

Colby



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Feedback

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FEEDBACK



No College Is an Island

Sitting far from Mayflower Hill, I admired President Greene's initiative as I read "Big Ideas for Waterville" in *Colby Magazine* (spring 2015). He voices a mission of mutual benefit through what can be a wide set of practicalities.

Today I share a public park with students from the University of California, Irvine, discussing with them the ibis bird's eating technique, enjoy talking monthly about geriatric issues with UCI Medical School students who visit my retirement community, and applaud the young UCI musicians who display their skills in fortnightly performances here.

As a Colby undergrad I loved skiing Dunham's slope off upper Main Street, walking to the Ticonic Falls to watch the ice breakup, hiking in spring from the old campus up to Mayflower Hill to see the view over the Kennebec and pick berries. In those days graduation was held in the Waterville Opera House. Five of my college chums lived in town; we bicycled to Belgrade Lakes, used the huge Kiwanis swimming pool during summer breaks from class, and paddled our canoes up the Messalonskee Stream. I worked jobs at Main Street enterprises.

My fond memory of my Colby years is as much from the non-academic rewards off campus; the ties of town and gown, the connections not realized, were a significant part of my maturing and college learning life.

After World War II, I spent one summer living in a Bowdoin frat house while taking three courses, urged by Dean Marriner to fill out credentials and be ready for my senior year at Colby. Later I studied at Columbia, living four blocks north of campus, absorbing the richness of city musical and theatrical life. Fast forward, and I lived with my family on Stanford's campus, isolated from Palo Alto, which seemed "over the tracks" to our children. Many students worked in the external world to help college costs. A son worked an off-campus practicum of technology learning; we aided biological science at Jasper Biological Preserve, helped teach ESL to the needy in town. And perhaps 90 percent of the faculty and staff and their children lived off campus, with consequent life experiences. Many unseen ties on and off campus, mutually beneficial.

And today I cheer the Colby Symphony Orchestra, which demonstrates the enriching rewards of town-gown. The interactions benefit in financial, psychic, and social ways, as well as the practical. A college is not an educational island. More power to President Greene!

*David C. Weber '47
Irvine, Calif.*

Honorary Degrees— Where Is the Political Balance?

Over the years I have grown increasingly uncomfortable with the philosophical direction of Colby specifically, and liberal arts institutions in general.

Colby no longer embraces and encourages tolerance and diversification of thought, particularly political thought.

Disagreement with far-left thinking and voicing is met with contempt, attack, libel, and expulsion for those who dare to digress. Disgraceful behavior and rejection toward conservative thinkers on the Colby campus have been clearly in evidence on several occasions.

The proclaimed purity of closed leftist thought has been demonstrated in many ways by the faculty and administration of the College. The choice of David Axelrod, a notorious far-left political operative and Democrat Party attack dog as honorary degree recipient, followed by commencement speaker Robert Redford, the personification of Hollywood intolerant leftist lunacy, is evidence enough. Absent of any meaningful balance these choices are deeply offensive to thousands of alumni.

Were the faculty and administration of Colby interested in diversification of open thought (I suspect they are not) they might avail themselves of a new book, *The Silencing*, by Kirsten Powers, a very credible and dedicated liberal journalist. This is an excellently researched documentation, which includes the current intolerant narrow-minded environment gripping many alleged institutions of higher learning.

I've not yet given up on Colby College; I still cherish the memory, but I'm getting close.

*Rush Oster '61
Bradenton, Fla.*

A Shout-out for Deep Space

The recent article "Extragalactic Explorers" (spring 2015 *Colby Magazine*) about the work of Professors McGrath and Kocevski has got to be one of the finest ever conceived in the history of the magazine. Absolutely fantastic.

*Norman Macartney '61
Morehead City, N.C.*

A Quadrangle Question

While sitting in my living room waiting for the wind here at Sugarloaf to subside somewhat, I was perusing the latest edition of *Colby Magazine*, which arrived a few days ago. I could not help but notice the caption accompanying the photo of the library inside the front cover: "... students hustle across the quad to lunch..." Is/was not the quad behind, rather than in front of, the library?

Before sending this email I took the liberty of sharing my inquiry with a number of 1960s vintage friends, all of whom (so far) have agreed with my (easily jumbled) recollection. None of us did, however, factor in the possibility that continental drift may well have a hand in this, in which case you can simply delete this missive (it being yet additional evidence of my having wayyyy too much time on my hands).

Peter Roy '68
Ellsworth, Maine

Editor's Note: The lawn in front of Miller Library is now known as the academic quadrangle. The area behind the library is the location of East Quad and West Quad, designating two separate dormitories. (The role of continental drift is a question for the Geology Department.)

Yes to the New Look

Great job on the new look and format. Read it cover to cover.

Peter Grover P'16
Acton, Mass.

Colby Conversation via Social Media

 facebook.com/colbycollege

 twitter.com/colbycollege

On the Death of Peter Cronkite '15

Sheila Rothgart Browning P'10 on Facebook

I celebrate the Cronkite Family for not hiding the tragic cause of their son's devastating death. Only by being open ... will we fight the stigma of suicide. Losing a loved friend or family member in any manner is the worst kind of loneliness. The stigma attached to suicide increases the survivors' sense of isolation. We all need to open the conversation so that we can try to reach those of us in pain. My heart goes out to you, Peter's mother, father, siblings, and friends. I too am a survivor of a suicide.

Diane Hoey P'16 on Facebook

Thank you to the Cronkite Family and the Colby community for the transparency and communications around this tragedy. They allow for important conversations to take place. Sincere condolences to all who knew Peter.

Lisa Shear Shawn P'16 on Facebook

"In Peter's memory, let us make asking for help an act of great valor." Deeply moving and profound words.

Commencement: #Colby2015

@MarcquesX on Twitter

I would trade a lot of things in life to spend one more year with all of the fantastic senior friends I made this year. #Colby2015

@tionna_heyyy on Twitter

It may be over, but something's about to begin. #Colby2015

Reunion: #Back2Colby

@PVSmith on Twitter

Freshman roomies, friends forever! Viva Class of '80. #Back2Colby

Colby Connections

Eileen Hopf '19 on Facebook: I was wearing my Colby shirt while walking around Paris, and this woman stopped me to say excitedly, 'Do you go to Colby?' I told her that I will be starting next year, and she told me that her daughter will be there, too. What a small world, and what incredible connections to Colby you can find, even in a completely new territory. This interaction made my day.

That prompted us to ask our Facebook audience, "What is the most unexpected place you've come across a Colby connection?"

Kristen Vaughn Olson '03: A woman actually pulled me over in my car while driving in Norfolk, VA, because she saw my Colby bumper sticker. She had graduated about 15 years before and wanted to make sure I had a job and a place to live.

Olivia Wright '19: Wore a Colby shirt stepping off the plane in Sri Lanka, a Colby alum ran up to me and introduced himself! Completely made my day!

Peter Adler P'07 P'15: I was at a dinner in Vermont with a high school friend (Class of 1960), his parents, and his parents' friends, in their 80's and 90's. Next to me was a fascinating Jewish lady who had written a book about her experiences in Nazi Germany. Toward the end of the dinner, I learned that her granddaughter was in my daughter's class at Colby, both about to graduate, and it turned out they were friends.