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From the Editor

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Want to measure Colby’s global reach? Look no further than this issue. An essay by an alum from New Delhi who produced a documentary about Colby students teaching in northern India. An article by an alum from Maine with ties to China who tapped alumni there and students to reflect on China’s mind-boggling growth and history. An article about a recent graduate from New York City who crisscrossed the globe to explore disadvantaged communities—and returned home profoundly changed.

What a difference a century makes. Or does it?

I say this because the spring 2011 Colby is the centennial issue of the magazine, volume 100, issue number 1. That was reason enough for me to walk over to Miller Library and procure a copy of the very first issue of the Colby Alumnus from Patricia Burdick, special collections librarian.

Old publications like this suck me in. The formal prose. The photographs. The people who have come before us.

News in that issue included appointment of William Penn Whitehouse, Class of 1863, as Maine’s chief justice. Four hundred students gathering in the field house for Colby Day. “The stirring impulse gained by personal contact cannot be reduced to cold print,” the reporter wrote. You had to be there.

But it was news of the expanding enrollment and faculty that caught my attention. That year the College enrolled 406 students, a 70-percent increase in just four years. The faculty headcount had increased from 17 to 25. “Large sums” of money had been spent on scientific equipment. “These improvements have been made quietly, with no blare of advertising trumpets as is often the case with certain institutions.”

In 1911 Colby was quietly on the move. Why? The writer summed it up in a single sentence: “Trustees, faculty, students and Alumni are working together in a harmonious effort to broaden and deepen the work of the college.”

So, as I consider volume 100, number 1, it seems that the scale and scope of Colby have expanded as the world, with innovations in communications technology, has shrunk. But the mission of the College remains largely unchanged.

India, China, South Africa. These pages are filled with stories of exploration—physical and intellectual. A century on, the magazine, like the College, is a continuum. In 1911 the writer said, “The work has just begun.” Turn the page and see the work continue.

CONTRIBUTORS

Martin Connelly ’08
(“Views on China,” P. 10) grew up traveling back and forth to China. An East Asian studies major, he’s worked as a writer and an editor in Beijing. He currently makes his home in Newfoundland.

Tarini Manchanda ’09
(“The Magic of Kalimpung,” P. 21), an environmental policy major, is based in New Delhi, India. She has conceived and directed two long documentaries on the politics of water resources in New Delhi.

Cynia Barnwell ’11 (“Sometimes It Takes a Posse,” P. 64) is a women’s, gender, and sexuality studies major. She is former president of SOBHU (Students Organized for Black and Hispanic Unity) and former host of the student-run poetry slam program.