

# MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE

CLASS OF 1961

55<sup>th</sup> Reunion: 20 – 22 May 2016

A to C

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## **Elsa Anderson van Bergen**

Since 2011 I am in many ways in a different place. Last year saw us selling two Maine homes to find a perfect haven near Goochs Beach, Kennebunk, special to us for 50 years, and a constant source of refreshment during soooo many moves, including ones abroad.

We now have in one place room for my looms; “sequestered nooks,” to quote Longfellow, for “all the sweet serenity of books” for OLLI courses and book groups; separate work areas to prepare for the various boards Richard and I serve and to write and draw; a book-lined space for dawdling dinner parties; a happy place for our affectionate calico Frankie; appliances in this brand-new house that are smarter than I am; and a more manageable garden to be developed this year. Recent joys otherwise include welcoming a second grandchild and having both Erik and Chris and their families join to celebrate my 75th this March. After reunion comes a first-time visit to Ireland and return to our favorite city, our other spiritual home, Stockholm.

Friends, family, intellectual stimulation, Portland’s culture and cuisine, walks on the beach, good health. What more could I wish for. Since last reunion I came to a surer state of health, mostly via a mastectomy, after decades of issues, and reassuring scans, with some help from the pleasure of growing and enjoying fresh-picked veggies (fingerling potatoes are a specialty here) and meditation. One of the best things to happen since 2011 was my gradual retirement as book editor after 52 years of seeing the industry go from galleys and lead type to wildly complex electronic publishing. More time for me and us!

One birthday card had a quotation “It is the sweet, simple things of life which are the real ones after all.” Entering Maine, you see a sign “Maine, the way life should be,” and for us it holds true. Note our new contact info: POB 213, Kennebunk, ME 04043 (correct email is [evanbergen@maine.rr.com](mailto:evanbergen@maine.rr.com)) and let us know if you are heading our way!



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### The Five Year High(?)lights

2011 Moved from New Jersey to Vermont  
2012 Diagnosed with ovarian cancer  
2013 Chemo  
2014 Remission  
2015 Recurrence  
2016

And so much more!

Moving from a rambling farmhouse with 25+ years of accumulated living was a challenge. Making the “new” house into a home is a continuing adventure. Reconnecting in small ways with Mt. Holyoke is a joy: enjoying a wonderful vacation through the Alumnae Association, hosting a senior from Viet Nam for Thanksgiving, keeping up with the email group. Our monodramas, HerStory Productions, are being booked through the Vermont Council on the Humanities. My ambition to have the first registered SAORI weaving studio in Vermont is a reality. Our SAORI “un”-organization has held 2 major conferences I was able to attend, in California and in Georgia. Having students in the studio is energizing. Music always makes things better: singing in an *a cappella* group and church choir, playing piano for our church, auditioning and being accepted into the Blanche Moyses Chorale to perform glorious Bach, just making music with friends around the piano. Husband Peter Nadolny is my best friend and helpmeet. Son Bret Nelson is our right hand man. Standard Poodle Mompou is aging along with us, keeping us amused along the way. So while cancer is a part of my life now, with continuing chemo and its side-effects, I try to seize each day and make it the best day ever. (No, I don’t always succeed!)



Blackberry Slump SAORI Weaving Studio

On October 18, 2013, my life took an unexpected turn when Paul, my husband of 40 years, was pronounced dead at the St. Luke's Mid America Heart Institute in Kansas City, MO. On that day, he was to give a paper at the annual conference of the International Society for Luso-Spanish Humor Studies (ISLHHS) which he had founded in 1995.

After years of hiking, camping, and traveling independently throughout the Americas, Caribbean, Europe, New Zealand, Australia, and China, we decided to take a road trip into the American Southwest with a stay in Kansas City on the way home. I wasn't prepared to face this crisis so unexpectedly and so far from Pennsylvania. I am deeply grateful to family, friends, the church, and a caring psychotherapist who helped me learn how to be a single woman again. Not of course, an 'uncommon' woman; I know that I share this status with many classmates.

I still live in the 1925 semidetached home we purchased in West Chester, PA. It's strange to write about our travels in the only house we ever owned. Although I haven't traveled as much as I did with Paul, I have been to Hawaii for the annual ISLHHS conference, to Texas for a Peace Corps Iran Association reunion, and to Alaska on a Road Scholar trip. Last August, I went on safari to Kenya and this summer, I'm taking a Road Scholar cruise to Norway with my sister Mimi ('52) and George, her husband of 62 years. I keep active with church ministries, a hiking club, writing, gardening and knitting. I am a member of our neighborhood association and the MHC Philadelphia Book Club.

You can read about my travels on: [www.blogger.com.2015 Kenyan safari](http://www.blogger.com.2015%20Kenyan%20safari). This is also linked to [www.blogger.com.travel aJENNda](http://www.blogger.com.travel%20aJENNda) which describes our earlier adventures.



or.

Jennifer Bagster-Collins Seaver

# BARBARA BALDWIN MILLER

## “BABBIE”



Babbie and Ludlow  
Lucy and Phoebe



Laura-Clarke-Elizabeth  
OUR KIDS



Lucy-Phoebe-Maggie-Lily-Eliza  
Our CA grand-girls



Laura-Emily-Jack-Michael Bland  
Emmy's High School Graduation 2015  
Richmond, VA



Eliza-Paco-Lily-Elizabeth Keville  
Christmas 2015  
Piedmont, CA



Lucy-Katy-Phoebe-Clarke-Maggie Miller  
At the Golden Gate Bridge 2015  
Living in Larkspur, CA

In the last five years, a lot has happened to me that did not happen in prior years and also, much was happily repetitive. The saddest part was the death of my sister in March 2013. She was 3 years younger than I am and lived only 2 miles away from me in Philadelphia. She was widowed in 2000 and her kids lived out of town so Ludlow and I became her first line of defense against her terrible glioblastoma cancer. She lived with it for 5 years and it wasn't until the last year that she went to Assisted Living. It was a very tough 5 years for all of us.

Then Ludlow and I made the big decision to move out of our wonderful home of 42 years and away from where I had grown up, to California!! We came all the way across the country to a new retirement community in Pleasanton, CA near San Francisco, where we will be taken care of for the rest of our days. We are enjoying a carefree life full of many fun and interesting activities and lots of new friends, while also having the chance to be with our west coast children and grandchildren who live practically around the corner! It's a wonderful life! And we're so looking forward to my 55<sup>th</sup> reunion---see you then!

Dear classmates,

I have fond nostalgic memories of my two years at Mount Holyoke 1957-1958 & 1958-1959.

My education continued at University of Minnesota. After graduation, I worked as a social worker.

My life continued in St. Paul and I married Paul Devitt and had three children. He worked at Minnesota Mining in the international division.

In 1984, Bob's job was transferred to Austin, Texas, and we moved the family. What a culture shock! People called us Yankees and did not understand our accents. We live in the Hill Country and enjoy the beauty and wild animals: Deer, raccoons, coyotes, and foxes.

The children went to private school and I was busy on the board and raising money, as well as volunteering. We belonged to a nice club so we could play tennis, golf and swim.

In 2004, my husband became ill with a neurological disease and was bedridden before he died in 2007. The next few years were lonely.

In 2010, I met a widower who was a retired architect from New York. He had travelled all over Europe on an architectural grant, and designed many building in the U.S. After a hear, we decided to get married on a cruise to Europe on the Princess. (Our children were invited if they could afford it).

We have had a wonderful four years together and have had a great cruise every year. Now we are very busy with seven grandchildren, varying from ages of fifteen years to six month-old twins.

Unfortunately, the twins were born 3 months premature, and had severe digestive problems requiring surgery. When they were born, they were two lbs. each! One twin had a brain-bleed, but they each now weigh eleven lbs. each, but one of the twins will be handicapped. We help as much as we can and so do the other grandparents.

Jack and I are okay, but have walking difficulties and use canes. Sorry we cannot make it to the reunion. I look forward to the book. Happy reunion!

-Diane Bement Devitt-Kushner



Frannie / Fran Blair

As I look back over the past five years, I find that very little has changed. I have had a knee replaced, received two intraocular lens implants, slowed down a bit due to arthritis, but still do pretty much the same things as before. I am very active politically, and do lots of organizing and campaigning for Democratic candidates from the local to the national level; I will be giving up my twenty-year position as Precinct Committee Officer next month to a younger neighbor (age 63), but will remain greatly involved. I feel the current political situation is poisonous, and refuse to stop fighting.

I am now three months into a two-year stint as Senior Warden (Chair) of my Episcopal church's Vestry, after a one-year hiatus following a two-year stint as chair of our Buildings and Grounds Committee. Our new Priest-in-Charge asked me to do it, and I didn't feel right refusing. I am now easing out of other responsibilities and practice saying "No, I can't" to my mirror several times a day.

I do continue to enjoy substitute teaching 2 – 3 days a week for the Steilacoom School District, although I no longer do kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade; I find those kids require a kind of energy I don't have any more. By now, almost all the students in the district know me, and I know which teachers leave good lesson plans or have the class from Hell, so I can pick and choose, as jobs are posted on the computer.

Putting together this reunion booklet turned out to be more of a challenge than I expected because of the decision to send it out electronically, which I have never done before. The learning curve was steep at the last, and I called on a number of friends with expertise for help.

My adult children have turned out to be wonderfully interesting people, and I love our times together. My daughter and son are runners and outdoors people, and I cheer them on. My son and his wife had a third daughter two years ago; unfortunately, they live too far away to visit often.

It will be fun to see all of 1961 who come to reunion; I always make new friends to add to the old and wonder why our paths never crossed when we were undergraduates.

## MARY LYNN CAFFREY BERRY

The last five years - for me, at least, have been really enjoyable. Like all of us, I assume, I've (helplessly?) seen friends and family deal with major issues, but for me and my immediate family, no complaints! Superstorm Sandy did "encourage" me to give up the Jersey Shore house, and I no longer rent in Princeton, but now I've added a sweet Berkshire condo, close to my Williamstown family. I'll never, of course, abandon my north Jersey hang-out (yes, same town I lived in while at Mount Holyoke!) I've decided that "dilettante" is not a dirty word - I value the luxury of time and energy to flip from book to book - museum to museum - even country to country. In January, I was in London for two weeks, seeing fourteen plays - and most were memorable!

The family front:

- David - still working for the Soros Justice Initiative Foundation - Daughters: Jane, freshman at Washington University (hello, Jean Castleman), Nora, high school Junior
- Wendy - celebrating 10 years with Malaria No More - Non-profit providing bed-nets in Africa. Husband, Gage McWeeny, English Department, Williams College (just published/sure to be best-seller: "The Comfort of Strangers" - on four Victorian authors). Children: Clara and Charlie - 13 this Reunion Weekend; Lucy - 10; Nico - 4
- Lesley - Massage Therapist (and world traveler) based in San Francisco - and such fun to visit!

I really look forward to visiting with all of you in May.



Past reunion with Ginger outside the CI



With Williamstown Family

**Elizabeth Carpenter Listerman****Goal for the next 5 years**

While I feel helpless to fix the problems of the world, I feel just as helpless figuring out what I should do in the next 5 years and beyond! Should I move? And where? For now I enjoy the option of my condo on Cape Cod or my condo in Cleveland. I shall listen and learn from all of you!

**Concerns of the last 5 years**

I am concerned over several issues facing us – our political system, global warming, ISIS and terror threats, the growing diversity divide economically and racial issues.

**Activities**

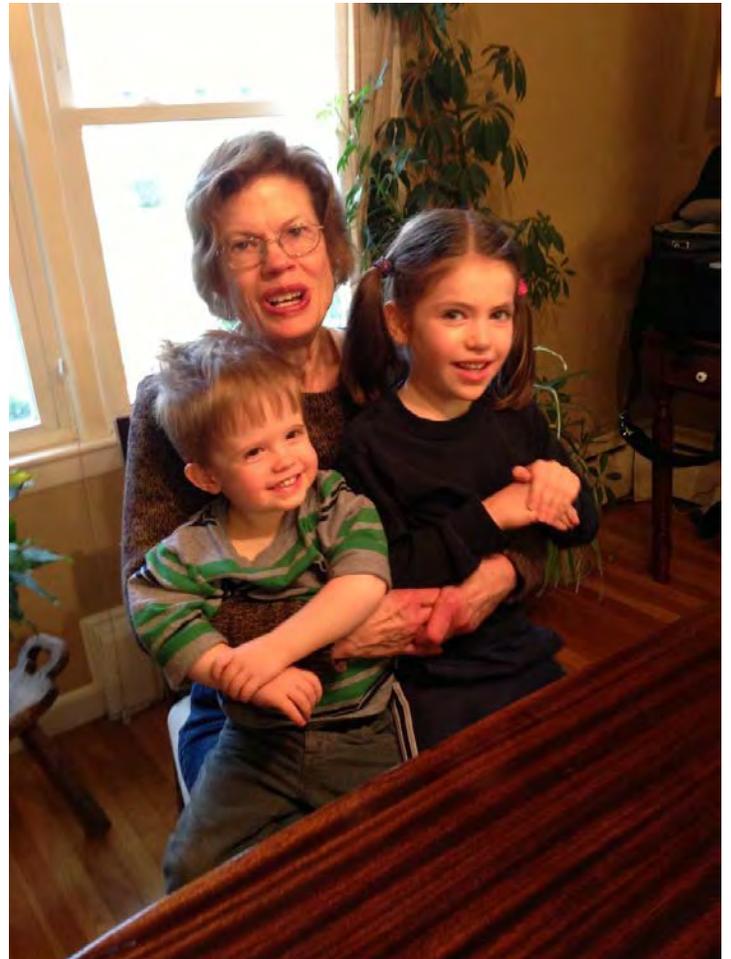
I enjoy and keep busy doing many of the same activities as all of us – reading and book groups, volunteering, drawing and watercolor painting, some traveling. I still curl but not competitively; and the latest, is a foray into Mah Jongg, which is a hugely popular game on Cape Cod and has caught on here in Cleveland.

**Greatest joy**

My family, of course – my two daughters and 3 grandchildren, ages, 2, 5 and 8. They give me the best excuse to spend as much time on Cape Cod so as to be near them.

**Dreams and aspirations**

- To enjoy life to its fullest
- To keep learning and trying new things
- To strive to leave the world a better place



Bobbi Childs Sampson

How could five years have flown by so quickly?

I treasure our Reunion Book of 2011 and its news of each of you. I wonder if there is much to add. For my family, these five years have been good and kind. My spouse, Chris Hamilton, and I are healthy. Our two children are engaged with their lives, families and careers. Our three grandchildren continue to amaze and delight us --- and occasionally try our patience. Our picture with them is from the summer of 2014.

We've been fortunate to have had some good travels. Our son, Sam, led us on a family-only Grand Canyon rafting trip, a "thank you" for introducing him to this amazing wildness canyon some 25 year ago. We've made several trips to Lebanon and a couple to Haiti as part of my NGO Board responsibilities. The highlight, however, was a three-week personally-planned private trip to Iran in 2014. We were warmly welcomed by all we met, dazzled by 6000 years of history, and delighted to discover how remarkably similar Iranians' hopes and dreams are to ours. We are enormously relieved that the Iran Nuclear Deal was accepted, and believe there is much to be gained from Iran's presence among the community of nations.

Perhaps our most profound yet subtle change in these five years is one of perspective. We have a sense that we must treasure all that life gives us, that our years go by with ever-increasing speed, and that our time will not go on forever. We know we have been fortunate; and we know that small kindnesses, long friendships, abiding curiosity and caring values mark the happiness of these years. I keep a Jane Kenyon poem on my desk as a gentle reminder:

I got out of bed  
on two strong legs.  
It might have been  
otherwise. I ate  
cereal, sweet  
milk, ripe flawless  
peach. It might  
have been otherwise.  
I took the dog uphill  
to the birch wood.  
All morning I did  
the work I love ...  
But one day, I know,  
it will be otherwise."



All of this is why it will be so good to see you at reunion! ~ Bobbi

Comment for Mount Holyoke 55<sup>th</sup> Reunion.

I left Mt. Holyoke after three wonderful years that have affected me ever since.

After finishing my undergraduate degree at Trinity University, San Antonio, TX, and a Masters and then a Specialists degrees in School Psychology at the University of Nebraska, Omaha, I practiced as a School Psychologist for 17 years and then changed careers to start a relocation management company working with large corporations to relocate their key assets, their families.

Today with close to 400 employees, NEI Global Relocation relocates approximately 14,000 families annually; our headquarters is in Omaha; our satellite offices are in Singapore and Geneva and our 176 clients include major corporations in every industry.

My life these days continues to include a full time job, travel for business and for pleasure, lots of community involvement and our family – the best of all in my life is my husband Sandy my chief mentor/collaborator/ supporter, our three children and nine grandchildren.

At some point I'll have to face retirement – after all when you are older than some of your employees' grandmothers maybe it's time.

Kate Clooney Dodge