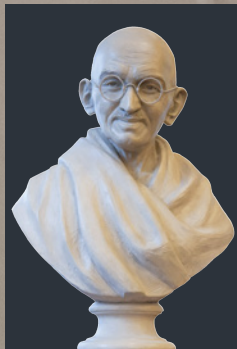
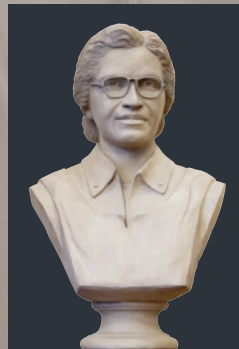


Groton School

The Quarterly • Winter 2022

FOUR STEPS FORWARD



MAHATMA GANDHI
NELSON MANDELA ROSA PARKS
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT





Christopher Temerson

Groton School

The Quarterly

Winter 2022 • Volume LXXXIII, No. 1

Four Steps Forward

The Schoolroom hadn't changed since 1904. Now Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parks, and Eleanor Roosevelt have joined the pantheon.

page 18



When Eleanor Roosevelt Spoke at Groton

She spoke about the United Nations in 1949, and some alumni from the 1950s recalled what her visit was like.

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Mitch Weiss

Message from the Headmaster

Teachers are indeed essential workers.

I often remind students that things are never as thorny as they feel (despite COVID) and also never as rosy as they look. While things became quite thorny this January, as we managed positive cases from the highly transmissible Omicron variant, my colleagues stepped up in ways that would make anyone associated with teaching, or with Groton, immensely proud. Even in this period of uncertainty, they were determined to teach in person—and to uphold their usual standards—because they know the value of this mode of learning. Their spirit is indefatigable.

A recent article in *Independent School* magazine reinforces just how critical a good teacher is. It quotes a policy brief written by Daniel Steiner, executive director of Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy and former New York state education commissioner, whose research led him to conclude that “the strongest education research finding in the last 20 years is that the quality of a teacher is the single greatest in-school determinate of student outcomes.”

With our robust professional development opportunities and regular evaluation process, we place an emphasis on the quality and continual improvement of all teachers. Five years ago, I created the position of director of new faculty development and appointed John Lyons as the inaugural director. This longtime history teacher and other veterans share insights with and impart skills to a new cohort of teachers. The process has proven invaluable. In turn, teachers new to the classroom often share technological skills with those of us from another era. This mutuality creates the type of learning community where there is reciprocity through the sharing of ideas—on pedagogy, on teaching philosophies, on practical

information, and, in general, on how we can improve in our craft.

Groton was recently re-accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). The esteemed educators on the NEASC commission and accreditation committee, including heads from reputable institutions, wrote:

“Ultimately, the Commission commends Groton School for the depth, breadth, and intensity of the conversations it is having around ‘the Circle,’ especially for its willingness to critically assess itself in the service of providing the best learning environment for its students. Given its resources and reputation, Groton School could ‘kick back and rest.’ It has not. Kudos to all for this remarkable spirit.”

The visiting committee affirmed that Groton is a school in dynamic equilibrium, committed to maintaining excellence shaped both by innovation and by its long-established pillars of scholarship, service, spirituality and globalism. Every member of this community works together to make this possible—our students, our staff, our administrators, our trustees, and, of course, our front-line workers, Groton’s classroom teachers.

Temba Maqubela
Headmaster

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Guiding Groton into the Next Decade

Groton School's Board of Trustees has adopted a new strategic framework to guide the school and solidify its commitment to inclusion, belonging, and student well-being.

The board passed the framework unanimously on November 12, during its fall meeting, culminating a process that began in 2019 and involved input from trustees, faculty, administrators, students, and alumni.

"The overarching goal of this strategic framework is for Groton to be a leader among all secondary independent schools not only in scholarship, but also in the areas of inclusion, affordability, and belonging—to consolidate and advance the progress we have made as we evolve into an even more diverse, inclusive, and close-knit community." That opening sentence summarizes the framework, which centers on five key elements: Affordability, Well-Being and Social/Emotional Development, Inclusive Excellence in Scholarship, an Inclusive Campus, and Community Ownership of Inclusion and Belonging. "Groton is blessed with a long history of leadership in secondary school education," said Board of Trustees President **Benjamin Pyne '77, P'12, '15**, "and this framework will

allow Groton to continue its leadership well into the future and remain truly relevant to future generations of students."

In the framework, objectives under Affordability include striving to have the most affordable tuition among forty peer (ABOPS) schools; ensuring that the commitment to tuition containment, access, affordability, inclusion, and belonging are deeply embedded in Groton's culture and financial structure; and maintaining the financial resilience needed to keep tuition increases modest.

Under Well-Being and Social Emotional Development, objectives include creating an environment with interconnected health, counseling, and well-being programs that provide a safe destination for students to seek support while fostering a culture in which students are comfortable seeking it. The Inclusive Excellence in Scholarship section of the framework reemphasizes Groton's global education as well as its belief that a sense of belonging and scholarly excellence go hand in hand.

The objectives under an Inclusive Campus concentrate on creating an environment—visually and experientially—that makes all community members feel a sense of belonging. "One underlying goal of this strategic framework is aligning, guiding, engaging, and inspiring our community around Groton's mission, one that is unique in its equal emphasis on both what we teach and the environment in which we educate," said Board of Trustees

Vice President **Gary Hill '83**.

The strategic framework's final section, Community Ownership of Inclusion and Belonging, focuses on outreach—fostering a greater sense of belonging among all constituent groups, including alumni and past and current parents, and inspiring these constituents to become involved in sustaining the strategic framework's goals of inclusion and belonging.

"This Strategic Framework has emerged from a collaborative effort of the trustees, administration, and faculty during a very difficult time," said former Trustee **Diana Chigas '79**, who managed the strategic planning process. "It is a collective commitment to consolidate Groton's remarkable achievements over the last seven years in becoming more diverse, inclusive, and close-knit. And it is an acknowledgement that we still need to go further."

Mr. Pyne added: "At its heart, this strategic framework is a commitment to bringing the community closer and hearing each and every voice."

CORRECTION: Lars Fritze '23, Rufus Knuppel '22, Stanley Spence '22, Sebastian El Hadj '22, and coxswain Nicole Lee Heberling '22 were members of the varsity crew, first boat. They were erroneously identified as JV crew members in the fall *Quarterly*.

MOMENTUM CONTINUES AS GRAIN CRESTS \$75 MILLION

Two gifts of \$1 million each since late December have raised the total given to GRAIN to \$75 million—reinforcing the goals of inclusion and affordability that distinguish the school and its new strategic framework.

The first GRAIN (Groton Affordability and Inclusion) initiative raised \$53 million between late 2014 and 2018, and its second phase, known as GRAIN 2.0, continues to resonate, bringing in funds at a pace of about \$1 million per month. With \$22.4 million raised to date, GRAIN 2.0 is nearing its \$25 million goal.

About twenty independent schools and five universities have inquired about GRAIN and how they might apply its principles to their institutions.

While alumni and parents both continue to support GRAIN generously, the recent swell for GRAIN 2.0 has been led by parents—a validation of the current-day experience of Groton students. New parents today are as motivated to give as parents were in GRAIN's early days.

"Whereas alumni are forever in their emotional attachment to the school they attended, parents are providing affirmation

of the sense of belonging for their children who attend Groton School today," said Headmaster Temba Maqubela.

Donors cite various reasons for supporting GRAIN and GRAIN 2.0: some are moved by the opportunity to empower students with untapped potential so they might become our future leaders, while others focus on GRAIN's success holding down tuition. GRAIN froze tuition for three years and has enabled annual increases of only 1.5 percent since—plummeting Groton's tuition rank from the most expensive among forty peer schools to nearly the least expensive at thirty-ninth of forty. GRAIN 2.0 is focused on moderating tuition increases, while also raising funds to increase the number of Inclusion Scholars, a subset of students selected to receive need-based scholarships because they embody the ethos of GRAIN, and to add Inclusion Scholars in the Second Form (eighth grade).

One donor, who prefers to remain anonymous, said he gives to GRAIN for two primary reasons. "First, GRAIN brings to Groton students who because of their social, economic, or educational backgrounds would otherwise lack the

means or access to come to Groton's attention or gain admission. GRAIN thus helps Groton

dramatically change the life trajectory of these youth," he explained. "Second, if our goal is to give our own students the right tools to make material positive contributions to our society—and even to become global leaders—then our students will benefit from learning in a highly diverse student body. So GRAIN enables *all* our students to expand their perspectives and to learn how to collaborate with people from a broad variety of demographic backgrounds."

The broad umbrella of social justice motivates many donors who see GRAIN as a chance to make a difference; indeed, their gifts have direct, tangible, and immediate impact on the lives of Groton students. Thanks to GRAIN, 43 percent of Groton students today receive financial aid, compared to 36 percent in 2014–15, before GRAIN took root. The total financial aid budget then was \$6.3 million, compared to \$7.7 million today (a 22 percent increase).



Tom Kates

GOLD "BRILLIANCE" AWARD FOR GROTON VIEWBOOK



Groton School's admission materials have won gold, the highest honor, in the "Printed Viewbook/Prospectus" category of *InspirEd's Brilliance Awards*. The school viewbook and three pamphlets received praise for layout and design, photography, messaging, and concept.

Groton's team asked Stoltze Design Group to approach the primary piece, a viewbook with the theme "dynamic equilibrium," more as an art book than a traditional viewbook—reliant on visuals to set a mood and tell a story rather than on extensive written content. "For many applicants, coming to Groton is a chance to 'find their people,' and that's why our viewbook is centered on student profiles," said Dean of Admission and Financial Aid Ian Gracey.

Both contemporary and traditional, the viewbook design captures

Groton's progressive mindset as well as its reverence for school traditions and history—one example of the dynamic equilibrium. Rounding out the suite of materials is a facts brochure, an informational booklet called "*20 Questions, 19 Answers*," and "*Mentors*," a compilation of faculty profiles.

Created primarily for families applying to Groton today, the materials also captured the imagination of a wide range of Grotonians. A 1959 Groton graduate commented, "For me, their most notable achievement is the deft way they present the school as an institution that is totally recognizable to an alum of my antiquity despite being heavily reinvented and adapted to modern reality over the more than sixty years since my graduation. Change rarely preserves this balance."

STARING DOWN INJUSTICE, GRAPPLING WITH FREEDOM

The Groton School community came face to face with the inequities of the American judicial system through a painful and personal lecture by Anthony Ray Hinton, who was wrongly imprisoned on Alabama's death row for twenty-eight years. He was put there in 1986 by an all-white jury and an overzealous prosecutor for two murders that he didn't commit. It gets worse: many of those who fought to convict him knew or suspected that he was not guilty.

The presentation, part of Groton's Martin Luther King Jr. Day commemoration, provided an intimate window into Mr. Hinton's life—an entirely different experience than watching his story in the documentary, *Just Mercy*, which most students and faculty have seen. Speaking via Zoom, Mr. Hinton described a criminal justice system “that treats you better if you are rich and guilty opposed to if you are poor and innocent.”

The injustice of his case was starkly clear even as Mr. Hinton was being arrested in 1985: a detective ticked off the reasons Mr. Hinton would be convicted, despite the lack of evidence to charge him. The #1 reason: he is Black. In addition, said the officer, a white man would say that Mr. Hinton shot the two victims, and there would be a white prosecutor and an all-white jury. “Do you understand what that means?” Mr. Hinton recalls the detective saying. “He repeated the words: conviction, conviction, conviction, conviction.”

Mr. Hinton also remembers being told: “I don't care if you did it or didn't do it. I'm going to see that you get convicted.”

After the accused's alibi checked out, the charges of robbery, kidnapping, and murder weren't dropped. Instead, they were brazenly escalated, and Mr. Hinton found himself charged with two counts of capital murder. He was advised, “‘Why don't you take this rap for one of your home boys who truly committed the crime?’ And with tears coming down my face I looked at that detective, and I said, ‘There is not a home boy in this world that I would take a rap for like that.’”

His innocence was a poorly kept secret. After Mr. Hinton's conviction and death sentence, he recalls a prosecutor saying, “perhaps a little louder than he intended,” that they hadn't gotten the right Black man,

but had “at least” gotten a Black man off the street. Settled into a prison cell whose size he compared to a bathroom, Mr. Hinton did not speak to anyone for three years. He communicated, when necessary, in writing.

Eventually, he became a teacher of sorts. One of very few inmates with a high school diploma, he received permission to start a death row book club. He especially hoped that one particular inmate—a member of the Ku Klux Klan—would join. He did, and showed up for the first book discussion, on *Go Tell It on the Mountain* by James Baldwin, with six pages of notes. For the first time, Mr. Hinton said, the men felt they were “part of something.”

After three years, when all of the men on death row asked the warden to join the book club, he said he had to shut it down. “I never thought that the book club would catch on with every man there in prison,” Mr. Hinton said. “Books gave every man a way out. They made them go to places they'd never seen; they touched them in ways they never thought they could be touched.”

A man of deep faith, Mr. Hinton said he believes God put him in prison to teach the KKK member about love, to help him unlearn the hatred he had been fed since birth.

Eventually an attorney from the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) showed up, but four years later offered only a reprieve to life without parole. “I said, ‘Life without parole is for guilty people,’” he recalled. “I'm not ready to die and I don't want to die for a crime that I didn't commit, but I could never stand up and tell a lie.” Mr. Hinton was so honest that during his arrest, when officers asked if he owned a firearm, he said he didn't but then offered that his mother kept a gun for snakes—a gun that was then erroneously, and purposefully, associated with the crimes.

Mr. Hinton's life story began to change, albeit slowly, after he wrote to EJI attorney Bryan Stevenson and persuaded him to

take his case. “The day that I shook this lawyer's hand, I knew. Something came over me,” said Mr. Hinton. “I knew that God had sent me his number-one lawyer.”

What should have been a pivotal moment came when Mr. Stevenson hired ballistics experts. Mr. Hinton had asked him to hire the best—insisting on having white men from the South because he knew who would have credibility in Alabama. The ballistics experts testified that the bullets did not match the murder weapon, but a string of state attorneys general refused to examine the ballistics evidence. “Was it because of the color of my skin,” he



Equal Justice Initiative

wondered aloud, “or was it because they already knew that the bullets didn't match? I sat on Alabama's death row for another sixteen years.”

Mr. Stevenson stayed with the case that long, taking it all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which unanimously vacated the conviction and called for a new trial. The state, empty-handed, dropped all charges and, in 2015, Mr. Hinton walked out of prison. He had watched fifty-four of his fellow death row inmates march to the execution chamber.

Details of Mr. Hinton's life story unfolded throughout his lecture and a question-and-answer session afterward. “Where do I get justice from?” he said in a rare show of frustration, removing his glasses to wipe his eyes. “Thirty years

continued on next page

Continued from page 5

in a cage for something that they knew from day one that I hadn't committed. No one has been able to tell me, where's my justice?"

While Alabama's prison system has a grossly disproportionate number of African American inmates, compared to the general population, Mr. Hinton said the system is not broken. "The system is working exactly the way it was designed to work. And the system was designed to put men of color in prison."

He urged his listeners to fight the death penalty. "As long as we have a justice system that is racist," he said, "we are bound to put innocent men and women to death." He wiped his eyes again, then urged voters to put people in office who believe in equal justice.

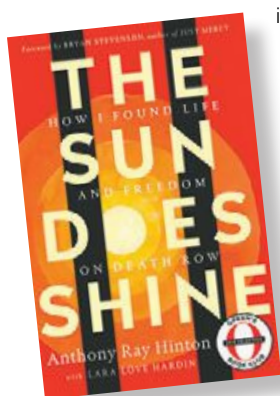
Director of Inclusion Outreach Carolyn Chica, who arranged to bring the speaker to Groton, first learned about Mr. Hinton when she heard Mr. Stevenson speak at a People of Color Conference. "Groton students will go on to make a big impact on the world, so it is important to share different narratives that will inspire them," said Ms. Chica, who advises the Cultural Alliance student group, which helped plan MLK Day. "If one student walks away with a different opinion on the death sentence, for example, then the talk was successful." The Cultural Alliance presented twenty-six student-run workshops after the morning lecture, on topics from climate justice to anti-Semitism to the stigmatization of infectious diseases.

Mr. Hinton concluded his talk by telling students, "I truly believe I've met all of you all for a reason. I truly believe you will take what you heard today and make a difference."

The speaker, who wrote his story in *The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row*, said

he thanks God for the bad things that have happened—and their lessons—not the good things. Still, he mused about the day when he finally meets his Maker. "When I see God face to face, I'm going to ask God, 'What took you so long?'"

—Gail Friedman



Gail Friedman

ZEBRAS GO TO COLLEGE

Twelve Groton athletes will be joining college teams next year, including seven in Division 3 and four in Division 1—bringing along their Zebra experience in baseball, basketball, crew, field hockey, ice hockey, and lacrosse.

Groton's Division 1 athletes are A.J. Colarusso '22, who will play baseball at Boston College; Aine Ley '22 and Sebastian El Hadj '22, who will row, at Dartmouth and Cornell respectively; and Patrick Eldredge '22, who will play lacrosse at Colgate.

Division 3 college athletes include two who will play women's basketball—Calie

Messina '22 at Middlebury College and Katherine Resendiz '22 at Claremont McKenna. Also playing D3 will be Samuel Harris '22, who will join Babson College's baseball squad; Kyle Toce '22, who will row at Trinity College; and two ice hockey players, Grace Crowley '22 on the women's team at Hamilton College and Thomas Giroux '22 on the men's squad at Middlebury. In addition, two young women are taking their skills to Bowdoin College—Hannah Gold '22 in lacrosse and Ella Ferrucci '22 in field hockey.

Congratulations Zebras!



HIGH-TECH
INNOVATION
ON PIANO



A CIRCLE TALK WITH AUTHOR AND PROFESSOR TIYA MILES

Slavery should be taught through the words of the enslaved, using primary sources rather than the incomplete or white-washed textbooks that still show up too often in many classrooms around the U.S. today.

Author and Harvard professor Tiya Miles made that point in response to a student's question during a Circle Talk for the Groton School community in late October. "I want students to see that enslaved people were fully human, making choices, loving their families," she said. "They were not solely victims."

Teaching through firsthand accounts, she added, would also demonstrate how a

system of slavery turned into a set of values for slaveholders and society—with its imprint still firmly rooted in our lives today. Groton's U.S. History faculty teach about slavery using primary sources, such as Frederick Douglass' writings and audio recordings of formerly enslaved persons made during the New Deal.

Dr. Miles' latest book, *All That She Carried*—winner of the National Book Award and a finalist for the Kirkus Prize—tells the story of three generations of Black women through an artifact and family heirloom, a simple seed sack. This sack was packed by a mother, enslaved herself, for her nine-year-old daughter, who was being sold to another slaveholder.

Director of the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History at Harvard University and a 2011 recipient of the so-called MacArthur "genius" grant, Dr. Miles has published extensively on African American and Native American histories, and their intersection. She told the Groton audience that her research on the Cherokee nation proved particularly challenging because she had expected to chronicle a story she had heard throughout her life, of enslaved Black people finding a safe haven on Native American reservations, but instead discovered that some Native Americans themselves held slaves. "I didn't know I was going to be studying slavery because I didn't know that slavery had existed in Native communities," she said.

Even some descendants of the enslaved could not accept this reality. "What I found was that many African Americans seemed to prefer to hold onto those stories and those [safe harbor] narratives," she said. "...they did not want to hear about captivity and violence and disavowal." She also found that many Cherokee people rejected the fact that some members of their nation had enslaved Blacks.

While Dr. Miles struggled with the inevitable fallout she would face from amplifying these stories, in the end, truth won her internal battle. "The biggest challenge I faced was feeling uncertain about whether I should even be doing the work," she said. "...I decided that injustice and its legacy must be brought into the light, no matter who the victims and perpetrators are."

Despite the heavy weight that her seven books (including one novel) and countless articles carry, Dr. Miles resolutely clings to hope. She acknowledged "a sense of inner conflict and tension" about the world today and the anxiety young people feel from ever-present, competing crises—from climate change to the normalization of authoritarianism in politics.

Yet she emphasized the need for optimism. "I'm trying very, very hard to hold onto a sense of hope and the possibility that what has been broken can be repaired again," she said, then urged students to do the same.

"I ask of you: try to step willfully into a space of hope."



Serene, a pianist who merges the worlds of music and technology, performed in the Campbell Performing Arts Center in early November, after providing a master class for Groton's piano students and playing in morning chapel.

Serene (who prefers to use one name) infuses her music with emotion and spirit. She was not classically trained and, in fact, was a Google engineer and senior research fellow at UC Berkeley's International Computer Science Institute before becoming a concert pianist full-time. For her performance at

Groton, she wrote code to connect live audio from her piano to visualizations projected behind her.

These images correspond to Serene's synesthesia, a condition (or perhaps a gift) that Theater Director Laurie Sales described as "when your sensory experiences are cross-wired." In Serene's case, she not only hears music but also sees colorful structures and landscapes unfold in her mind as she plays, which she says informs her unique approach to the piano. The live projections were an experiment intended to help audiences experience music as she does.

LESSONS & CAROLS

CELEBRATING THE SEASON WITH JOY

Adam Richins



Students, faculty, and staff gathered in St. John's Chapel on December 14 for Groton School's most beloved Christmas tradition, the Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols.

The Reverend Allison Read, the school chaplain and director of Spiritual Life, presided at the service, which included a prelude by the Groton School Chamber Orchestra, directed by Tim Terranella; hymns and carols by Groton's choir, under the guidance of Choirmaster and Organist Daniel Moriarty; and the nine traditional readings—the lessons.

This gathering—always meaningful and memorable—was

particularly joyous after the 2020 service, sidelined by the pandemic, was presented only virtually. A service for alumni and parents went on with limited attendance this year, but Lessons & Carols for the Town of Groton was not possible. Many joined the student-focused service via a livestream.

Lessons & Carols was the culmination of a variety of holiday-themed activities on campus, including Groton's annual holiday pops concert; gingerbread house and cookie decorating; and a spirited singing of *The Twelve Days of Christmas*.





GROTON WELCOMES FAMILIES TO PARENTS WEEKEND

Groton School welcomed nearly three hundred families to Parents Weekend, October 29–31, the first in-person Parents Weekend since 2019.

The weekend was filled with a variety of activities, from student performances and parent receptions to the

headmaster's annual address. But central to the autumn gathering were Groton's parent-faculty conferences. More than 2,100 conferences took place over the weekend, not including about two hundred that were scheduled virtually for families who were unable to attend in person.

Last year, the pandemic canceled Parents Weekend, and parents met virtually with advisors instead. This year, the school's vaccine requirement for students, employees, and visitors made the weekend possible. Families traveled to Groton from twenty-four states and all corners of the globe.



Adam Richins



Top and bottom rows: teachers Stephen Fernandez, Franck Koffi, Sravani Sen-Das, and Mary Frances Bannard meeting with parents. Center: Bolaji, Sheena '24, Semira, and Kamen Bakare (left); Julia, Angus '25, and Scott Frew (right).



Josiah Brown '88

Power to the (Youngest) People

P
E
R
S
O
N
A
E



Josiah with his wife, Sahar Usmani-Brown

Josiah Brown '88 is empowering perhaps the most overlooked group in the court system. They tend to be quiet, they cannot advocate for themselves, and their observations are often overlooked.

Josiah's work centers on children.

As Connecticut's executive director of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Josiah is overseeing the merger of three organizations into a statewide group dedicated to giving children who have been abused and neglected a voice in the courtroom—and in their lives.

Through highly trained citizen volunteers who act as advocates, CASA works with social workers, attorneys, teachers—even pediatricians—to find the best course of action for children who find themselves on the child-protection side of the Connecticut Superior Court for Juvenile Matters. These are kids affected directly or indirectly by domestic violence, mental illness, poverty-driven learning issues, parental substance abuse, and any number of other problems.

"Our aim is always to have children find safe, permanent homes in as timely a way as possible so they don't spend years and years in foster homes, which is associated with various risks," said Josiah.

While he was appointed to this new job last summer, it's only the latest touchstone in a lifetime devoted to service. Less a career move than the next step in a vocation, his position is the natural culmination of a life defined by

advocacy and outreach to the underserved. Maybe it began in his childhood in a rural Connecticut town, where he recalls his mother's example in leading an annual UNICEF drive and his father's service on the board of education. Or later, when he spent five summers during high school and college with the Connecticut Public Interest Research Group; during his time as a Big Brother volunteer; or as a tutor for University of Connecticut's Upward Bound. The work continued through Yale and Harvard—where he earned a master's in public policy—and through positions including Congressional aide, chief of staff to the president of the New School in New York, associ-

very motivated every day to do that.”

On any given day, Josiah might be doing a “fine-grained” editing of a court report; meeting with the state commissioner of the Department of Children and Families, a state senator, or a judge; attending a court hearing; or delivering a media presentation. He says he is building a team to better serve the state of Connecticut—and the needs he sees.

“The problems are immense. What we take on are small slices of enormous problems that include poverty and violence and inequality. It both motivates me and gives me hope that you can see individual progress ... So even if you see very troubling

receive financial aid. We came from middle class backgrounds—both our parents were academics but we did not have a lot of family wealth,” he said. “I was always aware of the juxtaposition between the really stunning level of wealth and privilege that you see at Groton—how beautiful the campus is—contrasted with the life experiences that I saw of the young people that I met in New Haven in the late eighties and early nineties. It would have been impossible not to have been struck by the contrast between the opportunities and life circumstances that most kids in New Haven had versus those I had.”

He says it was just “part of my consciousness” not to take his

» “The problems are immense. What we take on are small slices of enormous problems that include poverty and violence and inequality. It both motivates me and gives me hope that you can see individual progress.”

ate director of the Yale–New Haven Teachers Institute, and volunteer board positions.

In 2005, when he was awarded Groton's *Cui Servire Est Regnare* Award, his acceptance speech addressed the notion of making a “meaningful difference” in a world full of challenges, but these days he tends to point to his highly committed CASA volunteers as the real heroes. He describes his job almost as a support system for them.

“I have to match the dedication of these volunteers, and they inspire me to do that,” he said. “I have to provide the resources and guidance for them. If they are doing this on an unpaid basis, I surely have to get up every day and go to work reading the court cases, editing their reports, helping train them, drawing on our board's leadership. I feel

inequities that continue—and every day there's another report of a case of domestic violence—you do see the difference caring individuals can make when they work with systems, legal, law enforcement, social services, health, and education,” he said. “You need individuals working the levers at the intersection of all these different systems, and I think we at CASA are able to do that in some fashion. That gives me hope.”

Josiah says that society's inequities were obvious to him from an early age, and he took note of the circumstances on the Circle compared to those in parts of his home state. “When I arrived at Groton, I received some financial aid. My brother [Nicholas Brown '89] was a year behind me—we appreciated that we were able to

advantages for granted. His mission became to find ways to connect with people as individuals and to expand on networks and “social capital” that might benefit others. That social capital—yielding donors, board members, and volunteers at CASA—has extended the organization's reach.

That long-ago *Cui Servire* Award acceptance speech began with remarks from Theodore Roosevelt's “The Man in the Arena” speech, which celebrated the importance of striving “valiantly” for a “worthy cause,” a notion that underlines Josiah's unfaltering path of service—and his continued optimism.

“I'm still idealistic,” he says. “I also have a more informed pragmatism, not a doctrinaire idealism. I still have that spirit animating me.”

—Marie Speed

Alissa Gordon Heinerscheid '02

What's in Your Worry Box?



Cooking with her children and her brother, Adam Gordon '00

Alissa Gordon Heinerscheid '02 has climbed the corporate marketing ladder quite nimbly, but it wasn't her professional life that got her into the pages of the *New Yorker*¹ last summer. It was the soul-searching project she undertook as an antidote to work during the pandemic: interviewing one hundred women in one hundred days about the things weighing on them most heavily.

What was weighing on Alissa herself, in those early lockdown days, was working full time remotely as a vice president of marketing for Anheuser Busch while raising twin three-year-olds and a newborn.

"I wasn't myself. I wasn't being filled up by my job. I realized how much joy I got from the ancillary things around my job, like seeing my team shine, walking to lunch

with people, talking. And when it all became just about the work itself, no personal interaction, I was like ... " Her voice trails off listlessly. "My husband looked at me one day and said, 'I've never seen you work this hard and I've never seen you more joyless. Something's got to change. This family isn't happy unless you're happy, so you've got to get happy however you need to.'"

¹ "The Rise of the COVID Midlife Crisis," August 14, 2021

It was a unique kind of pressure, getting happy. What made her happy? The social aspect of her job had dried up, and coffee dates with friends weren't the same via Zoom. She thought back to the time in her life she'd felt most useful, most plugged into the current of humanity doing meaningful work, and the recollection surprised her. It had been during the years following her stage-three melanoma treatment, when she had shared what she'd felt with women in a similar situation and learned to counsel them. Those were substantive conversations, with friends of friends who would call her to discuss cancer, infertility, and surrogacy—all looking for answers where there wasn't a

to the chase. "I started with, 'Tell me about your three biggest challenges these days. What's in your worry box? What's keeping you up at night?'"

Phone call after phone call, week after week, patterns emerged. Parents working full time with young kids at home, and women feeling like they were shouldering 80 percent of the duties on the home front, caregiving and monitoring remote school. Women wondering, 'Where is the career that consumes less than 8:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m., a middle ground that lets me live my life, too?' And a restless, unfulfilled feeling that the current work they were doing perhaps wasn't vital enough to warrant the angst.

swell. The number of people choosing not to return to their jobs was making headlines. Lizzie Widdicombe, a staff writer for the *New Yorker*, was assigned to cover women not returning to the workplace. She heard about Alissa's project through a friend, and they spoke several times. "The Rise of the COVID Midlife Crisis: Why Are So Many Women Leaving Corporate America?" ran in the August 14, 2021, *New Yorker*. "It was like this propulsive tidal wave out of the loneliness of COVID," Alissa told the *New Yorker*, "and into other people's heads."

Alissa's mother had grown up on a tiny cattle ranch in Oklahoma, and when she and her husband started a family in his native Houston, she

» **"One woman I spoke to put it perfectly. She said, 'I don't mind being stressed about childhood hunger. I don't mind being stressed about climate change. But I don't want to be stressed about some email my boss sent about a client presentation with the wrong slide.'"**

playbook, and a judgement-free zone for feelings that sometimes didn't feel appropriate to air.

"That was really the genesis of One Hundred Women in One Hundred Days, because I started thinking, 'What could I do right here at home? Am I best in class at anything?' And I was like, 'Well, I talked to dozens of women about surviving cancer and choosing surrogacy. I really know how to listen, and share.'"

But this time, she was the one getting referrals—to friends of friends all over the country who, like her, were struggling to find meaning in work during the pandemic. The initiative was entirely word of mouth. The beauty of it, she said, was that there was no small talk: she cut right

"Women were looking for a second act. Thinking, 'I've got to get out of this thing I'm doing and find something that's truly fulfilling. But I cannot figure out what that next thing is, let alone how to make it happen, and I feel trapped.'" Alissa knew how they were feeling because she was feeling it, too. "One woman I spoke to put it perfectly. She said, 'I don't mind being stressed about childhood hunger. I don't mind being stressed about climate change. But I don't want to be stressed about some email my boss sent about a client presentation with the wrong slide.' That really resonated with me, because at the end of the day, I'm selling beer."

Alissa had tapped into a current that was turning into a significant

would always say that she wanted to have children who could grow wherever they were planted. "On a lark," she decided to move the family to Switzerland to expand the horizons of Alissa and her older brother, **Adam Gordon '00**. And when they returned to Texas, she had no trouble sending them to a different cultural climate for high school, a place she thought might be a little more worldly.

Alissa was often homesick, and credits Groton—and the kindness of the other girls—for instilling in her a deep sense of empathy.

"You are living in a cubicle, not even full to the ceiling, just a few feet away from someone else. And if there's a thirteen-year-old crying, you go in there and check on each



other. It fosters such a strong sense of community.”

At Groton she loved English class with Ted Goodrich—“when he loved one of your sentences, his highest praise was triple exclamation points, and it was so wonderful”—and was deeply committed to playing the harp. She was one of only a few girls chosen to study for multiple summers with master harpist Alice Chalifoux in Camden, Maine.

When she attended Harvard, she felt she was no longer defined in relation to her “brilliant, athletic” older brother, and she flourished. After graduating, she became a consultant with Tapestry Networks for five years, then attended Wharton and held a series of marketing positions: at General Mills, Johnson & Johnson, and now at Anheuser Busch, which she loves but doesn’t believe is her ultimate calling.

“I didn’t do enough self-discovery work in the beginning, which hopefully I’m doing now, twenty years later,” she said. “I became a lot more assertive and competitive since working at AB, but essentially my style is very green—very



Left, Alissa with her Groton roommate, Whitney Rauschenbach '02; above, with rapper Post Malone when Alissa was running Bud Light’s music and sports program

empathetic, a leader through consensus. I’m outgoing and I love connecting with people. But what’s the role I want to play in people’s lives? Where do I derive joy?”

When she was interviewing the women for her project, she spoke to an executive for a self-driving-vehicle company who had pivoted to work in climate technology, and a fashion executive who was able to jump into the performing arts. One woman founded an anti-hate group. Another started a zero-waste beverage company.

“It made me hopeful that this small

cohort of women I spoke to could find their true passion. Think about the impact these women will be having on the world, tapping into the thing that they were meant to be doing, the thing that brings them joy. Think about the direct impact on their families,” she said. “I think more and more of us are asking that question of ourselves. And I think it’s an incredibly hopeful thing for society and for families—women giving themselves permission to do the thinking and find their pursuit. I think we will all benefit from it.”

—Níchole Bernier

Wilford Welch '57

“I’m with Greta”

From a houseboat in Sausalito, **Wilford Welch '57** keeps his eye on the tides and his finger on the pulse of the world. In his decades as a U.S. diplomat, publisher of a world affairs magazine distributed in twenty-six countries, and an international business consultant, he's been tracking the major forces changing our world. He's seen glaciers melt, wildfires decimate communities, and sea levels rise. And he is deeply concerned by “the failure of governments to make serious progress to curb the fossil-fuel emissions that threaten our collective future.”

Floating placidly into Pacific coastal retirement isn't really his thing. So Wilford spends much of his time working to ensure that the next generation comes of age receiving accurate information in their schools about the climate emergency and how to navigate the world to come.

“It's very clear that global warming and climate change are going to fundamentally change the world that my generation has experienced. And it's essential that our children be given a good understanding of this in their K–12 classes, be given tools to deal with these changes, and be given reasons to have hope,” Wilford said.

To help educators incorporate climate literacy in their classrooms, he has created, with the Presidio Graduate School, a virtual “Climate Essentials” program for K–12 teachers throughout the United States. His latest book, the 2021 edition of *In Our Hands: A Handbook for Intergenerational Actions to Solve the*



Wilford, with Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Desmond Tutu, in Bali in 2004 at one of two “Quest for Global Healing” gatherings, organized by Wilford and his wife Carole Angermeir, that attracted nearly one thousand participants from forty countries

Climate Crisis, is the primary text and Wilford is the lead teacher. The nine-module climate program launched in early 2021 with as many as thirty teachers across the U.S. starting a new course every month. Funds raised from foundations and individual donors provide scholarships for participating teachers.

“Teachers are pressed for time and stressed by the challenges that COVID has caused. It is difficult for them to carve out the time to take on something new that they might not understand all that well,” he said. “We have to make climate change information and solutions, based on science, understandable and easy for teachers to

incorporate in their existing curricula. Our goal is for them to weave climate change into their daily conversations with students in all subjects—not to have climate change only taught, if at all, in their science class. This is an economic issue and a social and environmental justice issue.”

Being an educator is a natural culmination of Wilford's years studying the pressing issues of the world, starting with Asian diplomacy during the Johnson and Nixon administrations. Wilford first became aware of U.S.-China relations in Second Form while watching the McCarthy hearings. “How is this possible?” he remembers

thinking. “How can there not be diplomatic relations between the world’s most powerful country and the world’s most populated country?”

Immediately after graduating from Yale in 1961, he headed to Hong Kong for two years on a Yale-China fellowship to teach in a Chinese refugee college. He then went to law school at UC Berkeley, where he studied the Chinese legal system.

Wilford was then invited to Washington to serve in the U.S. State Department as assistant to **William Bundy ‘35**, the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs during the Johnson administration. He also worked for **Marshall Green ‘35**, who held the assistant secretary of state position in the Nixon administration, during the years when the U.S. established diplomatic relations with China.

After moving to Cambridge to head Asian business for Arthur D. Little, the global consulting firm, he undertook assignments for corporations such as Citibank and Toyota, assessing their international business strategies, and helped countries, including Taiwan and South Korea, devise electronics industry strategies. Wilford also led an effort to identify commercial opportunities in space for NASA and another that led to a Brazilian construction firm’s contract to build a railroad line from Baghdad to the Turkish border.

“In those years I was moving very fast between Boston, Asia, and other parts of the world, and I had to find ways to ground myself when I returned home. We had a small farm in Wayland, and upon arriving home I would hug my family, tell them how much I loved them, then hop on ‘Pepe,’ my tractor, and mow a field,” he recalled. “By the time I finished, I felt grounded and back home.”

While his career has been wide ranging, he has also explored other interests. Photographs of his work with the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu

and the Dalai Lama are on his website, WilfordWelch.com, along with scenes from an Everest expedition that removed five thousand pounds of trash and introduced the notion of “Leave No Trace” to Everest mountaineering. His website also features videos of his TedX talks, a presentation to the Sierra Club, speeches to corporations on climate change, and the two “Quest for Global Healing” conferences he and his wife, Carol Angemeir, organized in Bali for nearly one thousand participants from forty countries.

To Wilford, these seemingly disparate activities over the decades had the same objective: to understand the economic, social, political, technological, and ecological forces that would shape the future.

“Over the past two decades I gradually have come to realize that in my desire to enhance economic growth around the world by working with corporations and governments, I was also helping damage the environment and the lives of many indigenous societies,” he said. “The world’s relentless focus on economic growth and profitability ‘at all costs’ has often been at the expense of people and planet. The world has finite resources, and such resources as fresh water and agricultural land will not support the 7.8 billion people that now inhabit the earth if we continue to behave as we now do.” He points out that when he was at Groton, the world’s population was 2.5 billion.

Wilford believes we are at a critical juncture in the 300,000-year journey of the human species on our planet, and that inaction will irreparably damage future generations. “This is the decade when our actions—or our failure to act—will determine the future of humanity,” he said. “After six decades of failure to take incremental actions to get off our addiction to fossil fuels, we are now running out of time. We have the technological capabilities we need to solve this crisis, but we do not yet

have the will to do so.”

To Wilford, this presents an opportunity. “I find it energizing to realize that we are living at that moment in history when our actions can make all the difference.” The bumper sticker on his car reads, “I’m with Greta.”

He calls for a mobilization—that “all of us” become activists and press national, state, and local government officials to take action. “Politicians need to be pressed to do the right thing,” he said, “because governments are driven more by the near-term wants of the people who vote for them than the needs of the whole.” That, Wilford has concluded, is why the recent Glasgow climate summit failed to achieve most of its goals.

Wilford believes corporations are more nimble than governments and may prove most effective—“if the government puts in place the right incentives and disincentives. Corporations are increasingly aware of the risks climate change poses to their supply chains and their facilities. And, as their customers, employees, and investors become more concerned about global warming and climate change, these three groups will turn on those corporations they feel are greenwashing and are part of the problem, not part of the solution.”

Which brings him back to teachers. “They are in the best position to educate millions of young students about the fundamental changes taking place in the world during their lifetimes. Teachers must help them prepare for the future and give them hope.

“I received a great education while at Groton, but what I feel was even more important were the values that were instilled in me, such as service and teamwork. And teaching is where I now, hopefully, can have the greatest impact.”

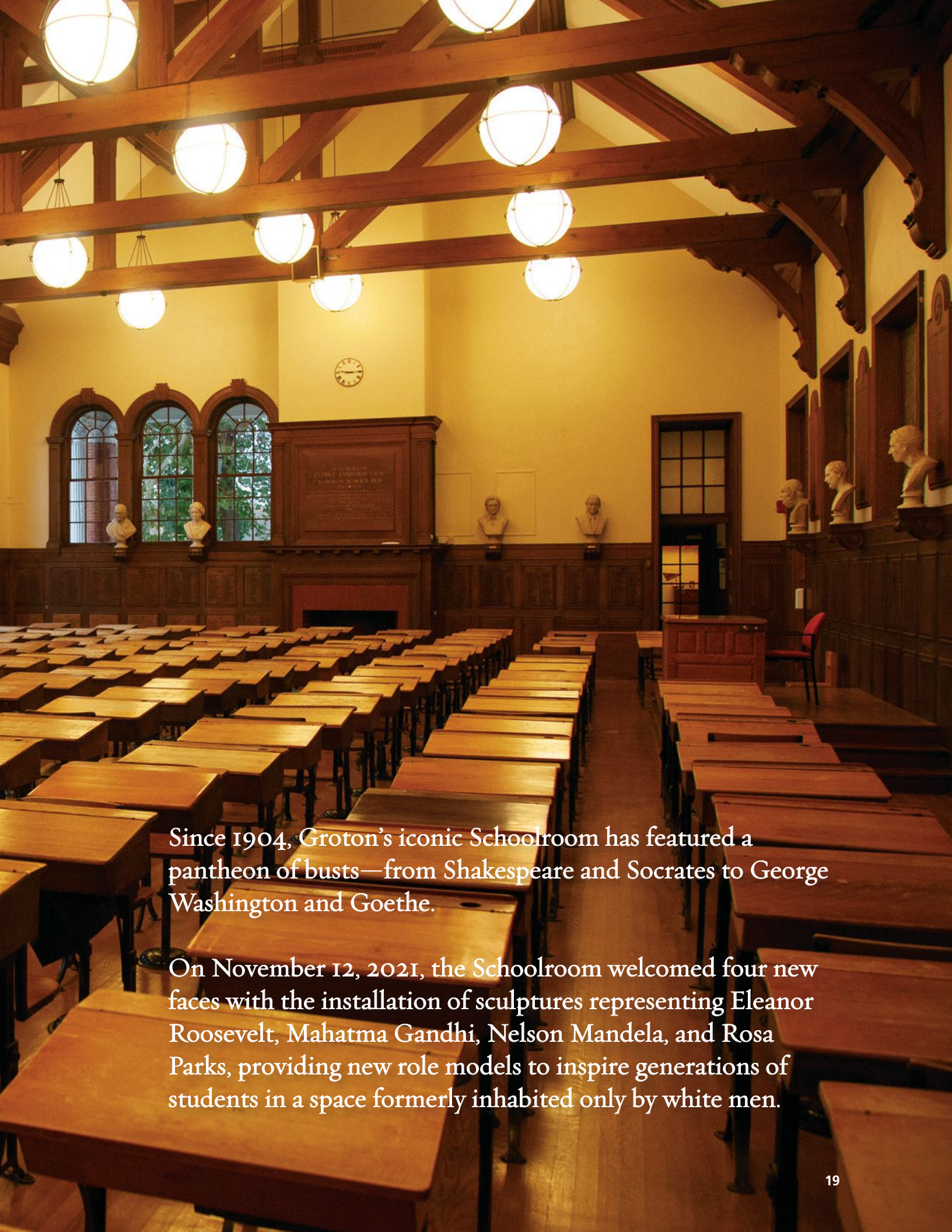
—Nichole Bernier

Search “Wilford Welch” and “TedX” online to find Wilford’s presentation, “You, Corporate America, and the Climate Crisis.”

THE SCHOOLROOM

FOUR STEPS FORWARD

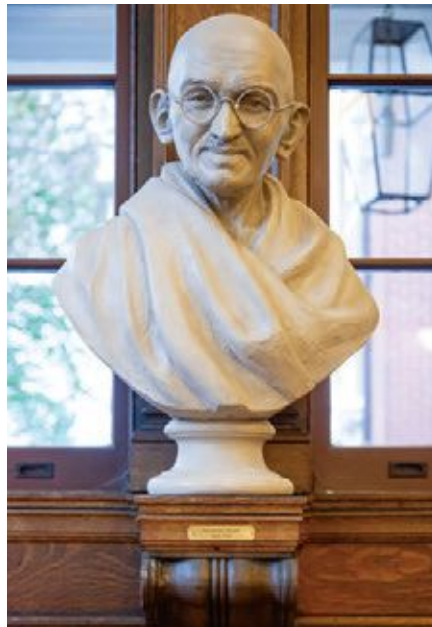
— BY GAIL FRIEDMAN —



Since 1904, Groton's iconic Schoolroom has featured a pantheon of busts—from Shakespeare and Socrates to George Washington and Goethe.

On November 12, 2021, the Schoolroom welcomed four new faces with the installation of sculptures representing Eleanor Roosevelt, Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and Rosa Parks, providing new role models to inspire generations of students in a space formerly inhabited only by white men.

Mahatma Gandhi, Eleanor Roosevelt, Rosa Parks, and Nelson Mandela, side by side on the front wall of the Schoolroom



“Groton’s original collection features eighteen subjects hailing from as early as 750 B.C. to as recent as the late 1800s,” Special Assistant to the Headmaster Kate Machan, who coordinated the bust project, said at the installation ceremony. “The collection embodies a breadth of intellectual, cultural, and social achievements, however only one gender and one race were represented—until today.”

With these new busts, the Schoolroom—where Second and Third Formers still have study hall—now better reflects world history,

the school’s commitment to inclusion, and the composition of Groton’s student body today. Headmaster Temba Maqubela has pointed out that the four busts represent more than half of the world’s population, not previously visible in the Schoolroom. The new busts, he said, are “visible inclusion at its best.”

In June 2019, Groton School’s Board of Trustees voted unanimously to add the new busts, spurred in part by student advocacy. “The busts were installed with such luminaries as





George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, William Shakespeare, and Socrates, all men who lived prior to the twentieth century,” Board of Trustees President Ben Pyne ’77, P’12, ’15 said at the installation. “For about 110 years, nothing happened; nothing changed, until a group of students approached Mr. Maqubela and then the trustees with a proposal that perhaps it would be a good idea—since a lot has happened in the world and at Groton since 1904—that we think about updating the collection and add women and individuals of color who have made a difference in the world and how we live today.”

In 2018, a group of students, spearheaded by **Lucy Chatfield ’18**, **Josie Fulton ’18**, and **Layla McDermott ’18**, advocated for a female bust. When they shared their argument with the headmaster, he asked them to present their case at a Board of Trustees meeting.

“I will say that when the idea was presented, my first reaction was, ‘Why hadn’t any of us thought of that? What a fantastic idea.’ There was a miniscule second of concern about changing a tradition,” Mr. Pyne acknowledged, “but we all believe that Groton is a living institution, not a museum, and that tradition for tradition’s sake can become hollow and weigh down the potential for any institution.”

The board unanimously supported the addition of females, but also supported adding other new role models, including those who would resonate with international students. Faced with the choice to make room for new busts or to remove some of

“There was a miniscule second of concern about changing a tradition, but we all believe that Groton is a living institution, not a museum, and that tradition for tradition’s sake can become hollow and weigh down the potential for any institution.”

—Board of Trustees President
Benjamin Pyne ’77, P’12, ’15

Headmaster Maqubela consistently advised an inclusive approach. His mantra became: “Add, don’t delete.”

the existing busts, Headmaster Maqubela consistently advised an inclusive approach. His mantra became: “Add, don’t delete.”

By fall 2019, Skylight Studios in Woburn, Massachusetts, which owns the collection of molds from which the original Schoolroom busts were crafted, had been commissioned to create the new sculptures. The multi-step process, which was delayed by the pandemic, included creating artistic renderings and making clay sculptures, molds, and, finally, the plaster busts.

“Representation does matter,” said Layla, “and more than that,



this will be the impetus for conversation that will lead to more change.”

At the ceremony, Mr. Pyne noted his family members’ coincidental connections to the Schoolroom busts. “My grandfather, who graduated in 1908, would have been in one of the first classes to experience these new additions to the Schoolhouse,” he said. “And in another connection, Eleanor Roosevelt’s son, FDR Jr., was in my father’s Form of 1933.

“Groton has come a long way since the early 1900s.”

After the ceremony in morning chapel, students stopped by to gaze at the new additions to the Schoolroom.



The Original Pantheon

Charles Eliot Norton, an esteemed Harvard academic, advised Endicott Peabody on the busts in the Schoolroom. In the below letter, he shares his recommendations with Groton's founder.

Cambridge, 11 December 1903

My dear Mr. Peabody,

It is an interesting but a difficult problem which you have suggested to me in asking me to make a list of the eighteen great men whose busts might be set upon the brackets in your school. There are more competitors than eighteen for such a position of honor; but there are some names which would be found, I believe, in every list that might be made for the purpose. I think I must make my list a little longer than eighteen, and leave you to exclude from it the personages that seem to you least fitted to adorn the walls of your schoolroom.

I begin naturally with Homer, and go on as follows:

Homer	Virgil	Michelangelo	Lincoln
Pericles	Caesar	Shakespeare	Pasteur
Plato	Charlemagne	Cervantes	Darwin
Alexander the Great	Dante	Galileo	
Aristotle	Columbus	Newton	
	Luther	Washington	

I am sorry to not include:

Sophocles	Marcus Aurelius	Cromwell	Napoleon
Phidias	St. Augustine	Burke	
Demosthenes	Leonardo da Vinci	Goethe	

For my own part, if I had to leave out two from the first twenty, I think they would have to be Virgil and Charlemagne. But I should be sorry to lose them. Personally, I should much regret the omission of Luther, St. Augustine, Goethe, and Napoleon; but I should always miss Virgil, and I should be sorry not to find a place for Burke.

I wish you had a gallery with twenty more brackets, or niches, for the busts or statues of great men — perhaps not of the first class of greatness, but still men who have served the world, or have deeply influenced its conditions.

I wish that I might have the pleasure of seeing you before long again, and talking with you on some of those many questions which are of common interest to us.

Always sincerely yours,
C.E. Norton

I begin naturally with Homer, and go on as follows:

✓Homer
Pericles
✓Plato
Alexander the Great
Aristotle
✓Virgil
Caesar
Charlemagne
✓Dante
✓Columbus
Luther
Michael Angelo
Shakespeare
Cervantes
Galileo
Newton
Washington
Lincoln
Pasteur
Darwin

Franklin
Goethe
Emerson
St. Augustine
Sch.

Above, part of the original letter. Note the handwritten names presumably added by Mr. Peabody, above, and where the final collection landed, below.

The Final Decision: *The Schoolroom in 1904, Unchanged Until 2021*

Isaac Newton 1642–1727
William Shakespeare 1564–1616
John Milton 1608–74
Johann W.V. Goethe 1749–1832
Walter Scott 1771–1832
Benjamin Franklin 1706–90
Nathaniel Hawthorne 1804–64
Ralph Waldo Emerson 1803–82
Ulysses S. Grant 1822–85
Alexander Hamilton 1757–1804
Abraham Lincoln 1809–65
George Washington 1732–99
Homer c. 850 B.C.
Demosthenes c. 384–322 B.C.
Gaius Julius Caesar 100–44 B.C.
Socrates c. 470–399 B.C.
Dante Alighieri 1256–1321
Christopher Columbus 1451–1506*

*Columbus' bust was damaged in 2019 and has not been replaced.

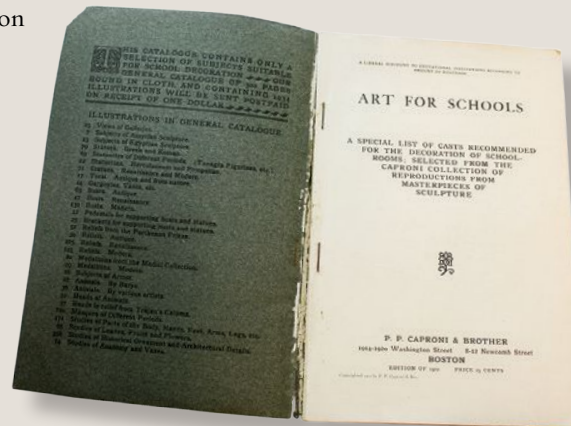
When Sculptural Busts Were All the Rage

IN THE EARLY 1900s, Groton was not the only school in the market for sculptural busts. In fact, the busts were so popular that they could be ordered from a catalog, like a pair of pants or a parasol.

Groton's busts are from a collection first offered in about 1835 by the Francis Chickey Company in Boston. In 1892, Pietro Paulo Caproni and his brother Emilio purchased the company and renamed it P.P. Caproni and Brother Gallery and Studio. The Capronis successfully marketed plaster busts specifically for schoolrooms.

In fall 2019, Groton commissioned Skylight Studios, the current owners of the Caproni Collection, to create the four new sculptural busts, with direction to integrate them seamlessly into the existing collection.

To expand a bust collection in the twenty-first century, as Special



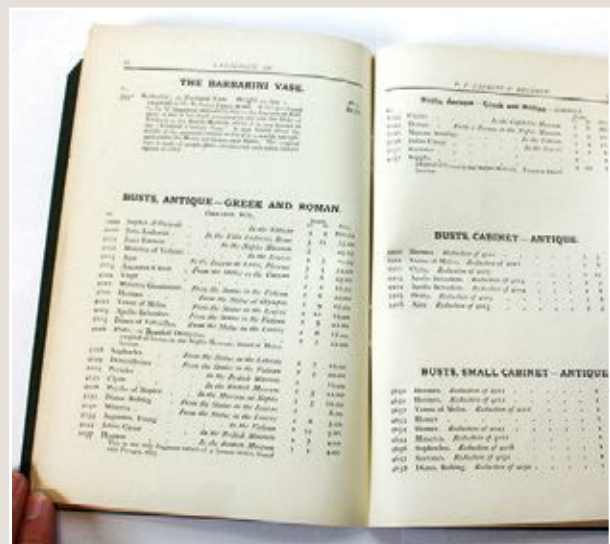
Assistant to the Headmaster Kate Machan explained at the installation ceremony, “it is no longer possible to simply mold an existing piece of artwork one might wish to reproduce.

“Fortunately,” continued Ms. Machan, who shepherded the process, “Groton’s collection of sculptural busts originates from a larger collection that has been safeguarded for generations by dedicated artists. Its current proprietor is Robert Shure,

a sculptor, plaster and bronze specialist, and restoration expert who, along with his daughter Lisa and a team of artists, keeps the tradition of plaster bust-making alive at Skylight Studios in Massachusetts.”

The process began with selecting an image of each of the four subjects; then came artistic renderings, clay sculpture, creation of the mold, and, finally, casting the busts in plaster. “The final products you will see in the Schoolroom are themselves original works of sculptural art, rendered in the tradition of plaster reproduction,” said Ms. Machan. “In addition, the Schoolroom was outfitted with new pedestals, fabricated by a specialized craftsman to exactly match the original pedestals, ensuring the seamless incorporation of the new sculptural busts into the existing collection.”

When Endicott Peabody was outfitting the Schoolroom, the market was robust with sculptural representations of inspiring stalwarts. The catalogs below demonstrate the wide selection of ready-to-make decorative busts—a far less customized process than that required for Groton’s four new busts.





The four new busts were unveiled briefly to the Form of 2021 graduates at Prize Day in June, but current students, faculty, and staff did not see them until November.

At the installation ceremony on November 12, 2021, senior prefects read quotes from each person represented by a new bust and shared a brief history of the honoree.

"I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against Black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons will live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

— NELSON MANDELA, READ BY MAYA VARKEY '22

Maya explained that Mr. Mandela led both peaceful protests and armed resistance against the white minority's oppressive regime in South Africa and spent nearly three decades in prison for his activism. Between his release from prison and his election as South Africa's first Black president, he worked to dismantle the country's apartheid system.

"It's the action, not the fruit of the action, that's important. You have to do the right thing. It may not be in your power, may not be in your time, that there'll be any fruit. But that doesn't mean you stop doing the right thing. You may never know what results come from your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no result."

— MAHATMA GANDHI, READ BY YEABSIRA GUGSSA '22

Yeabsira told the gathering that Gandhi, the leading figure in India's struggle to gain independence from Great Britain, was known for his doctrine of nonviolent protest to achieve political and social progress.

"There were times when it would have been easy to fall apart or to go in the opposite direction, but somehow I felt that if I took one more step, someone would come along to join me."

— ROSA PARKS, READ BY ANTHONY WRIGHT '22

Anthony described Ms. Parks as a lifelong activist known best for her refusal to relinquish her seat on a public bus in 1955.

"The development of the ideal of freedom and its translation into the everyday life of the people in great areas of the earth is the product of the efforts of many peoples. It is the fruit of a long tradition of vigorous thinking and courageous action. No one race and no one people can claim to have done all the work to achieve greater dignity for human beings and greater freedom to develop human personality. In each generation, and in each country, there must be a continuation of the struggle and new steps forward must be taken, since this is preeminently a field in which to stand still is to retreat."

— ELEANOR ROOSEVELT, READ BY GRIFFIN ELLIOTT '22

The former First Lady, said Griffin, "persistently exercised her influence in advocacy for the rights and needs of the poor, of minorities, and of the disadvantaged."



Eleanor Roosevelt spoke to the Groton boys (and some girls, presumably from Concord Academy) in 1949. We believe the boys at right are Thatcher Adams, Tom Bingham, Bob Burnett, John Jackson, and Paul Gardner, all from the Form of 1955, but we have confirmed only Thatcher and Bob. If you can identify the other young men, please email quarterly@groton.org.

When Eleanor Roosevelt Spoke at Groton

OF THE ROLE models represented in the four new Schoolroom busts, Eleanor Roosevelt has the most direct ties to Groton. She frequently had reason to visit the Circle—first to see her brother Hall, for whom she was a mother figure after their parents' death, and her cousins Theodore Roosevelt Jr. and Kermit Roosevelt. She sent her sons John, James, and Franklin Jr. to Groton, and of course her husband, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, is Groton's most well known graduate.

Grotonians may not be aware that Mrs. Roosevelt delivered a speech on December 3, 1949, in the Hall (now the library), a year after the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which Mrs. Roosevelt had spearheaded as chair of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights.

"I thought, 'Oh boy, this is going to be a drag.' Within a couple minutes I was enthralled. She had a charisma that captured the whole room."

The *Quarterly* contacted alumni who were students when Mrs. Roosevelt spoke, and several recalled her visit. "It was December of my Sixth Form year," wrote **Arthur Armitage '50**. "I had the thrill of sitting across the head table from her. She was seated on [Headmaster Jack] Crocker's right, and I was seated on his left. She was charming, very human, funny, and told us a number of stories about herself, her time in the White House, and most particularly about Winston Churchill's visit when he was attempting to get the United States in the war."

Alan McLean '51 remembered that his father, school physician and avid history buff Dr. Joseph McLean, couldn't attend and asked Alan for a full debrief.

"The place was crowded full, with visitors from the community as well as students and faculty," wrote Alan. "As a Fifth Former and as a student in one of Mr. [Acosta] Nichols' history classes, I was an awed listener that evening. She introduced me to the virtual miracle that the United Nations had been born, and she raised our awareness that beyond its goal of trying to keep wars from happening again, perhaps an even more important aspect of the U.N. was its creation of the World Health Organization. I felt the excitement she conveyed about what this international human rights and health care organization might be able to bring to the world. This enlightened approach to worldwide cooperative health and human rights became a part of my life as I served congregations for some sixty years, and on several occasions took confirmation classes to New York City to visit and discover the importance of the United Nations."

Alan said that when Mrs. Roosevelt ended her talk at Groton, so many hands were still in the air with questions that she agreed to meet informally in Hundred House afterward, and fifteen or twenty students

attended. "I was one of those in the room," he said. "Her presence—and her message about the United Nations and its potential for health, human rights, and the prevention of war—made a lifelong impact."

More than the words spoken, **Jerard K. Hartman '51** remembered "the unique multi-octave cadence of her voice, and that Mr. [Richard "Doc"] Irons, a wonderful history master at the time, stood when she entered the room, at which point the entire audience rose to welcome her."

John Crossman '54 did not expect to be taken with the "large, older woman with a high-pitched voice. I thought, 'Oh boy, this is going to be a drag,'" he wrote. "Within a couple minutes I was enthralled. She had a charisma that captured the whole room."

It may have been a bit more challenging for some of the youngest students. A twelve-year-old First Former, **Wheaton Vaughan '55**, understood the importance of Mrs. Roosevelt's visit but said he recalls the setting more vividly than the speech. The Hall (now the library) was home to school plays, dances, Saturday night movies, and other events, and next to the Chapel, said Wheaton, it was "the heart and soul of the school ... Seated at the head of the room at a small table, just in front of the lectern, was a court stenographer, poised to memorialize every word that Mrs. Roosevelt might utter."

As she spoke, young Wheaton was determined to keep his focus. "The day (and the hour) started to catch up with me, and my eyelids grew heavy, but sitting in the front row (the chosen spot for the First Form) I dared not doze off," he said. "The air grew warm and heavy. My thoughts wandered. And Mrs. Roosevelt soldiered on. God does have mercy on twelve-year-old boys, for ultimately she concluded her remarks, and within the hour I was in bed sound asleep!"

Eleanor Roosevelt, the first chair of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, spoke at Groton on December 3, 1949. The winter 1950 Groton School Quarterly published the following "condensed" version of her speech.

I am sure that most of you have heard it said quite often that the United Nations wasn't doing very much. What has it accomplished anyway? What is the use of putting all this money into something which may not be successful?

That is said quite often, and so I think first of all I will tell you that too many people believe that just by creating an organization which they call the United Nations, they are going to achieve peace in the world. Men have tried for centuries to learn how to live together without going to war, without using force; and then suddenly you create an organization and you think that peace is going to drop on you from heaven like a bird and you are absolved from doing anything.

The first thing we have to remember is that an organization is nothing but machinery. It expresses the desire of people, and, in this case, of a good many people (today ... fifty-nine nations [are] members of the United Nations) all of whom, when they came in, agreed that they did want peace. But that does not mean you are going to have peace; it only means that they are going to try to keep some kind of machinery going. The machinery will not do any more

than help to create an atmosphere in which peace can grow. Your generation, if we are successful, will have to go right on working to keep peace.

When you fight a war, you are always thinking, "Some day it will come to an end and then everything will be perfectly all right again; we will go back and have everything we had before." You never do, but that is how you feel. You have a goal before you. When you win the war, that is an end. You cannot do that with peace, because you have to live it day in and day out and keep on living it. Everything you do every day is what helps to create the atmosphere in which peace can grow, or defeats the hope you have of creating that atmosphere.

So it is less exciting, much less exciting than fighting a war. It is much more tiresome because it is something you have to go on with; it has no end. But if you can succeed, you save your world from having the kind of sorrow and misery which the world of today has to face.

We are the luckiest part of the world today because we have so much. I wonder if you ever stop to think that you are among the very few young people who live in a world

where they never had a bomb fall; where their factories, their homes have not been destroyed. All the rest of the world feels that we in this country have more than they have. For that reason we have to do better than anyone else anywhere in the world because not only do they look to us as an example, but they look to us, too, with a great deal of envy. They expect us to do more than anyone else materially and give them a sense of security. I think they also expect us to give them a little better leadership spiritually and morally.

Sometimes I wonder whether we are doing it. We are doing the economic things. We are doing the military things that give a sense of security. But I am not over sure that we are giving the spiritual and moral leadership, and that is something this generation will have to think over very carefully because it is probably one of the points on which hangs the future of civilization. Will the democracies give it or will Communism give it? That probably depends on what we develop in this country, and it has to be developed in every community, in every home and every individual. It cannot be done by governments. It has to be done by people.

Mrs. Roosevelt here traced the history of the United Nations, described its organization and functions, and concluded this section of her remarks as follows:

You have heard a lot about the Security Council, how nations called each other names, and of the terrible things we did. That has value, because if you can get up and call a person bad names, you do a lot of speaking and you are not so apt to hit him when you come outside. So it has been useful, very useful. But the place where the real work has been done has been in the Economic and Social Council and its specialized agencies. Those agencies have really helped us to better understanding.

For instance, do you know that today the World Health Organization is fighting tuberculosis in all the countries where there was war and which were occupied? Now you can say to me, What is that? Why is it necessary? We do not have very much tuberculosis here. No; but what would you think if in Groton School 50 percent of your students had tuberculosis? That would shock your parents and, I think, shock a lot of people. You would have many boys not able to work.

Last year in Paris I found it was thought that about 50 percent of the students had tuberculosis, or had had it, or were on the verge of it. That is a high percentage. A lot of those students were in the Resistance Movement. You would have been in the Resistance Movement in France;

you would have been trained to lie, to steal, to destroy. Those were the things that were virtues during the war, during the occupation; if you could accomplish something that would hurt the Germans, that was a virtue. It was the youngsters who went out and collected the food; if they had a brother at home, fifteen or sixteen, he had to stay in hiding. And it was the girls, very often of sixteen and seventeen, who saved a number of our flyers who fell in enemy territory.

... Once when I was flying back from London in one of our planes, the co-pilot came and sat down beside my seat. He said, "This is awfully exciting, Mrs. Roosevelt, because it is the first time I have been back to France since I came down just outside of Paris. A girl picked me up and took me home. She hid me, and took me to the border; later I got back to England." I said, "That *is* exciting. What are you going to do tonight?" And he replied, "I am going right straight back to that family which looked after me. I have brought a lot of things they would like to have, some candy and some dried milk."

You know, last autumn I was a visitor in France. In the restaurants you could get anything; they were trying to attract the tourists. But no French person could have milk in his

own home if he was more than five years old. A woman whose husband was ambassador over here told me that she and her husband would have no milk at all if it were not that friends in this country send them powdered milk. I got butter from our own Embassy canteen, run by the army. But if you were a French person, you could not buy any butter except on the black market. People did not have the money to pay that amount for butter. In the country districts you had plenty to eat; but a workman in the city was spending 75 percent of his whole income on food alone. That was only last autumn. You see it is not strange that they think we are pretty lucky people in this country. It is not strange that the World Health Organization has to fight tuberculosis on a worldwide scale. That is one of the things that is actually doing a tremendous amount to draw the nations of the world together.

... One of the first commissions which was created under the Economic and Social Council was the Human Rights Commission. There are many people who felt that the Human Rights Commission could actually develop into one of the cornerstones on which to build peace, because if you could get an agreement all over the world on what were basic human rights and freedoms, you

would begin to have an understanding that nothing else could give you. It was decided that the Commission should first draw up a universal Bill of Rights, prefaced by a Declaration which would have no legal binding value but which would set standards for the world and voice aspirations. Now you know that nationally the British have the Magna Carta, and we have the Bill of Rights, so it is not unusual to have a Bill of Rights which is national; but never before has a document been written which is accepted by so many people throughout the world. The Declaration was placed first because, not being legally binding, it could more easily be agreed upon. No nation had to change its laws; all they did was to agree that they would strive to live up to these standards and that they would accept the standards as voicing aspirations for people throughout the world. And so last autumn in Paris we passed the Declaration, which is the first part of the Bill of Rights. It was accepted by forty-eight states. Nobody voted against the Declaration, but some abstained.

One was Saudi Arabia. Mohammedans, they felt, could not vote for the Declaration because it had in it one little sentence in the article on freedom of thought and religion which said you had a right to change your religion or belief. Now you and I would think that quite normal, wouldn't we? But they said, "The Koran teaches we cannot change our religion or belief." But there was a difference of opinion among the Mohammedans on the Koran. One man got up and said something I think you should all remember. He said, "I interpret the Koran to say, 'He who can return shall believe; he who cannot believe shall disbelieve; the only unforgivable sin is to be a hypocrite.'" So he voted for the Declaration. The other Arabian states, except Saudi Arabia, and Yemen, followed.

Another to abstain was South Africa ... They said, "This document



Franklin D. Roosevelt Library & Museum

Eleanor Roosevelt and the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, created by the UN Commission on Human Rights, which she chaired

goes much too far. It is much too progressive. We could not possibly vote for it. We hope to give basic rights and freedoms, but not to go so far as this." The USSR and the satellites, who also abstained, said, "This document is an eighteenth-century document. It is reactionary in the extreme. We could not possibly vote for it. It is not progressive enough."

When we on the commission took the Declaration to Paris, the first article was very familiar to those of us who came from the United States, because it said: "All men are created equal." But the article that came out of the Third Committee and was accepted by the General Assembly was quite different. It read this way: "Article One: All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." Now why do you suppose we said, *all human beings* instead of *all men*? We thought *all men* meant everyone in the United States, didn't we?

Around that table in Committee Three there sat a great many people, a great many colored people, because of course you know the white race is a minority race in the world. There are a great many more colored peoples, yellow and black and other colors, than there are white people in the world. So as you sat and looked around, you would see a lot of people who for the first time felt that they were on an equal basis with the white people. There is tremendous feeling about it.

Now in the discussion, the South African delegate made a speech in which he said he could not accept the statement, "All human beings are born free and equal." He said something very interesting. He said there are people in the world who cannot now or ever be considered as equals. If he had said that there are people in the world who cannot now accept the same responsibilities therefore cannot be considered as equals, there would have been complete agreement, because we all know that there are peoples who, because of different conditions, are

If we can write down and have accepted throughout the world the basic human rights and freedoms, even though they may not be accepted everywhere in the same way, gradually we will grow nearer to an understanding that will be one of the foundation stones on which we build peace.

in different stages of development. But those words *now or ever* struck Committee Three like a bomb, particularly the people there who, for the first time, were feeling equality. There was absolute silence.

The next day I went up to the delegate from South Africa and said: "You must have felt that this Committee was shocked by your speech yesterday." He said, "I cannot understand it. I said only what was true." I said, "Oh, sir, you did something you did not realize; you condemned hundreds of thousands of people never to be considered as equal, and you did it in the committee where there were many, many people represented who had only just begun to feel that they were being recognized as equals. You shocked a great many people in this hall."

He never did understand it. He never agreed that there was any reason for the feeling; but the feeling was tremendous. In fact, at the last meeting South Africa had begun to feel it so much that they were coming around and saying, "How do you think we can get back so that people will not look upon us as barred from being part of the organization?" So you see, public opinion does have some effect on the way people feel.

Why do you suppose the Declaration reads *are born* instead of *are created*? You and I can say *are created* because we think that we have a Divine Creator and there is a spark of the divine in all of us. But there are lots of people (not just the USSR) who did not want to say it that way, or who did not want to say it at all. So we did what you do in international documents over and over again: we tried not to lose the meaning. The meaning is contained in the words *free and equal*; that is what we wanted to get across. And we found we would

have to say it in a way that the great majority of people could accept. So finally the formula of *born free and equal in dignity and rights* was hit on, and a majority could accept it and we took it.

When you do, as I hope you will, read this document, you will find a good many things that are badly worded, that don't make sense to you. I have articles here which make me shudder every now and then, they are so badly written. But remember that fifty-eight nations were working out a document. Anyone who sits in an ivory tower can do better by himself. But you will find that any international document which calls for some meeting of minds of people who have different habits and customs, different languages, different legal systems, and different religions, is a very difficult thing to write. Yet if we can write down and have accepted throughout the world the basic human rights and freedoms, even though they may not be accepted everywhere in the same way, gradually we will grow nearer to an understanding that will be one of the foundation stones on which we build peace.

That is why it is important that every one of you should know what is in this Declaration and know more about what will be in the first Covenant and the other Covenants as they pass, because those are the things we have to live up to in our daily lives if we are going to build peace. Those are the things we have to see to, because every time we fail, the other nations, who are watching us, talk about our failures.

That is one of the things the USSR does better than anything else; she watches us. I do not know how she does it. She tells me, or rather her delegates tell me, things that have happened in the United States which I have not even heard of, and I send

**Now we have
reached the point
where we are
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of all. Can we
really live together
peacefully?**

my advisers scurrying to find out what really did happen. I am sorry to say that quite often I find the things really happened.

The way the USSR says it is this: they tell me the story first, and then say, "Madam, is that what you call Democracy?" Many a time I have had to say, "No, sir, I don't call that Democracy. That is a failure of Democracy. At least in our country we can know when there are failures, and those of us who care can work to improve our Democracy." Then I have a favorite little speech. There never is a satellite delegate or USSR delegate who acknowledges that there is anything that could be improved in a Communist state. It is perfect; there is no improvement possible. So I always say, "Communist states, after all, are inhabited by human beings, and human beings are not perfect. Therefore everything cannot be perfect any more than it is in a Democracy. But what would trouble me, sir"—looking at the USSR delegate—"what would trouble me would be if my people were never to say that anything needed to be improved; if they were never to find that there was something wrong that could be made better; because I would know that meant one of two things; either that they were afraid to say it, or, if there were not afraid, that they were so apathetic and cared so little about what happened that they did not even notice that anything was wrong. Then I would be really worried, because nothing kills Democracy as quickly as apathy."

If you live in any kind of totalitarian state you don't have to accept any kind of responsibility at all; you are told what to do, what to think. No USSR delegate can deviate one word from what he has been told to say. But that is not so in a Democracy.

You have to think for yourself because you are the government. You are represented by your government; therefore, whatever is done by your representatives is your responsibility. Whatever happens in any community in the country is your responsibility. Whatever happens in any family is the responsibility of the individual.

One of the great things that the USSR offers to the countries, to the peoples of the world who are not happy, is the fact that they, under Communism, treat all peoples as equals. That is one of the first things they emphasize, and one of the things they watch with us. It is the reason why civil rights, which used to be a family question, has ceased to be a family question and has become an international question. For in all the parts of the world where people are miserable, the USSR gives promises. We believe in racial equality, they tell you, because, they say, we are a government of workers for workers. We have an economy of equality. It is true we cannot do everything for our people that we want to do, but we all share and share alike.

Those who live in a country where only a very small group of the people have much and the rest of the people are about one day away from starvation all the time, listen to those promises. Besides, the Communists keep pointing to the one great Democracy and saying, "You see, that is what happens there; that is what Democracy means."

Those promises have to be met by realities, because we are an open country and anyone can come and look at us; anyone can see what is happening. That is why, as individuals here, we carry such a great responsibility. That is why every one of us every day of our lives is going to have to live what he really feels is

Democracy if we hope for peace. It is only with the success of Democracy, it is only with the work that we do to make the United Nations succeed, that we can hope to build a peaceful world. It is the greatest adventure that a people have ever engaged in. Many adventures in the past, many warlike adventures, have been great adventures. The discovery of continents, of new worlds; the discovery of how to make people live better; all those things were great adventures. Now we have reached the point where we are embarking on the greatest adventure of all. Can we really live together peacefully? Can we develop the ability to understand our fellow men? Can we develop the quality of leadership in this country which will keep the world a peaceful world? Can it become so dynamic that we are willing to sacrifice, to live as we would do if we were fighting a war?

Those are the questions that are before you in the future. Those are the questions you are going to meet. I am going to walk off the stage as you walk on. I grant that the generations past have not handed you an easy world. We have not done, perhaps, all we should have; but at least you have a chance, you have a chance to do better than the generation that went before. I pray you will have the courage and the vision and the grace that only the Lord can give you, for it is a great adventure, not for you alone but for the hope of humanity.



A CHAPEL TALK

by Rufus H. Knuppel '22

October 29, 2021

The Cord Between Us

I would like to tell the story of my parents and me, which happens to be a love story:

I remember once finding my mother's eyelash pressed between the pages of a book. I do not know what book or what page, but I know (from its curve) that it was my mother's eyelash. I found it pressed, as a leaf would be, into the valley of a book spine. Then, just as I had balanced the lash on my fingertip, it blew away.

The richest parts of my childhood are slipping between the folds of my memory. It happens quickly—memories of four fall away, as a piano note dies, then five, six. I want to remember my early years—a time when I didn't quite know what would become of anything. Those days are like the shards of a broken bottle—I watch as my parents collect the pieces in a paper bag.



My mom has the voice of a hollow chestnut and wisps for fingers, like the smoke that lingers from a put-out candle.

If I draw deep from the memory of my mother, until my breath gives out, I arrive at a hiccup in her womb. And also a snip, the sound of scissors on my umbilical cord. At that moment I broke from her, and my world rested on the tip of a pin and a hiccup.

Steam pours out sometimes from manholes beneath the streets of New York—billowing, like the folds in my mom's purse I held as I stepped between cracks in the sidewalk. We would reach a light, and my mother would squeeze my hand. I recall a pressure and a pulse in that grip.

And, by the park, I can see the yellow of a street lamp, pierced by the black needle of her silhouette. I recall the tick of her shoes on the cement, like billiard balls breaking in the night. In that moment, the world

was a black box and the moon a pinhole, and I clung to my mother's leg, her scent, her hair.

I do not know when it was that I discovered my mother had a prosthetic leg. It's not something I think to tell people about her. I often forget until, in an instant, "could you grab my beach leg?" becomes a long hand reaching into a deep well, and it dawns on me. When I was a young boy, she waited for me to ask her about her leg, but I never did—for in my early years she could only be my mom, and, therefore, she was perfect. Kit and I are the only people in the world who see my mother in this way. I remember a time when my mother had her leg off by the beach, and watching my father pick her up (she was small in his arms), and they waded into the ocean. She was, then, the same as I was in my father's arms when he carried me to bed in half-sleep. When I let myself be heavy.

I grew up under the desk in my mom's classroom and the wingbeat in the whistle-thump of her voice. She taught me to read and spell and sing. My mother showed me the ocean and watched, in her sundress, the waves which chained me to the sand. I swam till my nose ran with salt and my face peeled.

She tells me that she feels my pain on her body. When she looks at my face and sees a spot, she itches at the same place, in parallel—it is as if there were once a cord that ran between us.



My father has the eyes of a seed. Within his iris, there's a white tongue that sprouts and licks with wonder. He is the most curious man I know, curious as the brook and the eddy. Curious as the fish is towards his fly.

If I let myself be drawn back to the Catskills, I can recall the artist's conk, white with dew, and my dad's hand



Left, Rufus with his sister and friends after his chapel talk. Below, Rufus with his sister Kit '24 and his parents, Eric and Katie Smith Knuppel '91



working the mushroom. And in the air the scent of the stove, suspended in cream light.

In April, when Kit turns her years, the tulips would rot on Park. Broken-words, the high-hat of the burner click, Oscar Peterson, the thick air of the kitchen. I can picture the sweat pooling in my father's nape, the arch of his clean-shaven jaw. The charcoal nude that hangs in the hall, drawn by his hand. My father plays God in the kitchen. I can smell the sweet-tang of asparagus, the tofu, and his fingers kneading pasta. I hear his voice over the music, asking if I would climb up on the counter to grab a bowl. And I can taste the waves of beans and roasted tomatoes, the butter of the smashed potatoes, hollandaise. And there's a glimpse, too, of the anvil of my tiny, impatient hand bearing down on the porcelain, spilling glasses—making a mess.

In the wash of twilight during the summer months, I recall leaves painted black against the clementine, an instant when the world loses its depth. Then the starlings would murmur, beating like a blue-black heart in the sky, and my dad would sit outside under the cicadas, near the fire he had lit.

My dad is my nurse. When I fell on my bike and kept my hands on the bar so my elbow turned to a blood-wine pulp, he poured antiseptic on the hollow. A hollow so deep we could see the white of the bone. My father deloused my hair. And he cleaned the scabs on my face when I fell from the scaffolding, my bare chest when I

slid over pine cones. He iced the half-space in my gum from a cracked tooth. And when I threw up, he rubbed my back with the lobes of his palm.

As the waters warmed and the branches bled green in spring, my father and I would venture out to the streams of Connecticut. In those days, he showed me fishing—rainbow scales, shadows and the riverbed, debarbing a fly, the knot, teeth on the tippet, the arch of a cast. We would wade deep into the calm, and I would watch as the line caught the sun and etched gold against the sky.



I was jealous, and I bit. I talked back and cursed my parents. I still do. Sometimes they are also harsh and stubborn. But I didn't know then, or now, all my parents would do for me—the deep warmth in the net of their arms. They showed me the art, the music, the passion, politics, and laughter that have become the anthology of my life. And when I come round the corner, in another panic or sick again—they drop their pen, always, to squeeze my hand and run fingers through my hair.

I'll try once more to say what I mean, before the memory slips away.

In Quogue once, behind the hydrangeas, an albino deer came to our field—as still in that summer meadow as your eyes. Perhaps it was a doe. She holds some secret I wish to whisper in your ear—a silent glance that says I love you.



A CHAPEL TALK

by Yeabsira M. Gugssa '22
September 21, 2021

A Love Letter to Abbtty

To my Abbtty ...

“Mita, why do you bother me?”

This is a statement my father often makes to me. When I try to hug him, steal his food, sing a song, and dance with him, he asks, why do I bother him? And I usually respond with some cheesy line like, “Because you are so cute.”

My relationship with my father can be described in many words. Goofy. Serious. Dramatic. And funny. I always tell him that he is my best friend, and he usually responds with some line like, “Mita, we are not the same age. You always want to play. Go sleep.” And the conversation usually ends with me forcing a hug, and my dad pushing me off until I finally give up and go to my room.

At first glance, my father appears to be a skinny, shy man of very few words. But don't let this image fool you because the truth is far different than what he lets the world know. My father, who is sitting somewhere on this Groton campus right now, is the strongest, bravest, and most dedicated person I know.

Ever since I was younger, I always admired my dad. I looked at him and I always knew he was always going to be there. *Abbtty, I know you don't really like affection or when I embarrassed you in front of my friends, so don't be mad if I do. I just want the world to look at you the way I do.*

So Abbtty, this is my love letter to you.

Thank you, for every morning text and every phone call.

If I have ever shown you the texts between my dad and me, you know that they make no sense at all. If I haven't shown you, they go something like this:

My dad: Hey Mita—good morning.

Me: Hey Abbtty—good morning.

My dad: Hey Mita.

Me: Hey.

My dad: Good, thank you.

And that's pretty much how every morning starts. Although these messages at face value lack depth and are comical at times, it's my dad's way of letting me know that he is here. He never misses a day and will even call me if I don't respond within the first hour. And sometimes he will add little phrasing that makes no sense at all, yet makes the most sense. Here are a few good ones:

- How fast is fast?
- Mita, you are a backbiter. (A little context: he was trying to say that was I talking behind his back to my sister and he didn't know the phrase, so he said backbiter.)
- And his “Where are you?” texts when he knows where I am also make me laugh.

Thank you, for being so strong in the hardest moment of your life.

About thirteen years ago, we were living in Ethiopia—four of us, five when Kormae joined us but usually four. My dad, my mother, Kiya, and me. Life was good. It was colorful, full of laughter, and truly perfect.

And then my mother started to go to the hospital more and more. My dad, who knew how much we missed our mother when she would stay at the hospital, would take us and make sure we got to spend as much time as possible. I remember bringing her rice and lying on her bed.

“That day, I don’t know how, but Abbt, you took my pain away.



Clockwise from far left: Yeabsira with her father, Mitiku Gugssa Aboie (her “Abbt”); in Chapel with Sixth Formers Maya Varkey, Alesandra Powell, Phoebe Lynch, Hannah Gold, Calie Messina, Ashley Rosenbloom, and Wren Fortunoff; the senior pre-fects dressed for Surprise Holiday — Anthony Wright, Maya Varkey, Griffin Elliott, and Yeabsira



Then one day, a teacher pulled my sister and me out of class and drove us home. As we got closer to our house, I saw more and more people go in the direction of my house. I thought, “Oh my God, she’s home. We are going to see her.” I got out of the car and my world was never the same. I saw my cousin pound his hand to the ground as he called out my mother’s name. I saw women in black multiply and start to howl. I walked inside and saw my dad.

I remember watching my father cry for the first time in my life. He sat on the bed with his head in his hands and didn’t make a sound. My sister and I hugged him and stood between his legs and we felt the pain in every part of his body. I watched him cry, and it killed me that I couldn’t do anything. After only taking a couple of hours to grieve, my dad arranged sleeping arrangements for my sister and me because he wanted to protect us from the pain.

He hugged us. He kissed us on the forehead and told us that it’s okay. *That day, I don’t how, but Abbt, you took my*

pain away. I’m sorry I couldn’t do the same for you. I always think back to this day and ask, “How were you that strong? How were you able to think of Kiya and me when you lost her, too? When you were the one who lost the love of your life that day? When you were the one who knew her most? How did you make it easier for me when it was hardest for you?” I want you to know that you encompass every letter of the word strength. Abbt, your strength amazes me. It inspires me, and it makes me admire you in an indescribable way.

Thank you, for coming to America and giving up your dream.

Although my dad’s English can be broken at times, in the words of Channel Miller, “it conceals genius.” After my mother passed away and life kept going, so did my dad. While raising my sister and me, tutoring my cousin Kormae, and working at a company, he got his master’s. Make no mistake, my dad, who had come from nothing, worked night and day and became a successful financier. When the opportunity to come to America

“My father, who was a successful financier in Ethiopia, started working as a cashier at a Family Dollar store in Cambridge because his degrees didn’t count in America.

arose, he had to make a decision—a better education and life for my sister and me, or stay and become even more successful. In other words, his dreams or the dreams of his daughters. My father, a selfless man, chose the latter.

We got a million vaccines; I sat on your lap for each one, and we packed our bags with honey and hope and went on our way. He gave me his snacks on the plane because he knew sugar and candy would settle my nerves. He gave up his dream as easily as he gave me his sweets. He gave up the life he had fought and worked so hard for for years, all because he wanted Kiya and me to have a better life. How do you do that? Give up your dream for someone else so easily? I know you gave up your dreams for me, and I promise I won’t let you down. Your sacrifices are the reason I am standing right here right now. You are the reason.

Thank you, for living in a closet, working multiple jobs.

Our first year in America wasn’t ideal. We lived in a closet meant for storing bikes and winter coats, but that’s all we could afford at that time. My father, who was a successful financier in Ethiopia, started working as a cashier at a Family Dollar store in Cambridge because his degrees didn’t count in America. You started to teach yourself English as Kiya and I tried to learn ourselves. We slept on winter coats and layers of summer clothes to imitate as close to a bed as possible. We slept body to body. Me in the middle and my sister and my dad on either side.

Summers were rougher with all that heat in that small space, and it was harder sleeping in the middle and absorbing all that body heat. Winters were cold, but sleeping in the middle came in handy those days and I would happily absorb their heat. And when my father knew I was really cold, he gave up his blanket, leaving him to fight the cold by himself.

You worked hard every single day at your job and you slept less. But every night you came in and checked on me and Kiya, checked my math homework, and made sure we ate. And if we didn’t, you went outside and got us food. How did you never give up? How did you

always stay strong even in bad circumstances? I never heard you say you regretted your decision to come to America even when life seemed to never go your way. You kept quiet and pushed harder.

Thank you, for working an overnight shift, walking me to school, and getting me boys’ clothes.

A year later we moved to a new town called Chelsea. I was going into the third grade and the elementary school was a twenty-minute walk away. I couldn’t get on the bus list because we moved too late in the summer. *There was no one else to take me to school, so what did you do? You started working an overnight shift because all the other shifts started before school.* And for a full year, my father worked an overnight shift and would come home and immediately take me to school. Even after sleeping only a few hours and being on his feet the entire night, my dad walked me to school and carried my backpack for me.

I don’t how you found time to do this, but you even shopped and bought me new clothes. You bought me XXL T-shirts (I am a small), size 8 (size 5) shoes, and you bought me a sweatshirt to put under my T-shirts (also, all these things came from the men’s department). Did this lead to some bullying from the guys in my class? Yes, a lot actually! *But I never felt ashamed. Because I always knew that your intent was pure and came from a good place.*

Thank you, for going to every parent-teacher conference and holding me to a higher standard.

Parent-teacher conferences always were special nights with us. I remember hearing my classmates say that their parents couldn’t come, and I was so envious. I thought nothing, no grade, would ever be good enough for my dad. Parent-teacher conferences went something like this.

My teacher would say, “Yeabsira has an A+.”

And my dad, unsatisfied, would say, “Can she can an A++?”

And my teacher looked confused and assured my dad that I was doing well. This example was one of the better meetings. Then there were other meetings, like in eighth grade when my dad met with my math teacher. This went something like this.

My math teacher said, “Yeabsira got a 63 on her recent math test.”

My dad said, “63??? A 6 and then a 3?”

My teacher said, “Yes.”

My dad, thinking he heard wrong, said, “63?”

She said, “Yes.”

My dad asked her to write the number on the notepad he brought. She wrote a 63!

My dad turned and asked, “Mita, you got a 63 in math?”

I said, “Yes Abbt,” feeling both mortified that the number 63 was said so many times, but also that I had disappointed my dad.

My dad said, “You are not allowed to get a 63. You need 100, Mita.”

Luckily, most people had also done really poorly on the test, so she told my dad our class would retake it. And as we walked out, my dad said, “You will get a 100” and showed me the paper, and so I did.

I feel ashamed that at one point my dad holding me to a higher standard was something to be ashamed about. *I am so grateful you showed up to every parent-teacher meeting and held me to a higher standard. I wouldn't be here without that.*

Thank you, for spending hours helping me become a better speller and practicing math.

Spelling has always been a struggle for me. I never understood silent e's. How the letters “tion” could make the sound “shonn.” *But you did. And so, after you came home from work and ate dinner, you got out a stack of paper and you taught me how to spell. You gave me words out of the dictionary and I attempted to spell them. You didn't stop there. You taught me math that my math class at school wasn't doing. You showed me faster ways to complete problems and new concepts. And although I left some of our sessions crying, your toughness and teaching helped me more than you know. All those hours you spent on me when you could have been sleeping or relaxing, you choose to do this. Again, you choose to help my future.*

Thank you, for supporting me while I did Beacon and waiting for me at the bus stop.

Beacon Academy was the school I went to before here. It was a fourteen-month program that took low-income students from urban areas in Boston and helped them get into independent schools. *I was very hesitant at the thought of being a repeat, and when we talked you said, “In ten years, there will be no difference between when you are twenty-four and twenty-five.” And so I went. Even when I wasn't sure, and you weren't either, you supported me. You came to America for me to get a better education and here was the opportunity. And so, I did Beacon.*

Beacon was hard. No sleep. Drama. Late nights. *But you were there. Asking me how you could help, and I know I wasn't the best version of myself at that time, but your kindness never changed. Even when I would give you one-word answers and say I didn't want to talk, you still asked questions.*

And every night near 10:30 p.m., you waited at the bus stop because you knew I was afraid of the darkness and men. I am sorry I was unkind to you. I was barely holding myself together.

And when my phone died and I couldn't get your calls, you called Mr. Nett and asked for help. I know I don't deserve you and how much you care for me, but I am eternally grateful.

Thank you, for staying on the phone as I broke down during Third Form.

There was one week in Third Form that was brutal, to say the least. I had gotten a 64 on a bio test, 68 on Latin, and after retaking a Spanish test three times and getting a 58, 60, and 54, I decided this place wasn't for me. I didn't feel like I belonged. I was resorting to making myself throw up before Spanish tests to avoid taking the test at all. I wasn't even successful at that. I thought, wow, another thing to fail, add it to the list. I was tired of failing. I mean it was embarrassing to see a number below 80 test after test. Week after week. My life was defined by the 58, the 60s, and 68s that I got.

I broke down on the third test. I called you from the common room, and I told you that I couldn't do it anymore. “How do I get good grades again?” I asked. “I can't Abbt. I can't.”

And you said this to me, “Mita, I got Cs and Ds. School is hard, and you are going to be stronger because of school. If you want to go to Cambridge public schools, I will come and take you. But the education at Groton (you paused) is an education that is rare.”

And with you saying that, I breathed easier. I slowly stopped crying, and you stayed on the phone through it all. You said, “It's okay Mita,” and I knew it would be.

Thank you, for telling me the most dramatic, fictional-yet-real stories and making me laugh.

For as long as I can remember, my father has always had a story to tell. A story about looking for a lion. A story about how he used to fight with his teenage friends. He always had a story. His stories make me laugh for hours and howl with pure joy. *For someone who has had a lot of hard experiences, you always find joy. Your ability to laugh and make joy has made a lot of experiences in my life easier. A lot of my happiness comes from you. Even though you go “oooooh” after telling each story, you make me want to be like you.*

Thank you, for being the best father.

To my Abbt, thank you for being my world, my rock, and the reason I shoot for the stars. You are a father through and through. I don't know how I found myself to be so lucky to have a father like you and have the life that we do. How did I get so lucky? My life is whole because of you. My dreams, my strength, my perseverance come from you. I don't need anyone else but you because I have all I could ever want from you. You are what a father should be and what a person should be.

So Abbt, the next time you ask me, “Mita, why do you bother me?”

I want you to know it's because you are everything I want to be.



A CHAPEL TALK

by Marichal B. Monts '81

October 28, 2021

On Gifts from God



Delivered on the celebration of
Groton School's 137th birthday

*Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father
There is no shadow of turning with Thee
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be*

*Great is Thy faithfulness, great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me*

*Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love*

*Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside*

When I came to Groton I was a poor boy from the city of Hartford who had never really spent time away from home. I remember staying up all night long in my room the first night because there was no noise. I was so accustomed to the sirens and people talking outside my window in the projects that I had to learn how to sleep in the quiet.

My mother brought us up in a Black Baptist church,

“Keep your heart open to making the world better because everything that you send out will come back to you in due season.”



Marichal Monts and his church, providing food and other services during the early days of the pandemic

so making a joyful noise filled my life every Sunday at 11:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. Church was the tapestry within which my life was woven. I was a Christian by profession and by what I believed.

And while my grandmother and mother were incredible examples and perfect Christian role models, at Groton I was challenged to grow up and put my faith to work without my family or community looking over my shoulders and cheering me on. So I began to build a new community. I remember some of my teachers and most of my classmates. **Bill Polk**, John and Joan Holden, **Lloyd Howlett**, **Gayland Trim**, **Steven, Onu, Gary, Selden, Starr, Jeff, Lukie, Betsy, Arthur, Margaret**, Craig Smith, and Mr. Tronic. Just saying their names makes me smile.

However, beyond the names and Chapel and surprise snow days, dramatic presentations and countless choir rehearsals in this building, I remember feeling like regardless of what might have been going on in the world at the time, I was around people who genuinely loved me and cared for me. Being at Groton was like being at Cheers: “Sometimes you want to go ...”

But more than all of that, I began to feel the urgency and the importance of understanding that real living was in giving. This place instilled in me an even deeper desire to serve God through serving people. And I don’t think

the lesson was “be a servant” per se, but more so: look out for your fellow human beings, regardless of race, creed, color, status, or background.

Groton has been building a community where everyone belongs for a long time. Let me be clear, America is an experiment and it still needs a lot of work before it can “form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity,” but Groton has always been a place where working together was the more viable option than much of the present-day vitriol that we are experiencing.

When I left Groton, I began the journey to live out what I’d learned here, first at Wesleyan University and then back in Hartford. Groton taught me that everyone deserved a seat at the table. Wesleyan taught me that I had a responsibility to go home and change my community for the better.

I used what I had—music. Use what you have. God has uniquely gifted you all. You are a designer’s original, and you give God glory and bring healing to your environment when you walk in your divine purpose.

I wish I could tell you that trying to do good on the earth was easy. Not so. Unity and inclusion are great in

“Use your voice in government, in education, in religion, in the sciences, in politics, in the media, and in your interpersonal relationships. Use it to bring more voices to the table. Use it to learn more about people who are not like you.

the end, but the journey there can often be sticky and even painful ... I cried a lot. I suffered many losses and setbacks. But in the midst of the failures and trials and struggles, I never stopped believing that, regardless of the adversity, I belong here. That knowledge and my faith in God wouldn't let me quit.

Gospel choir director for fifty-two years¹, gospel radio DJ for forty years, pastor of the Citadel for twenty-six years, chaplain for the Hartford police for nine years. And I'm just getting started on a multimillion-dollar project to build affordable housing, a community youth center with a pool, basketball court, tennis courts, a financial resource center, a daycare for children and seniors and office space—all because of the lessons imparted from this world-renowned institution.

I appreciate Groton for that, and I will be forever grateful for this Circle of friends who have become family since I was introduced to this place in the fall of 1978. As Grotonians around the world celebrate 137 years of making the world better, let us soberly remember that:

In Christ's family there can be no division into Jew and non-Jews, slave and free, male and female. Among us you are all equal... (Galatians 3:28)

Let us not seek to find reasons to be divided, but rather focus on what we have in common.

Let us remember more what it means to have character and integrity and honor and not worry so much where we learned it.

Let us be grateful that slavery as it were is no longer legal in this country, but let us long for a world where everyone is free and every single girl and woman is celebrated and appreciated and respected just as much as every man.

It is my prayer that one day you will all wake up and realize that you have been gifted with a unique but wonderful opportunity to be a part of this American institution called Groton School. You really are different. As a matter of fact, whenever I told someone that I was a student at Groton, they would quickly tell me that this school had the “cream of the crop,” and every

time I get to speak with students from Groton, I realize just how much more intellectually advanced you are in your youth than I am right now. And that's good. You are what Groton needs, and you are what the world needs.

When you leave here, you will be in positions of influence and you will be the agents of change for a world that right now feels like it is going crazy. You belong here and you will belong there.

Just promise me that you will use your authority and position and influence and power for good. Use your voice in government, in education, in religion, in the sciences, in politics, in the media, and in your interpersonal relationships. Use it to bring more voices to the table. Use it to learn more about people who are not like you.

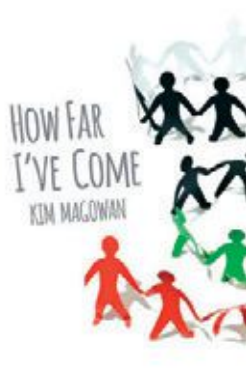
And then use it to develop institutions and systems that make the American experiment more real—a place where we *all* belong. A place where we are all free to dream big, believe with our entire heart, love deeply, and accept that while everyone may not see the world through the same lenses, we are all equal because God gave us all the breath of life. Keep your heart open to making the world better because everything that you send out will come back to you in due season.

Charles Dickens said: “No one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of it for anyone else.”

Every one of you matters. And believe it or not, God has a master plan and a purpose for each of you. As you fulfill His will and your dreams, always choose character, submit to scholarship, level up to leadership, and serve souls with everything that you have. When you do this, there will be dark nights of the soul, but if you will remember to allow the light of God to shine through you, your very existence will lighten the burdens of others and subsequently give you strength.

Thank you, and may God's blessings be with you forever.

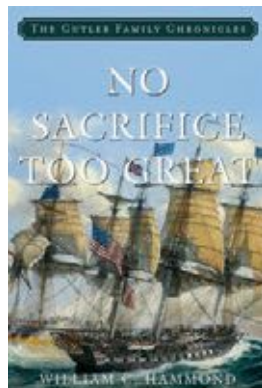
¹ He directed his church choir at age 6. “They put me on a table to direct the choir,” he said.



Kimberley I. Magowan '85

How Far I've Come

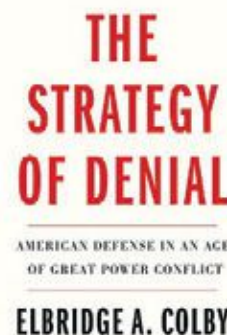
The fifty-seven short stories in this collection are not linked, but certain themes persist: messy love affairs, troubled teenagers, office romances gone sour, dysfunctional friendships, death and grieving, families undergoing systemic meltdowns, and families being sutured together in the wake. Characters learn (and re-learn) the awkward and unwieldy process of how to take care of both others and themselves. "How far I've come," a phrase borrowed from the penultimate story, is a nod to the wobbly trajectories a number of the characters take.



William C. Hammond '66

No Sacrifice Too Great

The sixth volume in the award-winning series profiling the American perspective in the Age of Sail, *No Sacrifice Too Great* chronicles the swashbuckling adventures of the Cutler family as the United States takes on Great Britain in the War of 1812. Richard Cutler and his two sons, William and James, serve in the U.S. Navy, weak in number of ships but strong in experience and fighting spirit. Battles in which the family participates include high-seas drama between the USS *Constitution* and HMS *Guerriere*, fleet engagements on Lake Erie and Lake Champlain, the siege of Baltimore, and the epic Battle of New Orleans.



Elbridge A. Colby '98

The Strategy of Denial: American Defense in an Age of Great Power Conflict

Elbridge A. Colby, the lead architect of the 2018 national defense strategy—the most significant revision of U.S. defense strategy in a generation—lays out how America's defense must change to address China's growing power and ambition. Based firmly in the realist tradition but deeply engaged in current policy, this book offers a clear framework for what America's goals in confronting China must be, how its military strategy must change, and how it must prioritize these goals over its lesser interests. It outlines a rigorous but practical approach, showing how the United States can prepare to win a war with China that we cannot afford to lose—precisely in order to deter that war from happening.

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





FALL SPORTS

Jack Lionette '23

Boys Cross Country 11–2

Boys cross country had a strong and successful season. We had forty-two runners on the roster, more than ever before, and even former BXC runners and coaches would join us for an occasional romp in the woods. Our varsity squad's pre-championship record was 11–2, and the team finished fourth in the ISL Championship and third in the New England Championship. BXC's JV squad placed third in the ISL Championship and second in the New England Championship. Our runners and spirits were soaring.

Starting with the return of our pre-pre-season retreat in Maine, nine racers accompanied the Capens for additional training on the trails of Mount Desert Island. This included the traditional runs around Little Long Pond in Seal Harbor, the half-marathon on the Around-Mountain loop in the heart of Acadia National Park, and the Labor Day morning run up Cadillac Mountain.

Beating St. Mark's 18–39 on their course in early October was especially gratifying, as were several individual accomplishments this season. Jack Lionette '23 came within five seconds of tying the school record on our course by the end of October and went on to finish fourth in the ISL Championship at 16:03.

Stanislas Robert '22 placed fourteenth in this varsity ISL Championship, while in the JV race Vivan Das '23 came in sixth, Jeremy Gall '24 seventh, and Larry Li '23 fifteenth. Ian Bayliss '22 placed second in the JV race at the New England Championship, with Carter Lightburn '25, Andres Palacios '24, and Trip Wight '25 also receiving ribbons for their fast finishes. Christopher Hovet '25 (our Most Improved Runner and also ISL Honorable Mention), Stanislas Robert (All-ISL runner), and Jack Lionette (All-ISL runner) also made the podium for their performances in the varsity race of the New England Championship. Special thanks to coaches Bert Hall and Franck Koffi and captains (and Coaches' Award recipients) Stanislas Robert and Tyler Weisberg '22 for their inspirational leadership.

—Coach John Capen P'17, '22



Girls Cross Country 7-4

After spending last fall running in masks and racing ourselves, the girls cross country team returned to a more traditional season of running and racing with great joy. With a handful of experienced racers and a large group of newcomers, we anticipated a season of building and growth. Our stated goals from the outset of the season were that every runner do their best, stay positive, go out and run hard, and let the times and the results take care of themselves. From start to finish, our runners did just that, and they capped a great season by bringing home a fourth-place varsity finish in the New England Championship in November—the

first time our team has finished in the top four since 2015.

After an initial loss (by only one point!) to Nobles in our opening meet, the team went on to win handily in our next two meets against BB&N, St. Mark's, Rivers, Lawrence Academy, and St. George's. We faced strong teams in the following two weeks and fell to Middlesex and Milton; that said, in spite of those numerical losses, those weeks saw tremendous gains for our runners. Every week we saw season bests and career bests, not only from our newcomers but from our veteran runners as well. Fourth Former Ruby Fehm and Sixth Former Wren Fortunoff consistently performed strong up front as our one and two, and Ruby won four

individual races. Sixth Former Sophia Deng; Fifth Formers Lang Burgess and Christina Chen; Third Formers Caroline Creasy, Tori Reece, Penelope Tregoe, and Lindy Zhang; and Second Former Sydney Nelson all made valuable contributions over the course of the season to our varsity roster as well.

After a particularly wet summer, our Zebras earned their stripes as they slogged, week after week, through a muddy first-mile field during our home races; when significant rainfall in the week leading up to Parents Weekend exacerbated those first-mile conditions, we opted to change our course at the eleventh hour before we faced Brooks, Thayer, and Tabor. Thanks to the tremendous effort of our Buildings and



Opposite page,
clockwise from left:
Chris Kadiri '22; Keira
Ley '24; Amelia Lee '22
(with ball) and Alicia
Guo '24

This page: left, Rose
Shingles '23; below,
girls cross country and
Kiefer Wood '23



Grounds team and the flexibility and understanding of many community members, we were able to pull off a successful, final regular-season meet on a modified course, winning against Brooks and Tabor and losing to the perennially strong Thayer team. At our championship meets in the final weeks of the season, Ruby and Wren finished in the top 20 in both races and earned All-ISL and All-NEPSAC Honors. Tori, Lang, Fourth Former Sheena Bakare, and Second Former Liv Ding earned individual accolades in the JV races, and our JV team finished third both at ISLs and New Englands.

Finally, whether doing a workout around the football field or racing up from the boat-house in the rain, Sixth Form captains Sophia

Deng and Wren Fortunoff modeled warmth and optimism, purpose and grit, every day. We are grateful for their leadership and know that their example will leave a lasting legacy on this team. We can't wait to get back on the trails with the team next fall!

—Assistant Coach Mary Frances Bannard
with Coach Michael O'Donnell

Field Hockey 6-7-2

The field hockey squad returned to campus this fall with great excitement. After missing a year of competition, the ISL was a blank slate. The girls used this opportunity to place a major emphasis on both team culture

and competition. Their two mantras for the season were "all in" and "the world is your oyster." Each and every day the girls showed up prepared to work hard and be there for their teammates, embodying many of the lessons from their summer team reading of Abby Wambach's book *Wolfpack*.

The season started out strong with wins over Holderness and St. George's, while the middle of the schedule proved to be more of a challenge. After suffering a tough overtime loss to a strong Tabor team over Parents Weekend, the girls set a defining goal of going undefeated in November. Following a similar trend, the next two games went to overtime. However, this time Groton was victorious with wins against both Proctor

This page, clockwise from top: Leonardo Serodio '24; boys cross country after the awards ceremony for the New England Championship; Luke Scheible '24

Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Ruby Fehm '24; Naomi-Erin Boateng '22 (with ball) and Sophia Leng '26; Inga Bartsch '24



and Governor's. The momentum continued with another two decisive wins against crosstown rival Lawrence Academy, under the lights, and against rival St. Mark's, to end the season.

While beating St. Mark's is always special, especially for our Sixth Formers, who had never done so before, accomplishing our goal of going 4-0 in November was the biggest highlight. This accomplishment speaks to the determination, commitment, and drive of the girls. While we will miss our departing Sixth Formers Aine Ley, Ella Ferrucci, and Emily Perez, we are excited to have a strong core of returning players next fall.

—Coach Kellie Walsh

Volleyball 5-7

Groton volleyball had its best record yet in only its fourth season of varsity play. We finished seventh of twelve teams in the ISL, above older programs like Milton's and Thayer's, and we ranked thirteenth of twenty-nine teams in NEPSAC's competitive Class B.

We once again beat crosstown rival Lawrence Academy, flooring the crowd with a comeback from 18-24 (sudden death) to nab the second set and, eventually, the match. Best of all, though, this team built a culture of hard work, positive thinking, and encouragement that will define our program for years to come.

—Coach Jennifer Wallace

Girls Soccer 4-9-3

The Groton girls soccer team relished a return to competitive play this fall. With only a handful of players who contributed to the 2019 campaign, the Zebras worked to incorporate new players and define roles early in the season.

After two 1-0 losses to Andover and St. Paul's, the girls earned decisive wins over Dana Hall, St. George's, and Brooks as well as a tie against Pomfret in a match that saw the Zebras outplay their opponent but unable to find the back of the net.

A plague of injuries coincided with a particularly challenging schedule in the middle of the season, and Groton fell to Milton, Rivers, Thayer, and Middlesex over



GROTONIANA



the coming weeks. Nonetheless, a 1-1 tie against Nobles, a perennial power, as well as a gritty performance in a loss to BB&N (who went undefeated in the season and unscored upon in the ISL) showed that the girls were continuing to develop as individuals and as a group.

The Zebras finished the season with a win over Cushing, a tie with Governor's, and losses to Lawrence and St. Mark's. In many ways, the girls' 4-4-2 record in class and the fact that they were in the running for a play-off spot on the final day of the season are more accurate reflections of their talent and growth than the overall record.

Sixth Formers Calie Messina, Lidia Spada, Grace Crowley, Alesandra Powell, and Ashley

Rosenbloom provided wonderful leadership during the 2021 season, and we wish them well. Meanwhile, a strong group of returners have all of us optimistic for the fall of 2022.

—Coach Ryan Spring

Boys Soccer 4-10-1

Our season was a bit of a sine curve, as a succession of short- and long-term injuries kept the training staff and team on our collective toes with numerous lineup changes on almost a weekly basis. As a partial consequence of the COVID break in play for many athletes, we ended up having to focus more on fitness and injury prevention as we

introduced a number of players who hadn't played varsity before—for context, we had only two seniors on the squad.

Despite a season filled with tough losses and a few bright victories, our notable win against St. Mark's allowed the team to keep the Fritz Wiedergott Cup on campus for another year! Though the season did not go as we had hoped, being on campus playing the beautiful game gave us the chance to reestablish team culture and set concrete goals for our offseason, with an eye toward what next fall will potentially bring for this team. By season's end we had a tight-knit group of young men who always showed up prepared to leave everything on the pitch.

—Coach Dave Pedreschi P'21

Top: Osric King '23,
Victoria Reece '25;
center, Stanislas
Robert '22 and
Maddie Cronan '25;
bottom, Luke
Romano '23, Bensen
Han '23, and Patty
Eldredge '22



 Follow Groton Athletics
on Twitter:
@GrotonZebras



Football 2-5

The Groton Zebras football squad returned to the gridiron in 2021 after a 2020 COVID hiatus that derailed the ISL football season. The young Zebra squad finished the year with a 2-5 record, bookending two big wins around five tough losses.

Groton topped Brooks to open the season, taking a 22-7 victory on a stellar defensive performance led by tri-captain Huck Jamison '22, who racked up five quarterback sacks in the second half, as the relentless Zebra defensive pressure overwhelmed the Brooksters. Huck added a TD catch from fellow senior tri-captain Patrick Eldredge '22 in the first half. Tri-captain Christopher Kadiri '22 iced the game with a nifty thirty-yard sprint to the end zone.

Groton suffered a hard-fought 12-6 loss to Roxbury Latin in Boston. After taking an early 6-0 lead on a Bensen Han '23

one-yard plunge, the Zebras hung tough throughout, relinquishing a late score. Making matters worse, Huck Jamison went down with what was believed to be a season-ending knee injury.

After the Roxbury Latin defeat, the Zebras hung tough despite a series of unfortunate injuries, losing to rival Middlesex 38-7; however, the Zebras found an offensive weapon in quarterback Patty Eldredge's legs, as the Sixth Former pivot-rushed for ninety-seven yards in the game.

A long trip to St. George's followed, and the Zebras struggled in the first half, falling behind 28-0, but came back to score 14 in the second half, ultimately losing to the NEPSAC champions 42-14.

On Parents Weekend, a talented Rivers squad was too much for Groton in a 35-7 loss; the highlight from Groton was Eldredge's 100-plus yards rushing. The

five-game drought was finished off by a loaded Thayer Academy squad in a 38-0 whitewashing.

The Zebras got great news during St. Mark's week as the injured Jamison and three other injured players were all given clearance to play late in the week. A healthy Zebra squad responded with the third win in a row over our ancient rival, 32-19, with Eldredge rushing for three TDs and throwing to Kadiri for a fifty-yarder. Han scored the other Groton TD.

Defensively, linebackers Han, Jamison, and Fifth Former Luke Romano stood tall in the victory, as did the secondary led by Fifth Former Henry Haskell and the defensive line of Fourth Formers Patrick Keegan and Forrest Nelson and Sixth Former Kyle Toce. Ending their Groton careers were Sixth Formers Eldredge, Jamison, Kadiri, Toce, Connor Hall, Joshua Poulin, and Logan Taylor.

—Coach Jamie Lamoreaux

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

Most Valuable Runner
Jack Lionette '23

Most Improved Runner
Christopher Hovet '25

Coaches' Award
Stanislas Robert '22
Tyler Weisberg '22

All-ISL
Jack Lionette '23
Stanislas Robert '22

All-ISL Honorable Mention
Christopher Hovet '25

Captains-Elect
Vivan Das '23
Jack Lionette '23

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

Most Valuable Runner
Ruby Fehm '24

Most Improved Runner
Sophia Deng '22

Coaches' Award
Wren Fortunoff '22

All-ISL
Ruby Fehm '24
Wren Fortunoff '22

All-NEPSAC
Ruby Fehm '24
Wren Fortunoff '22

Captains-Elect
Lang Burgess '23
Christina Chen '23

FIELD HOCKEY

Most Improved Player
Maddie Cronan '25

Coaches' Award
Keira Ley '24

Unsung Player Award
Aine Ley '22

All-ISL
Ella Ferrucci '22

All-ISL Honorable Mention
Ellie Smith '24

Captains-Elect
Keira Ley '24
Devon Mastroianni '23

FOOTBALL

Coaches' Award
Huck Jamison '22
Christopher Kadiri '22
Joshua Poulin '22

Charles Alexander Award
Patrick Eldredge '22

Most Improved Player
Kyle Toce '22

All-ISL
Patrick Eldredge '22
Huck Jamison '22

All-ISL Honorable Mention
Bensen Han '23
Henry Haskell '23
Chris Kadiri '22
Luke Romano '23

Captains-Elect
Bensen Han '23
Luke Romano '23

BOYS SOCCER

Most Valuable Player
Jack Travis '23

Most Improved Player
Osric King '23

Coaches' Award
Aidan O'Connell '23

All-ISL
Jack Travis '23

All-ISL Honorable Mention
Henry Burnham '23

Captains-Elect
Henry Burnham '23
Jack Travis '23

GIRLS SOCCER

Coaches' Award
Calie Messina '22

Sixth Form Award
Grace Crowley '22

All-ISL
Karenn Beckstein '23

All-ISL Honorable Mention
Calie Messina '22
Rose Shingles '23

All-NEPSAC
Karenn Beckstein '23

All-State
Karenn Beckstein '23

Captains-Elect
Karenn Beckstein '23
Rose Shingles '23

VOLLEYBALL

Most Valuable Player
Naomi Boateng '22
Sobenna Egwuekwe '22
Amelia Lee '22

All-ISL
Alicia Guo '24

All-NEPSAC Honorable Mention
Alicia Guo '24

Captains-Elect
Sophia Bay '23
Kyra Minda Chiriboga '23
Alicia Guo '24



Watch the Zebras play no matter where you are. Check www.groton.org/livestreams for upcoming games.



Groton performers took on the challenge of *Anon(ymous)*, a thought-provoking play by Naomi Iizuka, this fall. An adaptation of Homer's *Odyssey*, *Anon(ymous)* is an excruciatingly relevant refugee story. Young Anon searches for family during travels throughout the United States, meeting a wide array of characters—some helpful, some cruel—along the way.

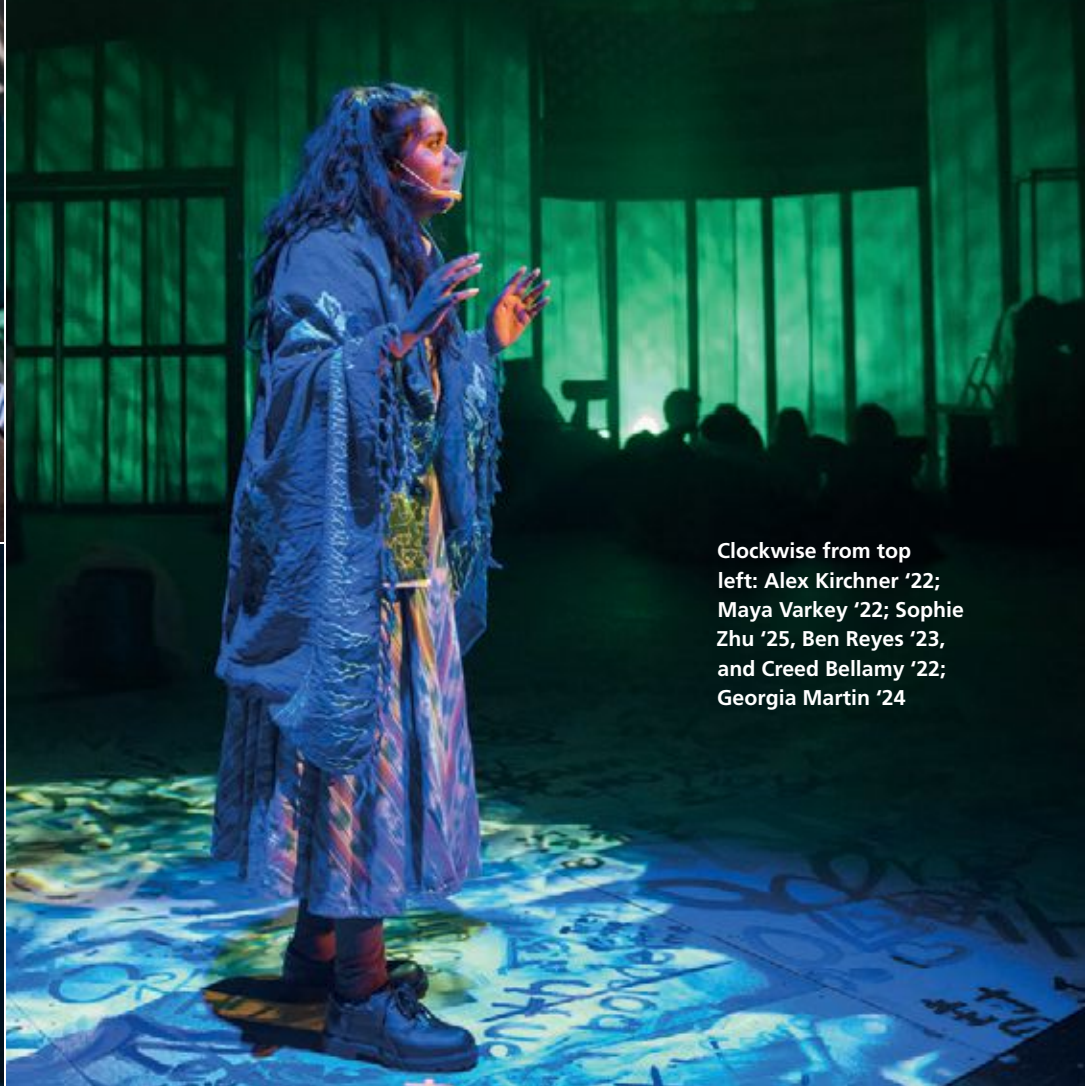
ANON(ymous)





Clockwise from far left: Jacinta Lopez '22 and Alex Kirchner '22; Wally Capen '22 and Creed Bellamy '22; Brittany Deng '24; Abigail Hunnewell '23 and Creed; Creed; William Laws '25, Tim Hebard '24, and Ben Reyes '23; and Maya Varkey '22, Brittany, Ebunoluwa Lawore '24, Sophie Zhu '25, Jennifer Polynice '25, Abigail, Leila Ross '26, and Jessica Lee '24





Clockwise from top
left: Alex Kirchner '22;
Maya Varkey '22; Sophie
Zhu '25, Ben Reyes '23,
and Creed Bellamy '22;
Georgia Martin '24



The Reverend John F. Smith

November 20, 1934 – October 26, 2021

School Chaplain 1978–2000

by John W. Tyler, former faculty



Jack Smith was just about the ideal school chaplain: a learned preacher, an engaging teacher, a talented writer, a great wit, a generous host and epicure, a warm friend, and someone with an intuitive understanding of all the struggles young people go through in becoming themselves. He was also a keen amateur photographer and talented clarinetist, an enthusiastic cross-country running coach, and a wise and trusted confidential advisor.

Religion in boarding schools hung by a perilous thread in the late 1970s. Many similar schools did away with chapel and religious education entirely. Yet everyone now at Groton would point to the chapel program as one of the school's distinctive strengths. That didn't happen by accident. Jack transformed Sunday services from a pageant staged by adults for the moral edification of the young into community events in which all took part. The regular morning chapel program that includes a brief call to worship, a reading from scripture, a hymn, and talks, in rotation, by students, faculty members, the headmaster, and the chaplain, is not a custom of deep antiquity, but something established by Jack.

Next to the headmaster, the chaplain was the public face of Groton School in those days, and how fortunate the school was during his tenure to have been represented with such intelligence, style, and wit. He was well aware that not everyone sitting in the Chapel on Sunday morning was there voluntarily. He made room for religious skeptics in a way that often troubled the more orthodox. Yet he stood well within the broad church tradition of the Episcopal Church. Community life in

boarding schools can be very inward looking, but Jack constantly reminded his audience that they had a role to play in a wider world outside the gates. His basic message was one to which even non-Christians could subscribe: justice, freedom, and peace are the essence of public morality and that what matters in this life (and perhaps the next) is how we treat one another.

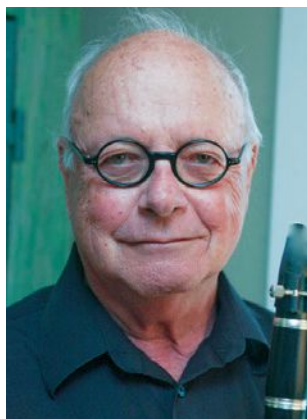
But preaching is just one part of the chaplain's job description. It is a multi-faceted, seven-day-a-week job, especially in a boarding school. Though he had never been a coach or athlete before arriving at Groton, he

became an enthusiastic advocate for cross-country running, and many members of his teams treasure memories of long conversations with Jack on practice runs through the Massachusetts countryside. Still more graduates will remember the portrait photos he took of their fellow students. He had an uncanny knack for capturing the animating spirit of each of his subjects, and the Admission Office cleverly chose to display them in the corridor leading to their location in the Schoolhouse.

Jack had many talents I envied: the grace and easy flow of his writing, his ability to defuse a potentially awkward

situation with humor, and his unparalleled skill as a *raconteur*. But if I could have made a Faustian bargain for just one of Jack's talents, it would have been for his skill as an advisor. He understood human lives in all their messiness and disappointment. As the poet Terence observed, "nothing human [was] strange to [him]."

One never felt reproached by Jack. He began from a position of sympathy and understanding. And his advice wasn't exactly advice: it came in the form of questions



that opened up new possibilities amidst the circumstances in which one felt so trapped. Although Jack deeply loved his advisees, he did not play favorites. He often undertook difficult cases: those in disciplinary trouble, or from broken families, or with problems of substance abuse. An entire generation of Grotonians can testify to his compassion and wise advice.

Jack, of course, had a life both before and after Groton. Prior to coming to campus in 1978, he served as the Episcopal chaplain at Boston University during an era of tumultuous protests against the war in Vietnam and demands for racial justice. He and his then wife Mary Grace kept an open house, welcoming both student friends and strangers in trouble. His first book, *The Bush Still Burns*, was a rejection of complacency and a call for Christian activism. He brought with him from BU his strong commitment to feminism (learned from his daughters Sarah and Cilla '80), and he helped make Groton a more inclusive place for young women in the early days of coeducation.

Jack retired to Wellfleet on Cape Cod, and it's hard to imagine a more suitable place for him than that summer haven for left-wing writers, famous painters, and New York intellectuals. He entered fully into the community there, playing the clarinet in the Lower Cape Band, serving on the town's historical commission, and acting as priest-in-charge for St. James the Fisherman, the summer parish first established by the iconoclastic Bishop James A. Pike. He wrote three books during his retirement: one a cycle of prayers for the National Association of Episcopal Schools (of which he had been a board member); a second entitled *Living Forward*, wise counsel for those about to retire; and my favorite, *Raising a Good Kid*, in which he distilled decades of wisdom gained from working with families. That book is now sadly out of print, but its themes of the dangers of striving for perfection in child-rearing and the need for young people to have the opportunity to make their own mistakes couldn't be more relevant in an age of "tiger moms" and helicopter parenting.

Jack died in his sleep, loved and admired by an entire generation of Grotonians and hundreds of friends from California to Cape Cod. When I remember him, I am reminded of the words of Psalm 17, which he used so often as a benediction: "Keep [him], O Lord, as the apple of your eye; hide [him] under the shadow of your wings."

Friends and colleagues shared these recollections:

One summer on Cape Cod, a friend asked me if I would like to have drinks with the Episcopal chaplain from Groton School; as a superannuated hippie and unreformed Jew, my first response was "Are you

kidding?" I fell in love that night with Jack and his then wife Mary Grace. They were funny and generous and smart and exactly my age. We became good friends, and Jack recommended me for a position at Groton, the best gift anyone ever gave me.

At Groton, Jack was the headmaster's confidant. When there were important decisions to be made, I know Jack was asked his opinion, but close as we were, he never once told me anything he had heard or learned in those conferences. That quality of trust was what kids inherently recognized in Jack; he liked kids, he trusted them, and they trusted him in return. Only occasionally was there a student who had been so serially unkind that Jack had to call him a "thug," his strongest epithet for such a person. Mostly he listened to kids and supported them. Jack knew lots of secrets.

Because he did not indulge in cant or bloviate about his religious calling, some kids actually doubted that Jack was a believer. I never wavered in my understanding that his Christianity was evident more in his actions and his life than in his professions of faith. Jack's sermons may on the surface have been about his beloved dogs, but underneath they were always about his absolute commitment to love and justice as manifestations of God's will for the world.

On Judaism he was one of my best teachers. "The Hebrew Bible," he said (he was always careful to call it that) "is a history of the Jews' relationship to God across time." To this day, more advanced though I am in my studies and my connection to Judaism, I have never heard a better definition. He also said, in the pulpit mind you, "The Jews are a narrative people; if you don't believe me, think of any conversation you have ever had with Ms. Klau."

One night at the end of a difficult spring term, there was an especially lively faculty party at which both Jack and I had had considerable to drink. I had come home early, feeling maudlin from my indulgence, and was sitting in my study writing him an email to tell him that I couldn't have gotten through the year without him. Suddenly he appeared at the open window, a little drunk, and said without preamble, "I couldn't have gotten through the year without you."

—Judith R. Klau, English faculty 1986–98

The prophet Isaiah wrote: "Morning by morning he waken my ear to hear as those who are taught." The prophet could have been speaking about Jack Smith, who, in his classes and in daily chapel, wakened our ears and, I might add, opened our eyes to hear and see in ways we had not before.

Whether speaking about school life or a larger issue of humankind and the world, Jack urged us to hear and see, in the words of the prayer, with "an inquiring mind and discerning heart." He pushed us beyond ourselves, beyond formulas, beyond the expected and the trivial, encouraging



us to break down and build up: break down barriers of intolerance, dishonesty, prejudice, and injustice, which separate and diminish people, and build up the forces of perseverance, trust, and love, which bind people together and overcome the differences of gender, race, and sexual orientation.

Jack brought a larger landscape to the Groton geography. He made Chapel a place in which student participation was valued. Because he liked and trusted them, young people understood that when he confronted them for inappropriate behavior or shoddy work, he had their best interest at heart. As a teacher he helped them believe in themselves and gave them confidence that what they know is worthy of expression in words well chosen. Always willing to lend a hand where needed, Jack coached the cross-country team, helped the Dramat, filled in for ill colleagues, and judged at the finish line of crew races. Around his dining room table, many advisees and colleagues found excellent food, interesting conversation, wise council, and sometimes tough love. Time and again, Jack gave us the message, “We are loved by God. We need to prove nothing but only grow into the people we are meant to be.”

Jack influenced many of us in ways that mark us to this day.

—William M. Polk '58, headmaster 1978–2003

Jack Smith taught me, in words and by example, why growing up might not be such a bad thing. He was, simply, one of the best people I have ever met—supportive, kind, and wise, and a reminder that these qualities can coexist with discernment and asperity. I saw him a few months before he died, in Wellfleet, with his daughters, Cilla and Sarah, and he was fading but so completely himself. I was proud of him and he was proud of me and I loved him very much.

—H. Willing Davidson '95

Good memories, all: Many quiet talks in '79–'80, when I briefly taught English at Groton—talks about God, faith, marriage, existentialism, teaching, Cilla (his delightful daughter and a student of mine in Creative Writing), protest movements, politics, et al. More recently, occasional lunches at PB Boulangerie in Wellfleet. RIP, good friend.

—Edward Yasuna '63, English faculty 1979–80

My first Jack Smith encounter occurred on a late morning in late May 1989. I was on campus interviewing for a position in the English Department and was getting the tour with Judith Klau. As we approached the Chapel, Jack popped out, leaning on the heavy wooden door and singing the fight song from the University of Michigan, our shared alma mater. Seeing him made me think that maybe this was a place I could find my people, not at all what I, a transplanted Midwesterner, had been thinking before his appearance. Over the decade that we worked together, Jack hosted some of the most memorable Groton dinner parties, provided wicked side commentary during faculty meetings, created in the Chapel a space for a wide range of beliefs, and even presided over my wedding. While he was providing loving guidance and mentorship for Groton students, he was doing no less for the faculty. I miss knowing he's in my orbit.

—Jean E. Klingler, English faculty 1989–2001

A memorial celebrating Jack's life will be held on July 9, 2022, at the Chapel of St. James the Fisherman in Wellfleet, Massachusetts.

Lewis H. Spence '64, P'92, GP'22, '25

Trustee 1985–91

November 17, 1946 – August 15, 2021

by Adam M. Spence '92, P'22, '25



C*ui servire est regnare* is often spoken in and around Groton. We carry it with us after we've graduated and weave it into our personal and professional lives. My father, Lewis Harwood "Harry" Spence '64, took *Cui servire est regnare* to heart and dedicated himself to its expression.

Harry died unexpectedly while vacationing in Greece in August at the age of 74. He grew up in Cranbury, New Jersey, a small farming town outside of Princeton, and came to Groton as a Second Former in the fall of 1959. Harry was active in the school's literary life, including serving as editor of both the *Third Form Weekly* and the *Grotonian*.

After attending Harvard College, my father began his public sector career as a special assistant at the Somerville

Housing Authority while a student at Harvard Law School. Distracted by full-time work at the Somerville Housing Authority, he barely managed to earn his JD in 1974, the year I was born. Two years later, my sister Rebecca was born.

The late seventies saw him developing a reputation as a "housing expert" (his occupation noted on my 1974 birth certificate), such that when the Boston Housing Authority was forced into a federal court-mandated receivership, my father was called to the role of receiver at the age of thirty-four. He loved the job: a public sector crisis that dealt with housing for the most vulnerable, overlaid with huge challenges ranging from crumbling infrastructure to race relations. After a successful turnaround of the agency and its troubled system, Harry had developed a name for himself as a manager of complex public agencies in distress.

In the mid-1980s, my father briefly experimented with roles in the for-profit private sector but never took to the work. The rest of his life was filled with service projects of significant scale and challenge. In strike-force type roles that lasted never more than five years, he turned his attention to leadership of state and local public institutions in crisis. Living by the motto, "if it doesn't scare you, it isn't worth doing," he became the state-appointed receiver of the City of Chelsea, commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Social Services, deputy chancellor for operations of the New York City schools, and the first in a newly created role of Massachusetts trial court administrator. Between public appointments, Harry's transitional roles included teaching at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government

Adam Richins



Ann, Stanley '22,
Adam '92, Harry '64,
and Robin Ely at
Parents Weekend 2019

and helping to develop the Doctor of Educational Leadership program at Harvard's Graduate School of Education.

During his stint as lecturer at the Kennedy School in the early 1990s, Harry met Robin Ely, his wife and partner of thirty-two years and mother of his third child, Francesca. Harry and Robin vacationed on Hydra every year since 1997. Taking three to four weeks in Greece while managing public agencies in crisis may sound difficult, but my father often remarked that if he couldn't leave the agency unattended for such a period then he just wasn't doing a good job.

My father retired a few years ago and turned his attention to building a house at the edge of the Great Marsh in Essex, Massachusetts, where he tended to his garden and pursued interests long deferred, including writing about his career, learning to speak Spanish, and engaging as both student and teacher with the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute.

The son and brother of Brooks School graduates, Groton became very much Harry's own, right from the start, and continued to be a deeply meaningful thread throughout his life. While living in Cambridge as a young man, my father frequently returned to Groton for

walks around the campus, reunions, and family trips to Lessons and Carols. He served on the Board of Trustees from 1985 to 1991, transitioned to the role of parent (I graduated in '92) and then to grandparent, of Stanley Spence '22 and Henry "Harry" Spence '25. My father attended not only his own reunions in years ending in 4 and 9, but also returned for my reunions and Parents Weekends so that he could spend time with his three grandchildren (including his youngest grandchild, my daughter, Eliza).

My father's connections to the Form of 1964 were deeply held. Thurston Clarke '64 recalls my father beginning his remarks to the Form of 1964 at their 45th reunion in 2009 saying, "You should know that I consider you all my brothers." He was very much looking forward to the Form of '64's 75th birthday party in New York in October 2021.

My father didn't talk a lot about Groton, but as I look back on his life I'm struck by how central the school was to him. He was a member of the Groton family as student, trustee, parent, and grandparent, but more deeply than those titles confer, he lived within the fabric of the school's mission as a public servant, devoting his energy and talents to the service of others.

George Tyssen Butler '62

October 12, 1943 – October 21, 2021

by Francis I. Blair '62, P'98 and Caroline Alexander



GEORGE WAS BORN in Chester, England, in 1943, the birth year of most of the Form of 1962. His father, Major Tyssen Desmond Butler, was an Anglo-Irish officer with the Royal Welch Fusiliers, and his mother was a West from Boston. His parents were married in Kenya, where Major Butler was stationed—an auspicious start for George, whose life would span so many exotic places.

When Major Butler was transferred, his family moved with him to Somalia, where George was watched over by spear-carrying Askari and learned to like camel's milk. It was here too that he learned his skill and respect for hunting, as the British officers often hunted for the pot. In the early 1950s, the Butlers moved to Jamaica, where George continued spending much of his time outdoors, swimming and fishing and boating in the Montego Bay area. George attended the DeCarteret boarding school, where he made lifelong friends and formed a love for Jamaica that lured him back over the years for visits and photographic assignments.

In 1957, he came to the United States and to Groton School, bearing a deep tan and an English accent. Formmate Dennis Dix remembers Jake Congleton being astonished that when called upon, George got to his feet and stood next to his desk to answer a question. Even Groton in 1957 wasn't *that* British! John Whitman recalls George telling him that in his boarding school in Jamaica, students poured boiling milk onto the porridge to kill the maggots—but he couldn't tell if George was joking or not.

The Wests owned True Farm in Holderness, New Hampshire, a second home for George and, when he later

purchased it from his parents, the home of his heart. It is well known to many of the Form of 1962, who visited George there over the years.

After Groton, bucking the expected Yale-Harvard tradition, George went to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He loved the South and thrived there, running a legendary—and provocative—speakers' program that brought the likes of Tom Wolfe, Louis Farrakhan (a Jamaican), and Alex Haley to the campus. On graduation and with the call to Vietnam looming, George completed a master's degree in writing at Hollins College. In 1968, objecting to the war, George signed on for national service with VISTA and was posted to the North End, an inner-city area of Detroit that saw much violence. He founded a community newspaper that took on exploitive landlords—a crusade that earned him respect and acceptance within the community and threats from without it.

George seemed to have been born with a keen eye for detail and a highly visual sensibility. Drawn to photography, he trained under Enrico Natali and soon became a master of grab-shot portraiture. Continuing his activities in the peace movement, in 1971 he co-edited—with David Thorne and future U.S. Senator John Kerry—*The New Soldier*, a highly praised book about Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW). In 1972, a photographic assignment for *Life* magazine to cover the Mr. Universe bodybuilding contest took him to Baghdad and Tehran and led to the publication of *Pumping Iron: The Art and Sport of Bodybuilding*. Intrigued by the experience, George spent the next few years following this obscure sport and eventually undertook a theatrical documentary



Above: George, far left, and his film crew for *In the Blood*, standing before Teddy Roosevelt's famous gun and two Cape Buffalo skulls



Right: George in Antarctica, where he filmed *The Endurance*, about explorer Ernest Shackleton

on the subject. *Pumping Iron* was released in 1977 and became an instant classic, helped launch the fitness industry, and made a mega-star of its central character, an obscure Austrian bodybuilder named Arnold Schwarzenegger.

That same year, George established White Mountain Films—named for the White Mountains of New Hampshire—which over the following decades produced a series of critically acclaimed and award-winning documentaries. A pioneer of the feature documentary—movie-length, non-fiction films to be shown in movie theaters—George worked hard to bring high-level production values to all of his movies, taking pains to seek out the best cinematographers, editors, and composers. Documentaries, he believed, should play “like movies.” His last movie, *Tiger Tiger*, is an Imax film that is expected to be released this year.

Although mostly known as a filmmaker, George created a remarkable body of photographic work, and

assignments took him from bodybuilding in the Middle East to Jamaica’s wild Cockpit Country in search of the world’s rarest butterfly to the ruins of Xanadu. While his photos of celebrities such as Arnold Schwarzenegger and John Kerry have been widely seen, his best work is perhaps the extraordinarily intimate portraits of the North End community, which one hopes will be exhibited in the near future.

The path of an independent filmmaker and photographer is not an easy one. George never gave up on chosen subjects, working steadily and doggedly to bring each to fulfillment, however long it took. Along the way he also built an extraordinary life and, like Odysseus, “saw the towns of many men and came to know their way of mind.” He was at home among the sophisticated of the world’s great cities and in the woods and mountains of remote places. He is buried in the field behind his house, on the edge of the forest, with a view over his beloved True Farm and the lake beyond.

James H. Case '58

November 6, 1940 – September 1, 2021

by William M. Polk '58



In September 1952, eleven First Formers arrived at Groton, Jim being the only non-legacy of the group. His connection to Groton? While in college, Jack Crocker dated Jim's mother.

Laid back with a droll sense of humor and a lover of all matters baseball, Jim enjoyed using nicknames for people: Ap for Bill Kenney; Willie, never Bill, for me; Sap for Wick Simmons; and Veg for the Latin teacher. The nickname Veg, for vegetable, was sparked in reaction to a character in the movie *Stalag 17* named Animal.

Jim didn't invent this nickname, but he sure liked using it. During a Latin class Third Form year, a frustrated Veg grabbed a window pole and, like a Roman Centurion, hurled it at a resting Jim Case in the back row. Fortunately, the pole missed its target and flew out of the second-floor window of the Schoolhouse. It landed near a surprised Larry Noble, the admission director, who was giving a family a tour of the campus. Veg did make Jim retrieve the window pole.

Jim Case was born in Rochester, New York in 1940 and grew up on a dairy farm in nearby Avon. He earned a BA in mathematics at the University of Rochester, where he was a three-sport varsity athlete, participating in football, swimming, and baseball; he was inducted into the U of R's Athletic Hall of Fame in 2013. After graduating from the University of Rochester, where he met Pat, his ever so sane, stalwart wife, he followed his overriding passion to become a professional baseball pitcher and signed with the Dodger organization. Released by the team in the spring of 1962, he took a tramp steamer to Cannes, France, bought a bicycle, and headed north to Paris, stopping to enjoy starred Michelin restaurants. His favorite vacation forever after was a trip through the French countryside seeking good food and wines.

After completing master's and doctoral degrees at the University of Michigan, Jim did post-doctoral research at the Mathematics Research Center at the University of Wisconsin and at Princeton University. He moved to

Baltimore in 1970 to join the Operations Research and Industrial Engineering Department (now Department of Applied Mathematics and Statistics) at Johns Hopkins University. He wrote three books, a number of chapters and peer-reviewed papers, and articles and book reviews—as recently as September—for the *SIAM* (Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics) *News*.

On moving to Baltimore, he became an ardent fan of the Orioles and Colts/Ravens. He was also an avid downhill skier, who instilled a passion for the sport in his children, their spouses, and his grandchildren, who treasure memories of family ski vacations.

Jim taught for a semester in British Columbia and took a liking to the hard cider made there. So he founded the Chesapeake Hard Cider Company, introducing the beverage to the mid-Atlantic.

"In six years at Groton," David Bingham '58 noted, "I don't remember hearing a single mean or angry word from Jim, who always seemed to be walking on the bright side of life. He may not have made the majors in baseball, but he was a star."

Jonathan Sedgwick '58 wrote, "While attending a climate change conference near Flathead Lake in Montana

a few years back, Jim took time to drive west to Coeur d'Alene to visit us. What a pleasure it was to rekindle our friendship. This led to many conversations via email. He became my sparring partner in the world of ideas."

From Tom Wright '58: "He has been the rarest of people—without an unkind molecule to him, only kindness. And a shining example, if proof need be, that 'a book should not be judged by its cover.' His (very large) appearance was of softness. But his very hard fastball was a clue to great inner strength."

Deeply loyal to Groton and to members of our form, Jim and Pat never missed a reunion, and we could always count on Jim to spin a few good yarns. This "gem of a character," as Ed Robbins '58 describes him, leaves us with an intense sense of loss and volumes of cherished memories.



FORM NOTES



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Members of the Groton community may read
them online by signing into GrotonConnect
at www.grotonalumni.network.



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CIRCLING BACK



Endicott Peabody and Groton boys by the Nashua River, most likely during a meeting of the Rowing Club in the late 1930s

FOLLOW GROTON:

