

Meadowood Anthology



A publication by and for the residents
of Meadowood Retirement Community

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From the Editor

We don't have to wait till
Thanksgiving to say thanks.

Now is a perfectly wonderful
time to say a big

THANK YOU!

to all contributors to
Meadowood Anthology.

Each year, about 40-50 Meadowood residents submit their work to the *Anthology*. As you know, the writing and art in the *Anthology* is diverse and wide-ranging, and the talents of residents are many.

When you submit your work to public view it is an act of courage. This is particularly true when the "public" happens to be a rather erudite and discerning crowd.

So THANKS to those of you who took the plunge into the *Meadowood Anthology!*

We applaud you! We appreciate you. Thanks for sharing your best with all of us.

Sandy Lynch
Editor
and The Editorial Board

Springtime at Meadowood

By Carolyn Dean Carlyle

This bright spring morning as I leave the front door of my cottage and deeply breathe the cool spring air, I notice it has a fresh new fragrance. Walking by my small front yard I see that there are tiny grass blades peeking through last year's green, faded carpet. Also scattered casually around the grass edges are pastel crocus flowers.

The air is cool and I walk faster humming "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning." The sky is a clear light blue with a few feathery-edged clouds floating high above. The bright sun proclaims stardom over all else for its power in creating earth's spring beauty. Winter's welcome goodbye is seen here and there in small gray clumps of diminishing snow. No longer will we have to endure its cold and inconveniences.

Sunshine and rain have brought green fuzz of baby leaves on tree limbs and shrubs. If you aren't watching this leaf growth you'll be surprised to see the same trees covered in full leaf bloom.

In my backyard the birds have been chirping, screeching and darting all over the hawthorn tree, awaiting their chance to land on the birdfeeder. There are the usual cardinals, chickadees, blue jays, sparrows and others. They are excited because in springtime they will find a mate and begin building a nest.

As I continue enjoying my spring walk I notice groups of the traditional yellow flowers of spring, such as narcissus, daffodils and jonquils. They are in bloom around cottages and garden paths. Forsythia shrubs dramatically direct their straight golden-armed branches toward the sun. All of springtime's beauty seems to sparkle on this morning walk.

A few people are out walking or are puttering in their gardens. I stop to speak to a woman gardener, bent over planting pansies and annuals in a freshly-dug garden bed. She points excitedly to a vacant flower bed from which will arise six red and six white tulips. At Nature's timing they will be born upward from their bulbous darkness into the drama of natural birth. First we will see a scruffy tulip head slowly awakening from its underground bed. The body stem and leaf arms will yawn and slowly push up and out of the earth into startling sunshine. Their shiny red tulip petals will open at the warm kiss of the sun and the amorous touches of rain drops. I will expect to drop by and witness the awesome birthing of the six red and six white tulips.

Meadowood not only has spring flowers but also spring-blooming trees such as the ever-popular dogwood and redbud trees. What is more gorgeous than seeing a bare, dark-limbed dogwood tree become transformed into a delicate mass of white or pink blossoms? Whether we are walking or driving, we have to slow down or stop and stare at these annual spring-blooming beauties.

They also dramatize the setting of our large pond in the spring. It is named Herman B Wells Sanctuary after Meadowood's founder. This pond contains a large sparkling fountain as its centerpiece. On one side of it rests a wooden gazebo, overlooking blooming water lilies and also earth-bound flowers. This tranquil water scene entices walkers to saunter down and sit awhile to enjoy the quiet of nature's sanctuary.

In late afternoon and evening the evergreen trees and shrubs cast long irregular shadows across our fresh green lawns. We like sitting outside then to feel the warm touch of sunshine and the cool breezes of the evening. Neighbors may gather to visit as we all enjoy this mellow closing time of a spring day at Meadowood.

▼

A Soviet Potato

By Barbara Restle

The train from Moscow to Leningrad was surely the same one that carried Russian soldiers during World War II. This was early November in 1978 and the weather in Moscow was heading for a long Russian winter. The train was chilly and during the journey I never took off my trench coat, wool beret and gloves. I boarded the train in the morning with arrival in Leningrad scheduled for early evening. Within an hour or so, I noticed that the leather boots I was

wearing were dampening in standing water. No one else appeared to be bothered by this, so I did not question my travel companion Dmitri, my KGB-designated tour guide for the day. Apparently, this was all part of traveling by train in the Soviet Union.

We were seated in the rear of the train car, and I had a good view of my fellow travelers. I was the only tourist. In my well-traveled wrinkled trench coat I felt overdressed and knew that everyone could easily label me as a tourist. After several weeks traveling in the Soviet Union I was accustomed to move about as if invisible: no fleeting smiles or eye contact. The men in black suits, who exited the next door hotel room the exact same time that I left mine, shadowed me every day and I simply ignored them. They must have been bored, annoyed, even insulted with this daily surveillance.

After several hours, a young man in front of the train stood up, turned toward his fellow travelers, stretched out his arms over his head and said something that made people close to him respond with subdued friendly chatter. He was a robust young man wearing rough farm clothes, his tousled blond hair framing a wide tanned face and his smile was that of a disarming innocent boy. The week I spent in Moscow, I saw very few smiles and never on the faces of the young. I thought it was possible this man was traveling with his family. He stepped out into the aisle and took something out of a canvas bag, and showed it to people on his side of the aisle. At first I

did not recognize what it was, only that it was quite large and bulky. The response from the passengers was one of surprise and pleasure. Soon the object was handed to all passengers on the left side of the train and when it was handed to me I saw that it was a potato. It was truly the largest potato I had ever seen in my life. It was almost as large as a football. I stood up, holding the potato in both hands, gave the young man a big smile, and handed it to the man sitting behind me. The potato was handed down the right side of the train and back to the young man.

I spoke to Dmitri and told him how impressed I was with the size of this specimen and how I wished I could talk to the young man and try to learn about his farming methods. Dmitri's response was a quick negative one. The journey was beginning to bore me and I needed diversion. The weather, as we moved closer to Leningrad, deteriorated into a minor snow storm and this was early November. I had been so cold in Moscow and I had prepared for traveling north by wearing flannel pajamas under my slacks. I now knew even this might not be warm enough.

After an hour or so I saw that the young man had opened the train door which led into the entryway of the train. Before Dmitri could stop me, I followed him out. He was smoking a cigarette. In English and with pantomime I informed him that his potato was truly the largest and most wonderful one I had ever seen. He responded with his generous open smile and said, "*Spacibo*." (thank you)

When I returned to my seat, Dmitri indicated that he did not approve of my following the young man. He was indeed acting like a stern disapproving teacher stuck with an intractable student.

The train slowed into the Leningrad terminal and everyone stood up and gathered their belongings. Then I saw the young man walk with determination toward me, hold out his hand and with slow, careful articulation said, "Cooperation and Friendship." His words were spoken with conviction; his broad smile contagious. I only had time to take off my beret, unpin one of my many travel emblems on my hat and hand it to him. He took my symbol of friendship and rapidly left the train. I wanted to know how he knew these perfectly pronounced words. He obviously had been taught them after I tried to communicate with him in English. Someone on this train spoke English, and had watched us and initiated the message of cooperation and friendship.

The crush of everyone leaving the train quickly separated us and I never saw him again. Standing on the platform, Dmitri asked me what I had given the young man. He was clearly angry with me. The symbol of friendship I had given the young man was hard to explain to my KGB-designated tour guide. I finally said, "I'm a member of an organization and it is called DUCKS UNLIMITED." ▼

[Ed note: Barbara had joined a small London-based tour group visiting Soviet-block countries.]

Two Black Cats

By Virginia Gest

Two black cats of graceful elegance live at my house.
Silent black paws, crisp pointed ears,
Whiskers and fur shining black.
Black as licorice or coal, save for pale green eyes,
Pink tongue, and a brush-stroke of white at the throat.
Fat Cat of the ruffled jowls
Pads around with masculine assurance
And easy affability. His sister, Little Cat,
Once frightened by his sallies,
Now plays the role of cleverness.
With satanic conceit they parade through their realm,
Tails on high like undulating question marks.

On frosty mornings they rush inside
Like two matched circus prancers
And curl up by the heating vent.
With paws tucked in on all sides and
Eyes blinking sleepily, they are
Two round islands of composure.
That's when they purr, throaty and deep
An odd mechanism to sound from such softness.

The smell of bacon draws them to the kitchen.
They press their furry backs against my legs.
Wherever I step, the floor seems full of cats.
They eat daintily, watchfully
Crouched on the edge of the paper.
Then the ritual of washing begins.
One takes his cue from the other:
First the paws, then the whiskers and face --
Eyes closed to slits --
Then the head bobs down and down again
As the pink tongue licks the chest shiny damp.
With a delicate sigh they collapse in a double sprawl,
As limp as a fur neckpiece dropped carelessly.

Who Is Janie?

By Thea Hosek

As told to Beth Van Vorst Gray

“WHO IS JANIE?” my husband asked – in capital letters, adding the comment, “She’s BEAUTIFUL!” I had never heard him speak in capital letters even though we had lived on Air Force bases all over the world, raised three sons together, and Bob had fought a war or two. But on this warm summer day in Peru, Indiana, 42 years ago, Bob unknowingly asked a REALLY BIG question, the answer to which would soon change our lives.

She had asked for Eric, our youngest son and we surmised that she was a school mate. As soon as Eric came home, we told him she had been there. Eric told us that they were friends and he had told her to get in touch with him if she needed help or a sympathetic shoulder. We weren’t surprised, since Eric was a compassionate young man, wise beyond his years. Between his open-heartedness and his mother’s lifelong practice of taking in anyone who needed a meal, a bed or some TLC, there was always heavy traffic at our house. He told us that Janie was only fourteen but was living a week with one friend, two weeks with another to escape the situation at her home.

He explained, “Janie’s mother is dying of cancer and her father is an alcoholic. And that’s not all, the man is living with his dying wife’s best friend.” I was livid to think that any child would be so

abandoned and said so. “She shouldn’t have to live like that; we have a bedroom that isn’t being used and she could stay with us.” Our two oldest sons were already on their own, popping in for an occasional visit when they could get back to the Midwest, leaving us, of course, with an empty bedroom.

Eric told Janie that I would help her, and she soon came over to meet me. She spoke very little, as I was later to understand was her nature, and displayed a stoicism and sense of direction seldom seen in a young person. Eric said it best, “Mom, she comes across with a strong heart and knows who she is; takes care of herself.” She had gathered apples that had fallen from a neighbor’s tree on the way to our house, so we made an apple pie while we talked.

I was well-versed in the juvenile court system since I worked with various community organizations and was on the board of directors for Big Brothers, Big Sisters. Bob made initial inquiries on her legal options. While talking with Janie, I told her that she could appear before a judge and ask for respite from an unsafe living situation, whereupon the court would name Bob and me as her guardians and she could then live with us. Trying also to give her some heart’s ease, I suggested that she give her father the benefit of the doubt since he might be overreacting in his own grief and fear of his wife’s impending death. She left our house saying, “I’m not ready to take such a big step right now.” And I reassured her that we would be there for her, day or night.

Janie's mother died soon afterward. Her mother was British and her family was in England. With no help from her father, the burden of planning the funeral fell upon young Janie. Bob, Eric and I were all there to support her. That day, I lost all sympathy for her father. At the cemetery, Janie fainted as the mourners walked from their cars to the graveside service, and he simply stepped over her! I couldn't believe I had seen such a thing.

About a month later, there was a knock on the door. It was Janie, with puffy eyes. She said, "How about now?" Her father had come home drunk and kicked her out of the house. Her younger brother seemed to be accepted by his father's girlfriend (later wife), so Janie brought in what few clothes she had and moved into our small bedroom. Eric took the large one so his visiting brothers would have a place to roost. He and Janie shared a bathroom. I remember overhearing Janie say, "Eric, aren't you glad we never dated?" She found a place in our home and our hearts and became "family" very quickly.

She never gave us an ounce of trouble; quiet, polite, with a gentle sense of humor. That's not to say there wasn't a lot of adjusting to do – mostly on my part, I think. Nurturing girls, teenage girls especially, is 180 degrees different from raising boys and I had a lot to learn. No more picking out clothes, as I did for my sons, who wore them without comment. "Shopping" with Janie was an adventure. She rolled her eyes and heaved a deep sigh

when I suggested an unsuitable item, as were most of my choices. Her soft manner had a steel underpinning of stubbornness and independence.

Upon occasion, she could come up with a bit of sardonic humor. She had phone calls. Lots of them. Boys don't talk on the phone all day, so Bob's unbreakable rule of "no phone calls taken at suppertime" got a different reaction from her. Bob's remark "Janie's having dinner, will you call her back?" brought a certain set to her mouth and a silent scream. One night, the phone rang and Janie answered it with the standard "Mr. Hosek is having dinner. Will you call him back?" She came back to the table with an impish grin for Bob.

One day, my best friend said, "You know, Janie is neither fish nor fowl – an integrated part of your family, but not carrying your name. Why don't you adopt her?" And so we did, all members including Janie, thinking that was a marvelous idea.

Janie was a solid "C" student and active in some high school activities – another change from my three active high achievers. She did know herself well, and upon graduation from high school, she adamantly refused to go to college; her confidence in her own abilities to establish a career without it prevailed. Since she had already proven her ability to get promoted in her high school jobs – at a "big box" store and the bank – we accepted her wisdom. She had saved a substantial

amount of money, her goal being a trip to England to reunite with her mother's family, and see the country in which she was born. We added to that amount and suggested that she do a tour of Europe as well.

Her friend, Sarah Lambertson, accompanied her on the tour, and we proudly put Sarah and our beautiful daughter, with lovely chestnut hair flowing down her back, on the plane. She was flying away into her own future.

After time with her relatives in London, she joined the tour of Europe starting in Paris. It was one of those "If it's Tuesday, this must be Belgium" whirlwind trips. On the tour, she met her tour guide Robbie Yare, an urbane, intelligent Brit, who soon won over the tourists – including Janie. Robbie and Janie conducted their own personal tour of Europe (If it's Thursday – this must be Venice).

Upon their return, we eagerly met Janie and Sarah at the airport, but, as soon as I saw Janie, I gasped and told Bob, "She's met a man." She had a very becoming bobbed haircut with just the right hat to perch on it, smiling, confident, with a new kind of poise. She had returned the blooming young woman that she was always destined to be. THIS is JANIE.

Epilogue

Robbie came to meet us. We fell in love with him as well, although he was 20 years older than Janie. They were soon wed in an Episcopal Church in Peru, Indiana. They lived happily for 10 years, with two

beautiful children. Then Robbie was diagnosed with melanoma cancer and died. Janie was his stalwart caretaker to the end. She raised her two children alone. Her son Damien is getting a law degree in London and Sabrina is a teacher. Janie is also a cancer survivor. She lives in Florida and calls me, without fail, every Friday morning.

▼

Mad Sparrow

By Bernard Clayton

It happened in a trailer park in Texas.

Standing by a large metal pipe holding up a clothesline, I realized that the chirpings of an angry bird scratching in vain were coming from inside the 5" steel pipe.

Would a stick lowered into the pipe to allow the bird to grab it and be lifted out? No, a stick poking around would have ruffled her feathers even more.

Close by I spotted a garden hose hanging on a tool shed. Perhaps I could float the bird up to the top. I turned on a small stream of water and directed it down the side of the pipe away from the center. The bird was not happy but I knew from her chirpings that she was floating up according to plan.

When she appeared at the top she hopped to the edge of the pipe, ruffled her wet feathers, looked me in the eye – and bit me! ▼

Memories of War:
A Series

A Glimpse of the Past – Part 2

By Gene Merrell

In July 1968, I was assigned to Andrews Air Force Base near Washington, D.C., to join a newly-organized squadron that would be flying special missions involving high-ranking civilian and military leaders. Upon arrival at Andrews, I learned that sixteen of the twenty-two selected pilots were Lieutenant Colonels. My first thought was that the squadron must be a living graveyard for Lieutenant Colonels. Our average age was 43, and our average accumulated flying time was over 7500 hours. Most of us had served during World War II, Korea and Vietnam. The rows of ribbons we wore told the story of where we had served and how well we had performed. There was no shortage of Distinguished Flying Crosses and Air Medals. Ribbons and experience are nice to have, but we still had to prove our competence to the Flight Examiners who took their jobs seriously.

We soon learned that missions involving very important people (VIP) required more than just flying the airplane. Mission planning was more complicated. There

were more concerns about passenger comfort and appearance of the aircrew, and even about the desired way of flying the aircraft. Meeting departure and arrival times was of utmost importance.

During the next two years I probably logged between 80 and 100 hours of flying time per month on trips lasting from one to ten days. Most of them were in the VIP category involving high ranking civilians from governmental agencies and general officers of the Army and Air Force. On several occasions my passengers included the Commandant of West Point and his staff. I was also privileged to fly three extended missions involving foreign dignitaries. They were for the Chief of Staff of the Belgian Army, the Chief of Staff of the Greek Air Force, and a ten-day tour of military installations for 20 prominent journalists from different European countries. One evening I flew the top astronauts on an hour-long dinner flight between Andrews and a small island just East of Maryland. They wanted, and were served, cocktails, steak, baked potatoes and salad. I also flew many other missions including motivational flights for teachers and counselors to places like the Air Force Academy, Cape Kennedy, and the Air University.

Most of my missions were without incident but there were several occasions when precautionary landings were necessary. Only once did I feel grave concern for the safety of my passengers and crew. We were flying through a weather system that

was dumping snow on the Alleghany Mountains when the left engine lost power and became engulfed in flames. We shut the engine down and activated the fire extinguishing system twice before we felt the fire was under control. Even so, smoke remained visible.

The copilot notified the Air Traffic Control Center of the emergency and requested assistance. We were informed that every airport in the area except one was closed and the weather there was deteriorating rapidly. I was familiar with that airport and felt that if we missed our approach there would be no second chance. Having no other option, we requested radar vectors to that airport.

The Center gave us directions, cleared us for an *enroute* descent and later handed us off to Approach Control as we neared the airport. We were told to intercept the slide slope of the ILS (Instrument Landing System). I requested a GCA (Ground Controlled Approach) as back-up. We intercepted the glide path which called for a descent rate of about 500 feet per minute. As we approached an altitude of 200 feet the controller advised that the cloud ceiling was 100 feet with visibility obscured by moderate snow. The field was now below minimums. I replied that we were coming in. At 100 feet above the ground we were still in the clouds and the runway was not in sight. I decreased the power and rate of descent in preparation for touch-down. The copilot watched for the runway knowing that if he saw it, he was to take

control and complete the landing. A few seconds later he shouted, "I've got it!" The wheels touched the runway before I took my eyes off the instrument panel. When we were completely stopped the emergency crews covered the engine with foam and secured the aircraft.

During one of my non-flying days I was summoned to the Flight Manager's Office and given the task of writing a detailed Operations Plan for a classified mission. The plan was to be ready the afternoon of the next day. I worked through the night and finished on time. A week later I was put in charge of the Operations Plan Division, with responsibility for classified plans for such contingencies as emergency evacuation and dispersal of key government personnel, ground support of Air Force One, and the National Emergency Airborne Command Post. I also served as co-chairman of ad hoc committees, developed staff studies and worked on special projects.

The project I found most rewarding began in 1973 when State Department teams negotiated the release of all U.S. military personnel who had been captured by the North Vietnamese and held as Prisoners of War (POW) during the period of 1965 to 1973. Most of the POWs were held in a camp near Hanoi. Upon their return to the States those with homes in the East were flown to Andrews AFB for medical evaluation and debriefing. I co-chaired a committee charged with the responsibility of providing near total support for both the returnees and their families.

The POWs arriving by air were given the “red carpet” treatment. As they walked down the ramp at the rear of the airplane the marks of cruel and inhumane treatment were plainly visible. They were greeted officially with honors by high ranking civilian and military officers. As they walked slowly and painfully across the ramp, some paused to kiss the ground and every one of them looked up at the American flag. They straightened up as best they could and increased their pace toward their loved ones. Spectators cheered when a few daring wives raced across the ramp to greet their husbands with unrestrained enthusiasm and warmth. It was not long until every one of those brave men had been greeted with the same enthusiasm and passion. Those of us who watched wiped away our tears and gave thanks for their return. During my stay at Andrews AFB events of national interest were frequent. For my behind-the-scene role I was awarded two Meritorious Service Medals and two Air Force Commendation medals.

When the base was reorganized I was assigned to Kincheloe AFB in upper Michigan where I was Airfield Manager and Chief, Base Operations and Training Division. While there I helped close the base and remained on the caretaker force until I retired on 31 May 1978 as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Regular Air Force. I have never regretted my years of service or my selection of Bloomington, Indiana as the best place for me to retire.

▼

She Always Played the Rose

By Nancy Seward Taylor

She always played the rose in their high school review. At the age of seven or so she would visit her father's bakery shop and eat her favorite green apple pie. Then she would skip over to what was then called the colored Baptist Church. Parishioners would help her into a pew where she dangled her legs and clapped her hands to their singing hymns. She loved their easy, happy rhythm.

She heard her father often speak of William Jennings Bryan and how powerful he was. Carrying an umbrella on a windy day she was carried up into the air. She yelled, “Billy Bryan, I'm being blown away!” One day she turned on the kitchen sink faucets but could not turn them off. “Help! Help! Billy Bryan, the water's running away!”

She was a member of one of the oldest families in Bloomington, and married into another one. When she was in her sophomore year at Indiana University, she went to the campus Well House where she met her beau. As is tradition he pinned his Phi Delta Theta pin under her Kappa Kappa Gamma key. That same year she had to move to Florida to take care of her mother, who had broken her hip. It had not set well. She wrote to her fiancé, “Now describe to me the new dance steps. I'm afraid I'll be a back number when I return.”

When grown up she was described as one of the loveliest young women in Bloomington.

She was Edith Eudora Regester Seward, my mother.

▼

Lost in Pronunciation

By Olympia Barbera

As told to Rosemary Messick

Shortly after we opened the door on arriving home from vacation, we discovered our home in a shambles. Just then the phone rang.

“Hello...”

“Olympia, how grand that you’re back! I’m calling to remind you of our Guild meeting tomorrow. Shall I pick you up?”

“Oh Rowena, I can’t go. We walked in on a terrible mess. The “keds” have peed under the piano! I’ll have to spend tomorrow cleaning up the whole house.”

“You left them alone?”

“Oh, yes. We always have.”

“Do they know how to take care of themselves?”

“Sure. They always do. When I’m here they behave perfectly. I don’t know what happened this time.”

“How many kids do you have?”

“The first we adopted when we bought this house since he was already living here.”

“Really? And the second?”

“My son brought the second one home from college. So we adopted it.”

“Oh my! How old are they now?”

“Oh, I don’t really know. I can’t remember how long we’ve had them.”

“I see. You say they usually behave themselves?”

“Oh, sure! They know what to do. All I have to do is feed them and be sure they have something to drink.”

“Really? Do you think they may be sick? Maybe that’s what caused them to lose control.”

“I guess they might be. Looks like they may have vomited some.”

“Don’t you think you should have them seen by a doctor?”

“I don’t know. I’m thinking about that. But, if I take them anyplace, it will be to a vet.”

“A vet? What do you mean? How many kids did you say you have? I thought you had three.”

“Wait a minute Rowena! What are we talking about here?”

“I didn’t know you had two younger kids too.”

“Oh, no! I have three children. They’re all in college. It was the “keds” that made the mess.”

“I still don’t understand.”

“My ‘keds’ – k – i – d – s, are grown. It’s my ‘keds’, c – a – t – s, I’m talking about.”

“You mean cats?”

“Yes, I mean ‘keds!’

Something was lost in pronunciation.

▼

Memories of China

By Eleanor Byrnes

President Obama’s recent Asian odyssey brought back vivid memories of my trip to China with my husband in May 1981. Bob was invited to speak in China from Harbin in the north all the way down the coast to Shanghai in the south. Arriving in Peking we were met by our two contacts who would travel with us during this month. Driving in from the airport it was dark, and cars did not use lights at night, just dimmers. We toured the city for a few days and we viewed all the important sites as well as seeing ladies with bound feet, stores fully stocked, and bicycles galore. Cars were mainly Russian, Japanese, as well as Chinese. Drivers turned off their motors most of the time and coasted.

When our tour ended in Shanghai we returned to Peking where arrangements had been made for us to continue on to the People’s Palace where the body of Madame Soong (Madame Chang Kai Shek’s sister) was lying in state. A state limousine with red curtains was waiting for us, but my husband thought it inappropriate for him to go. They requested that I go, and I did. The limousine deposited me at the entrance to the Great Hall of the People where soldiers in long lines on both sides of the building were approaching, two by two, up the front steps of the entrance. They inserted me and my contact into the line and we continued up the steps. At the top we were directed to a table with large

squares of parchment for special guests to sign. A black armband was placed on my left arm, and we proceeded into the Great Hall of the People. There was a large backdrop with a huge picture of Madame Soong in the center, and overhead in large Chinese characters – In Memory of Madame Soong. On either side of the hall, in double rows, were huge wreaths set on standards. Her body was on a catafalque and enclosed in glass with the flag of China draped over her body. Beneath and around her were wreaths.

All of a sudden the lights went on and my picture was taken. We walked behind a group standing nearby and proceeded out the way we entered, stopping by the table to leave the armband. The limousines returned me to my hotel.

This is a notable memory of my visit to China. ✓

Sounds of Time

By Henry H. Gray

I suppose that all of us can recall from early childhood certain favorite sounds, and I also suppose that the feelings such recollections generate are those associated with that childhood---feelings of fear or serenity, anxiety or happiness. My own childhood was particularly carefree (I know that now as I did not then) and so the chance memory of a sound of long ago brings with it a feeling of well being that is

not easily achieved these hurried days.

Not one of my sounds of time, strangely, is associated with home. But only one is itself a sound related to travel. In 1927 I went with my family by train from our home in Indiana to the west coast. Because the trip took several days we engaged a Pullman compartment. I well recall watching the countryside glide by outside the window. I remember the smells of that trip too, and the crisp linens in the diner, and many other things. But it is the sound of a crossing bell that I never hear today without being transported back in time to my fifth year. Ding-ding-ding-DING-DANG-DANG-DONG-dong-dong-dong, louder, then softer it clamored as we passed with seemingly effortless quietness, and they always signified a grade crossing where we might see automobiles waiting impatiently for us to pass, or where at night we would see the brilliant flash of the red warning lights across our compartment window. The change in pitch of the sound as we passed fascinated me. I can now explain it scientifically and know it as the Doppler Effect whereby, among other things, astronomers can determine that all the stars in the universe are racing away from us at unimaginable speeds, but this more mature knowledge neither explains nor diminishes my feelings at hearing a crossing bell today.

My paternal grandparents lived in a fashionable part of Louisville. The avenue on which they lived was a quiet place, and especially so early summer mornings. The sun drummed at the windows of the room

in which I slept when I visited there and wakened me at an hour that would have been unacceptable to the rest of the household, so I had to stay abed listening to the clock in the dining room downstairs as it softly chimed off the quarters, waiting for the first sign of life. Seldom did a morning breeze stir the leaves and even the Kentucky songbirds seemed slow to arise, so that my first indication that the silent world would awaken and my vigil would be over usually came with the milkman.

Louisville dairies delivered milk by horse-and-wagon long after most other cities that I was familiar with had changed to truck delivery, and none of those newfangled pneumatic-tired wagons, either. So each morning I listened for my unseen friend. The avenue was smoothly surfaced with asphalt but the side streets were brick, and the soft clip-clop of the horse's hooves increased to a clatter and then was suddenly augmented with a fortissimo jangling, rattling din as the wagon wheels, thinly tired with about an inch of hard rubber, rolled onto the bricks. Then, as abruptly as it began, the noises quieted as horse and wagon passed the corner of the house and I had to imagine that the horse would stop without signal, as I had seen others do, and would wait while the milkman took his wire basket of bottles to the back door. There he would be met by the cook, who would tell him how many quarts would be needed today (more than usual, because children were visiting) and would give him clean empties to be returned to his wagon. She might also

favor him with a hot breakfast roll right out of the oven, but all this would be out of sight on the other side of the house and I could only imagine it, though I could smell the fresh rolls. The sounds of the daily milk wagon are gone from the street today, and gone also from most cities are the trucks that superseded them.

Another vehicle that is on the streets no more is the trolley car. My maternal grandparents lived in Terre Haute and the room that I usually slept in when I stayed there was high on the back side of the house and overlooked what seemed to be a vast sea of rooftops. Out in that sea, two streets away, was the trolley line, a single track with passing sidings every eight or ten blocks. My room had broad casement windows and even on the coldest nights they were thrown open wide. I crawled under heavy covers as the big steam radiator in the corner was turned off and the door was closed; the fresh air would do me good, I was told. The bed was a wooden Victorian monster with thick octagonal posts, fully seven feet tall, highly ornamented with carved and pedimented designs and surmounted by a carved head from Greek or Roman mythology. There were two closets in the room and in the smaller one were shelves on which were kept toys and books especially for me. Surely there were other things in that room as well, but what I remember most about it is the sound of the trolley cars on cold winter nights.

The trolleys were called grasshopper cars, supposedly because they once were painted bright yellow-green (they were orange as I knew them), but they were small four-wheeled cars unlike the much larger eight-wheeled cars of the big cities, and as they went about their business they bobbed joyfully in a somewhat grasshopperly way. Larger cars also needed a conductor, but on these the motorman handled the car all by himself; when he came to the end of the line he got out, put up the trolley on what had been the front end of the car, got back in, closed the door, went down the aisle flipping the wicker backs so that the seats faced the other way, opened what was now to be the front door, got out, pulled down what was now the front trolley and hooked it down, and got back in. Now he was ready to go back up the line whenever the schedule called for it. Even the switches on the passing sidings were arranged so as to need no attention from the motorman. Late at night, when only one car, the owl car as it was called, made the run down and back, the sidings weren't needed but the car had to go through the switches anyway. With few passengers the stops were infrequent and brief, and the owl cars seemed to cruise aimlessly up and down as if for fun, running only as far south as Hulman Street because there weren't enough passengers to justify going farther.

Sometimes, when I was downtown, I could hear the deep hooting blast of the air-horns carried by the big interurban cars, and I marveled at the variety of shrieks, howls, and ringing sounds made when the flanges of the big wheels bit at the rails on the

sharp, street-corner turns where the tracks led into the terminal. These were muscular sounds, suitable for daytime only. The nights of which I speak were so quiet that in my room I could hear the cars from far away. First I could hear the slow tick-tack of the wheels on the rail joints, then the singing of the trolley wire, and finally the rattles of the windows and doors and the hum of the motors and gears. Now and then the car would shriek to a stop and the door would plop open to admit or discharge a lone passenger, and in the brief relative quiet I might hear the soft knocka-knocka of the air pump that powered the brakes. If the stop was long enough and the air reservoir became full I would hear in diminuendo the psssssss of the relief valve as the pump shut off. Then the door would flap shut and with a sudden low growl the car would be on its way again into the night. On snowy nights that were exceptionally still, as the acrid smell of coal smoke drifted into my room, I might hear the trolley wire faintly singing long after all the other noises had been hushed. The automobile was on the scene but hadn't yet dominated it and few cars broke the silence of the cold winter nights.

These sounds of time are all but gone now. Can anything replace them in the hearts and memories of today's children?

▼

The Rockae

By Ledford Carter

[Ed. note: Last summer Ledford Carter attended a performance of a musical created by an IU summer workshop. By mistake, he arrived fifteen minutes late. His review follows.]

Unintentionally I missed the first quarter hour.

Intentionally I missed the last quarter hour.

I saw style and technique,

Fluff and flutter,

Writhings and grindings.

I heard pickings and bangings,

Wailing and screamings,

All monotonous and deafening

During the middle hour I did endure tolerant torment.

▼

Contributors

Olimpia Barbera was born in Cordoba, Argentina, graduated at the age of 18 years, with Honors, from the Provincial University of Cordoba with a major in piano. During her early career she performed with chamber orchestras in Argentina and Brazil. In Venezuela, Olimpia formed and conducted an orchestra for deaf children, performing for TV, in theaters and schools.

Eleanor Byrnes was born and raised in Worcester, Massachusetts, and graduated from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. She was an IU graduate student of Russian Languages. Eleanor and her husband Robert, a Professor of European History, and their seven children lived on various college campuses before settling in Bloomington, Indiana. The couple traveled widely, especially in Russia. Eleanor has been an active volunteer in the Red Cross and the Bloomington Hospital

Carolyn Dean Carlyle finds her talents to have been mainly in the arts. When young she was an advanced classical pianist. In middle years she became a watercolorist. She continues to paint and displays her art at our July 4 Art Exhibit. She has always enjoyed writing. Her father was Everett Dean, the early IU basketball and baseball coach.

Ledford Carter is a retired Indiana University professor, filmmaker, and Army officer. During his 28-year residency at Meadowood, he has been a board director and Residents Council president, and he has served on numerous Meadowood committees.

Bernard Clayton Jr. was a war correspondent for Time-Life Magazines in the Pacific theater for most of World War II. He is best known as the author of best-selling cookbooks.

In 1963, **Virginia Gest** studied writing poetry with Samuel Yellen of the I.U. English department. With small children at home, this course was her "dessert." "Writing a poem is hard work," she says. Her inspiration is usually nature.

Henry H. Gray was a Geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey and with the Ohio and Indiana Geological Surveys. He is noted for his restoration of Franklin antique automobiles. He and his wife Alice have a fine collection of Brown County art.

Thea Hosek's husband Robert, was in the U.S. Air Force for 25 years. After moving every year and a half, the couple and their three sons settled in Peru, Indiana. Thea was very active in several community organizations including United Way, Chamber of Commerce and Big Brothers and Big Sisters. One year in Peru, Thea was named Woman of the Year and in another year was named Citizen of the Year.

Eugene A. Merrell retired from the U.S. Air Force in 1978 after six years in the Reserves and 30 years on active duty. He was a Command Pilot on flying status for 31 years. He served four tours in the Philippines, Korea, and Vietnam where he was awarded the Bronze Star and Air Medal. After Vietnam, he was assigned to Indiana University as Professor of Aerospace Studies, then to the "elite" 1st Air Transport

Contributors (cont'd.)

Squadron at Andrews Air Force Base. He retired at Kincheloe AFB, Michigan, and settled in Bloomington.

Barbara Restle is committed to a healthy environment supported by her interest in science and her experience raising cattle. She has lived in Vienna and among the people of Fiji. She is a graduate of Indiana University in Journalism. She loved piloting single-engine Cessnas.

Nancy Seward Taylor, a Bloomington native whose great, great grandfather constructed the fish above the Monroe County Court House, returned recently with her professor and author husband of 30 years to continue their retirement. Nancy, whose youthful portrait adorns a wall of the Brown County Playhouse, later pursued a professional stage career. She now reads weekly to residents of the Meadowood Health Pavilion.

What's missing from this issue of *Meadowood Anthology*?

Y O U !

Submit your art, writings, and memoirs to the *Meadowood Anthology*.

You may e-mail submissions to meadowoodanthology@live.com.

Or drop by the Front Desk.

We look forward to seeing YOU in the next *Meadowood Anthology*!

Deadline for the Spring issue is April 10, 2010.

