teacher, so we were over the moon when he agreed. Somehow, through the truly singular pairing of Dr. Reyes and ancient empires, we learned more than we could have ever imagined about nearly everything we could think of, from pop culture to ancient art.

Since graduating, I've returned to Groton a few times just to grab a meal with Dr. Reyes. He will be missed on the Circle, and I'm so grateful to be his student.

—Monica Bousa '15



DR. REYES was an important mentor to me during my time at Groton. I remember showing up to his classroom in Second Form for Latin class—the sea of books lining the walls overwhelmed me, but not nearly as much as the material and rigor of the course soon would. His hilarious sarcasm mixed with his ingenious wit made what felt like the hardest class of my short life enjoyable! He taught me to stay forever curious and inspired me to read more than I ever imagined. Dinners at his home remain some of my most cherished moments. Groton is very lucky to have had him for so many years. He will be deeply missed!

—Bridget Bousa '13



I ALWAYS say that the gift of Dr. Reyes as my academic advisor is the greatest gift my brother has given me, having recommended I request him when starting Second Form. His mentorship, tutelage, and friendship during my five years at Groton shaped me into the person I am today, and inspired my pursuit of the Classics at university. From raucous advisee dinners with the most delicious peanut chicken (for which Dr. Reyes woke up early to grind the peanuts, of course) and pancakes (expertly prepared by the incomparable Judith, whom we all miss dearly), to chocolate drawer hijinks, to indulging me and letting our class translate *Harry Potter* into Latin (NB: “tergum” does not work for “the back” of a cat), to

Cocktail Party Conversation Quizzes (whose random factoids still come in handy!), to name a few memories, Dr. Reyes embodies William Johnson Cory's *On Education*—which, if you know, you know (and can probably still recite). Thank you, Dr. Reyes, for so profoundly and positively influencing the lives of so many Groton students, including this one's, and for ensuring our post-Groton lives are rich with “self-knowledge,” thereby preparing us for “the active work of life.” To M.F.A. (My Favourite Advisor), Groton will not be the same without you. I am so grateful for our continuing friendship. As ever, Y.F.A. (Your Favourite Advisee)

—Bunny Bispham '04



THANK YOU, Dr. Reyes, for agreeing to take this smother mother's phone calls from Hong Kong, day or night, while Bunny was at Groton! I hope I did not abuse the privilege too often. And for how many giggles your own mother and I had over lunch on The Peak about your generous offer to me—and how I did once avail myself of it! Thank you, O Wise and Wonderful Advisor, for all that you have done for our family, day and night!

—Barbara Bispham P'01, '04



TO RECOUNT all that I owe Dr. Reyes would require more space than this short note for the *Quarterly* would allow. Nevertheless, a few highlights would most certainly include my first encounter with Greek, my first job as a research assistant at university, and my first (and perhaps only) academic citation ever!

Dr. Reyes is one of those exceptional people whose extraordinary intellect never gets in the way of his infectious sense of humor and *joie de vivre*. Despite our occasionally appalling performances on end-of-term Greek exams, Andy remained patient, enthusiastic, and kind. He fully embraced his role not only as a teacher but as a mentor, always providing a sympathetic ear to his students' struggles, whether

with the aorist tense or the various twists and turns of boarding school life.

His extreme kindness and empathy probably got him through the countless student music recitals he attended in his time at Groton. I distinctly remember him as a front-row fan at most of these recitals, which, given his love of classical music, was all the more commendable.

Dear Andy, thank you for being a wonderful teacher, mentor, and friend. I wish you many new adventures, much joy, much poetry, and *tout plein de bonnes choses* in this next chapter of your life!

*neglegens, ne qua populus laboret,
parce privatus nimium cavere et
dona praesentis cape laetus horae,
linque severa.*

Hor. Od. 3.8

—Sarah Norodom '09



DR. REYES was committed to teaching whether or not school was in session. When I did a summer at Oxford years after leaving Groton, Dr. Reyes took me to lunch and gave me a copy of his latest book: *C.S. Lewis's Lost Aeneid*! I credit much of the awe I felt in tracing the footsteps of Lewis and Tolkien that summer to the tutelage of Dr. Reyes and many other wonderful teachers at Groton who instilled in me a lifelong love of and reverence for places of learning.

—Sarah Long '12



ANDY HAS threatened to retire perennially, and unexpectedly, unbelievably, now it is coming to pass. Students will miss his irreverent sense of humor, and colleagues will miss his smile, his laugh, his clever turns of phrase, and his thoughtful attention to all that he does.

—Kathy Leggat, Academic Dean



DR. REYES, I fondly remember your legendary classroom full of books and your home full of Snoopy paraphernalia—spaces that will not be filled in the same way again. You are a treasure.

—Adetoro Adeyemi '08



I KNEW something very special was going on in Dr. Reyes' classroom when my son reported that Latin was his favorite course. How lucky students, parents, and the entire school have all been to have had such a talented scholar and teacher at Groton. Thank you, Dr. Reyes!

—Ruth Davis Konigsberg P'23, '26



ANDY DEFINES scholarship and style. An intellectual giant, a humble gentleman, and a consummate boarding school teacher, Andy made colleagues stand in awe ever since he returned to Groton to teach. Rubbing shoulders and holding court with the likes of Warren and Micheline Myers, Rogers Scudder, and Hugh Sackett, Andy loved his field of study and shared it freely with all of the students whom he taught. With a full slate of advisees always, Andy took delight in showing them the joy that was possible

in translating a single sentence of Latin or appreciating an inspiring passage written in any tongue. Andy has left an indelible mark on this institution. A graduate who came back to share what he had learned with a new generation—*Cui servire est regnare*, indeed.

—John Conner P'11, '14, '16, '19, Dean of Faculty



THANK YOU for paying tribute to my favorite teacher ever and probably the reason I cross my sevens to this day.

A note: To me, he always has been and always will be "Mr." (vs. Dr.) Reyes. As I remember it, in my Second Form Latin I class (shout-out to the Delta Force of 1995–96), we all started the year calling him Mr. Reyes, and sometime midyear someone figured out he had earned his PhD. Understandably, some in the class began to call him Dr. Reyes instead. I remember asking him in casual conversation one day if he preferred to be called Dr. Reyes. He replied with a typically refined and modest version

of, "Oh, whatever, Sarah, don't bother. I actually kind of like being called Mr. Reyes." And that was that. Thus, my use of it below is not a typo, but an honoring of that long-ago conversation!

Perhaps what I appreciate most about Mr. Reyes is the fact that he treats everyone as his equal. ATR is erudite, elegant, in a class by himself, no doubt about it. And yet whether one is (fortunate enough to be) his fourteen-year-old Latin I student or his dear respected mentor, the late Dr. Scudder, Mr. Reyes listens with a kind and keen interest and responds with genuine curiosity. He gave me unwavering encouragement as I developed my "mental courage," to borrow from a William Johnson Cory quotation he shared with me during my Groton years, which I've hung above my desk ever since, and I am grateful for our friendship of twenty-six years. I wish him a most splendid monkhood! Hope it's one of those monasteries that makes jam. Thank you, Mr. Reyes.

—Sarah Lawrence '00



In his iconic classroom with Julia Trowbridge '22 and Tate Burgin '21



MY FONDEST memory with Dr. Reyes is a quiet one. I was in his classroom one afternoon after some rain-fall. In the midst of conversation he glanced out his window and exclaimed, "Ducks!" We sat looking out the windows onto the Circle. Some ducks were playing in a puddle, a few inches deep, on the grass. In the grey rain, they were so delighted with their puddle. What a simple joy it was, to watch ducks play.

Throughout my years of high school, college, and adulthood, Dr. Reyes has continued to be a source of comfort and calm. I have turned to him countless times for advice and still value his input over almost anyone else's.

Congratulations to Dr. Reyes as he starts a new chapter. I hope he finds suitable homes for all his books and plenty of adventures ahead.

—Bryn Garrity '10



BEYOND MY personal sadness to see a dear friend decamp across the pond, we are losing a teacher who has helped shape the curiosity and intellectualism of students for decades. Andy is the antithesis of the "teach to the test" model, and he balances an old-school emphasis on "essential knowledge" with lighthearted joy in the classroom. He was a teacher who required students to draw a map of the Roman Empire freehand, but also let them earn extra credit by drawing a Snoopy on their test papers. I believe he is in his third volume of guest books from student dinners at his house—but whether the students enjoyed a home-cooked meal *chez* Reyes or clustered around him at the Dining Hall, they loved the balance of humor and erudition he brought to the table. We will miss you, Andy!

—Jennifer Wallace, History faculty



WORDS CAN'T express how we all feel about Andy's departure from our ranks, both departmental and

institutional. As a one-of-a-kind, truly outstanding, and unique product of the school, he will be missed by one and all. However much his impending absence will create no small tinge of remorse and loss, it is dwarfed by the well wishes and joy we extend to him as he takes the next step in his life. We know the next realm within which he situates himself will be specially impacted and blessed by the skills and attributes that only Andy can bring.

—Amy Martin-Nelson, Classics faculty



ANN AND I have many fond memories of Andy—she would cite their joint participation in the Choir under the leadership of Craig Smith and lunch in the Dining Hall after practice. I remember his time as baseball manager in the spring of 1980 and many conversations about *The Odes* of Horace—not the usual topic of discussion on the bench! Once he joined the faculty, he stood out as a scholar, debate coach, and trusted friend to many fortunate students. We were thrilled that he was the first recipient of the Ann and Charles Alexander Teaching Chair.

—Charles Alexander P'79, '84, '87, GP'10, '14, '16, former Classics faculty



FOR TWO years during college, I had no idea that the buttoned-down fellow with the briefcase, who could not have appeared more different than me, was a Groton graduate, a Classics major, a soon-to-be Rhodes Scholar, an enthusiast of pre-World War II murder mysteries, and one of the wittiest people in Cambridge. How fortunate for me that more than a decade later, I finally came to learn that Andy Reyes is all of these things and more.

Indeed, the past twenty-four years he has brightened my days with many good laughs, a little gossip, and many brief but lasting lessons on everything from archaeology to Groton lore. I have also been inspired by Andy's outstanding classroom teaching, which has been made clear to me by the many glowing remarks about Andy offered

by his students, including my own children. Andy is an original in the best sense of the word.

—Tommy Lamont, History faculty



I FIRST met Andy in my first year at Groton, 1980. He was a Sixth Former who had been crew manager for a few years, and he asked if it was OK if he passed the job to his brother, Al '81. "It's a family tradition." I was delighted to have Al, and yes, Andy, he did an admirable job. When Andy returned as a faculty member, I learned that he was one of the most enjoyable members of the faculty to chat with. He was always buzzing with ideas and offbeat questions. His students loved him, and it has always been clear that he is a master teacher. He is also a scholar, and over the years I have enjoyed reading his monographs about archaeology. Thank you, Andy, for elevating conversation and scholarship at Groton.

—Andy Anderson P'15, '17, '20, Associate Head of School



WHILE I did not take a class with him until Sixth Form and was a desultory debater at best, Andy Reyes left an indelible mark on my Groton experience from my early days. I remember fondly being invited to dinners at his house, where I was nourished by his dry wit and stories, by his wealth of knowledge and wisdom, and by his care for students—not to mention the delectable food itself! The opportunity to explore authors like C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien with him in a senior tutorial was a unique intellectual treat and joy (or as Lewis would write, Joy), and years later to have him give me a tour through C.S. Lewis' house when I happened to be in Oxford was a wonderful repetition of that experience. To be able to work beside him as a colleague the last seven years, and to see with the eyes of a teacher just how much he gives of himself to Groton students and the whole community, has been a true privilege.

—Preston Bannard '01, Classics faculty

Would you like to share a tribute to Andy Reyes? Please email quarterly@groton.org.



High Standards

ELLEN RENNARD joined the Groton faculty in 2003 and made an immediate impression as a dedicated teacher who was determined to have students reach their potential. Many Groton alumni would say that Ms. Rennard taught them to write.

An accomplished photographer, Ellen also shepherded the yearbook staff for many years, leading with both keen organization and artistic sensibilities. We wish Ms. Rennard well as she leaves Groton School this summer. Not one to shy from an adventure—she spent two years teaching in Jordan—Ellen plans to teach in Bulgaria next year.

MY GROTON experience would not have been the same without taking English with Ms. Rennard in Fourth Form. She taught me to approach literature differently, to both read carefully and imagine different worlds. It is safe to say I have approached reading and writing on works of fiction differently ever since. Reading *The Great Gatsby* for the first time with her is one of the highlights of my high school education. While it was sad to hear she is leaving Groton, I know her influence on my writing and thinking will continue with me.

—Amy Zhang '14

THROUGHOUT MY time at Groton and beyond, Ms. Rennard has been an incredible English teacher, mentor, and friend. During a particularly difficult time for me, Ms. Rennard had me over for breakfast every weekend. She never pried, but rather she lifted me up with her exuberance, warmth, and kindness. She treated me, and all students, with respect, and her classroom embodied her appreciation for rigor, creativity, and more than a pinch of wry humor.

There's no other way to say it: Ms. Rennard is a force. She will be missed on the Circle.

—Allie Banwell '12

ELLEN RENNARD'S Fourth Form English class was my very first class as a new Groton student. Ms. Rennard set the tone right away for what I was in for—teachers were going to be experts in their field and they were going to push students to produce their highest quality work. I remember fondly writing about *The Great Gatsby* as well as a creative writing piece about the Palio, a horse race held twice a year in Siena, Italy, where ten riders dress in bright colors and race bareback. Ms. Rennard, through her love of literature and horses, elevated both experiences.

During my Fifth and Sixth Form years on the yearbook staff, I was always amazed at Ms. Rennard's ability to delegate, coordinate many moving pieces, and ultimately enable and empower students to assemble an impressive final product. She will leave a meaningful legacy in the English department, on the yearbook staff, and on the Circle.

—Emma Peabody '11

IN SIXTH Form Expo with Ms. Rennard, I wrote a paper about a local diner. In my first draft, I described the diner as having "glistening" floors and a "sizzling" griddle. After reading it, Ms. Rennard effectively said: "Really? I don't buy it." And she was so right. The floors did not glisten, and the griddle mostly clanked. I've been wary of varnish since.

—Hugh McGlade '13

ELLEN INVITED me over for coffee one summer morning to chat about the end of term. Nothing quite equals the elation that marks the end of the school year and the beginning of the summer and, as I headed over, I looked forward to a morning of coffee and book talk, uninterrupted by bells and routine.

As I entered her house, Ellen ushered me over to her back porch, where two chairs faced a magnificent apple tree from which hung numerous bird feeders in all shapes and sizes. I had the sensation that I was sitting in front of a giant canvas: the tree was a riot of color and movement as an array of New England birds dipped and soared around the carefully placed feeders. As we sat drinking our coffee, Ellen named every type of bird that alighted on one of her feeders and regaled me with stories of each feathered visitor (and some bushy-tailed ones, too!) with whom she shared her backyard sanctuary.

It's this eye for detail and composition that marked Ellen's work in the classroom. An inspired photographer, Ellen has an uncanny eye for the perfect frame, the perfect shot. She helped countless students with their writing, meeting with them one-on-one and teaching them to look at the relation

between words and punctuation in ways that forever shaped them as writers. She used her creative and unerring eye to train aspiring photographers and editors as they worked with her on the yearbook, and she taught electives on Native American literature and "dictators and demagogues" with infectious energy and a sense of fun.

I know many of her students will remember Ellen as "the teacher who taught me to write." I wish her well as she moves on to new landscapes to make her own.

—Sravani Sen-Das P'16, '19, '23,
English Department Head

I CANNOT imagine my time at Groton without Ellen. She listened to all my concerns and guided me through numerous academic challenges. More importantly, she enabled me to manage the social and personal challenges that I felt much less equipped to handle. In particular, she was instrumental in helping me decide which college to choose, and it turned out to be the right choice for me. As an adult, I have so enjoyed reconnecting with Ellen during reunion. I will always be grateful for her inspiration and support.

—Caroline Boes '08

RIDING IN from the West, where she taught at Albuquerque Academy before coming to Groton, Ellen gave us a breath of fresh air. Farms, horses, and photography were her passions along with literature, teaching, and writing, and she found ways to blend all of them into a practice that enlightened not only her students but also her colleagues. She mentored me by sharing thoughtful ways of teaching books like Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*, and also by modeling methods by which she paid attention to the craft of composition. Ellen is a teacher of teachers, well versed in what makes a piece of writing work, rehearsed in bringing words to life not only on the page but also on the stage, and immersed in the art of living. I wish her well as she continues her odyssey, which will surely take her back to an ashram or two, and hope she

keeps the Circle close to her heart even as she explores further afield.

—John Capen P'17, '22, English faculty

IN MY Second Form English class, I wrote a paper on *The Odyssey*, and for one of the first times in my life a teacher was completely honest about everything I needed to improve—it was a lot. I'm fairly certain I burst into tears, but to this day it is a moment I look back on with the utmost respect and gratitude. Ms. Rennard, I cannot thank you enough for your genuine interest in the development of each and every one of your students' writing. I would not be the writer that I am today without your guidance, and I will never forget the compliments, the edits, and the constructive criticism. What I learned in your class at the ripe old age of thirteen has informed so many things that I have done since, and I know I speak for everyone who has had the privilege of learning from you when I say thank you for all that you taught us and for every nudge in the right direction that you gave us.

—India Dial '13

ELLEN LIVED in the apartment above the Richards House's garage for several years before she moved into a delightful house across Farmers Row. She was always very kind to my young children and would ask them about things they did at school or at play. When they were able to have her in English class years later, they commented about what a help she was in improving their writing. She has overseen the challenging task of getting a fine yearbook out every spring. Good luck in Bulgaria.

—Andy Anderson P'15, '17, '20,
Associate Head of School

IN ADDITION to losing a formative teacher in the English classroom, we will miss Ellen's artistry and enthusiasm around the Circle. I have seen so many students thrive under her watch, whether in the classroom or on the yearbook staff. I cannot wait to see what her new home will inspire



Annie Card

photographically, as she is one of the most talented shutterbugs I have had the privilege to know. Good luck, Ellen!

—Jennifer Wallace, History faculty

ELLEN RENNARD was one of the teachers who had a profound impact on me during my time at Groton. She made me a better writer, of course, but her influence extended beyond the classroom. She took an interest in my photography and introduced me to graphic design and spatial composition via the yearbook. These interests have stayed with me into adulthood. Thank you, Ms. Rennard!

—Elizabeth Darden Wooten '06

AN ADVISEE once told me that her sister had told her to go to Ellen for

some help on a college essay, saying: “She will tear apart what you have written, but she will help you build it back up better than you ever thought possible.” Ellen has interests that one might not always expect—her photographs of horses and working barns that she turned into a book were remarkable.

—Kathy Leggat, Academic Dean

ONE OF the reasons I accepted a job offer at Groton in 2005 was to work with teachers like Ellen Rennard: smart, experienced, passionate instructors who had high standards for their students and had no qualms about pushing them to work hard. In my first few years here, Ellen would regularly drop by my classroom to talk about a book she was teaching, or a new lesson that had worked particularly well, or a departmental issue she needed to

discuss. I’ve always appreciated how seriously Ellen takes her work as a teacher, how unafraid she is to voice her own opinions, and how ready she is to laugh out loud at anything she finds absurd. I also vividly remember how thrilled Ellen was to become a grandmother, and I hope that her new overseas adventure gives her the chance to spend more time with her family in Europe. Hundreds of Groton students can thank Ellen for helping them write—and think—more clearly. I can thank Ellen for being the kind of colleague who has made me a better teacher.

—Peter Fry P’15, ’17, English faculty

ELLEN WAS one of the first people I met when I came to Groton. I could not have had a better welcome and a better neighbor as I embarked on my Groton career.

—Amy Martin-Nelson, Classics faculty

OUR SON Andrew Huo had Ms. Rennard as an English teacher during his Fourth Form year. Andrew at that time was a developing teenage boy who was probably confused most of the time. By sheer luck, Ms. Rennard paid attention to Andrew, who initially complained and resisted. As recounted to me by Andrew, Ms. Rennard sat down with him multiple times, telling him to work harder. But the message was empathetic when Ms. Rennard told Andrew that he is smarter than he thinks and therefore that better work is expected of him. Ms. Rennard followed up with individual sessions after class to work on essays with Andrew. With mixed perplexity, amazement, and pride, Andrew improved his work and carried on to improve further in Fifth Form with the help of Ms. Sen-Das to achieve stellar results on both the AP English Language and Composition and the English Literature tests. Ms. Rennard encouraged and guided while at the same time holding Andrew accountable. She has had enormous impact on who Andrew has become.

—Sue Fang P’21



THE Boys of '64

Remembering Groton's First Henley Royal Regatta



by Nason Hamlin '64



“Are you ready? Ready all ... ROW!”

These were the starting commands, said in a regular cadence, for all our crew races. Springing into our racing start we would be off. At least that was what was supposed to happen.

However, at the start of the finals of the New England Championship race at Lake Quinsigamond in 1964, the Pomfret crew took off right after the “Are you ready?” command. It was such an egregious false start that we were sure it would be called back, so we stayed put. When the other crews took off after Pomfret, and the race was not called back, we started out a couple of lengths behind. Although favored to win, we knew we were not going to get much sympathy for complaining about an unfair race, so we just dug in and did our best. Eventually passing Brooks and Belmont Hill, we caught Pomfret just before the sprint, but we were nearly a length behind Middlesex and South Kent. Then we went into overdrive and won by a foot!

Watching the movie of the race, we were amazed by our acceleration in the sprint. It was a great day for Groton crew. The B boat also won their race—by a deck

length. Coach Jim Satterthwaite wrote in the yearbook, “There is no magic to victories like these. Interval training, weight lifting, and Ratzeburg strokes may get you to the finals; when you’re there, you’re just five boys in a boat, and you and nobody else have to make the piece of kindling wood that floats you move. You call on something you didn’t know was there, and suddenly you sprint from third place to seventh heaven. You can’t be taught to win; you win by doing what you were never taught. That makes coaching fun.”

So, how did we get there and go on to be the first Groton crew to compete at the Henley Royal Regatta? As the varsity rowed fours during the regular season, it would mean putting A boat and B boat together into an eight, just two weeks before the races.

Each of us has a unique story about how we started rowing. In early middle school I was an uncoordinated, short, fat redhead. (With apologies to Christopher Marlow, mine “was the face that lunched a thousand chips.”) I came to crew by accident—a football accident in my Third Form year. A locked knee from a torn cartilage required surgery and many weeks of crutches



The 1964 Groton crew, battling a dominant Washington & Lee High School at the Henley Regatta

and rehab. As I was sitting with my knee in a whirlpool bath in the gym, the wise athletic director, Mr. Wickens, suggested I consider a different form of hydrotherapy, crew, for my spring sport. "Nason, it will be good for your knee, unlike going back to being a catcher in club baseball." What great advice. I loved crew. I had had enough musical training to understand rhythm and timing. I loved working hard in a non-contact sport. I shed pounds and grew tall.

Coming into our Sixth Form year there was a sense that '64 would be a strong year for crew. It also happened to be the first year that Henley allowed American schoolboys to compete. **Ian Gardiner '64** had earned a crew letter in his Third Form year, rowing in B boat, an amazing accomplishment. Our Fifth Form had been a strong year with an undefeated B boat. A boat had a strong start to the season but came out of the running along with Captain **George Denny '63's** appendix.

Emory Clark '56, who was in training for the Olympic trials, came to have lunch with us and was an inspiration. He went on to win a gold medal in the U.S. eight at the Tokyo Olympics that year.

Our winter training involved lifting weights and running (ergometers had yet to be invented), and we made a key extra training decision in the spring. Instead of running down to the river for practice and walking back, we decided to run down and back and sprint to the gym. I think that made the difference in our championship row and beating the two fastest English crews in tight races at Henley.

Our coach, Jim Satterthwaite, alias The River God, was very innovative. He introduced interval training, the world champion German crew's Ratzeburg stroke (the *Times of London* correspondent described our stroke as Grotonesque), and Italian rigging. We switched to the new "spoon" blades when we arrived in England. He was every bit as creative as the new young Harvard coach, Harry Parker.

The '64 season did not disappoint. Despite setbacks such as Ian Gardiner's knee injury skiing, the A boat had an undefeated season, including the first win of the initial scrimmage at Exeter in fourteen years. (We borrowed their boats and oars.) The B boat lost to Exeter by four feet but had an undefeated regular season.

We learned that the English pronounced our school's name "Growt'n" and learned that "grotty" was a pejorative.

The Henley crew consisted of **Mathew Hudson '64** (bow), **Jacques Seronde '65** (2), **Thom Jackson '64** (3), **David Wadsworth '64** (4), **Ian Gardiner '64** (5), **John Chandler '64** (6), **Oliver Edwards '64** (7), **Nason Hamlin '64** (stroke) and **David Noyes '67** (cox). Our formmate, **Sam Pease '64**, had hoped to cox but was sidelined by appendicitis. **Jonathan Staebler '64** and **Terry Considine '65** were our able subs. Coach Satterthwaite and his wonderful wife, Tica, rounded out our team. Other Groton graduates also competing at Henley in 1964 included **Sy Cromwell '52** who won the Diamonds Sculls in record time; **Rob Gardiner '62** with the Harvard crew in the Grand Challenge Cup; and **Jim Huntoon '62** with the Elliot House crew in the Thames Cup.

We were so excited to arrive at Henley. First impressions included the beauty of the race course, the elegant row of houses across from the launch site, the cold showers in the big tent after practices, the scent of hops and malt from the local brewery, and the fact that we were staying in a small hotel that dated back to 1544, forty-four years before the Armada! We learned that the English pronounced our school's name "Growt'n" and learned that "grotty" was a pejorative.

Coaches did not have launches but instead rode bicycles on the tow path, holding a megaphone in one hand and hanging on to the handlebars with the other. The intermittent cattle gratings presented an additional challenge to the unwary.

On our first day of practice we met up with the RAF Bomber Command crew, who challenged us to a friendly scrimmage. Much to their surprise, we were faster. In true English fashion, they were very gracious and became great supporters. We were also granted temporary membership to the Leander Club. At that time, to be a permanent member, one had to have won at Henley. (The Club's color is "cerise," a euphemism for a gaudy shade of pink. Their mascot is the hippopotamus, "the only other aquatic mammal with its nose up in the air.") Tom Jackson recalls that we were the third heaviest crew at the regatta. The heaviest was the Soviet Olympic crew, averaging 13 stone

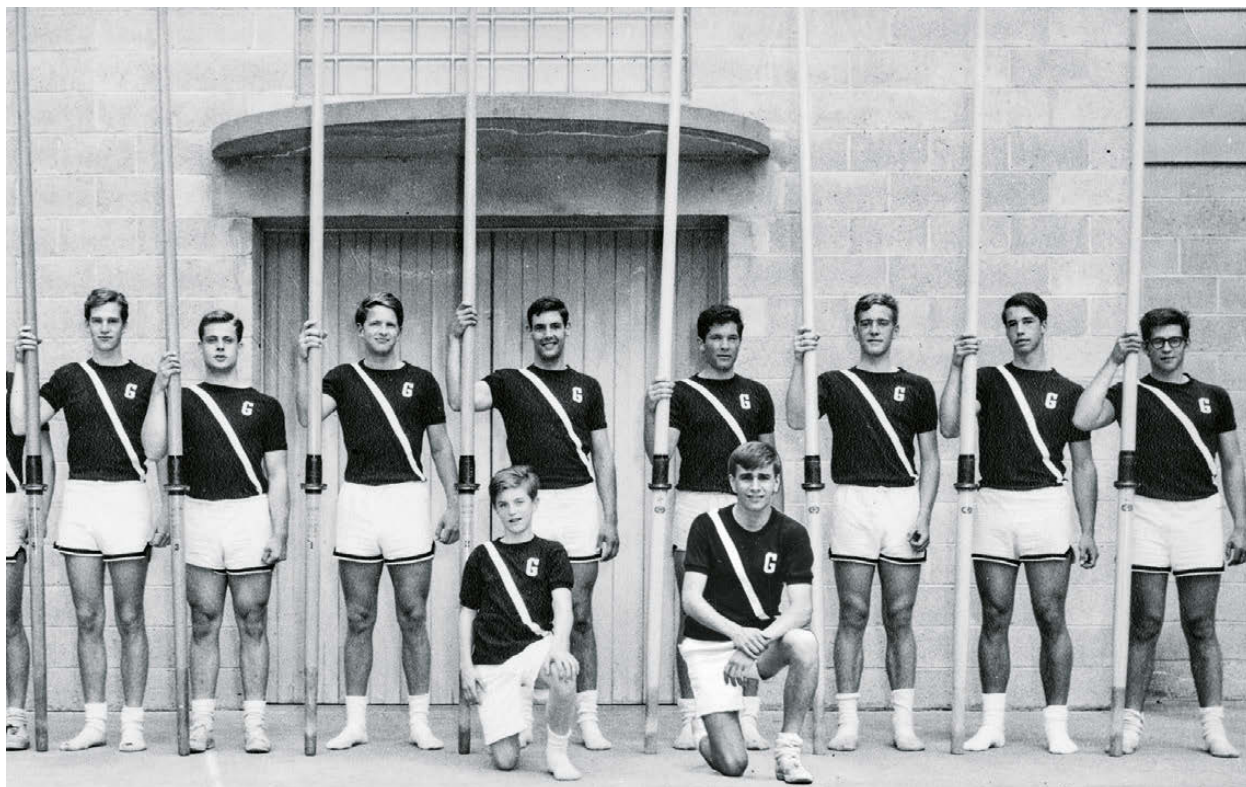
11 pounds. (A stone being 14 pounds). We averaged 13 stone 1. He also remembered that the English idea of a steak did not compare to the tasty beef back home.

As a warm-up we rowed down the Thames to compete in the Marlow Regatta. We went through locks and got into some shrubbery along the bank, anticipating a memorable command in the movie *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* by several years. In the first heat we beat Queens University Belfast but, alas, did not win the day. We slogged through mud in the field, but it was a wonderful experience. After Marlow, Mr. Satterthwaite shuffled the seating positions a bit.

Next we noted the Henley draw. For our first race we were happy not to be paired with the U.S. national champions, Washington and Lee High School (we were not allowed to compete in the Nationals when Washington and Lee won that title), but we were to meet Exeter in the first race. One of us would have to go home having traveled over three thousand miles to compete with a home crew. Thankfully Groton advanced. We beat Eton in the next race by three lengths, having sprinted from a length-and-a-half lead, which some considered an "unsporting" margin.

Prior to the start of the races we had spent a wonderful day at Eton. We went to chapel, noted the students in high collars and morning coats, the difference in their five courts given the configuration of the chapel's buttresses (Groton played Rugby Fives), and learned that beer was part of English crews' training table. Jonathan Staebler remembered the English Sixth Formers summoning a designated underclassman to run errands by shouting a derogatory word. I think we were horrified with that tradition and preferred the Groton tradition of Sixth Formers being leaders and role models. We ended with a visit to their boathouse, which held hundreds of boats; we were impressed that every senior had his own single, and every underclassman shared a single with another student. The boatman, who also built the boats, asked us what we rowed. We said "Pococks," and he said, "I taught Georgie how to make boats." (We rowed fours by George Pocock all through the season, but the eight we took to Henley was made by Joe Garofalo in Worcester, Massachusetts.)

Ian Gardiner recalled that five of us rang the bells in the Henley church. All four A boat rowers were bell-ringers, as was John Chandler in B boat. (Sam Pease was also a bell-ringer.) I often thought that Groton bell-ringing was an asset for rowers as it taught us timing, smooth strokes, efficient use of strength through good technique, and teamwork.



Crews from the A and B boats, who combined as an 8 at the 1964 Henley Regatta: standing, Nason Hamlin '64, Thom Jackson '64, Oliver Edwards '64, Ian Gardiner '64, David Wadsworth '64, John Chandler '64, Jacques Seronde '65, and Mathew Hudson '64; kneeling, David Noyes '67 and Sam Pease '64 (who missed Henley)

Our third race was our toughest against the best English schoolboy crew, Shrewsbury.

The night before, Shrewsbury alums invited us to a reception with the Soviet Olympic crew, which was in fact, Lithuanian. Their average age was in the low thirties, and most of them had not started rowing until their mid-twenties. The alums tried to ply us with beer, perhaps hoping we might not be in true form the next day, but we stayed with orange squash. The Soviet crew drank from large bottles of milk that they had brought with them. They won the Grand Challenge cup easily in record time but were defeated in the Tokyo Olympics by the U.S. eight. Who could have imagined that, in a mere three years, the legendary '67 Harvard crew, stroked by Ian Gardiner, would edge out a powerful Soviet crew to earn a Silver Medal in the European Championships two seconds behind the indomitable West Germans, the Ratzeburgers?

On day three, when our chief rival, Washington and Lee, had an easy race, winning in 7.11, ours, which we won in 6.53, was close. The official report stated: "Shrewsbury led by a $\frac{1}{4}$ length at the $\frac{1}{4}$ mile and held that to the $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. Groton were (sic) level by Fawley and led by a canvas at $\frac{3}{4}$ mile and the Mile. Shrewsbury led again at the 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ mile by a canvas, but Groton with a tremendous spurt went ahead and won a fine race."

The last day was July 4. As *Henley Royal Regatta 1939-1968* states, "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowden, and the Earl of Snowden honoured the Regatta by their presence on Saturday afternoon."

We won another tough race in the morning semifinal, a come-from-behind victory against Winchester College in 6.51. They gave it their all, so much so that the bow man fainted briefly at the end of the race. Two years earlier, the bell-ringers on our crew had spent an afternoon at Winchester Cathedral on a Groton trip and had rung the bells in Winchester cathedral. We had great respect for their fine school and crew.

That afternoon we faced the national champions, Washington and Lee. Rowing to the starting line we passed the spectators from the royal family and then the demonstration row by the Harvard 1914 crew that had won the Grand Challenge Cup fifty years earlier. They were all present, including their manager. (It was inspiring, and long before the time when rowers in their seventies, eighties, and even nineties would compete in the Head of the Charles and other international races.)

In the final, Washington and Lee "led by $\frac{3}{4}$ length at the 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ mile and won a hard race by $\frac{2}{3}$ length. Both finished at over 40," according to *Henley Royal Regatta 1939-1968*. The *Times of London* correspondent, who had



A come-from-behind victory against Shrewsbury at the 1964 Henley Regatta

Coaches did not have launches
but instead rode bicycles on
the tow path, holding a
megaphone in one hand and
hanging on to the handlebars
with the other.

disparaged our rigging, now said that British school crews would do well to emulate the Americans.

The official summary of the regatta stated, "Washington and Lee and Groton were much faster than the others ... Shrewsbury and Winchester were the best home entries."

Yes, it was disappointing not to win the final race, but it was not a surprise. Had we had an entire season to race in an eight, the result might have been different. However, it did teach us that winning isn't everything and to be gracious in defeat. We needed no apologies for how we played the game.

After Henley, Tom Jackson, Jonathan Staebler, and I decided to accept an invitation to visit Shrewsbury. We set off, pedaling our three speed bicycles with fifty-pound sacks on back racks through the streets of London, through to Oxford, and headed west. We stayed in wonderful youth hostels. After days of bucking a steady 20 mph headwind, we realized we would not make it to Shrewsbury in a timely fashion—in fact, we would not make it at all—and we turned south after Evesham. Tom recalls our "waiting for ten minutes at a red light in the middle of nowhere, then impatiently running it only to find that we were crossing an airfield under the wheels of a plane taking off!" Our route took us to Stonehenge, Salisbury, Southampton, Winchester, through Brighton and Hastings in the rain, and finally to Canterbury before heading back to London. It was a great ride.

So why was the '64 crew season so important—other than the New England championship and the historic first Groton crew to compete at Henley? Ian Gardiner

went on to row with the Harvard varsity and was chairman of Friends of Harvard and Radcliffe Crew for a number of years. John Chandler and Oliver Edwards rowed and Sam Pease coxed for Yale. (Sam's father, Hoyt, co-chaired the Yale Regatta Committee for more than twenty-five years, and a cup was named after him.)

The experience of rowing at Groton and on the '64 crew taught us valuable lessons that went beyond mere sport. The intense training, the critical importance of coordinated teamwork and of keeping a cool head under pressure, and the need for finesse and precision along with strength were excellent preparation for life, especially in my chosen profession as a doctor. That and the fact that, in my mid-seventies, I can still enjoy rowing with my Wesleyan crew, a sport that we reactivated in the 1960s after it had been canceled in deference to the football program in 1896! The Wesleyan crew competed in the Head of the Charles for more than fifty years and gets together every fall to row for fun in the same boat with undergraduates. Not many sports can continue to bring such joy for so long.

John Chandler concluded, "The experience itself was extraordinary from start to finish" and that Jim Satterthwaite's "delight in the entire event was everywhere evident ... A once-in-a-lifetime event, to be sure." Jonathan Staebler agreed, saying, "It was one of the best of times."

It was indeed, and we were all privileged to be part of an exceptional experience.

I will end with how the English crews taught us to cheer one's opponent at the end of each race:

Well rowed! Well rowed! Well rowed!

Groton Crew at Henley

At Groton, crews compete in 4s (with coxswains). To make the Henley experience available to more students, crews have mostly competed in 8s, a combination of the first two boats.

+ indicates coxswain
 – indicates no coxswain
 x indicates 2 oars for each rower

BOYS' RESULTS

1964	in 8	Lost to Washington & Lee HS* (USA) in finals (1 st trip for boys)
1973	in 8	
1981	in 8	Lost to Shiplake in first round
1984	in 8	Lost to St. Joe's Prep (PA, USA) in quarter finals
1986	in 4-	Lost to Glasgow Univ. in quarter finals
1991	in 4+	Lost in semi-final to Lea Rowing Club (UK)
1994	in 4+	Lost in 1st round to Upper Thames RC (UK)
2000	in 8	Lost to St. Joseph Prep* (PA, USA) in final
2002	in 8	Lost in semi-final to Abingdon* (UK) ½ length
2012	in 8	Lost to Hampton (UK) in second round
2016	in 8	Lost to Radley (UK) in first round

GIRLS' RESULTS

1994		Won 4+ and 8+ events (1 st trip for girls)
1997	in 8	Lost to Lady Eleanor Holles School (UK) in semi-final
2000	in 8	Lost to Lady Eleanor Holles School* (UK) in semi-final
2002	in 8	Lost in Finals to Kent School* (USA) by 3 feet
2006	in 4+	Lost to Headington School* (UK) in semi-finals
2008	in 4+	Lost to St. Neots School*(UK) in semi-final
2011	in 8	Won 8+ event beating St. Paul's (USA) (Peabody Cup)
2012	in 4x in 4+	Lost to Henley RC* in semi-final Lost to Aberdeen School* in semi-final

PRIOR TO 2012, there were no school events for girls at the Henley Royal Regatta and Groton's trips were to the Henley Women's Regatta. In 8s the girls have raced in the Peabody Cup, a prize given to the Henley Women's Regatta by three former Groton faculty members—Richard Fox, Maureen Beck, and Rogers Scudder—to introduce a named Cup for girls. They donated the Groton School Challenge Cup for 4+s, which Groton also won in 1994.

* Losses to the crew that ultimately won the event. Races at Henley are always single elimination, so one loss means the end of competition.



John H. Shore



A CHAPEL TALK

by Charles T. Whitehead III '21

April 29, 2021

The Man in the Arena

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

—Theodore Roosevelt, "Citizenship in a Republic" (1910)



Trey, his brother Braxton, and Pioneer Peak

Saying goodbye has never been, and will never be, an easy undertaking. Two weeks before last year's virtual Prize Day, I moved out of my home in Palmer, a small farm town nestled in Alaska's Mat-Su Valley. Packing up my belongings, taking AP tests, interning on a campaign, and attending 5 AM Zoom classes distracted me from the ramifications of my departure, and when the eleventh hour arrived, I felt disoriented. After thirteen years in the House that Built Me, I had thirteen minutes to reflect on all that had transpired within its doors.

So, I sauntered outside, sat on our now-barren back porch, and stared out toward Pioneer Peak—trying to brand a silhouette of the Chugach Mountains onto my brain. When I was called to the car, I stood up, took a rock with a serrated edge, and carved my initials into one of our Chokecherry trees. I was overcome by an irrepressible desire to leave something behind.

I guess in some ways, this chapel talk serves a similar purpose. Perhaps circumstance has made me sentimental, but in my final Groton moments, I feel bogged down by the bittersweet implications of flipping the page—of stepping into the fog of what my future may hold.

Before I stroll out of this chapel to fling my boater into the air, I have a tale left to tell—a lesson in leadership that I hope might influence this community's morale in a more profound way than a forgotten name on a Schoolhouse wall ever could.

“What is a name, if not a legacy persevering? What is a title, if not a culmination of character?”

Because what is a name, if not a legacy persevering? What is a title, if not a culmination of character? Whether you love or hate the man in the arena, “whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood,” you know what he stands for all the same.

Many of you here know me by my moniker, Trey, but my full name is Charles Thomas Whitehead III, which I admit sounds more like the title of an obscure English prince than that of a gritty Alaskan transplant. While I enjoy entertaining the thought, it couldn't be further from the truth. Charles Thomas Whitehead is a family name—a promise—that stands for something greater than its twenty-two letters and five syllables.

Integrity, resilience, and fortitude—the men for whom I am named exemplified these values. My great-grandfather served in WW2 and Korea. My grandpa fought in Vietnam, and my dad flew KC-10s and C-17s for 20 years in the Air Force. They are my heroes, but not because of their individual accomplishments within the military. They believed in something bigger than themselves—risking their lives to protect those around them. They answered the call to service, and their courage and their selflessness inspire me every day.

My grandfather, a boisterous and warm family man, was the first Charles. We all called him “Choo-Choo” because of his forty-year railroading career. With his infectious smile, he used to regale us with stories from his time on the tracks, and later in his life, with his experiences in the 25th Infantry Division too.

Dad is the second Charles, and his resolve distinguishes him. He never complains—never stops working—and I can always rely on him to be my compass when I need advice. I hope that one day, I can be the type of father to my kids that he has been to me.

What defined the men before me was a will to never give up on themselves and those they loved. They were born into socioeconomic mediocrity—into rural, blue-collar, working-class lives—but the travail of my Texan forefathers has given me an example to embody—a set of ideals to shoot for. I am the product of my family's American Dream—the fruit of their sacrifices—and I speak to you from this pulpit today—a representative of a middle America that for over a century was largely missing from Groton. To me, Charles might as well be a royal title; I feel honored to share my name with two of the greatest men I have ever known.

And although I often fall short in following their precedent, I will spend the rest of my life enthusiastically striving to be like them—striving to serve and to lead as they did. I have never been the smartest student nor the strongest athlete here, but I have never given up—not on a paper, not on another person, and not on the school I envision Groton one day becoming.

Before lowering the American flag on Tuesday and Saturday nights as a part of my Color Guard routine, I often gaze at the horizon line, where in the vermillion twilight, the outline of my beloved Pioneer Peak materializes.

Mountains, both the physical and the figurative, have always attracted my interest, but in order to properly express this sentiment, I feel compelled to borrow the words of a far more poetic man than me. George Mallory was an esteemed British mountaineer who attempted to

“Broadly speaking, to be a leader is to emanate warmth in the numbing cold—to find sunshine in a valley of negativity—and I have been lucky enough to learn from several Grotonians, Alaskans, and Texans who thrive in this regard.

summit Mt. Everest three times in the early 1920s. In 1922, he wrote in his journal:

“People ask me, ‘What is the use of climbing Mt. Everest?’ and my answer must at once be... If you cannot understand that there is something in man which responds to the challenge of this mountain and goes out to meet it, that the struggle is the struggle of life itself upward and forever upward, then you won’t see why we go. What we get from this adventure is just sheer joy.”

Knowing that I have exerted my fullest effort—that I have invested my all into something, whether that something be a Court and Constitution brief or a hockey practice or a family member—triggers a tremendous sensation of fulfillment within my heart. This is the mindset of Roosevelt’s “man in the arena”—the man who “knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and who spends himself in a worthy cause.” This is the mentality embedded in the name that I will one day earn; this is the Whitehead way.

In 1924, Mallory tried to climb Everest a third time, and to this day, no one knows if he made it. His frozen body was recovered in a ravine seventy-five years later—sun-bleached and mummified. Regardless of whether he reached the top, he died doing what he loved—pushing the limits of impossibility at Earth’s extremes. His death was a unique kind of martyrdom—a martyrdom that I have enormous respect for.

I firmly believe that no one enters this world with that type of monumental fortitude, in the same way that no one has ever been born a leader, because the strongest leaders, like the tallest mountains, emerge from the application of pressure, heat, and stress over time. Groton is like a tectonic plate boundary, and while some of my peers may disagree with me, I stand by Roosevelt’s doctrine of the strenuous life too—the “life of toil and effort, of labor and strife.” The hard times, wrought with late nights, major commitments, and frequent mistakes, challenge us, but it is our resilience—our leadership in times of trial and tribulation—that defines who we are, and who we are going to be. It is our attitude that can render us Herculean.

In Alaska, home was always a place where the only thing more rugged than the mountains were those that lived in their shadows, and where a temperature of forty below might cancel recess, but not class. I was raised in a society of pioneers—by those who stared into the abyss of improbability and never let the odds phase them. Ever since the age of five, I have looked up to those Alaskans. They are my heroes.

In 2007, Dad was stationed at Elmendorf Air Force Base, so we moved from Sacramento to Palmer to begin our Alaskan adventure. Within the first week, however, our expectations for life in the Last Frontier—borrowed from the Discovery channel—were upended. Survival meant studded tires, snow shovels, and having enough Sockeye in the freezer to last through the winter; we had been led astray by reality television.

From the start, the wilderness treated us with harsh contempt. A 7.1 earthquake shook our foundation—both physically and emotionally—and when Mt. Iliamna erupted, volcanic ash blanketed our entire valley. Twice, I returned from hockey practice with second-degree frostbite on my ears, and every morning in the seventh grade at Teel- and Middle, I hiked a half-mile through knee-deep snow drifts to take Algebra 2 at the nearby high school. With each stumble, my family learned to walk, and when we fell, Palmer was there to pick us up. We relied upon our neighbors for warmth when the world grew cold, and eventually, they counted on us for the same.

Broadly speaking, to be a leader is to emanate warmth in the numbing cold—to find sunshine in a valley of negativity—and I have been lucky enough to learn from several Grotonians, Alaskans, and Texans who thrive in this regard.

To AJ, Brian, Mitch, and the rest of the Buildings & Grounds crew. To Ms. Colleen, Ms. Willard, Suki, and the entire Dining Hall staff. To the people who work in the dark to make this school run in the light, thank you. You have shown me nothing but kindness in my three years here.

To Mr. Riley, Mr. Funnell, Headmaster Maqubela, and the rest of the admissions team, thank you for taking a chance on me. Up until the seventh grade, my Cajun great-grandmother, who was unable to speak English throughout her childhood, could not afford shoes; she had to drop out of school at the age of twelve so that she could work in a diner to support her nine brothers and sisters. Amidst her struggle, however, my great-grandmother felt lucky. For the first time in her life, she had a pair of shoes to wear—a pair that the diner had issued to her. Grand Memere, as we affectionately called her, was a special lady. She passed away a few years ago, but I can only imagine the joy it would have brought her to know that her great-grandson was attending a place like this. My gratitude knows no bounds for the opportunity I have received, which is why I have tried to give my best back to Groton. I hope that I have not let you down.

To Mom—the unsung superhero of my life. Your

Trey with his father Charles at McGuire Air Force Base; far right, Trey with his father Charles, sister Berkeley, mother Alyson, and brother Braxton by Charles' C-17 at Elmendorf Air Force Base; below, Trey with friends after his chapel talk



capacity for empathy—for unconditional love—is nothing short of astounding. In order to raise, educate, and care for Berkeley, Braxton, and me when Dad was deployed or flying through the sky above us, you forfeited your budding career and every minute of your free time. Now, I'm both college and military bound. Braxton's a professional hockey player at sixteen, and Berkeley is on track to be far smarter, sweeter, and undoubtedly prettier than either of her older brothers. Your mountain-moving selflessness—your sacrifice—brings tears to my eyes as I reflect upon it now. Just always remember: no matter how far I may roam—no matter how much my summits may change me in the years to come—I'll always be your son. I love you, Mama.

I place my faith in people—in the strength of the ordinary individual to do extraordinary things—and in the lively eyes of my most beloved friends, in the encouraging gazes of the Riley's Dorm third formers, and in the glare of the camera lens, where I know Braxton and Berkeley are watching from afar, I detect enormous potential. I see the leaders of tomorrow.

As a sixth former, I find myself on a well-trodden trail, but one that I have yet to walk, and in the coming weeks,

my departure from the Circle will emerge from the haze of this Spring—another ridgeline for me to scale. Yet, the peaks in my life orient my direction, and I have no doubt that my sense of positioning will devolve into the mist of memory following Prize Day.

Like I remarked before, saying goodbye has never been, and will never be, an easy undertaking, but it's worth remembering that sadness is a relative emotion too. I am distraught to leave Groton—the symbolic arena of my high school years—because battling alongside my dearest friends here has brought me true and unbridled happiness.

So, I implore you all ... don't squander your chances to grow, to lead, and to climb your own mountains in this life. Find sheer joy in the adventure itself—in the challenges you may encounter—and leave trail markers behind you for those that may follow.

And as future Grotonians wander down the hallways of our home, may they see our stories, our legacies, and our names etched into the marrow of the Schoolhouse walls and may they remember us, not as the children who fell, but as the leaders who got back up.

Dare greatly, my friends. Thank you.



A CHAPEL TALK
by Olivia Dillon '21
February 15, 2021

Pieces of Wisdom in my Pockets

What makes someone who they are? What have their experiences been? What is hidden within them that would be so intriguing to know or understand? A person is made up of many complex layers, and part of life is learning to understand your own layers as well as getting to know others'.

Recently, with the college process, I have had to think about "who I am" a lot, *and* who I want to be. So, do I have the answer to who I want to be in the future, you might ask? Not exactly.

Rather than desperately trying to figure out the answer to this question, I think about the experiences that make up who I am today—specific experiences. A large part of our identity comes from the wisdom that is passed on to us from others—and in my family, particularly through the women. The powerful stories that my mother and grandmothers have passed on to me are ones I have enjoyed and are worth hearing over and over again. They are memorable, and they have helped shape the person I am today.

My grandmother was born in Ireland in a small town along the southwest coast of the country. She was the youngest of eleven children, and she often tells me stories about her childhood. She spent her days picking berries by the river and training her pet sheep. As the youngest, she naturally wanted to keep up with the others. And from this, she learned to be independent, strong, and stick up for herself. She learned that life could be filled with adversity and challenges and in her family it was intelligence and civility that would lead her through life—it was taking the high road.

Back in those days, instead of occupying her childhood time with toys or watching TV, my grandmother played with words. Yep, words. My grandmother's family placed a



Olivia's grandmother, scientist
Margaret Harrington

large emphasis on academics, especially poetry, writing, and reading. She still remembers every word of some poems, one of her favorites being the one you heard as the reading, "I Remember, I Remember," and she often recites poetry as she goes about her day. When she was only four years old she learned an intimidating phrase from her siblings, as people often tried to call her nicknames instead of by her real name, Margaret. The phrase was to give her confidence and allow her to speak up for herself:

"The audacity of your pomposity predominates my indignance to think I should tolerate such impertinence from an inferior individual like you."

She always wanted to be better, smarter, and faster. She would ace every test that had academic merit, but she would purposely fail certain ones, such as when asked to "turn the heel of a sock," a knitting technique insisted upon young women back then. Not only did young Margaret hold her ground in her childhood, but she defied expectations of what a young woman was to be during those days.

Margaret came to the United States to pursue her studies and eventually became a biochemist. She worked at New England Medical and then at New England Nuclear. At that time, women in the science fields were a rarity, and so it was always an uphill battle. She once went for a job interview and the director brought her on a tour of the lab. When the director asked her why she thought he had

Clockwise from right: Olivia with friends after her chapel talk; young Olivia with her mother, architect and adventurer Debra Harrington Dillon; Olivia's grandmother, Dorothy Dillon—independent but pushed toward education rather than her chosen field, law



“A large part of our identity comes from the wisdom that is passed on to us from others—and in my family, particularly through the women.

given her a tour, she said, “So I could see the facilities?” He responded with, “No. It is a treat for the boys.” Margaret held her head high and politely turned down the job.

Even after having children, she returned to her passions and attended Harvard School of Public Health, continuing her love of science, medicine, and knowledge. She followed her interests with passion and conviction, and passed on her values to her children.

My mother is also the youngest. She grew up exploring the outdoors and learned to balance her quiet disposition with being strong and independent. My mother wore pants, climbed trees, and built forts. She preferred to spend her time making booby traps rather than playing with Barbies or dress up. Around the time when she was eleven, an illness caused her to be in bed for several weeks. She decided to occupy her time drawing the floor plans of different places she had been.

When she grew up, her obvious interests led her to become an architect. She entered the fields of architecture, engineering, and construction, which were heavily dominated by men. She tells me about her travels to war-torn

countries, to save world monuments, and how she would balance on swing scaffolding while inspecting buildings in New York City. One of her projects included the Federal Reserve Bank, and as she floated past the windows in a harness, the employees would be understandably alarmed and call security. My mother didn't let obstacles stand in her way, and always forged her own path.

She also has lived in many places and traveled through many countries. I'm no longer surprised by all the unusual things that she has done. She often told my brother and me when we were growing up that “the journey is part of the adventure.” She has taken us everywhere with her and never had any fear of traveling with young children. Some trips have been exotic or dangerous—and other times small adventures, just to open our eyes. I'll never forget the time she brought us to the dump on a hot summer day to see the piles of trash and recycling. Weird, yes, but the point was made.

Along with my mother's love for travel, she has made an important point over the years that oftentimes things won't go according to plan. And with that, she has told me that it is imperative to have civility when presented with challenges. On the many occasions when unfortunate

circumstances arise, my mother somehow ends up helping those who are least expecting it. Planes, trains, hotels, something always went wrong but she never lost her composure and kindness. One time we were staying in a hotel room with a connecting door. The neighbors, after a marriage proposal, were being, let's just say, very loud. Rather than interrupting the important occasion or complaining, we stayed quiet. The following morning my mother approached the hotel manager with advice on how to treat the door to make it soundproof. A situation was never about "woe is me" but rather how to better the situation for future people, in that case, the future hotel guests.

When I was born, all my baby clothes were blue, not because a boy was expected, but because my mother thought a girl should be able to wear blue. This was all considered normal for my parents even though most people were confused why baby Olivia always wore blue. Our photo albums show me growing up in blue and then green and then khaki, oftentimes bent over the ground playing with sticks and stones or carrying piles of books around to set up reading areas. She told me I could be whoever I wanted to be and that nothing should ever hold me back.

* * *

My other grandmother has also had an impact on my life even though she passed away eleven years ago. She was a wise and witty woman who was loved by many for her diplomatic and disciplined ways. Her mother died when she was young, which left her with four men in the household—her father and three brothers. She had to be strong and independent, and she grew up fast. She wanted to go to law school but her father did not support this. Instead, she went into education, teaching at an all-girls school, with her favorite classes to teach being *The Constitution* and *The Supreme Court*. Even after having five children, of which my father is the youngest, she continued her passions and later became head of school. She never missed a day of work ... ever. Her infamous words to all of us were, "There is no such thing as a day off, it is a day on." Go out and do something constructive and be useful! She was also very reserved and never dominated a room, but when she spoke, people listened. Her character always meant that she was respected. I will always remember this, as I may never dominate a room, but I too always hope to speak wisely.

* * *

When I was thirteen months old, I developed a severe case of bacterial meningitis. I lost the ability to do everything by myself—eating, walking, and talking. When I recovered, I had to learn how to do all these simple skills again. My grandmother would take me to the hallway to help me practice walking again. She would hold my hands up above my head and have me take steps, repeating to me, "The audacity of your pomposity predominates my indignance to think I should tolerate such impertinence from an

inferior individual like you." I would march around to the steady beat of this phrase. I didn't even understand what this phrase signified, but it wasn't long before I too had the words written in my mind.

Ever since I was little, my grandmother has repeated this phrase over and over to me. Each time she would come to visit, she would ask me to recite the sentence to her, correcting me if I said a wrong word and instructing me to remember to use the sentence to stick up for myself. While I might not have understood what it meant back then, the words are now etched into my mind, a constant reminder of my grandmother's fearlessness.

With all my doctors' appointments over the years, my mother was able to make them almost enjoyable. It was always an adventure, a road trip, a time to see amazing medical facilities and meet impressive doctors—all the while making me realize that I am very lucky and to count my blessings.

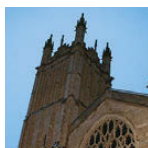
* * *

I have never been a super-confident person. I am not the loudest in a classroom setting. I have never been the best at sports. I am embarrassed easily. I get nervous when it is my time to speak in class. My life has never been an easy trajectory for me. Life has thrown many obstacles in my way and it has been, and will be, my job to navigate them. I have been strong and have persisted through every challenge, something that I am proud of myself for. These are the challenges and personal moments that have added to my layers and have made me strong, grateful, and humble.

* * *

The stories of hardships, difficulties, or tragedies are the ones that people remember so vividly ... these are the stories that are worth telling. They can be painful, but also beautiful lessons in life. During these challenges of life, we grow and stretch and become more than what we were before. Who we are is a collection of these experiences—both personal and our family legacies. For me, I may not know where I'm going in life. I don't know where I'll go to college. I don't know exactly what I want to major in. I don't know what I will do or where I will go when I graduate from college. But what I do know is that I will have words of wisdom and past experiences to guide me, and I am excited to see the different paths that will stretch out before me.

I have filled my pockets with pieces of wisdom and I know that whatever life throws at me, I can dig into my pockets to find something to get me through. Who I am and who I want to be is an evolving character. And while I will always remember the wisdom of those before me, I know I have the ability to blaze my own path ... with intelligence and civility. We must have inspiration in life and embrace all experiences, as they add to who we are—the good, the bad, and the ugly will all contribute in some way to making you, you.



A CHAPEL TALK

by Katherine Sapinski '21
April 15, 2021

Born Twice

When I was little, I wanted nothing more than to be an adult. I'd always hope that someone would ask me what I wanted to be when I grew up, so I could fantasize about being an astronaut, or a veterinarian, or the sixth band-member of One Direction. Not only dream jobs, but the freedom of no curfews, ability to get seconds on dessert whenever I wanted, living in my own house, and driving my own car were all so enticing to me. Adulthood was something that I just couldn't wait to reach.

Now I'm 18 years old—a legal adult, just like I'd always wanted—and yet somehow, I find myself wishing that I could go back to being a kid again. Because now I see the

I could be the class clown, saying one-liners that made everyone laugh. Or I could be the studious girl, who worked harder and for longer than anyone else. I could really be anybody I wanted.

sides of adulthood that I was oblivious to as a child. I see the stresses of filing taxes on Tax Day, the difficulties of choosing a major in college, the competitive job market, and even the agonies of parenthood that I've been the cause of. Yes, I was a super angsty teenager. Sorry, Mom and Dad.

What makes me the most nervous, though, is the feeling that I don't know what in the world I'm doing. When I was younger, it seemed to me that all the adults in

my life had it all figured out. Whether it was my parents, teachers, or coaches, every adult I knew was so secure in themselves and in their livelihoods. I know that I'll get there eventually, but right now I'm crossing my fingers that people don't ask me about future careers because not only have I not yet figured that out, but I'm still grappling with the present moment of who I am. My identity is something that I've been wrestling with for a long time, but even more so since I've been at Groton.

Because unlike most people, I was born twice.

My parents say that the moment they first laid eyes on my swollen, tear-stricken face, there wasn't even a moment's hesitation before my name was determined: "Katherine."

And so I was born first on October 11, 2002: Katherine Sapinski.

When I was about three, I got my first nickname, 'Roo,' after my favorite character in *Winnie the Pooh*. Growing up, Roo refused to eat anything but Kraft macaroni and cheese. Roo loved to hold up picture books and pretend to read to her vast collection of stuffed animals, and she'd always pick out the most colorful leggings or sparkly shirts to show off to all her preschool friends. Roo did as she pleased, her life driven simply by the things that made her happy.

As Roo grew out of her *Winnie the Pooh* phase, she too matured into a new nickname to add to the repertoire: Big. (My mom really tried to make "Little" stick, but that was met with many tears and cries of, "But I'm not little anymore! I'm BIG!") Because she was Big now, her parents finally deemed her old enough to ride to school on a bright, shiny red GoPed scooter all by herself. Instead of sitting idle in the back of a car, twiddling her thumbs as she watched the world slowly move by like everyone else, Big whizzed gleefully down the sidewalk, giggling as she weaved

in and out of startled passersby that always managed to shout some version of “Watch where you’re going, kid!” Even when the GoPed scooter shrank smaller beneath her as she inched taller with each passing month, she wouldn’t dare part with it.

The last nickname to be added to the list was Amorcita. As Amorcita matured, she grew to love this nickname the most. When she went to visit her Abuelito or Abuelita in Illinois, or her Tia Elvia and Tio Isidro in San Diego, she loved to speak in Spanish with them with far too much confidence for a girl with an extremely American accent. Most of all, she loved the way that whenever her mom called her Amorcita, it was inevitably followed by a “*mi cosita mas bonita del todo el mundo*” and a big hug. The nickname Amorcita came with its challenges, though—like the late nights spent laboring over Spanish homework in middle

school, pulling my hair out because things weren’t clicking even though Spanish was my first language. Even though my mom, and the entire side of my mom’s family, is fluent. Even though I’m half Mexican.

I was born again on September 12, 2017.

I arrived on the Circle a week early for preseason as a new Third Former, and the campus rested peacefully before the chaos of move-in day. After a quick hug goodbye, I shooed my parents away, wanting to get their impressive ability to embarrass me as far away as possible before the arrival of my new classmates.

Each cross-country practice blurred into the next, and before I knew it the much-anticipated move-in day had arrived. The butterflies in my stomach doubled, then quadrupled, as I thought more and more about how fresh of a start Groton was. If I wanted to, I could be the loud,

Clockwise from right: Katherine (right) with her cousin Zuri and her mother, Manuela Sapinski; a family dinner; Katherine with friends after her chapel talk



“ Passing as Kat at Groton has certainly been no easy feat, and ultimately it impacted not only the way others perceived me but also the way I perceived myself.

outgoing girl that loved nothing more than the spotlight. I could be the class clown, saying one-liners that made everyone laugh. Or I could be the studious girl, who worked harder and for longer than anyone else. I could really be anybody I wanted.

When the name ‘Kat’ started floating around one day in the Brooks House mall, I hesitated for the first time ever. I wanted to shut it down, just like I had always done at home, preferring Katherine. But for some reason, this time I didn’t say anything. Before I knew it, more and more people began to call me Kat, and eventually there was no stopping it. So I told myself that it could be a good thing. Kat was the blank canvas from which I could paint the new me.

And thus I was reborn: Kat Sapinski.

Over the next few months, the changes began to take place. Unlike how Big took pride in the way her red scooter was different from every monotone-colored bike in bike racks, Kat let out an adamant “NO!” when her parents called asking if they should ship her GoPed to Groton. She told them she would walk, just like everyone else. While middle-school Roo refused to wear anything but long Nike basketball shorts, baggy dri-fit T-shirts, and Kobe’s to school, Kat decided she needed to dress more “preppy” to fit in better with her new environment. And while Amorcita would have jumped at every opportunity to embrace her Mexican heritage, Kat determined she would never attend a single GMP meeting, which is Groton’s mentorship program for domestic students of color, after a passing comment from a friend that she was “so white” and so there must’ve been “some mistake” that she was on the students of color email list. Must’ve been “some mistake” she checked the “Mexican/Latina” box on the Groton application. After moments like those, I figured it was better to not even mention to Groton people that I was

half Mexican. It was just less complicated that way.

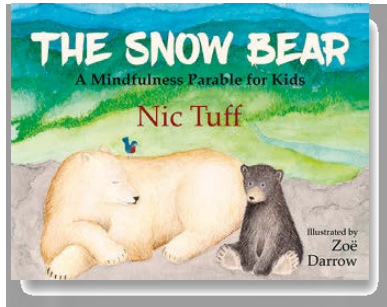
And with each passing day, all of the different aspects of my identity that fit together to form Katherine slipped farther and farther away, until at last she was nearly a complete stranger.

In my “Passing” in Literature elective the other day, Mrs. Maqubela asked us an interesting question. Given the complexities of “passing,” is it even worth it? As author Brando Skyhorse puts it, passing is “a knowing decision about omitting one’s background to obtain acceptance into a community.” For most of my time at Groton, I’ve been passing. Passing only as white, thus muting my Mexican background. Passing as preppy, when I’m secretly a massive tomboy. (It wasn’t just a phase.) Passing as chill and nonchalant, when actually I overthink and overanalyze every single thing that’s ever happened to me. (It’s exhausting.) Passing as Kat at Groton has certainly been no easy feat, and ultimately it impacted not only the way others perceived me but also the way I perceived myself.

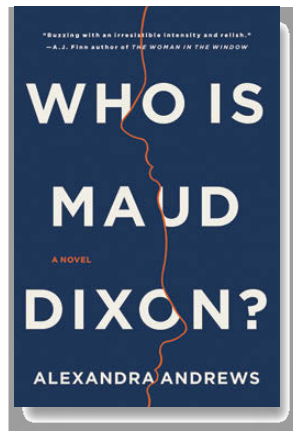
Looking back at it, though, I’ve realized that passing has actually taught me a lot about my identity. It has shown me what my indispensable, my immutable, truths are. What I cannot truly be *me* without. My roots. My opinions. My voice. My style (or current lack thereof. But I’ve recruited Janice to help me out, so there’s hope). I didn’t realize something was such a big part of my identity until I lost it. But it was because of my friends and mentors at Groton that I was able to rediscover the important aspects of myself that I cannot live without, and for that I will forever be thankful.

I’d be lying if I told you that I’ll go through the rest of my life never passing again. Because frankly, everybody does it. Whether it’s consciously or subconsciously, it’s human nature to want to fit in. To be accepted into a new community. But the difference now is that I’ve learned the differentiation between passing and covering. When I head off to college and am presented with a blank page just like I was at Groton, I’m not going to cover up parts of myself that are true to me. I’m not going to cover up the aspects of Roo, or Big, or Amorcita, or Katherine, or even Kat that have come together to shape my identity. Instead, I am going to embrace and build upon every single one of them as I continue to embark, slowly but surely, down the path of adulthood.

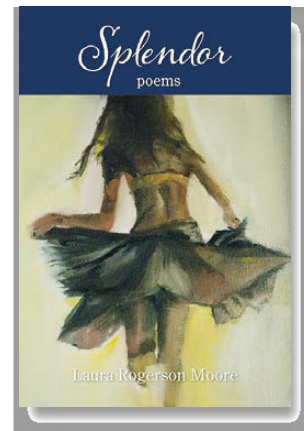
①



②



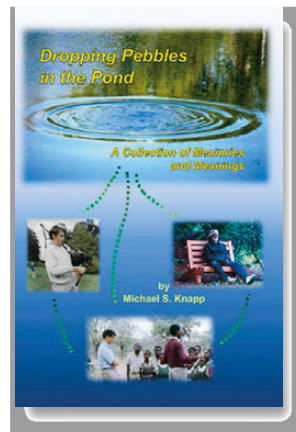
③



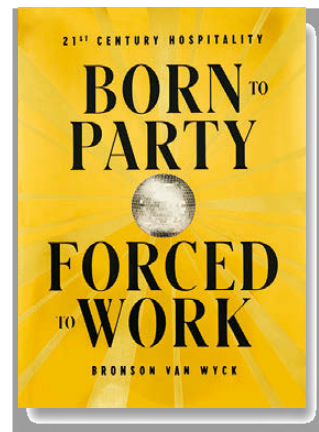
④



⑤



⑥



► Please send information about your new releases to quarterly@groton.org.

①

Nic Tuff '95

The Snow Bear

The story of *The Snow Bear* guides children on a journey to find ways of working with difficult emotions, such as anxiety and fear, using mindfulness. The Snow Bear is particularly suited for times of great social and environmental change to help

children find a place of fearlessness.

Based on observations from nature and wisdom millennia old, the story works with animal archetypes exemplifying characteristics of modern times that the protagonist, Barry Bartholomew, has to overcome. Barry seeks the wisdom of the forest community himself and from the wise Snow Bear. The Snow Bear helps Barry overcome his anxiety and fear of an impending forest fire

using lessons on mindfulness and the wisdom of the natural world. As the lessons come to a natural end, Barry's solidity is tested by a fire that has overcome the forest. He works with the various psychologies of each species in the forest community to help them "cross to the other shore"—an allegory for finding complete freedom within oneself. More information is available at thesnowbearbook.com.

2

Alexandra Andrews Beha '02
Who Is Maud Dixon?

Who Is Maud Dixon? is a psychological thriller about a low-level publishing employee, Florence Darrow, who believes she's destined to become a famous writer. When she stumbles into a job as the assistant to the brilliant, enigmatic novelist known as Maud Dixon—whose true identity is a secret—the arrangement seems perfect. Maud Dixon (whose real name, Florence discovers, is Helen Wilcox) can be prickly, but she is full of pointed wisdom on how to write and how to live.

Florence soon accompanies Helen on a research trip to Morocco, and Florence's life at last feels interesting enough to inspire a novel of her own. But when Florence wakes up in the hospital after a terrible car accident, with no memory of the previous night—and no sign of Helen—she's tempted to take a shortcut. Instead of hiding in Helen's shadow, why not upgrade into Helen's life? Not to mention her bestselling pseudonym, Maud Dixon ...

3

Laura Rogerson Moore '78
Splendor

The fifty-nine poems in this collection are suffused with light as they tell a story of a girl named Phoebe, her mother and father, and a stranger named O'Ryan who comes to be one of them.

Set in rural New England in the middle of the twentieth century and written in Phoebe's voice, *Splendor* captures the extraordinary

lives of these four ordinary people who seek a way to exist beyond the expectations of their world. Weaving her present with her past, Phoebe recounts her days as a child, her young womanhood, and her final years, certain of both her incorruptible self and of her joy, acknowledged and sustained by wonder and love.

Splendor was inspired by stories of the writer's father and his boyhood during summers in Vermont, haying on his best friend's farm, and the girl who lived down the road. Laura later worked on her farm and witnessed her incorruptible wonder and joy. *Splendor* imagines how that joy came to be.

4

Richard N. Bentley '55
Leaving Chicago

Leaving Chicago is a collection of short stories and poems that have appeared in various literary magazines since 2016. They include "Health Care," a story that won a Best Microfiction of 2019 (Pelikanesis Press) award and another for poetry (The Pushcart Prize). The author's earlier works include *Post-Freudian Dreaming*, *A General Theory of Desire*, and *All Rise*.

Dick Bentley, who was editor of *The Grotonian* in 1954–55, shared the opening of his poem "Ants."

*A solitary ant, when closely seen,
Is quite unlike a thinking, sentient being.
Observed in nettly field or tangly lawn,
He looks more like a goofy ganglion
Of nervous neurons legging o'er the lea
With deaf, dumb, blind yet restless energy.*

You finish it, says the author.

5

Michael S. Knapp '64
*Dropping Pebbles in the Pond:
A Collection of Memories and
Meanings*

This collection of personal reflections explores events, episodes, and feelings from the author's past. Each is prompted by an artifact, something that tumbled out of a long unopened box: a tiny address book in which he wrote a "novel" at age 7; a practice bagpipe which he hadn't played for many years; a newspaper clipping of a tragic accident; a letter written by his great-grandfather during the Civil War; a Starbucks latte cup made to provide coffee intravenously; and many more. These prompts call up memories that crisscross Michael Knapp's years, from age 7 to 74. The reflections probe what the stories say and mean as he looks back across a long lifetime.

6

Bronson van Wyck '91
Born to Party, Forced to Work

What defines a great party? For party and event designer Bronson van Wyck, it's generosity of spirit (with plenty of spirits to drink, too).

Born to Party is an insider's look at some of Bronson's most memorable events, distilling the essential pillars of the art of party-giving.

Known for entertaining that combines wit and sophistication with the gracious warmth of his Southern upbringing, Bronson has organized parties all over the world, for clients including Presidents Clinton, Bush, and Obama; Beyoncé; Gwyneth Paltrow; Madonna; Richard Meier; and Diane von Furstenberg.

72 (!) ARTISTIC ACCOLADES

TWENTY-FIVE Groton students won seventy-two regional Scholastic Art & Writing awards, including one national gold medal and eighteen gold keys, the highest regional honor. Several of the visual arts winners are on the following pages.

Sophia Nicole-Bay '23 won a national gold medal for her personal essay "Hunger," which will be published on the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards website in June. Of nearly 230,000 writing submissions nationwide, only 2,000 received a national medal. Sophia also received a gold key for her short story "Family Reunion" and an honorable mention for her photograph, "That Fleeting Moment."

Angela Wei '21 won the most awards overall, with gold keys for her poem "Fairy Tale for Gardeners," her painting "My Hands Make No Amendments," and her art portfolio "The Diotimas." She also won silver keys for three poems, two personal essays, two paintings, and a mixed media work. Angela received honorable mentions for three paintings, and a poem, personal essay, mixed media work, and a design piece.

Colin Kim '23 won a gold key and a Best in Category art award in expanded projects for "Fragmented," a video montage. He also received a silver key for his short story "The Vaccine" and an honorable mention for his art project "Blur."

Five other students received honors in both art and writing: Yici Cai '22, Janice Zhai '21, Yuen Ning Chang '21, Noemi Iwasaki '22, and Mei Matsui '23.

Four additional students received art awards—Amy Sharma '23, Jack Wang '22, Tyler Weisberg '22, and Paopao Zhang '24—and thirteen received writing awards, including several with multiple accolades: Beatrice Agbi '21, Morgan Arnold '23, Alisa Gulyansky '24, Edric Kan '22, Jiacheng Kang '22, Amelia Pottash '23, Fiona Reenan '23, Benjamin Reyes '23, Will Vratatos '23, Hannah Wise '21, and Julie Xie '23.

—Christopher Temerson



Jack Wang '22
City Geometry, Silver Key



Noemi Iwasaki '22
Blue Peter, Honorable Mention



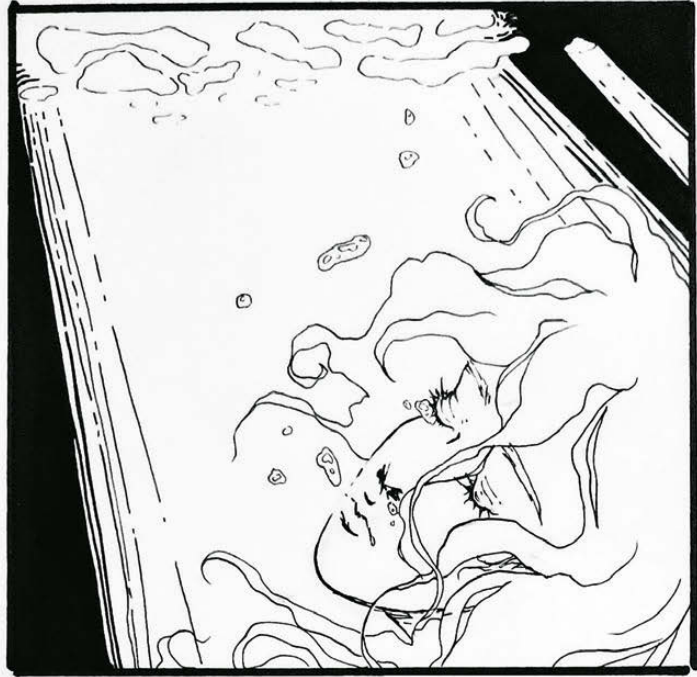
Colin Kim '23

Fragmented, Gold Key, Best in Category/Expanded Projects (screenshot from a video)



Angela Wei '21

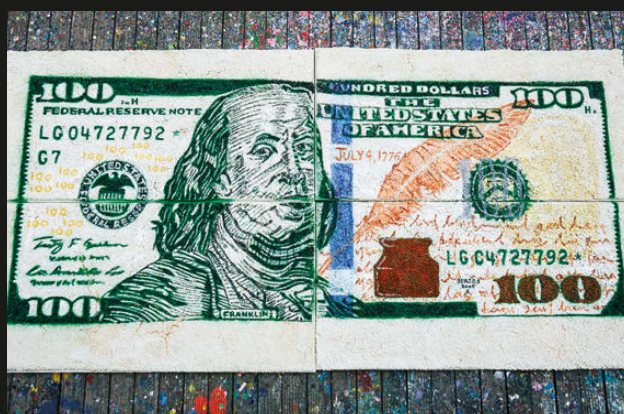
They Pray to a Time on Fire, Silver Key



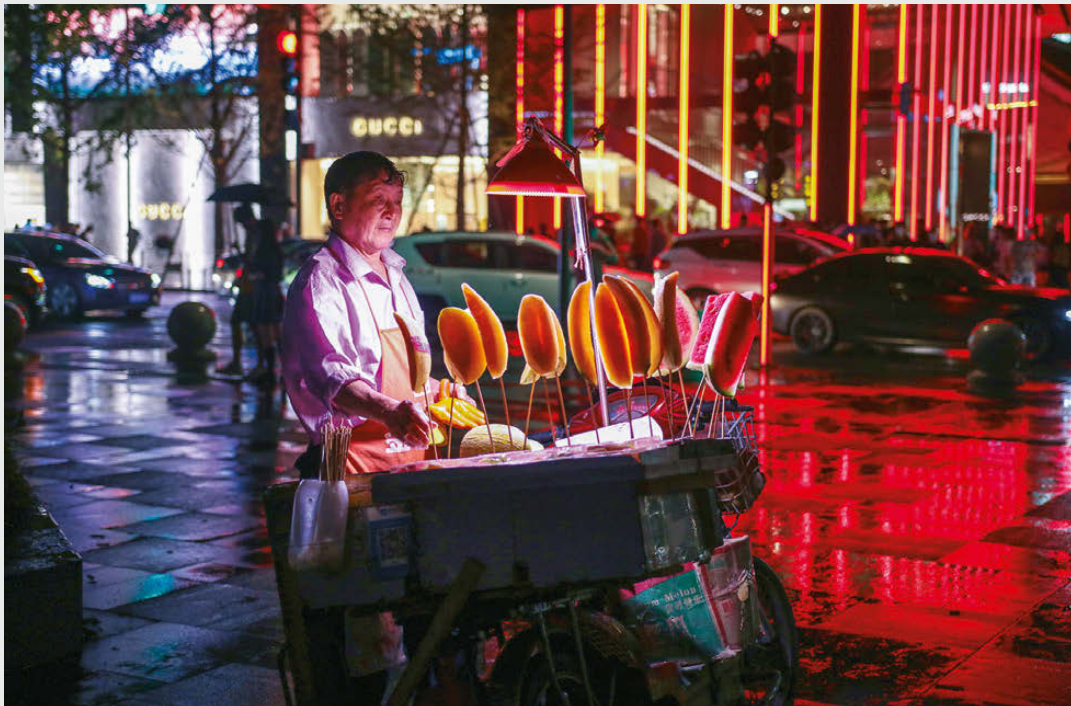
Mei Matsui '23
Siren, Silver Key



Janice Zhai '21
The Swan, Honorable Mention



Isabel Cai '21
270 Million Grains, Gold Key



Tyler Weisberg '22
\$0.96/hour, Gold Key



Qingyang "Paopao" Zhang '24
Veggie Burger, Honorable Mention



Yuen Ning Chang '21
Gilded, Silver Key



Amy Sharma '23
Azdarchid, The Tree Will Grow, Gold Key

Marianna “Muffin” H.M. O’Brien

March 28, 1930 – January 9, 2021

by Thomas B. Hoopes ’79, P’18 and David W. Rimmer ’79



In January the Groton School community lost a dear friend in Muffin O’Brien, a woman who contributed to the school in numerous ways: as a faculty spouse, sports fan, social organizer, dorm parent and affiliate, faculty mentor, and form mother. So many were touched by her warmth and support during her twenty-five years at the school, including students, parents, faculty, and trustees—but especially the advisees or English students of her husband Junie, players on his baseball or hockey teams, and, later, the female students she brought under her wing through one of the most welcoming kitchens on campus. We consider ourselves fortunate to have known that love and, like so many others, are forever grateful.

Muffin arrived at Groton in the fall of 1955 after a summer marriage to Junie, who had been teaching and coaching at the school since 1948. They, along with Charlie ’44 and Clare Rimmer, were the first couples to run a dormitory, the newly renovated Pest House, which was divided into two separate wings. A few years and a child or two later, the O’Brien family settled into the brick house on Farmers Row across from the Dining Hall, with the Rimmers eventually moving into the white one next door. With nine children between the two families, there was constant traffic between the two houses. But it was that brick house, more than any other on campus, that became a home away from home for countless students, often offering a fresh batch of chocolate chip cookies, warm from the oven. It was a refuge for adolescents navigating the rigors and challenges of boarding school life, whether they were relaxing over games at “Parlor” or teammates enjoying some homemade food after a game. Sports were often featured, whether bumper pool, ping-pong, a Bruins game on TV, or the occasional street-hockey game in the driveway and garage, with Junie’s seemingly endless cardboard boxes of books acting as the goal.

Following a 1969–70 sabbatical year in London, Muffin, with her four children growing and in school full time, took on a greater role with the school, while

Junie moved from the classroom and athletic venues to focus on development and alumni affairs. Headmaster Rowland Cox hired Muffin the year he came to Groton, and she served on the Women’s Committee when girls first arrived in 1975. Muffin and other faculty spouses’ subtle influence and support helped guide the school through that transition. Muffin also started the Student Activities Committee, was director of special events and student affairs, and later, as special assistant to Headmaster Bill Polk ’58, became greatly involved in planning new student orientation, Parents Weekend, Reunion Weekend, the school birthday, and numerous other events.

After the O’Briens retired from Groton in 1980, Muffin continued her work in the secondary school world, founding a consulting business with Junie in Boston to help families navigate secondary school placement and also continuing as a trustee of Miss Porter’s School, where she eventually served as interim head during 1992–93.

From the perspective of two lifelong family friends and Groton alums, it is abundantly clear that what delighted Muffin most was bringing family, friends, former students, and faculty together, embracing and sustaining long-standing relationships emblematic of those formed at Groton School. That embrace was no stronger or more inviting than through the O’Briens’ Edgartown house on Martha’s Vineyard, which she and her wonderful family opened to many for more than fifty years. Like the iconic brick house on Farmers Row, “Havoc House” (as it came to be known), framed by the harbor and Muffin’s beautiful flower garden, was an enduring symbol of the hospitality, warmth, and love that defined her life. Muffin spent her final years there, where she was happiest sitting on the porch on a warm summer evening and looking out over the harbor, surrounded by her children, grandchildren, former students, and family friends, enjoying the warm conversation and laughter filling the air. We all will miss Muffin’s unconditional hospitality, radiant smile, and friendship.



I feel so privileged to have had Muffin O'Brien as a colleague, mentor, and friend for almost fifty years. My first year teaching at Groton, 1974, was also the year before Groton became coeducational. As a young faculty member, I quickly realized that Muffin was instrumental and an experienced voice in this transition. In many ways Muffin was a "pioneer" as she balanced an active role in the life of the school while always being a supportive wife to Junie and a devoted mother to her four children.

In a professional world of very few women, she was a strong and influential role model for me, both professionally and personally. Wise, tough, loving, and fun. I often consulted her during my thirty-year tenure as a head of school. She was an excellent listener and a trustworthy confidant.

Muffin's role in coeducation was profound. She led one of the first human relations and sexuality seminars; was a dorm affiliate for the nine years that my husband, John, and I ran a girls dormitory; and played a key role in the many planning meetings and decisions related to preparing and implementing coeducation. Our female students gravitated to her warmth, calm, and wisdom.

These past several years I visited Muffin on her beautiful deck on the Vineyard, overlooking her meticulously self-maintained gardens and the harbor. We would reflect, talk, laugh, and sometimes even cry together. Her spirit soared in the breezes as I now imagine her spirit still soaring. I miss her dearly; she will always remain a part of me. How fortunate and blessed I was to be that young faculty member in 1974.

—Joan G. Ogilvy Holden, former faculty

In 1955, Junie arrived at Sunday chapel with a woman. Two hundred female-deprived boys tend to notice these things. Being a communion Sunday, Muffin and Junie had to walk up the center aisle, receive communion, and walk back down the center to their seats. Everyone in Chapel had 20/20 vision that morning. Of course, we fell in love with Muffin instantly.

Typical of Muffin's spirit of inclusiveness, every member of the faculty and the student body received an invitation to the O'Brien wedding. Muffin was always attentive and welcoming to new faculty and their families. Malinda and Gillian, my daughters, remember with deep affection and gratitude the way in which Muffin made sure that our entire family felt welcomed into the community. In Malinda's words, "She landed us as a family here." She landed a lot of people at Groton.

Thanks to Muffin, the O'Brien home was the center of hospitality at the school: a home away from home for students; a refuge of relaxation, good conversation, and



The O'Brien Family: Junie, Frankie, Dede, Elsie, Muffin, and Louise at their Edgartown house

laughter for the faculty; and a place where school organizations went to celebrate special occasions.

A strong advocate for coeducation, Muffin did her utmost to make sure female students were treated equally and respectfully. In her later years at Groton, she was adviser to the Student Activities Committee and had the role of organizing special events and programs for faculty and students. Unofficially she was a cheerleader at more games, especially at the open cold rink, performances, and events than I can count. Always interested in what people were doing and always encouraging those in need of a boost, she was a vital presence for many of us as we navigated the minefield known as adolescence.

—Bill Polk '58, former headmaster

One enduring memory for me as a student, as a young faculty member, as a school trustee for many years—her voice was always present, in a thoughtful and perceptive way. Junie always offered his two cents but followed her wise lead.

—Adapted from a letter from Warren Cook '63, former faculty, to the O'Brien family

I still picture her as she was nearly fifty years ago, when she and Junie opened up their home to us on so many happy occasions. Lovely smile, genuine warmth, and goodwill in her voice. What a remarkable pair they were! And such a respite amid the daily grind of school, sports—the entire 24/7 immersion that was Groton School during those somewhat difficult years of the late sixties and early seventies.

—Adapted from a letter from Allen Peacock '72 to the O'Brien family

The O'Briens were open-hearted, open-minded, and extremely generous people. I was so lucky to be able to stay in touch with Muffin over the years, with visits to Boston and the Vineyard. Her impact on me, and her support during my Fourth and Fifth Form years in particular, was immeasurable. The term *in loco parentis* comes to mind, in the best possible sense.

—Selden Wells Tearse '81

Muffin had something that could not be measured by achievement—it was an outpouring of pure love and understanding that she so happily and easily gave to everyone she knew. It far outweighs anything else I know of.

—Adapted from a letter from Ann Hoopes P'75, P'79, GP'18, a longtime family friend, to the O'Brien family

Muffin was one of the loveliest people I've known. She contributed so much to Groton School and to Miss Porter's, and most of all to everyone who knew and loved her. Some people shine by example, and she was surely one of them.

—Adapted from a letter from Clare Rimmer P'79, '81, GP'18, faculty spouse from 1953–74, to the O'Brien family

It's hard for me to put into words what Muffin has meant to me during the past sixty-three years; I am remembering so many events, kindnesses, and times when her support and love helped bring out whatever is good in me.

—Adapted from a letter from Oakley Brooks '63 to the O'Brien family

Richard Gordon Leahy '48

Trustee 1970–81

March 6, 1929 – November 19, 2020

by Paul S. Russell '43, P'75, Trustee 1964–79

Dick Leahy was a most worthy son of Groton. After his early years in Buffalo, his mother consulted her bishop regarding his education. The bishop wisely recommended Groton School, thus enriching both Dick and the school.

He was tall, a couple of inches over six feet. He maintained an erect posture throughout his life, making him easily recognizable in a group. His demeanor was quiet. But it didn't take long for his high intelligence and firm character to shine through. His subtle sense of humor was a winning trait, and he made close, lifelong friends at the school. Stuart Brunet '48 was the best man at his wedding, and David Low '48, Bill Erhart '48, and Dick Peaslee '48 were ushers, all Grotonians. During summers, he and his family loved their place on a lake in Quebec, where he grew up with boating and water sports.

Dick loved everything about Groton School. He was excellent in the classroom, where his orderly and analytic mind was immediately apparent. Rowing on the Nashua was another place where he excelled. His lanky frame and staying power made him a first-class oarsman. In the winter it was skiing. At Groton, the slopes near the school were unimproved so one had to face the challenge of climbing up to have the joy of coasting down, a rather Groton type of challenge.

The time directly after his graduation was one of exploration. He worked for a time in the oil fields in Midland, Texas, then went to Union College before finding his true métier at Yale. Here it was that he also found Sarah "Sally" Brooks Griswold. They were kindred spirits, both with deep academic interests as well as a serious appreciation of the arts and current affairs, and he soon married her. After his graduation from Yale, he moved on to Harvard to pursue a PhD in geophysics while Sally moved on to Wellesley College.

His first post after graduation was at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, where he became involved in marine research, including what must have been exciting cruises on R/V Atlantis. His talent for institutional administration began to show as he became assistant to the Institute's director. Now with three children, the family moved to Chestnut Hill in Newton, Massachusetts, while Dick joined the administration of Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences. His scientific background prepared him for steadily enlarging administrative

responsibilities in support of the science faculty, facilities, and programs. As associate dean of the faculty, he was entrusted with a remarkable range of oversight responsibilities. He was director of the Laboratories of the Division of Engineering and Applied Physics, which included overall planning for Harvard's large new science center. He became coordinator of governmental relations in the Office of the President. He also had oversight of Harvard's far-flung holdings beyond Cambridge, such as the Arnold Arboretum and I Tatti (Bernard Berenson's picturesque villa perched in Fiesole across the Arno from Florence).

Beyond Harvard he served as chairman of the board of the John von Neumann Electronic Computer Project in Princeton, chairman of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Design Selection Board, and executive director of the New England Consortium for Undergraduate Science Education. I saw him regularly when our terms on the Groton Board of Trustees overlapped. Dick and I shared the feeling that the school's science facilities could be improved. This need, and the support of science in general, are moving targets that need continuing attention. We helped supervise the addition of a wing in back of the Schoolhouse that included space for science.

Dick enjoyed his house on the Vineyard and his life there with his beloved Sally, his three children, and their spouses. There he could go duck hunting with his Labradors, sail, and play golf and tennis. For awhile he made the trip from the mainland to the Vineyard on a powerful "cigar boat," which must have been exciting and a bit wet. He was a man of many skills. When needed, he could be a carpenter, a plumber, or an electrician. He and Sally were much involved with the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. They followed the exhibits and activities at the museum. Sally was a docent for many years, and Dick was a member of the corporation. They made a handsome couple much in demand by their many friends in Chestnut Hill. In later years, they moved to Fox Hill Village in Westwood, Massachusetts, where they were popular with their fellow residents.

Dick is survived by his wife Sally and their three children, Sarah Leahy Cerami, Betsy Leahy Morton, Peter Gordon Leahy, and their spouses and children. Dick was indeed a worthy and grateful son of Groton.



FORM NOTES



Form Notes are now password-protected.
Members of the Groton community may read them
online by signing in at www.grotonalumni.network.

A simple way to make a *difference*

One simple way to support Groton is to name the school as a beneficiary of your:

- **Retirement plans, such as an IRA, 401(k) or 403(b),**
- **Bank and brokerage accounts, or**
- **Paid-up life insurance policy.**

Beneficiary designations allow you to specify the individuals and charities you would like to support and the percentage of assets that you want each beneficiary to receive. Your gift will also avoid income and estate taxes, and the disposition of these assets does not require changing your will or living trust. It's as simple as filling out a form.

TO LEARN MORE VISIT: legacy.groton.org

or contact

Giulia King at 978-448-7597 or gking@groton.org



The Circle Society recognizes those who have provided for Groton School's future through their estate plans. Groton is grateful to each Circle Society member for their thoughtful planning, which ensures future support for Groton's mission to inspire lives of character, scholarship, leadership, and service within a diverse, inclusive, and close-knit community.

Groton School

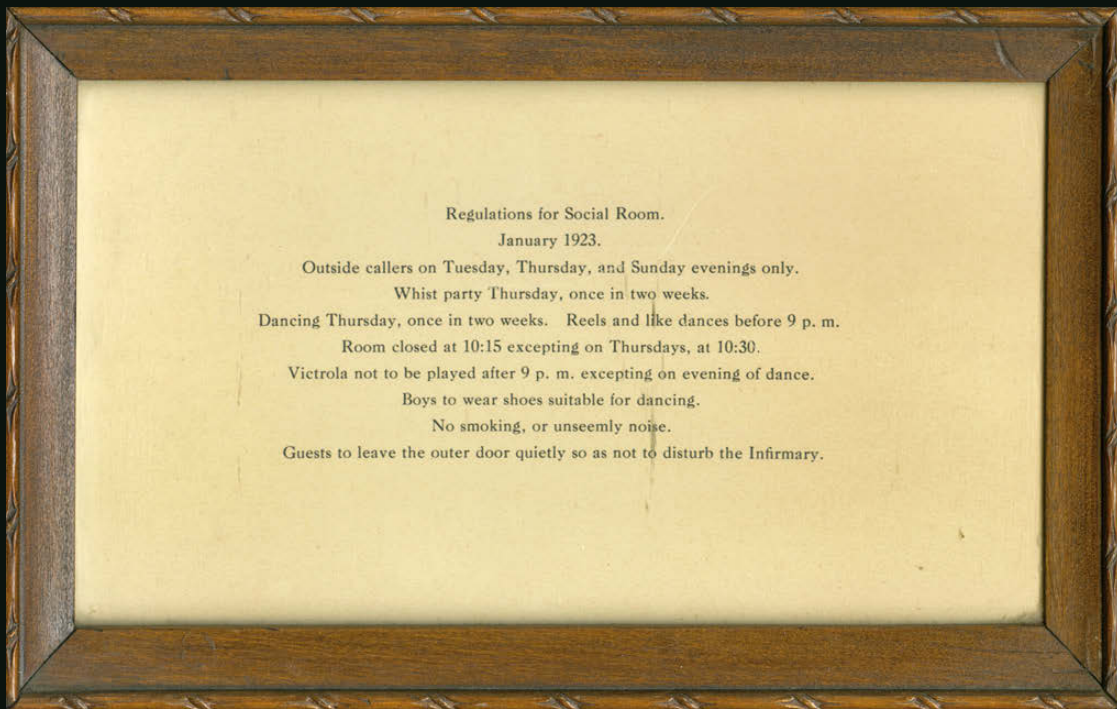
P.O. Box 991

Groton, Massachusetts 01450-0991

Change Service Requested

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
North Reading, MA
Permit 215

CIRCLING BACK



The rules were firm in the Groton School Social Room in 1923. Thursday was a big night, when the room—in the basement of Pest House—stayed open fifteen minutes later. That was also the night for Whist, a card game similar to bridge.

FOLLOW GROTON:

