

MARY SLOCUM ARCENEUX, CLASS OF 1960

How many years did you attend Linden Hall?

I was at Linden Hall for three years, graduating in 1960.

What did you love most about Linden Hall?

The camaraderie, the close friendships, my roommates Dale Crenshaw and Robin Howell especially (we were in our sophomore room just before lunch in 1957 when we heard about Sputnik on the radio. Lunch was very quiet that day – I think we were all scared, not knowing what it all meant for us.)

I truly loved the beautiful campus. Ok, and the desserts made from scratch by the Mennonite ladies in the kitchen - apple goo, Moravian sugar cake and many others. Served with real whipped cream, of course.



Describe your experience at Linden Hall. What is your favorite memory?

We had a strict routine that was very comfortable at times, stifling at other times, especially when we were seniors. Our teachers were truly dedicated teachers who tried, with discipline and kindness, to impart to us what we needed to know to prepare us for college and, as the school motto says, for life. Favorite memories.....we would swim in the basement pool on Sunday afternoons, usually removing our swimsuits and skinny dipping. Mrs. Stengel, the Admissions Director, was on to us and would call out from the top of the stairs, "Yoo-hoo, girls, I have visitors with me" to give us time to scramble back into our suits. Also, dashing across the street to the pretzel factory (very against the rules to leave campus, even to cross the narrow street) with Robin as my lookout, to buy a big bag of broken pretzels for a quarter. That was high mischief! There are a couple other things that I still will not mention, for fear of being expelled.

What clubs were you a member of?

Clubs - all of them, I think. I was a real joiner. I can't find my LH yearbook right now, or I'd be more specific. I was in all the singing groups I could be – the choir, the Lindennaires (a quartet.) Music was a big part of our daily lives then, since we attended chapel for 15 minutes each morning (two hymns), and went to the Moravian church Sunday mornings and had Vespers Sunday night. Plus, singing lessons once a week with our music teacher Mrs Pfeiffer, who was a good musician (singer) from Germany, and had the greatest sympathy and affection for us - we could feel it. She was very patient with us rowdy American girls.....

What sports did you play? Were you a rider?

I played field hockey (a very dumb game, in my opinion, then and now), tennis,

basketball, and I took riding classes, but was not on a riding team (was there one in the '50's?)

What piece of advice could you share with the girls at LH today?

Re: current students.....they probably don't need any advice from me at all; their expectations are so very different from mine in 1960. However, I would hope that they would feel the traditions and enjoy being part of a continuum of young women who have studied there. Look at the graduation pictures in the Bridge, laugh at the funny clothes and hairstyles, but be proud to be part of it. Also, get to know your teachers as human beings, not just as teachers - you will be amazed and rewarded.

What college did you attend?

I went to Connecticut College for Women (as it was known at that time, for obvious reasons) in New London, CT, then to the New York School of Interior Design in NYC.

What is your occupation?

My occupation, after many careers, is now retired. I am good at it.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Spare time, of which I have plenty, is spent reading voraciously, going to films as often as possible, seeing my family when they are available (grandkids live close by, but have heavy schedules!) keeping up with friends, travel, knitting.

Is there anything else you would like to comment on?

I must comment on some favorite teachers. Miss Mary P. Goodyear, who taught Latin, which I hated (Latin, not Miss Bonus Annus, meaning "good year" in Latin, as we called her) was a dynamo, in and out of the classroom. She challenged us with her enthusiasm, love of her subject, and general lively spirits. I liked her so much that once I was done with the dreaded Latin, I took her Modern European History class, even though it was a freshman class and I was then a senior, just to be taught by her once more. Mr. Ralph Sloat, who was retired from the New York schools, came to us as a math teacher. He was the classic absent-minded professor, completely passionate about teaching, never noticing that his was rubbing against the blackboard and getting chalk dust on his suit jacket. He was a good teacher, and we were very fond of him. Miss Rachel Laird, the language teacher - I took French and Spanish, so was in her class twice a day. She seemed like a typical single lady teacher who was very serious, but as time went on I realized that she had an ironic sense of humor. I have gone to France a few times and as I try to remember pronunciation, I hear her voice in my head, "Girls, to speak French, you must learn to m-o-o-o-ve your m-o-u-u-u-ths!" Dr. Horne was Headmaster then and a very kind man who probably wondered why he had to put up with girls in their bathrobes, cream on their faces and curlers in their hair, knocking on his door at night, begging for "late per"

And, of course, Miss Pat Sullivan. I was in most of the plays (won the acting award for my part in 'The Barretts Of Wimpole Street' - I was Mr. Barrett! She taught Speech, English and directed all the plays, as well as trying to civilize us. She met me at the airport on my 40th reunion and, driving to Lititz, I discovered that when I was a senior at LH, she was only 32 years old!!! Ohmygosh.....we laughed about that (of course, we assumed that all teachers were ancient, and she was prematurely grey haired.) I remember one spring day she took us outside to sit under a blossoming tree to read and study Edna St. Vincent Millay's Poem "Renaissance" - (did I spell it right?) It was a very sweet moment.

Just for Fun -

Favorite Book:

The Boys In The Boat and Zola's *L'Assommoir*

Favorite Film: I just saw *Room* a newly released film. See it if you can - very powerful.

Some things you couldn't live without:

My family and dark chocolate.

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