

# Fifty-Plus

## Correspondent:

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What follows covers the last 34 of the responses to my questionnaire of March 15, 1994. Two hundred five of you sent returns so that, of necessity, my coverage has been spread over several issues. But if you returned a questionnaire and haven't seen your name here yet, surely you will find it now.

## TEENS

**Elizabeth Sweetster Baxter '41** sent material on the life of her mother, **Phyllis Sturdivant Sweetser '19**, who died at 96 on January 16 at a Portland, Maine, hospital. Mrs. Sweetser, a woman of many accomplishments, was a member of the Colby College Alumni Council and a recipient of the Colby Brick in 1972. She was chairperson of the Cumberland County (Maine) Cancer Crusade. She was a lifelong member of the Cumberland Congregational Church, president of the women's fellowship there, head of the children's department for 16 years and a member of the pulpit supply committee. My dear late sister, **Harriet Eaton Rogers '19**, and Phyllis Sweetser were close friends. Mrs. Sweetser wrote some years ago to say that she remembered me as a 2 year old when she visited Harriet at our home on Silver Street in Waterville. ♦

## TWENTIES

**Olive Soule Parmenter '26** writes that her father-in-law was George Parmenter, head of the Chemistry Department at Colby. (Fondly do

I remember Professor Parmenter's lecture demonstrations.) Olive is blind but keeps fit by walking. ♦

## THIRTIES

**Roderick Farnham '31** writes to tell about his brother, the late **Albion Farnham '35**, who had a fearsome reputation as the man who pitched Colby to at least two state championships. In an interview by Harland Durrell in the *Waterville Morning Sentinel* of July 19, 1952, Eddie Roundy, coach at Colby starting in 1924, was quoted as saying that in over 25 years of coaching Colby baseball, his three best pitchers were right-handers **John Trainor '28** and **Al Farnham '42**. Al's brother **Ray Farnham '36** was a heavy hitter with some of the same teams that Al played on. . . . **Dr. Carl Reed '35** is continuing for the 16th year as executive secretary of the Florida Association of Academic Non-public Schools comprising 29 organizations with a membership of about 1,000 private schools. A son, Terence J. Reed, Ph.D., is a professor at the University of Alabama in Huntsville; and a daughter, Sandra D. Reed, Ph.D., is a professor at the University of North Carolina in Greensboro. (Dr. Reed was principal of Somerset Academy in the late '30s when my father, Harvey D. Eaton, Colby Class of 1887, was a member of the Board of Trustees. The two were friends and met often at my father's farm in North Cornville.) To stay fit, Dr. Reed starts at 6 a.m. with a one-and-a-half mile walk followed by a stint in his garden. . . . A large change has occurred in the life of **Richmond Noyes '35**, because in the 1989 Colby alumni directory he is listed as living in Milbridge, Maine, whereas his April 8, 1994, questionnaire shows Oakville, W.Va., as the place to send his mail. He sold out his store after 42

years in business, and he walks one and a half miles a day by way of keeping fit. . . . **Wilfred Kelly '35** up in Middlebury, Vt., spent the winter of '93-'94 in Florida. His daughter is a "pretty spry girl" whose own daughter presented Wilfred with a great-grandson five years ago and will, by now, have presented him with another. . . . According to **Nancy Libby '36**, the thing to do about turning 80 is to ignore it. She retired from the State University of New York at Fredonia in 1978 but still takes part in activities there. She and **Lois Lund Giarchardi '36** plan to attend their 60th reunion in 1996. . . . **Ruth Millett Maker '36** is taking piano lessons again after a hiatus of 50 years. She plays the organ at the Episcopal Church in New Bedford, Mass., an accomplishment of which she is proud. She keeps fit by doing the "Senior Stretch," which consists of mild aerobics twice a week plus daily walking. As a fund raiser for her church, she walked 10 miles in the fall of 1993. . . . **Solomon Fuller '36** celebrated his 85th birthday March 10. He has six children, 14 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. During January 1994 he visited Marco Island, Fla., Sanibel Nature Preserve and Everglades City. His #1 and #2 sons, John and Robert, and their wives visited him there. . . . **John Dolan '36**, that most stalwart of Colby alumni, sent me a copy of the nostalgic letter he wrote last year to President Cotter. In it John reflects on the many features that make Colby great. The faculty, food service and helpful people in the Alumni Office all come in for well-deserved praise. . . . In a letter dated February 13, **Marjorie Gould Shuman '37**, my predecessor in this column, writes that she

and husband **Ed Shuman '38** are traveling extensively and meeting all manner of Colbyites in their travels. In April last year they spent two weeks in England and Scotland. Thereafter, Marjorie's sister **Dorothy Gould Rhoades '36** and her husband, **Donald Rhoades '33**, visited the Shumans in Oneonta, N.Y. The two couples then visited Marjorie's sister-in-law, **Ruth Stebbins Cadwell '41**, in Doylestown, Pa. Following that, Marjorie's sister **Ruth Gould Stebbins '40** and her husband, **Roger '40**, came to the Shuman summer home in Florida for a tour of the central part of the state in the Shuman van. Marjorie's brother, Gilbert, with wife Ellie joined the tour. Another reunion involved **Marion Dugdale '38** and **Helen Foster Jenison '38** at Marion's spacious home in South Daytona, Fla. . . . **Muriel Scribner Gould '37** and her husband, Lewis F., celebrated 57 years of marriage on July 10, 1994. She has affectionate memories of Professor Eustis—"a real teacher, helping all his students to make the grade and always willing to listen to our problems." . . . **Rod Pelletier '37** reports from Daytona Beach, Fla., that he worked exclusively last year on getting a year older. He says he does a little painting (house or easel, he doesn't make clear) and mows one and a half acres (presumably grass). . . . Our deepest sympathy coupled with admiration must be extended to **Hildreth Wheeler Finn '37**, who has suffered a crushing series of family tragedies. However, she says, "My support is in my church . . . a charismatic wonderful group of people." Fortunately, her health is excellent, permitting her to walk, swim, play golf and read—mostly inspirational books. . . . **Lucile Naples Weston '37** is too busy reading the questionable news in the political and investment worlds to have time for any other reading.



Three years ago she traveled up and down France renewing happy relations with relatives there. Her most recent project has been to obtain a Massachusetts state license in mental health counseling. Her fond recollections are of the three language professors, John McCoy, Everett Strong and Gordon Smith: "All fine educators and personalities who taught with enthusiasm and interest in the students." . . . The Rev. **Donald Thompson '39** reads the Bible a lot. He is reminded of the boy who, when asked why he did not read the Bible as his grandmother did, answered: "She is preparing for her final exams." Says Donald: "I am a grandfather, and the time is coming." Don included detailed observations on the making of maple syrup at his brother's place in Presque Isle, Maine (sap becomes syrup at a temperature determined by the barometric pressure at the time, and on the day in question that was 219 1/2). . . . At our age, the accomplishments of our children go a long way to offset some of the ills that seem, inevitably, to befall us. **Lois Britton Bayless '39** and her husband, Bill, have two sons. Steve is vice president of Westlake Chemical Co. in Houston, Texas, and Bob is a colonel in the Air Force in Brandon, Fla. The sad offset is that Bill has had to go on kidney dialysis and, although "He has adjusted very well . . . it has certainly curtailed our impulsive traveling." . . . **Jean Burr Smith '39**, suspecting that my mind is going, has sent me a page of math problems certain to speed the decline. She says: if  $4/9=1/9+1/3$ , how do you express  $3/11$  using only 1's in the numerator. My answer is:  $1/11+1/11+1/11=3/11$ . But I suspect Jean doesn't have in mind anything so simple as that. Thanks a bunch, Jean, for ruining my afternoon! ◆

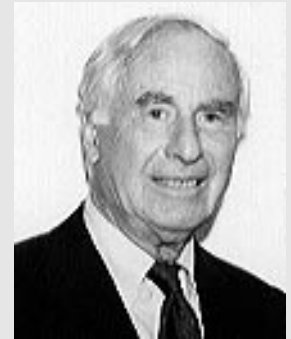
## FORTIES

**John E. Gilmore '40** and his wife, **Ann Jones Gilmore '42**, have two children, Richard '66 and Susanne Gilmore MacArthur '68, and five grandchildren, including Cory Snow '91. The Gilmores spend each April at Sista Key, Fla. In 1992 they visited London, Paris and the Loire Valley. In 1993 they took a Princess

Cruise along the inside passage to Alaska. . . . **Gardner Oakes '40** submitted the most complete questionnaire ever received by this correspondent—two pages, solid, single-spaced, elite type. His three children are all less than an hour's drive away. After the passing of decades, he has located Kappa Delta Rho frat brother **Phil Grant '40**, who he hopes stays well and happy. "Lasting impression guys," now deceased, whom Gardner (and I) remember with affection are: **Irv Gammon '37**, **Ray Stinchfield '39** and **Bert Rossignol '39**. Gardner still thinks banning the frats was a bad mistake. How has he changed? Crabby as hell now that he is older. He's learning to fly but can't afford it. . . . Our sympathies are extended to "**Babs**" **Walden Palmer '40**, who recently lost her husband, **Paul '37**. **Babs** and **Bob Bruce '40** have been corresponding about a topic that troubles them: How come today's college kids do so much better academically than we used to do? Answer: today's professors are more lenient, **Babs** theorizes, for fear of losing students. (A cover story in *Maine Times* states that high marks are indeed easier to get these days.) **Bob Bruce** himself writes that in January 1995 nine World War II members of U.S. Navy Dive Bombing Squadron VB-305 were awarded Air Medals and Distinguished Flying Crosses 51 years after the event. As a pilot, **Bob** won three Distinguished Flying Crosses and nine Air Medals. He flew Douglas Dauntless dive bombers in the Pacific and finished the war flying F6F Hellcats. One of **Bob's** wartime memories is of his landing an F6F fighter on the aircraft carrier *Hornet*. As **Bob** explains it, the landing was "rough" because his plane had several gaping holes in its rudder and elevator. He enclosed a censored (1944?) letter from his wife, which read in part: "I almost forgot, your broker phoned yesterday. He was very XXXX. He told me that your XXXXX had gone way XXXX with the result that you are now XXXXX and will probably XXXX XXXXX XXX XXXXXXXXX." . . . **Doris Peterson Stanley '41** writes that she and her husband, **Kenneth '39**, had been married

## NEWSMAKERS

**Ludy '21** and **Pacy Levine '27**, of Levine's Clothing Store in Waterville, were featured in the September *Yankee* magazine for embodying the spirit of New England. . . . The late **Thelma Bamford Tracy '31** received tribute in *Maine Times* from writer Sanford Phippen for her excellence as an English teacher and her attention to his high school literary efforts. . . . **Leland C. Burrill '39** received the Bulldog Award from the Lawrence High School Alumni Association. He practiced as a family physician in Menlo Park, Calif., for 37 years. . . . **Lester Jolovitz '39**, who has been active in the Waterville Area YMCA for 30 years, received the organization's Red Triangle Award for his contributions to young people in Maine. . . . On Easter Sunday, **N. Douglas MacLeod Jr. '44** and two of his grandsons rowed through choppy seas to rescue a Barrington, R.I., man who had been in the water more than half an hour after toppling out of his sailboat. "We did what we had to do," MacLeod said. "We couldn't stand by and watch a person die." . . . Lawrence (Mass.) High School inducted **John P. Turner '44** into its athletic Hall of Fame. Turner, who lettered in football and track, went on to captain the Colby football team and rose to the rank of captain in the Marine Corps in World War II.



Lester Jolovitz '39

## MILEPOSTS

*Deaths:* **Alice La Rocque Brown '21** in Northampton, Mass., at 96. . . . **Julia Hoyt Brakewood '22** in Elkhart, Ind., at 94. . . . **Agnes Cameron Gates '23** in Niagara Falls, N.Y., at 95. . . . **Ruby E. Robinson '24** in Skowhegan, Maine, at 93. . . . **Phyllis Buck Dorr '26** in Boothbay Harbor, Maine. . . . **Clyde E. Riley '27** in Worcester, Mass., at 89. . . . **Ava Frances Barton '28** in Atlanta, Ga., at 89. . . . **A. Frank Stiegler '28** in North Haverhill, N.H., at 87. . . . **Roger M. Boothby '29** in Palm Harbor, Fla., at 88. . . . **Rena Mills Theberge '30** in Beverly, Mass., at 86. . . . **Milton H. Edes '31** in Dover-Foxcroft, Maine, at 88. . . . **Bertrand Chute '33** in Manchester, N.H., at 83. . . . **Ruth M. Vose Jones '33** in Ridley Park, Pa., at 82. . . . **Muriel Hallett Kennedy '33** in Westport, Conn., at 82. . . . **Charles M. Tyson '33** in Clinton, N.C., at 84. . . . **Margaret Salmon Matheson '34** in Waterville, Maine, at 81. . . . **Florence Kennison Fisher '35** in Fresno, Calif. . . . **Donald P. Robitaille '35** in Waterville, Maine, at 86. . . . **George H. Cranton '36** in Boca Raton, Fla., at 88. . . . **Barbara Day Stallard '36** in Montclair, N.J., at 79. . . . **Natalie Gilley Reeves '36** in El Lago, Texas, at 79. . . . **A. Virginia York Choate '37** in Cropseyville, N.Y., at 78. . . . **A. Virginia York Choate '39** in Lewiston, Maine, at 75. . . . **Kenneth G. Stanley '39** in Allaire, N.J., at 78. . . . **Earl E. Glazier '40** in Pittsfield, Maine, at 78. . . . **Virgil J. Hinckley '40** in York, Maine, at 86. . . . **Priscilla B. Mailey '40** in Fresno, Calif., at 76. . . . **Clarabelle J. Huntington Groseclose '41** in Houston, Texas. . . . **Lowell E. Barnes '44** in Boston, Mass., at 70. . . . **Peter Kouchalakos '44** in Coral Gables, Fla., at 75.

53 years on July 5, 1994. The Stanleys have three children and four grandchildren (with two in college). Sadly, she writes, Ken has had several mini-strokes that have put him in a nursing home. We extend our deepest sympathies. Doris recommends *The Bridges of Madison County* by Robert James Waller as a short and nice love story. . . . The Rev. **Linwood Potter '41** wishes he could climb mountains but feels that, at 83, he should think about it a bit longer. His fondest professorial memories are of Richard Lougee in geology, "Donkey" Morrow in sociology and especially "Bugsy" Chester in biology. "They all," he says, "added much to my life." . . . Dr. **Richard Dyer '42** has retired after 42 years in general surgery. Dr. Dyer reported that his wife, **Natalie Cousens Dyer '43**, is doing well following her 1991 treatment for lung cancer. The Dyers have four daughters. One grandson is a member of the Class of 1995 at Colby. Dr. Dyer walks, jogs, swims, goes skiing and plays tennis and golf. Missing from this array of activities is something he would like to do—fly. . . . **Blanche "Sunny" Smith Fisher**

'42 retired in December 1993 after 10 years as a legal advocate for battered women. After that she became busy with Seniors Helping Others: Meals on Wheels and teaching a watercolor workshop for seniors. She has two children and two grandchildren. For fitness she works in her garden and allows Wee Bit, her dog, to take her out walking. . . . For a man who left Colby after only two years, **Phil Jones '42** is as enthusiastic a Colby man as many who spent the usual four years. In a letter postmarked April 27, 1994, he tells of a meeting with Dean Marriner at New York's Hotel Victoria. At the time ('36-'37), Phil was a high school junior and emerged from the meeting with towering respect for Dean Marriner. The previous summer, Dr. Johnson assured him that there was no relationship between Colby and the Colby Hall attended by the Rover Boys of "classics" renown. Later, a letter informed Phil that he was the recipient of a \$50 scholarship—no small sum in those days. . . . **William Conley '42** and his wife, Betty, have two cats—and three grown children and four grandchildren, all within a hundred

miles of their home in Lansing, Ill. Being 74 has given him incentive to become an octogenarian. . . . **Weston '42** and **Jean Cannell MacRae '42** had a mini-reunion last year at the Sun City Center, Fla., home of **Kay Reny Anderson '40**. **Frances Brewer Barker '42** also was a member of the party. The MacRaes have three children and four grandchildren. . . . In January 1994, **Harriet Rex Feeny '43** moved from her home of 30 years in Greenwich, Conn., to a retirement community in Baltimore, Md., where she enjoys being near her son and his family. Her plans for keeping fit were "to swim, eat a low-cholesterol diet and generally lead the healthiest lifestyle you ever saw—it says here." She would like to settle down to some serious writing—"a novel, a mystery, or who knows?" She recalls "Prof. Libby and his truly dramatic delivery, Prof. Lougee, who made geology fascinating, and Dr. Marshall, who really cared about teaching English." Mrs. Feeny is a retired vice president of the J. Walter Thompson Advertising Agency in New York City. . . . **Muriel McLellan De Shon '43** reports that her 50th reunion "was wonderful" and says

she wishes she could see more of her great Colby friends. She also wishes she had more time and energy. She golfs, walks and uses her exercycle, rowing machine and treadmill "but without great success." . . . **Elizabeth Beale Clancy '43** has a novel suggestion for keeping fit: drink lots of coffee. This puts her in shape to swim once a week and walk a mile daily. She says that *The Clairvoyant Countess* by Dorothy Gilman is delightful. Elizabeth has five kids and an ocean of grandchildren. . . . **Kay Monaghan Corey '43**, a normal parent, revels in what her children are doing. Charlie, 42, is at Lawrence Academy in Groton, Mass., where he teaches history, coaches soccer, hockey and lacrosse and is the assistant athletic director and a member of the admissions staff. Son Jeffrey, 41, is a psychiatric social worker at the Mental Health Institute in Augusta, Maine, and is a bicycle racer and the head lacrosse coach at Oak Hill High School. Kay and her husband, Nels, keep fit by swimming at the nearby Comfort Inn pool in Augusta, at the beach in St. Petersburg, Fla., and at their camp in Bridgton, Maine. ♦

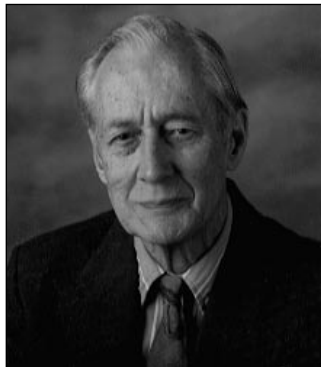
## Age of Enlightenment

**E**ighty-six-year-olds attend Elderhostel classes, but how many of them teach those classes? Norman Palmer '30 does—and travels the world, too.

Palmer, who taught history and political science at Colby from 1933 to 1947 and later chaired both the political science and international relations departments at the University of Pennsylvania, has written two dozen books on international subjects, including three since he retired in 1982. He has taught at more than a dozen institutions around the world, and his travels to more than 50 countries include 14 trips to India and 12 years in Africa. He has logged three one-semester stints at Kyung Hee, a school of international relations in Seoul, Korea, the last as recently as last year.

"I enjoy the foreign experience," Palmer said with graceful understatement. When not on the road he lives "out of the rat race" in the San Juan Islands in Washington state, teaching Elderhostel courses on the Pacific Rim, contemporary India, U.S. policy toward China and India and the impact of major global changes.

"I think the world is changing so much—and it's not just post-



Cold War," Palmer said. "There's a great deal of interest in alliance systems and relations with other parts of the world."

Palmer says Elderhostel students have been around, are opinionated and outspoken and have no problem getting a discussion going. "Besides," he said, "a lot of them are retired, and we can be completely irresponsible. If we were in the position [of the current White House administration] we'd be as bad as we think they are in two weeks."

A Hinckley, Maine, native, Palmer traces his interest in international relations to relatives in the China trade, the New England transcendentalists and Colby professors, especially William Wilkinson and Paul Fullam—"extraordinary people," he said, "who opened up a lot of horizons for me." The honorary doctor of humane letters Colby awarded Palmer in 1955 commended him for his "position of influence in American foreign affairs, of which your college is proud."

Palmer thinks he could live almost anywhere today—except in China-suppressed Tibet, where the 16,000-foot altitude "does things to the system"—but after he and his wife, Gurina, returned from a recent trip to Spain, Portugal and Morocco, he says he is "still recovering." He wonders for a moment if he should teach and journey only vicariously through books.

But no, Palmer says, he'll keep going "as long as the health holds." He says he and his wife are talking about a February trip to Southeast Asia by ship "with a leave-the-driving-to-us group. I'd be interested," he said, "now that Vietnam has opened up."