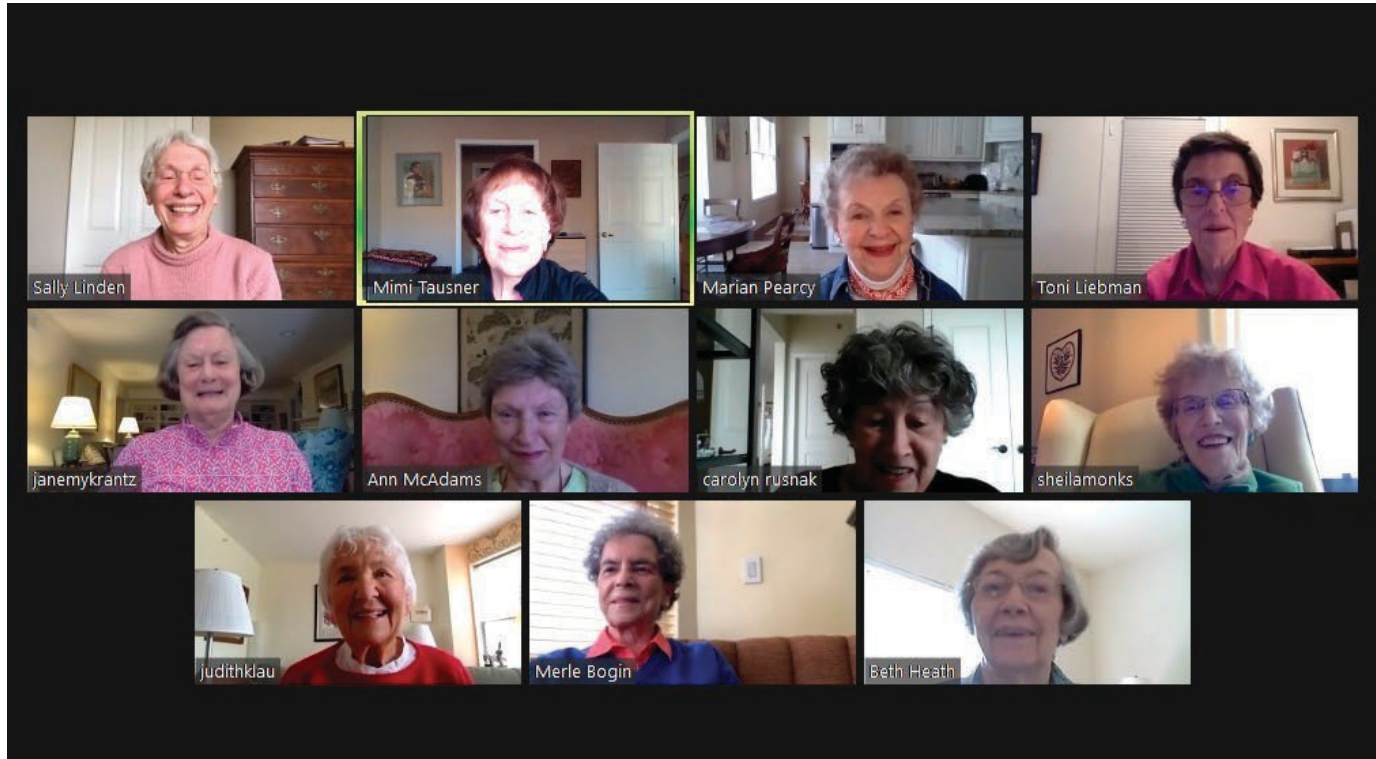


# *Scarlet Letters*

*Number 16 June 2020*



*Screen Shot of participants in the Wellesley 1956 Mini-Reunion, May 7, 2020*

## **Comments, Contributions, Inquiries Invited**

Claudia Lauper Bushman  
claudia.bushman@gmail.com

Sheila Owen Monks  
smonks341@gmail.com

Designed by Jane Nieuwenhuis Baker  
jbaker651@woh.rr.com

Published under the auspices of the  
Wellesley Class of 1956

Sally Blumberg Linden, President  
sallylinden@comcast.net

Toni Holland Liebman, Web Manager  
toelieb@aol.com

## **1956 Mini Reunions**

All of us are feeling unmoored from the world at large as each of us copes with the COVID19 pandemic. So! for the '56 mini reunion this year our class is planning to meet using methods unheard of back in the day. We are doing this using Zoom, a technology some of you are familiar with, others not. Earlier this Spring you should have received an invitation to join in a series of randomly chosen small groups.

That invitation engendered a terrific response and on Thursday, May 7th, we had our first meeting with the first eleven responders, ably hosted by Sally Linden. It was such fun!! Over the next weeks we anticipate having a series of small gatherings as we work through the list. I hope that list will continue

*(continued on page 8)*

## Ann's Art

Here are some pictures of my baskets and jewelry. I made silver jewelry at camp when I was a teenager. Then I studied at The Craft Students League in New York City until I went to London for ten months, where I studied free at the London County Council School of Art. When we came home to a house in Englewood, New Jersey, which we had bought before leaving, we adopted two boys, three years apart. I made almost no jewelry until they eventually grew up and left home. Then I worked at home and went out to craft fairs on weekends.

I sold quite a lot of what I made for what I now see was too little. It was usually an entertaining endeavor. It's hard to describe my work. I made pins, earrings, and necklaces out of silver, bronze, copper, and some gold. I used some semi-precious stones. At an earlier stage I was influenced by fifties and sixties design, Celtic Jewelry, comic strips, and other things that caught my eye.

Fifteen years ago, we moved to a townhouse where I couldn't really use a torch to solder metal. So, I studied basket making at a local arts and craft school. My baskets are mostly made out of rattan in various sizes which I order from a catalog. The rattan has to be wet to be shaped, and it can be dyed. I sometimes use cord made from plant fibers and a little Virginia Creeper, etc. My baskets are based on the styles of the work baskets made by European settlers in this country. They were utilitarian shapes: egg basket, market basket, hen

basket, dough basket, etc. and made with relatively little decoration.

I meet with the so-called "Crones Group" at Starbucks in Englewood, New Jersey, at 8 am every Tuesday. We are mostly artists and very informal, usually talking all at once and across each other. We discuss everything from operations to art shows, from movie plots to husbands, from Polaroid transfer printing to double chins. We exchange tiny gifts, trade books and recipes. Some of us wear costumes on Hallowe'en.

A "crone" is "a withered, witchlike, old woman" according to Webster's College Dictionary (1991). While some of us are more corpulent than withered and others are only middle-aged, we all have wrinkles. The word "crone" came up when we were trying to think of a title for a show we were doing. It stuck. Some group members, who actually are old, prefer the forthright "crone" to "older woman," which is too tactful, or "female senior citizen," which is worse. In fact, most of us think "crone" is funny. Other members hate the word. Still others don't give a damn! We're a contentious group of artists, as you see.

**Ann McGraw Davis**

amcdavis11@hotmail.com









## The Paintings of Joanna Smith Hunt

Jo Smith Hunt taught special education children in Massachusetts for twenty-five years. After her retirement, like so many of us, Jo Hunt pursued a hobby. Hers was painting watercolors, and she excelled at it (watercolor is not easy!). She displayed and sold her works in local arts and crafts stores. Her free-flowing, colorful works reflect her beloved garden as well as her travels. Her excellent advice to her daughter Jolene in our 50th Reunion Book was to always pursue her interests.

If you enjoyed Jo's paintings, please send a message to her husband Will at [johuntann@aol.com](mailto:johuntann@aol.com) and he will see that she gets it.









## Our Cruise

Last February into March, Phil and I took a Viking Cruise Line 900+ passenger ship to the Western Caribbean. From Miami we cruised to Key West, then to Cozumel, Belize, Honduras, Costa Rica, Panama, and Jamaica, seeing Mayan ruins and taking small boat excursions up bays and rivers to look for manatees, monkeys, and other wildlife. Nothing too strenuous. The biggest thrill for me, though, was the Panama Canal.

We approached before sun-up and reached the first set of locks after passing under a beautiful bridge. Entering a lock was a slow process: there's not much room to spare on the sides. We were watching from our cabin's balcony. They use tank-like vehicles on a rail alongside to tow the ship along very gradually. Once inside the lock we stopped and the gate behind the ship was closed and water came in. We slowly rose ten feet or so. Then the gate ahead opened, and we made our way into the next lock—there were three in all, raising us to the level of Gatun Lake.

By this time the sun was well up and we had had breakfast. The ship went well into the lake, out of the main traffic channel, and set anchor within sight of the locks. We remained there until mid-afternoon. The lake is beautiful, dotted with islands and peninsulas; not much sign of habitation. A steady procession of freighters and one cruise ship came by. It's about twenty miles across the lake to

the locks on the Pacific side. We had seen a film on the construction of the Canal—a huge effort costing many lives, largely due to tropical diseases (Yellow Fever). Gatun Lake was created as part of the passageway, from water of pre-existing rivers. But that's another story!

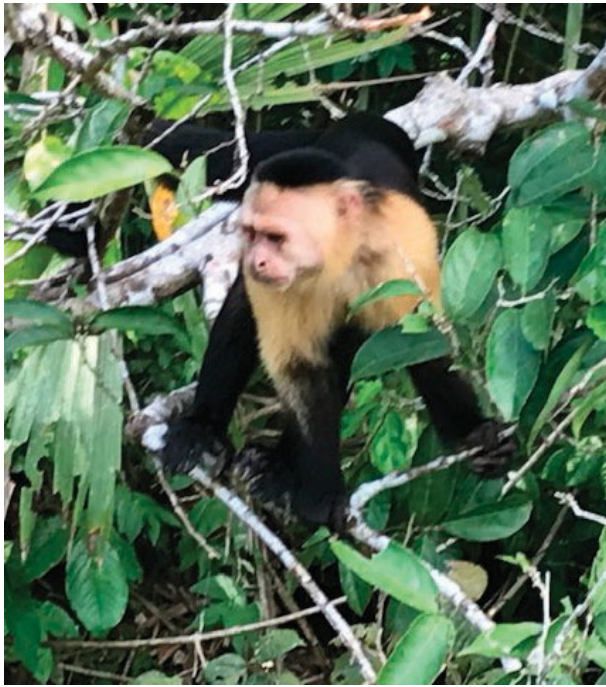
Our return took us back through the same set of locks we had done earlier. We passed three small (30-40 ft.) sailboats and marveled at the idea of doing it in one's own boat!

The night was spent docked at the coastal city of Colon. Next day we were bussed to a small marina on Gatun Lake where our group boarded a pair of small boats for a two-hour ride looking for wildlife. A pair of Capuchin monkeys were very bold, and one actually hopped aboard looking for food—he had obviously been fed by tourists before, a practice discouraged by our tour guide.

From Colon we headed to Jamaica and then back to Miami, arriving the morning of March 6th. We had heard news of the corona virus in China while we were cruising. But it was early enough (just!) for us to enter the United States without difficulty. Our ship was scheduled to sail back to its home port in Norway for some maintenance work. We're wondering how long it will be before cruising will begin again and thanking our lucky stars we didn't get marooned aboard somewhere!

**Claire Wilkinson Brooks**  
pabrooks31@gmail.com





### What's Cooking? Grandma's Chocolate Cake

My grandmother was a great cook. Her meals were simple but always delicious. I don't think I ever saw her use a cookbook or a written recipe, but somehow everything turned out right every time! When asked about measurements, she often replied in metrics such as a "dab" of this or a "pinch" of that. This is a family favorite.

1 1/2 cups sugar

Lard the size of a large egg (I use vegetable shortening or butter. The large egg translates to about a scant 1/2 cup.)

2 eggs

1 1/2 cups sour milk (To sour the milk, add 1-1/2 Tablespoons of vinegar to milk and let sit for 5 minutes.)

2 cups sifted flour

3/4 cup cocoa

1 1/2 tsp. baking soda

Pinch of salt

Vanilla (Probably a tsp.)

Cream the sugar and shortening. Add the eggs. Beat until fluffy. Alternately add the sour milk and the dry ingredients, mixing well between each addition. Pour into a greased and floured 9 1/2" x 13 inch pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes.

I usually frost the cake with a chocolate buttercream frosting in which I use coffee as the liquid.

**Barbara Gelder Kelley**  
barbaragkelley@aol.com



to grow. Wouldn't it be nice to have our entire class participating? The first tea connected me literally!! with those I had not seen for 64 years. The event was a little time capsule which erased the intervening years. Please sign up with either Sally Linden <sallylinden@comcast.net> or me

**Annsie Svennson McAdams,**  
annsie999@yahoo.com

*Here's a story that came out of the first online mini reunion.*

May 13, 2020

I have lived in apartment 4E in a cooperative building on the Upper East Side of Manhattan since 1979. My neighbor in 4F, Susan Levin Schlechter, has lived there since 1978. My neighbor in 4D, Fran Kumin, has lived there since 1988. We share the same hall. For our earlier years, we were occupied with family and work. One morning, perhaps even 20 years ago, I happened to be in our hall after the mail had been delivered on the floor in front of our apartments. The Wellesley Alumnae Magazine was in front of 4D, 4E, and 4F. Yes, we are all graduates of Wellesley. Susan is Class of 1967 and Fran is Class of 1973.

Sadly, we shared another of life's coincidences. Our three husbands died recently within two years of each other. Fran's husband, Richard Ticktin died 12/15/2017. My husband, Wallace Berger, died 2/17/2019. Susan's husband, Bruce Schlechter, died 3/31/2019.

Now, life has changed for the world. Manhattan has changed dramatically. We were a city of dense crowds and people everywhere and noise and rushing: "the city that never sleeps". Now it is weirdly quiet, except for ambulances, fire engines, and police sirens.

Living in an apartment means being sequestered. Because of the pandemic, we three ladies are currently the only occupants on our floor. Only 30% of our 90 apartments are occupied at the moment, other owners having moved to personal residences where they felt safer.

A few weeks ago, we three happened to meet (not too close) in the hall. It was a Friday night, and Susan and Fran are members of Central Synagogue

which has Friday evening streaming Shabbat services at 6:00 p.m. We decided to listen and watch the service in our individual apartments and then have a face to face meeting, far more than six feet apart, in our hallway. We enjoyed that evening so much that we decided to do this twice a week, adding Tuesday evenings.

And that is what we now do. On Tuesdays we meet at 5:30. On Fridays, after the Temple service, we join the Manhattan 7:00 p.m. shouting and applauding outside our windows that celebrates the city caregivers. On both evenings we open our doors, put chairs in the doorway, usually have a glass of wine, and visit face to face and heart to heart. You cannot make this up: three Jewish recent widows, next door neighbors, Wellesley College graduates.

**Merle Golden Bogin**  
merlebogin@gmail.com

### **What's Cooking? Lentil Soup**

1 lb. dried lentils/split peas  
¼ tspn. marjoram  
2 qts. cold water  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1 ham bone/1 pkg. pork shanks  
dash cayenne  
1-1/2 C's onion, diced/sliced  
¼ tspn. thyme  
1 tspn. salt  
1 C celery, diced  
½ tspn. pepper  
1 C carrots, dice

Cover lentils/peas in water & soak overnight. Next day, add ham bone/pork shanks to same water. Add onion & all seasonings; bring to boil. Reduce to simmer, cover, & cook for 1-1/2 hrs. Remove bone/shanks & dice meat remaining on it. Add meat, celery, & carrots. Cook slowly, uncovered, for 1 hour. Will thicken in storage; can add water to reheat.

Serves 8-10. We like to double the recipe and have hearty servings. We like it better with lentils than with split peas.

**Joan Miles Oliver**  
oliver.jm@primary.net