Profile of Mary E. (Betsy) Stanley, Class of 1970, Mount Holyoke College

“ Never in my wildest dreams did I expect to proclaim that the happiest years of my life so far have been my 50’s and 60’s. Rearing children, continuing a demanding career, divorcing, caring for elderly parents, establishing my own home and having a new relationship have been challenges, all quite enriching.”

In her own words, Mary has summed up many of her reflections on her life since her years at MHC. A political science major, she has had a very full life as a US Magistrate Judge for the twenty years before her retirement, having gone directly to law school after MHC at the University of Virginia. Her favorite course at MHC was a history course with Professor Trout on the history of women in America.

She also noted that in her view while a graduate school degree may be needed for some professions, an MHC education will provide all graduates with the ability to savor the richness of life in a meaningful way. She takes a long walk each day and pursues her hobbies of gardening, cooking, crossword puzzles and needlework, and is a happy granny with children and grandchildren whom she is able to see often. After many years of hearings and mediations on misdemeanors, bonds, arraignments, social security and civil right disputes, the quiet of a beautiful morning is a just reward for her many years of good, dedicated public service. Equally as much fun is the coincidence that she met her partner of 13 years, Clarke VanDervort, when she was asked to mentor him as a judicial nominee. What fun when work and play lead us to happiness and a good balance in life!

