

# MOUNT HOLYOKE CLUB OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA NEWSLETTER

**FALL 2020**

## MEET YOUR BOARD



**Joyce Gleason, '69, President**  
Biology Major

I had a long career as a science educator. I moved from Massachusetts to Punta Gorda 15 years ago and became interested in the study of parliamentary procedure. Please join the Club Board--we have openings! ! It's been very rewarding to work with this fine group of women. Email me: [mhcswfl@gmail.com](mailto:mhcswfl@gmail.com)

**Leslie Farrand, '77, VP**

I was an English Major which led me into advertising, hoping to become a copywriter. From a start in TV Production I moved into Account Management/Client Liaison. My favorites were the airline/hospitality accounts, which required extensive travel! I still love travel and living in Sarasota is almost as good as a vacation! I love to sail and enjoy most water-related activities, as well as the Arts, gourmet dining and literature.



**Diane Elliott, class of 1969, Treasurer**

Religion major. I moved from Connecticut to Florida in 1975 to obtain my Masters in Gerontology at the University of South Florida. I planned to return to Connecticut, but I am still here 45 years later! I retired 6 years ago after a career of over 30 years in a variety of management positions in the Pinellas County Clerk of Courts Office. I love to travel and enjoy socializing with friends.



**Sue Graham Simpson '68, Secretary & Past President**

Sociology Major

I am the proud grandmother of 6, a retired elementary teacher, past president of this wonderful club for 7 years, and co-chair of my 55th MHC Reunion in May 2023. I hope to do more traveling soon, continue to discover more about my family tree, and try, every time I play a round of golf, to make a hole in one 🏌️



**MEET YOUR BOARD, continued on page 2**

WEBSITE <http://new.alumnae.mtholyoke.edu/swfl/>

EMAIL [mhcswfl@gmail.com](mailto:mhcswfl@gmail.com)

**MEET YOUR BOARD, continued**



**Elizabeth Russell '70, Program Chair**

Art History Major.

MBA Webster University, St. Louis, MO.

Career spent as a Merchandise Manager for Brown Shoe Co. (renamed Caleres); President and Founder of Pine Valley Spring Water Co., an entrepreneurial women-owned (WBE) start-up bottled water company, 5-gallon and small case goods; supporter of St. Louis community and philanthropic activities.

**Maria Mandler '74, Social Chair**

Romance Languages Major.

After getting an MBA from Kellogg (Northwestern), I became an international banker. I have enjoyed getting to know Mount Holyoke alumnae in cities where my family and I have lived, including London, Hong Kong and now Sarasota. For something little known: I am a long-time beginning student of flamenco dance.



**Pat Brodt '55, Membership Chair**

American Studies Major

After graduation spent 8 years in New York City as admin. asst. to VP of Sports at CBS. Perk of job was attending many events we televised.

Now widowed, have recently moved to retirement home in Venice where like everyone we are pretty isolated during this pandemic, but they do have great chocolate cake!



**Wendy Hanafee, MD '84 Admissions Rep**

Biochemistry Major.

Wendy serves as the liaison between the Mount Holyoke Office of Admission and prospective students in our region. Contact her at the email below if you know any students that may have an interest in the College.



**Georgia Walters '70, Communications Chair**

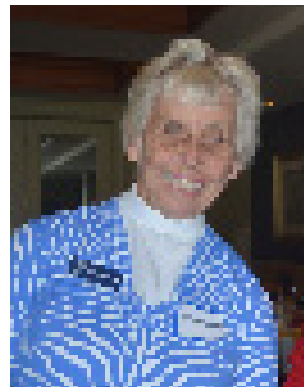
Math Major.

I parlayed my math major into a career as a CPA working in large part with not-for-profits, and now I'm even doing tax returns for grandchildren. Love gardening with native Florida plants and sketching anything that happens by.



**The Reverend Maggie Gat '61, Nominating Committee Chair**

Economics & Sociology Major. After spending my childhood in the Andes Mountains, I entered MHC from Little Rock Central HS. My very circuitous route from there led to my position at the MHC admissions office and to a M.Div from Yale. I believe giving your time as a volunteer is incumbent on all of us.







## **SOME UNUSUAL MOUNTAIN DAY HISTORY**

**by Sue Simpson '68**

Leaves turning from green to vivid red and yellow signal that Mountain Day, Mount Holyoke's beloved and oldest tradition, soon will occur. Curious about the history of this event, I contacted Leslie Fields, Head of Archives and Special Collections at Mount Holyoke. Leslie provided me with links to several websites containing historical Mountain Day photographs and printed materials. Here are some of the interesting facts I learned:

The first Mountain Day was held in June 1838, 7 months after Mount Holyoke Female Seminary opened its doors on November 8, 1837. At dawn on that June day, students and instructors left campus in horse drawn carriages for an all-campus hike up to the summit of Mount Holyoke. The hike began at the base of the mountain, and it was challenging walking up the narrow, rocky trail in long dresses. After reaching the top of the mountain, everyone relaxed outside the Mount Holyoke Summit House, an 18 by 24 foot cabin built in 1821. For several hours students admired stunning views of the Connecticut River Valley, identified plants, trees, and rock formations, sang songs, and even attempted to see the town of Amherst through a telescope kept in the Summit House. Following a delightful morning outside, all were back on campus by lunchtime.

From 1838 to 1893 Mountain Day was a spring event. Initially the college year ran from November to June. Following the lengthening of the college year, it was decided in 1893 to move Mountain Day to "some beautiful day in October" and this fall date tradition continues. During the Civil War years, Mountain Day was not celebrated. It was also cancelled in 1896 when a devastating fire on September 27, 1896 completely destroyed the original Seminary Hall building. Seminary Hall was Mount Holyoke's 4-story main structure containing not only classrooms, but also all dorm rooms, the library, dining hall, kitchen, and even a gymnasium. Mountain Day was held during World War II; however many students, instead of going on a hike or bike ride, spent the day outdoors picking apples or digging up potatoes to help local farmers harvest their crops.

From early in the twentieth century until 1929 there were actually 2 Mountain Days for the senior class. The first Mountain Day was the traditional fall all-campus event. The second Mountain Day was a private senior celebration held the day before graduation in June. On Senior Mountain Day, seniors in their caps and gowns were transported to the Mount Holyoke Summit House which was now a small hotel. The soon-to-be graduates were serenaded by their sophomore "little sisters" as they left campus. At the Summit House, seniors enjoyed a special class dinner, read letters written to them, reflected on their years at Mount Holyoke, and spent the night together as a class one last time in nightgowns made by underclasswomen.

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***SOME UNUSUAL MOUNTAIN DAY HISTORY, continued***

Food is mentioned in many of the archive records. The Mountain Day picnic on June 29, 1844 featured biscuits, cookies, gingerbread, and cheese. In 1851 dried beef and biscuits were served. Over the years, sandwiches and bag lunches became popular as more students started spending Mountain Day exploring other outdoor sites like Mount Tom, Quabbin Reservoir, the Notch, and Sturbridge Village. In the mid-1960s, I do recall the Outing Club serving cider and donuts at the summit of Mount Holyoke.

**When did the tradition of having ice cream begin? I'm not sure. It is my hope that someone reading this article knows and will share the information by emailing mhcswfl@gmail.com. Georgia Walters '70, our Communications Chair, will then publish the ice cream answer in our next newsletter. Georgia and I would also like you to share your fondest Mountain Day memories with our club. What did you do? Where did you go? Were there any college rules you had to follow? Please let us know.**

Enjoy this year's virtual Mountain Day by having some ice cream at 6:37 p.m. on the designated date. Hopefully many of you will also be connecting with other alumnae in our club Zoom Mountain Day event hosted by Maria Mandler '74.

**Happy Mountain Day!**



**WELCOME TO NEW ALUMS!**

A warm welcome to new alumnae in the area or alums joining us for the first time in the last year: **Linda Ader '60, Susan Greene '63, Andrea Sweeny '71, Lisa der Mateosian '74, Nancy Evans '78, Arcinee Hemiston '80, Karen Molinaroli '91, Deborah McDermott '92, Ruth Betances '00, and Sasha Braverman '18.** Sasha attended from Riverview High School in Sarasota. Let us know if we missed you!

**PROGRAM SCHEDULE For the Remainder of the 2020-2021 Season**  
**All events subject to change**

**Friday, November 13, 2020 ~ Orchid Show**

Selby Gardens, Sarasota. 10 am.

See page 5 of this Newsletter.

**Tuesday, December 8, 2020 ~ Virtual Event**

**2020 Presidential Election Recap**

Dr. Susan MacManus, Speaker.

Hosted by the Yale Club of the Suncoast.

See page 6 of this Newsletter.

**February 2021**

Branch Tropical Gardens in Sarasota ~ Private Tour

Optional Lunch afterwards at Sunnyside Cafe, Hungarian Restaurant, Sarasota

**April 2021**

Marietta Museum of Art and Whimsy, Sarasota ~ Private Tour

***Details for 2021 Programs to follow in later Newsletters.***

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 13, 2020, 10 AM  
The 45th Anniversary Orchid Show ~ In-Person  
Marie Selby Botanical Garden  
*"Women Breaking the Glasshouse Ceiling"*

*Optional Lunch afterwards Outdoors at 11:30 am  
Selby House Cafe, paid individually*



As the only botanical garden in the world dedicated to the display and study of orchids, bromeliads, gesneriads and ferns, epiphytes, and tropical plants, Selby Gardens hosts an orchid show each fall focusing on different themes.

This year marks the 45th anniversary of the official opening of Marie Selby Botanical Gardens. To celebrate, the annual Orchid Show will honor the founder, Marie Selby, and highlight the accomplishments of the many notable women who have built on her legacy and helped to make Selby Gardens home to the best scientifically documented collection of orchids in the world.

The Orchid Show will combine a spectacular display of living orchids in the Tropical Conservatory with an impressive exhibition of orchid treasures from Selby Gardens' library and preserved collections in the Museum of Botany and the Arts. To these will be added a stunning display of orchids and roses at the Selby House, marking the 100th anniversary of William and Marie Selby's purchase of the property. The rose was one of Marie Selby's favorite flowers and also a symbol of the Women's Suffrage Movement.

**COVID-19:** All participants must familiarize themselves with Selby's COVID-19 policies by typing: <https://selby.org/status-of-selby-gardens-and-coronavirus/> into your browser or search for "Selby Gardens Updates on Coronavirus Impacts." Masks are required, there will be sanitizing stations inside the Orchid Show event, and social distancing will be strongly enforced.

**Directions to the Selby Gardens:** Selby Gardens is located near downtown Sarasota at 1534 Mound St. at the northwest corner of Mound and S. Palm Ave. Limited free, on-site parking can be accessed from S. Palm Avenue or from S. Orange Avenue--arrive a bit early!

From I-75 heading south from Tampa area: Take exit 210 onto SR780 Fruitville Rd. Turn right onto SR780 and head west for 5.1 mi. Turn left on US-301 N Washington Blvd. and head south for .7 mi. Turn right onto Mound St. (US-41). In .5 mi turn left onto S Palm Ave. Parking lot 1/2 block on the left.

From I-75 heading north from North Port area: Take exit 207 onto SR758 Bee Ridge. Turn left onto Bee Ridge Rd and head west for 5.1mi. Turn right onto US-41 Tamiami Trl. and head north for 2.1 mi. Keep left onto Mound St. (still US-41). In .6 mi turn left onto S Palm Ave. Parking lot 1/2 block on the left.

Show is \$18 per person. If you are a member of Selby Gardens, entry is free. Annual Club dues are \$20, and may be paid with your reservation or in person at any of the Club's events. Send reservations and payments to club Treasurer Diane Elliott at 10594 Alvarado Ct, Seminole, FL 33772, (phone 727-642-5354). Checks payable to "Mount Holyoke Club of SW FL."

Guests are welcome; just indicate name(s) on the form. **R.S.V.P. by Wednesday, November 11th.**

**Note: Don't have a printer? Just replicate the info below on paper & mail it in with your payment.**

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Friday, November 13, 2020, 10 AM: Selby Garden Orchid Show  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Preferred Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Guest(s) Names(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Orchid Show \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ 18 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Orchid Show-Selby Member \_\_\_\_\_ @ Free \_\_\_\_\_ 0  
2020-2021 Club Dues @ \$ 20 \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to : Diane Elliott, Treas.  
10594 Alvarado Ct  
Seminole, FL 33772

**Note: Lunch afterwards paid individually.**

- ☐ I am new to the Club (attending for the first or second time).
- ☐ My contact information has changed. (Use reverse side to provide changes. Thank you!).





**VIRTUAL EVENT via Zoom**  
**Presidential Election Recap**  
**Tuesday, December 8, 2020 12:30 PM**  
**Susan MacManus, Professor of Political Science**  
*Hosted by the Yale Club of the Suncoast*

The 2020 election is over. The voters have made their choices. Dr. Susan MacManus, Distinguished Professor Emerita, University of South Florida, will share her observations and present some facts about this contentious election. As in recent past elections, Florida was a key battleground state both major political parties focused on winning. Dr. MacManus, a native Floridian, is a nationally recognized expert on Florida politics. She has been frequently quoted in national newspapers and seen on TV as a political analyst. Our thanks to the Yale Club of the Suncoast for the invitation to attend their virtual meeting and hear Dr. MacManus's analysis of the 2020 election.



**Dr. Susan MacManus**

Socialization and Yale Club business begins on Zoom at **12:30 pm**. Be sure to enter the Zoom access no later than 12:50 pm. **Talk and Q&A will be 1-2 pm**. Discussion may continue after 2 pm among the participants. **Zoom link will be emailed to you closer to the date, so make sure you provide an email address for each participant.**

Cost is \$5 per person, payable by check to **Mount Holyoke Club of SW FL** (see form below). **Please respond by December 4th**. This is an extremely popular event and sells out quickly.

Annual dues are \$20, and may be paid with your reservation or at any of the Club's in-person events. Send reservations and payments via mail to Diane Elliott at 10594 Alvarado Ct, Seminole, FL 33772 (phone 727-642-5354).

Guests are welcome; just indicate name(s) and email(s) on the form.

*Note: Don't have a printer? Just replicate the info below on a piece of paper and mail it in with your payment.*



Tuesday, December 8, 2020, 12:30 PM: Presidential Election Recap ~ Virtual Event

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) Names(s): \_\_\_\_\_

2020-2021 Club Dues @ \$20 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Fee for Yale Zoom Event \_\_\_\_ @ \$ 5 \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to : Diane Elliott, Treas.  
 10594 Alvarado Ct  
 Seminole, FL 33772

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We joined The Florida Studio Theatre on August 20, 2020 to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Ratification of the 19th Amendment. The presentation, originally scheduled to take place in the theatre, was relocated to a Zoom event.

We heard from several inspiring speakers, including award-winning journalist Charlayne Hunter-Gault, Sarasota Mayor Jen Ahearn-Koch and Suffragist Project Director Kate Alexander as well as many accomplished artists. The Reform movement took over 72 years and revealed a radical political movement of sheer genius. Today 68 million women vote -that's 51% of the US population. Today women help shape policies and lives. (Mayor Ahearn-Koch)

The first woman to speak in public was Maria Stewart In the early 1800's. This was an act of great bravery and courage, as women were still meant only to be seen and not heard. "Women were not allowed to choose their own husbands, nor to handle money, much less manage property or business. If their husbands passed away, they received nothing--no property, no money; they weren't even allowed to keep their children." (Kate Alexander)

Black women were very active in the movement, so imagine their disappointment when they, along with Native Americans and Asians, were excluded from this new privilege, as they were not US citizens! Charlayne Hunter-Gault talked about what it was like to be the first Black student at the University of Georgia in 1961. Early in her life she already was preparing to be a servant of the people. She went on to become a very well-known journalist, as well as an excellent performer—of which we enjoyed a small taste!

There were also many segments of singing, and role-playing of significant historical contributors. The event wound down with Kate Alexander lighting candles to honor the suffragists and closed with an inspiring statement, "Let Us Go into the Light."

-----by Leslie Farrand '77

## The 1619 Project

### The 1619 Project is the College's Common Read for 2020

*The 1619 Project* was published in *The New York Times Magazine* in 2019 with the goal of re-examining the legacy of slavery in the United States and timed for the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in Virginia.

Mount Holyoke College's Common Read for 2020 will be selected prose essays from *The New York Times Magazine's* ongoing initiative, *The 1619 Project*. Discussions around the Common Read are the first intellectual dialogue based on a shared text that new students have at Mount Holyoke, as they start to learn how to express themselves about complex issues while building community. They will continue the discussion into their fall classes and throughout the year.

The written essays are the focus for the Common Read. MHCSWFL members can learn more about the Common Read by typing "Mount Holyoke College 2020 Common Read" in your web browser. Search through and you will be able to access a PDF of the August 18, 2019 *New York Times Magazine*.

#### CONNECT THROUGH FACEBOOK!

Did you know we belong to the "Mount Holyoke Alumnae: West Central Florida" Facebook group started by **Jeanne Egan '87**? It's more than 80 members strong and it's a great way to receive and share up-to-date information with other members. If you are on Facebook and would like to join it, search for the group via the name in quotes above and ask to join.

It's a "closed" group which includes:

- 1) Alumnae living in Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, Polk, Manatee, and Sarasota counties,
- 2) Students/future alumnae from these counties, and
- 3) Current members of the **Mount Holyoke Club of Southwest Florida!**

