

**Hollins University
Alumnae Reunion 2008
May 31, 2008**

**25th Reunion Remarks
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Class of 1983**

“In My Next Life”

My mother used to always say “In my next life...” and then fill in the blank with something that she fully intended to do in her “next life.” In my next life, I am going to be one of those fantastic scrap-bookers who documents every part of their life in a colorful and organized fashion. My first scrapbook will be about Hollins.

I will start with a page about before we came to Hollins. We were children born in the early 1960s. Our parents had to wait to hear “It’s a girl!” when we were born rather than have an ultra sound to tell them before the fact. We were put to bed on our tummies in cribs painted in lead-based paint. We rode bikes without wearing helmets, had no idea what a car seat was and drank water from a garden hose rather than a plastic bottle. We ate white bread and drank Kool-aid and Tang. We played outside ALL day with the kids in the neighborhood. We came home only when it got dark and we were ready for supper because no one could reach us before then. Our first decade or so saw the first man on the moon, war images on T.V., and that groundbreaking television show, “The Brady Bunch.”

Somehow, we made it through all of this and then got accepted to Hollins. We arrived “green” and ready to learn.

But back to my scrap book. I would have to dedicate a page to those nervous few weeks as freshman. We signed up for classes, found our way around campus, and watched what was happening with “Luke and Laura” religiously. We walked across the street to Kay’s Cabin to buy the preppiest clothes that we could find. We showed up at the dining hall at 4:30 in the afternoon

for dinner and we never missed the ice cream at lunch on Fridays, even if a road trip was waiting.

Just when we thought we had gotten the hang of it all there was Tinker Day. Yeah, sure, a day off from classes to climb a mountain at the crack of dawn, dress up in wacky costumes, sing silly songs and eat fried chicken and cake. And we loved it! Now we were becoming part of the Hollins community. We were the Class of 1983 living in the “Sweet Virginia Breeze.” That year the “Miracle on Ice” happened at the Lake Placid Olympics, CNN started broadcasting, and a letter home cost 15 cents to mail.

We knew that “Women Who Are Going Places really DID start at Hollins!”

By sophomore year, we settled in and took our place on Front Quad. We learned to yell “flushing” if someone was taking a shower. Some went to Paris and some stayed. When a number of us found ourselves on campus during Fancy Dress, we started our own tradition with the theme of “Come in Your Best Polyester.” We pulled “all nighters” trying to bring our GPA’s up and popped popcorn in giant electric poppers. We then ate it with a can of Tab as Diet Coke had not been invented yet. MTV started to broadcast that year and IBM introduced the first PC. Lady Diana married Prince Charles that summer. She was our age so we felt a special kinship with her.

During our junior year, Dr. Brownlee came to Hollins and we adored her. A large group of us went to London and when the Queen waved to us during the opening of Parliament, I thought we had died and gone to heaven. We declared majors, had ring night and came to appreciate all that we have here. A nurturing community that gave us the freedom to try and try again if we needed to. We were beginning to look outside our own world and see the possibilities beyond the gates of Hollins. USA Today started that year, Time’s “Man of the Year” was the computer, and “Late Night with David Letterman” premiered.

I would have to dedicate a page to the many professors who helped us to grow. They challenged us, laughed with us, and encouraged us to think outside of the box. They had expectations that

we tried hard to meet and surpass. There were also the many Hollins staff who took care of us. Bertie and Cecelia in the bookstore, Mr. Wrobel in the dining hall, June in the laundry, Mr. Creger who kept us safe, and Channing Howe, the treasurer, who we called “How Charming.”

Our senior year saw us taking over the apartments as we took that first step away from campus - a baby step, mind you, but a step. We savored our last Tinker Day, wrote our senior theses, and played Ms. Pac Man to relieve the stress. We cried on Hundredth Night that the journey might be coming to an end. We wrote resumes and watched the last episode of M*A*S*H. We paid no attention when some guy named Arnold Schwarzenegger became a citizen and when Phillips introduced something called a compact disc. We had no idea the impact of a new car being sold called a “minivan.” We listened closely as Wyndham Robertson, Class of 1958, spoke at our graduation. We drove out the gates as alumnae and our lives would never be the same. How would we ever find another place that would build us up, challenge us, and feed us so well emotionally?

Now we flash forward to 25 years later. How did we get through Hollins? We were truly “old school” before “old school” was cool. We had no CDs, cell phones, DVDs, PCs, lap tops, e-mail, Internet or iPods. Our notion of the chat room was actually sitting in a room and chatting!

We got through Hollins because on this campus we learned to persevere, to never run away from a challenge, and that the laughs we shared with these friends would last a lifetime. We gained confidence to become leaders in our own communities and jobs. We took a part of Hollins with us and still use it to shape our daily lives. We may have arrived here “green” but when we left we were “gold.”

And all these years later we know that Women Who Are Going Places Really Do Start at Hollins – and then they RETURN!

“In my next life” . . . , I may not be one of the people who make scrap books, but I do know that I will be from Hollins.