

The Wellesley College Class of 1956 presents

Scarlet Letters

Number 24 - July 2022



A Large Mini in Solvang, California, 2013. From the left: (women only, with maiden names) Jane Vose, Barbara Booth, Ethel Larrabee, Ann Ehrenfeld, Nancy Amundson, Carolyn Montgomery, Arlene Gumbiner, Nancy Gordon, Ann Clemenshaw, Kay Wood

News today that a million Americans have succumbed to Covid, the Black Plague of our day. And the reaping of the vulnerable, a group of which we are all a part, is rising again. The variants are continuing to emerge. The promise of complete protection from infection by way of vaccination is diminishing. Even we senior ladies who carefully guard against contagion may yet be listed among the victims of this dread disease.

What to do? Of course, we must continue to be vigilant in our daily decisions to take care. We should also think of positive ways to respond. Have we paid sufficient attention to planning our final departure? Do we want the music of Bach, a white coffin, donations to Wellesley? Have we noted our preferences in writing and notified survivors where they can be found? Have we assigned our treasures to others and left our intentions in writing in the same place? And finally, as you have heard too often in these

pages, have you written your own obituary? This is a good time to sketch it out, getting in the details that will be harder for someone else to gather and insert.

Scarlet Letters publishes in this issue the obituary of Beth Heath who died recently, published in the *Boston Globe*. There is no indication that it was written by Beth, but the command of detailed information and the lively spirit indicate that it could have been. This sounds as if it is the way she was and would like to be remembered. It is a model of the kind of thing we would like to have known about ourselves after our unfortunate demise. Use it as a model and sketch out your own story. Send it to us. We'd love to do an obituary issue. Let's celebrate our great past, even as we continue our long and valuable lives.

Claudia L. Bushman
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HEATH, Beth Montgomery, age 86, died on January 8, 2022. Born in New York City on May 22, 1935 to Harry and Emily (Eaman) Montgomery, she grew up in Riverside, CT, and attended Wellesley College, earning a degree in music.

At Wellesley (her mother's alma mater) Beth loved that women were in charge and respected. Ever the daughter of a newspaper man, Beth honed her lifelong love of language and devotion to grammatical accuracy. She met Richard "Dick" Heath, a law student from Harvard, at a school mixer, married him in 1955, moved to Buffalo and focused on raising their family. She volunteered extensively (The League of Women Voters, Wellesley Club, Planned Parenthood, Elmwood Franklin, International Institute, The United Way, and democratic campaigns).

Beth earned an MSW at UB in 1974, then worked at Child and Family Services for 26 years. Beth felt if she "could just change one kid's life, it was worth it." When Beth retired in 2000, she divided her time between Buffalo and Pompano Beach. In the summers she and Dick went to her favorite place in the Adirondacks, where she enjoyed loons, big family meals, yoga, and raucous card games. For special occasions, Beth would pen a personalized rewrite of a song, many of which her grandchildren can sing word for word to this day.

Upon Dick's death in 2017, Beth moved to Meridian in Florida where she worked her magic, made close friends, led a choral group, and played piano. There she felt "free to continue lifelong passions: music, singing, exercise, and being with others."

In August, Beth was diagnosed at Mass. General with a brain tumor. Throughout her life Beth was loved for her warm and accepting manner, her ease with people and the positive energy she readily gave to the world. She continued to live this way with humility and grace until the end, surrounded by family in her daughter's home.

Beth is survived by three siblings Tom Montgomery (Helga), Izzie Wylde (Nancy), and Henry Montgomery (Rene); children Ellen Plapinger (Keith), David Heath (Mary), Karen Heath (Chris), and Debby Heath (Don); ten grandchildren, Kate, Eli, Sam, Ian, Juliana, Sarah, Caroline, Lucas, Mia, and Nikki; and three great-grandchildren, Meyer, Charlotte, and Danny.

Published by Boston Globe from Jan. 15 to Jan. 16, 2022.

Ester Gasperoni 2022

L O N E L I N E S S

Esther writes: "I met my husband at the International House in New York and married him in Italy. We spent some time in India, then back to Italy, then off to France, where I have been living since 1983. I live about half an hour from Paris in one of the many villages that surround the capital. I used to go to Paris several times a week to attend language classes, bilingual groups, etc. Unfortunately, all of these activities have disappeared because of the pandemic, except for one, thanks to zoom. My son lives in New York, and my daughter and her three children all live and work in Paris. They are very busy, and I seldom see them. My life is rather lonely because of covid. This explains the poem which I am sending. But rest assured: my days are not always that lonely!"

I wish the phone would ring
Even if it's a wrong number,
I wish a neighbor,
The gray-haired lady would do,
Came to knock on my door
Just to chat, or perhaps
Ask for a lift downtown
Or borrow some potatoes
Which she forgot to buy.
Anything but this silence.
I wish thunder would roar
And rain drum on my roof,
I wish the wind would hiss
With mounting wrath:
Anything but this stillness.
I wish I could hear
The laughter of a child
Or even
The treble shrieks
Of his tantrums,
I wish a man would speak
Soft words of love
Or even
Burst out in anger
Anything
Just anything
But the implacable
Hush of the empty day.

Merle Golden, Entrepreneur

The history of my company began when my parents were in England and my mother, Fannie, bought my father/her husband, Abe, a special present. It was a golf glove named Duragluv that was manufactured by W.Tavener & Son in Yeovil, England. Abe was blown away by the quality of the glove and long story short, he went to Yeovil and persuaded William Tavener to export his gloves and Abe would find the way to distribute the gloves in the U.S.

Abe had known a golf salesman and hired him to sell the golf gloves in the state of New York. This connection was not successful, and after about two years, Abe came to me and convinced me, the mother of three children, currently all under the age of five, to take over the Duragluv business which became Golden International, Inc. With Abe's backing I was able to get letters of credit to finance the purchase of Duragluv golf gloves.

Abe took me on a sales lesson, and we went to Wee Burn Country Club in Darien, Conn., where he successfully sold Duragluv to their golf pro Mike Chiapetta. After that, I began spending a few hours a week making sales trips and the gloves were well received, even if only in small numbers. Sometimes I was able to fill the orders from my car and other times I would go home and bring the gloves back the next day. It was labor intensive for sure.

I wanted my business to grow. I discovered an annual golf merchandise show in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, and set up my first glove booth there. I met a sales representative, Dave Neuner, who sold golf clothing in Florida, Georgia, and North and South Carolina. Dave educated me about sales representation and with a handshake, he became my first sales representative.

After I returned home, I forced myself to go to the Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck, NY. It was, and still is, a famous Golf Club, a major location of the U.S. Open Golf Tournament. It was a rainy day and I thought that Claude Harmon, their well respected and famous golf pro, would not be there. I would not be comfortable having attempted to sell my golf gloves to him.

But he was there. I spread out the colorful gloves on the counter and poured out my sales pitch. He responded, "I'll tell you what, young lady, I am tired of selling someone else's logo and if you can put my logo on your gloves, I will sell your gloves here at Winged Foot. I knew he was referring to the popular All-Star golf gloves. Of course, I said that I would discover how to do that!



Claude Harmon introduced me to Lion Brothers in Owings Mills, Maryland, the company that made his gold encrusted logoed emblems of Winged Foot that were sewn on the blazer pockets. I contacted Lion Brothers and ordered my first logos with the minimum order being 340 for which Mr. Harmon paid.

Just a few days later, I heard from Dave Neuner calling from the Sea Island Golf Club in Georgia. The golf pro there, Eddie Thompson, asked if we could put the Sea Island logo on the back of our gloves. I told Dave that if Claude Harmon and Eddie Thompson both wanted this, we were onto something. We had to give it a try. This was the beginning of my successful golf business story. Most private country clubs have their own logos which have been put on many items including clothing, glasses, pottery, etc. Personalized logos on their golf gloves had not been done before, and there was definite excitement about this new sales item, a new

development for the golf business.



A few other companies attempted to personalize golf gloves, but they could not compete with my focus on this plan. Golden International, a small company with low overhead, sold only golf gloves. At the first golf show where my first three logoed gloves were displayed, many representatives of golf equipment visited my booth. They were impressed by the focus on the personalization. It was not long before my company had 28 representatives in the U.S.

The sewing of the logos onto the gloves was perfected by a seamstress, Evelyn Phelps. My family and Evelyn moved to Tavares, Florida where my business lasted about fifteen years. By then, my personal life had changed. I was divorced, and my children were all in college. The owners of the Miller Golf Company, who had become friends, offered to buy Golden International. They specialized in the personalization of Country Club clothing, glassware, and other items. I made the decision to sell in one day.

I do want to note that the United States Golf Association (USGA) has a golf museum in Liberty Corner, NJ. They now have my collection of logos including close to 800 for individual golf clubs and more for some business golf tournaments. They make a very colorful and impressive museum exhibit.

In November 2021, I moved across the country to Napa, California, where I am living at The Meadows, adjusting to a new life, closer to my children. I have nothing to complain about here. I send hugs to all my Wellesley friends.

Merle Golden Bogin
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Earth's Population Statistics in Perspective

The population of Earth is around 7.8 Billion. For most people, it is a large figure. However, if you condensed 7.8 billion into 100 persons, and then into various percentage statistics the resulting analysis is relatively much easier to comprehend.

Out of 100 :

11 are in Europe,
5 are in North America,
9 are in South America,
15 are in Africa,
60 are in Asia.

49 live in the countryside,
51 live in cities.

75 have mobile phones,
25 do not.

30 have internet access,
70 do not have the availability to go online.

7 received university education,
93 did not attend college.
83 can read,
17 are illiterate.

33 are Christians,
22 are Muslims,
14 are Hindus,
7 are Buddhists,
12 are other religions,
12 have no religious beliefs.

26 live less than 14 years,
66 died between 15 - 64 years of age,
8 are over 65 years old.

If you have your own home,
Eat full meals & drink clean water,
Have a mobile phone,
Can surf the internet, and
have gone to college,
You are in the miniscule privileged lot.
(in the less than **7%** category.)

Among **100** persons in the world, only **8** live or exceed the age of 65. If you are over 65 years old, be content & grateful. Cherish life, grasp the moment.

If you did not leave this world before the age of 64 like the **92** persons who have gone before you, you are already the blessed of mankind. Take good care of your own health. Cherish every moment.

If you think you are suffering memory loss... The French Professor Bruno Dubois, Director of the Institute of Memory and Alzheimer's Disease at La Pitié-Salpêtrière--Paris Hospitals, says: **"If anyone is aware of their memory problems, they do not have Alzheimer's."**

Do you forget the names of families? Forget where you put some things? People over 60 often complain that they lack memory. The information is always in the brain, it is the "processor" that is lacking. This is "Anosognosia" or temporary forgetfulness. Half of people, 60 and older, have symptoms that are due to age rather than disease. The most common cases are:

- *forgetting the name of a person,*
- *going to a room in the house and not remembering why we were going there,*
- *a blank memory for a movie title or actor, an actress,*
- *a waste of time searching where we left our glasses or keys.*

After 60 years most people have such a difficulty, which indicates that it is not a disease but rather a characteristic due to the passage of years.

Those people concerned about these oversights should note the following statements:

1. *"Those who are conscious of being forgetful have no serious problem of memory."*
2. *"Those who suffer from a memory illness or Alzheimer's, are not aware of what is happening."*

Professor Bruno Dubois reassures the majority of people concerned about their oversights:
"The more we complain about memory loss, the less likely we are to suffer from memory sickness."

Now for a little neurological test:

Only use your eyes!

1- Find the C in the table below!

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2- If you found the C, then find the 6 in the table below.

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3- Now find the N in the table below. Attention, it's a little more difficult!

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If you pass these three tests without problem:

- you can cancel your annual visit to the neurologist.
- your brain is in perfect shape!
- you are far from having any relationship with Alzheimer's.

Ukraine

April 2022

A blown-out window, an empty eye socket;
An exposed cross-section of an apartment
building, a skeletal rib cage;
A crushed orange car, a ruptured spleen.
We must see this for what it is:
A crucifixion.

* * *

“What I tell them,” explains the young priest
In the aisle of the high-vaulted Gothic style
cathedral,
“Is to go to war, but
To retain their humanity.”
Father, you have never been to war.
If you had, you would tell them to make
themselves
Brutal, savage,
Crazed, insensate,
Numb to their core,
Then
Go off to war.

* * *

Caught in the middle of their lives,
Their natural, unarranged faces,
Their clear eyes and steady gaze,
Their simplicity, their ordinariness.
What is this if not humanity?

* * *

Why must you hang there
On the cross

In my family room
As I try to eat
My perfectly good dinner?

* * *

Varying in pitch and timbre
But always with the same refrain
Their voices, overlaid, form
A motet.
“We did nothing. They attacked us. Why
did they do this?”
It is their plainsong.

* * *

I am grateful, though,
For their faith
Which allows the
Fiery pain of the tearing of their tender
flesh
Parting from their shoulder sockets
To be united with the fiery death of
Joan of Arc, and permits
From the tops of their crosses
As their souls depart
White lilies to spring,
Gazing into the
Eye of God.

* * *

O my bleeding
O my beloved
O Ukraine.

Joan Miles Oliver
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