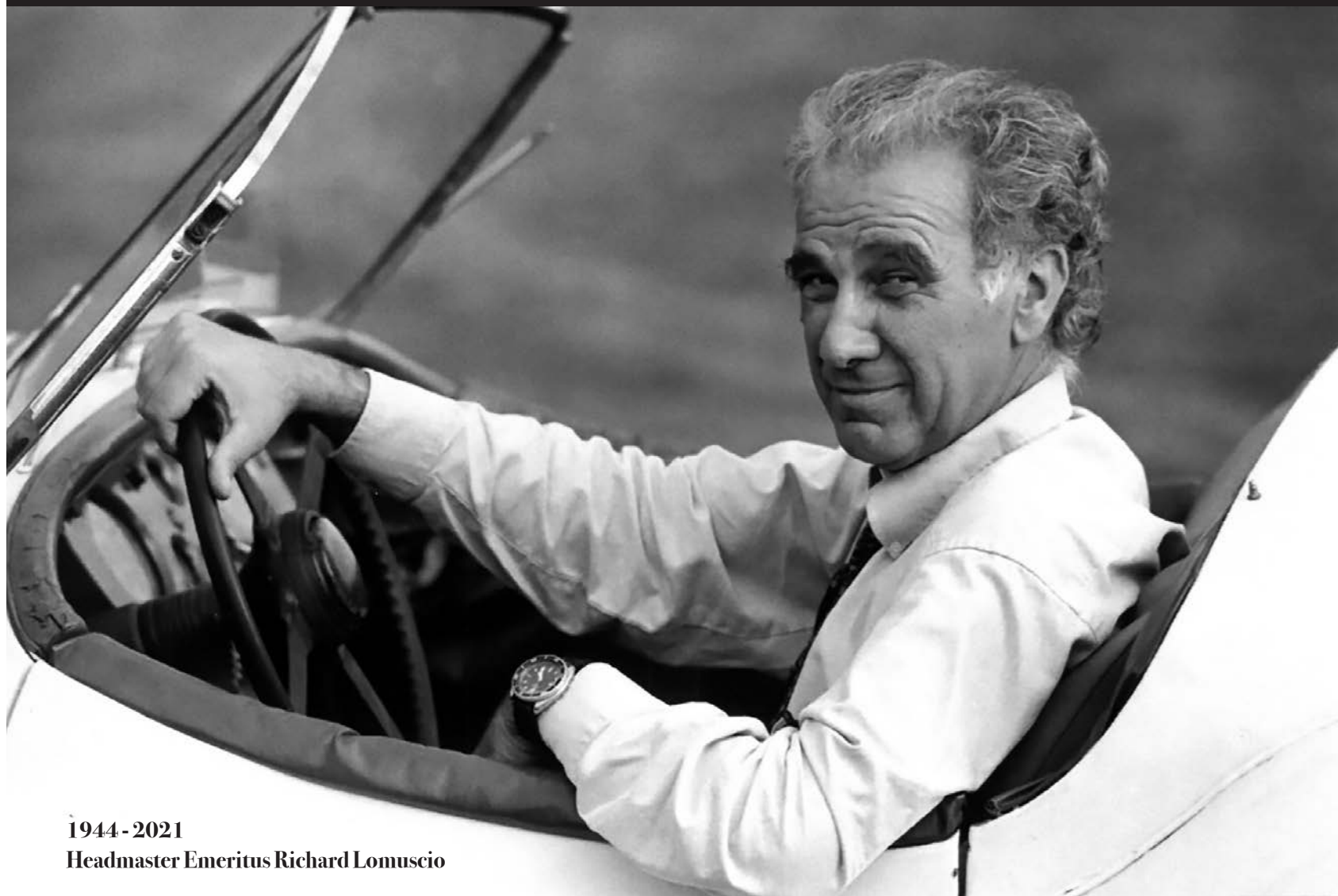


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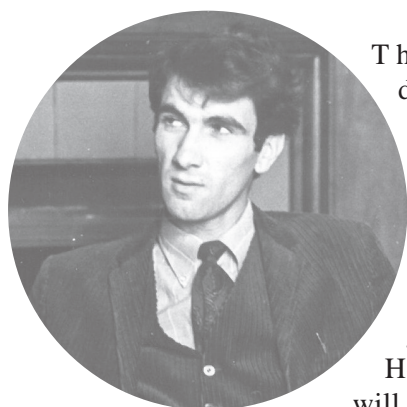
1944-2021
Headmaster Emeritus Richard Lomuscio

SPRING 2021

HOOSAC TODAY

SPRING 2021

ABOUT THE COVER



This issue is dedicated to Hoosac Headmaster Emeritus Richard Joseph Lomuscio who passed away this February at the age of 76. He gave 36 years to Hoosac School and will be deeply missed by many.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

The theme of this issue of *Hoosac Today* is courage. The courage to adapt, to move forward in the face of a rapidly changing world around us. We demonstrated courage this past year not only in creating a new sense of normal on campus, but in how we treated one another. The courage to face differences and to listen. The courage to broaden our perspectives. The courage to face our fears and ask for help when help was needed. Hoosac isn't just a school; it's a family. A community of faculty, staff, students, alums, and parents from all around the globe. We see courage in our alumni as they reach for and achieve their dreams, whether it be on Broadway, beside a bubbling stream in the northern Adirondack mountains, or capturing a single moment amid the din of a bustling cityscape.

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR HEADMASTER

Dean Foster

*When in April the sweet showers fall / And pierce the drought of
March to the root, and all / And veins are bathed in liquor of such
power / As brings about the engendering of the flower...*

-A modern translation by Neville Coghill of Chaucer

April not only brings with it the long awaited touch of spring. It's also the time when we see our students return to campus from their long break. Grades will have been mailed, Vith Formers are coming to the realization that their time at Hoosac is near an end and excitement builds among everyone in the community.

I'm sure many of you can harken back to the fun-filled and gone-to-soon third trimester. Spring sports, AP exams, Asado Day, the tapping of the new Prefects, and finally Prize Day and Commencement all await the next class of alumni soon to join the ranks of those who have gone before. Urge them on and support them as they are indeed a rare class; one that has endured a year like none other. However, instead of lamenting what could have been, we shall celebrate what it was, a victory over odds incredibly stacked against them.

Just as Chaucer's band set forth in the Spring, so too will the graduating students of Hoosac. Their journey beyond the Valley begins now as they prepare for their last days as students. Soon they will be immortalized in the pages of this magazine just as some of you are in this issue. Enjoy these tales of courage and success and recognize your own successes in them.

Deus Regit!

**Courage is something
you don't realize you
had until after the fact.**

-Ryan Moreau '04

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Carpe Diem

The following is Richard Lomuscio's last column for the Shelter Island Reporter, filed the week before he died unexpectedly on Thursday, February 18th.

THE HEADLINE OF this column is a Latin expression for “seize the day” and it’s applied to themes often found in lyric poetry – to enjoy life’s pleasures while one is able.

Seventeenth century poet Robert Herrick is famous in literature anthologies for his poem called “To the Virgins, To Make Much of Time.”

His first stanza is very clear about the theme:

“Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old time is still a flying;
And this same flower that smiles today
Tomorrow will be dying.”

He’s very direct in his message to make the most out of our time here on this planet.

I’m not here trying to evaluate all of Herrick’s poetry or the poetry of others. I’m just remembering what it was like as a 14- or 15-year-old to fully get what these old guys meant. At 14, all I wanted to have happen was to get older and experience the rewards of adulthood. Things like a driver’s license, a car, college and an apartment were all in the future.

Independence.

So I must say that I didn’t fully understand the poet’s message. After all, I had my whole life ahead. Then, like many of my readers, all of a sudden I’m 70 or more. The meaning of “carpe diem” takes on a whole new perspective. Something like: “Since I don’t have that much time left, how can I make the most out of each day?”

This is very difficult for seniors now during this COVID thing. Enjoyment of our precious time left is difficult because of all the restrictions we face from an unseen enemy that has the ability to kill us.

Getting in line for the vaccine is one step to take, hoping that it will be here soon.

Also taking advantage of the beauty that our Island has to offer. Go walk along the beaches and breathe in the fresh, crisp air. Set aside some time to experience nature and walk through Mashomack or some of the





Richard Lomuscio was a family man and dedicated teacher. He was at his best when sharing his love of automobile or other hobbies with others and never missed an opportunity pass on a life-lesson

many other hiking trails throughout the Island.

Most of us can also just look out a window and marvel at the beauty of the turkeys, the deer and the other colorful wildlife we have around us.

And learn how to use Zoom to enjoy the programs available to us at the Library. There's plenty going on in cyberspace so we don't have to visit in person if we don't want to. However, the Library is open, with restrictions, for visitors.

It doesn't make good sense to stay sequestered and watch TV. But I must admit that occasionally I fall into the trap of watching 50-year-old TV shows.

There's something comforting about being transported back to a simpler time – and when we were younger.

I don't think it's too healthy to live in the past. Let's use the present and the future that we have. And while getting locked in by the virus – and now the snow and ice – it's common to wish for the summer, the best time ever here. Just make the best of the snow and ice and the time indoors.

I have painted and refurbished three rooms in my house. At times it was a fight, but when completed, I had a real sense of accomplishment.

And before we know it the vaccines will be here. And summer will be here!





*Richard Lomuscio on the beach at Shelter Island,
his home away from Hoosac*

In Memoriam

Richard Joseph Lomuscio 1944-2021

Richard Joseph Lomuscio passed away peacefully at his home on Shelter Island on Thursday, February 18, 2021. He was 76.

Richard was born to parents Helen and Dr. Richard Lomuscio in Petersburg, Virginia, on October 5, 1944, when they were stationed there in connection with Dr. Lomuscio's deployment to Europe with the U.S. Army Medical Corps.

While Richard grew up in the Marine Park section of Brooklyn, New York, his was not the stereotypical Brooklyn childhood since he spent as much time as he could fishing and exploring the creeks and woods then surrounding his neighborhood, and often did the same when at his family's summer home in Eatons Neck, New York.

Richard graduated from Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School in 1962, and went on to obtain a BA in French and an MA in Education from New York University. While at NYU, he met his future wife, Karen Rensberger, and they were married on December 31, 1966.

In 1966, Richard also began what eventually would become a 36-year career at the Hoosac School in Hoosick, New York. From 1966 to 1977 and again from 1984 to 2011, Richard taught and was an administrator at Hoosac, ultimately serving for 20 years as the 130-year-old independent boarding school's 10th Headmaster. A true believer in the liberal arts approach and that education extended beyond the classroom, over the years he taught French, English, biology, chemistry, and calculus; coached track, fencing, tennis, and basketball; served as a dorm parent; and pursued his passion for cars by working with students on almost every type of automobile from Jaguars to Camaros.

Hoosac's current Headmaster, Dean Foster, recalled Richard as an "icon of independent education and the most remarkable teacher I have ever known." His many students echoed this sentiment, with one noting that Richard's "wealth of knowledge and the way he

articulated it made you think — and that is what great educators do."

In the years he was not at Hoosac, Richard lived on the Shelter Island property that Karen and he bought in 1972; taught at Pierson High School; dabbled in auto body repair; worked as a freelance copy editor for various New York publishing houses; and as a reporter and editor at the Shelter Island Reporter.

Following his retirement from Hoosac in 2011, he returned to Shelter Island full-time and began a weekly column for the Reporter that often featured adventures with his six grandchildren. He also mentored students in a journalism program at the Hayground School in Bridgehampton.

Richard was predeceased by Karen in June 1983 and is survived by his companion Dorothy Serrell; his siblings Mary Lomuscio, Florence Bernie and her husband Sheldon; James Lomuscio and his wife Christine; his sisters-in-law Kahla Gentry and Kristin Cheyne and her husband Ian; his son Richard Joseph Lamar Lomuscio and his wife Michelle Lomuscio; his daughter Lora Lomuscio and her husband Bran Dougherty-Johnson; and his son Victor Lomuscio; his daughter-in-law Christa Dunston; his grandchildren Myla Dougherty, Leonardo Dougherty, Maudie Grace Lomuscio, Anouk Lomuscio, Avalene Lomuscio and Andrew Lomuscio; and Dorothy's family, Wendy Fish and her husband Jon; Chad Serrell and his wife Jenna; and Bryan Serrell, his wife Lisa, and their children Marley, Dean and Colette.

Burial occurred at the Emily French Memorial Cemetery on Shelter Island.

A memorial service honoring Richard and celebrating his life-long work in education will be held at a future date at the Hoosac School.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Mashomack Preserve, 79 South Ferry Road, Shelter Island, NY 11964, or the Hoosac School, PO Box 9, Hoosick, NY 12089. Visit hoosac.org/giving/overview or email info@hoosac.org.

Mapping Hoosac History

By Samantha Graves

*I*n 2018, a blood-stained map of the Hudson River-Lake Champlain Valley sold at auction for \$84K into private hands. Flawlessly executed with intricate detailing, the map features watercolor ink on paper overlain atop a fine linen weave. It is one of only six of its kind to survive the American Revolution and was hailed as “one of the finest 18th-Century American maps to have come onto the market.”

This highly revered example of early-American map-making was the product of a young cartographer, Francis Josef Pfister, who had volunteered with the Royal American Regiment under General Abercrombie at the start of the French and Indian War. The battalion, known also as the 60th Regiment of Foot, consisted of commissioned and non-commissioned officers; and of these were several cartographers and engineers. Each would demonstrate their worth during the seven-year conflict designing and constructing fortifications and surveying lands essential to the war effort.

The Royal American Regiment’s non-commissioned officers were largely made up of German and Swiss volunteers. This wasn’t by chance; the German and Swiss military were better equipped for conflict in regions like

the forested mountains and river valleys running through the American colonies. Moreover, these men were largely Protestant and willing to take sides in a conflict against the predominantly Catholic French.

Though just 15-years-old at the time, the German-born Pfister demonstrated a profound aptitude for engineering and map-making. He was recruited as a non-commissioned officer with the British Army to survey lands in the Province of New York at the height of the conflict.

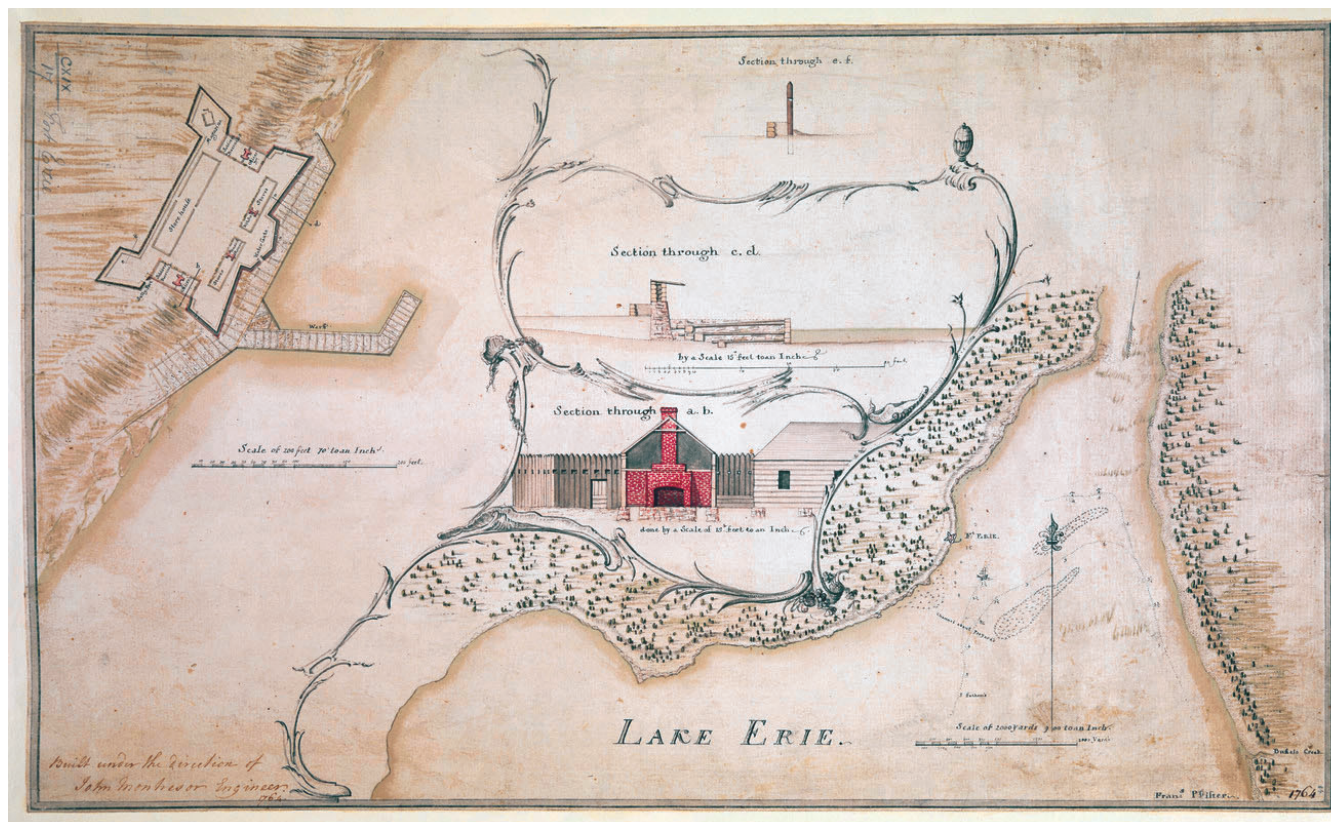
By 1758, Pfister was a commissioned officer traveling east of Fort Niagara, tasked with mapping the Hudson River-Lake Champlain Valley corridor. This assignment would lead him to untold successes with Pfister bearing witness to the extraordinary ingenuity of the era. Later, it would thrust him into one of the most critical conflicts of the American Revolution.

Montessor’s Wooden Railroad

Pfister was rarely in one place for more than a year after arriving on American soil as a teenager. Stationed at multiple fortifications during his service during the French and Indian War, he came into contact with a



This map of the Hudson-Champlain corridor was taken from Pfister after he fell at the Battle of Bennington in August of 1777. The blood-stained map sold at auction for \$84K in 2018



The 15-year-old Pfister demonstrated such remarkable skills in engineering and cartography that he was recruited by the British military and tasked with surveying New York Province. He served as a non-commissioned officer during the French and Indian War and mapped several fortifications including Lake Erie

variety of individuals who would later prove significant in the expansion of territory and war efforts.

By 1762, Pfister was stationed at the newly completed Fort Stanwix, halfway between Oneida and Utica. There, he became acquainted with Sir William Johnson. It is said the two engaged in conversations about business and military strategy. Pfister was even said to have attended a meeting between the then-British Supervisor of Indian Affairs and leaders of the Iroquois Confederacy at his home, Johnson Hall, in 1767.

Arguably the most important person Pfister would meet during his time with the British Army was a man largely lost to history, a man not that different from Pfister. That man was cartographer and engineer John Montessor.

Like Pfister, Montessor was stationed briefly at the lower landing of the Niagara portage between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie in 1764. This portage linked the Great Lakes watershed with the St. Lawrence seaway and included a section of the Niagara Escarpment, a steep-walled cliff peaking at an elevation of nearly 200

feet at the site.

Prior to Montessor's arrival, members of the Seneca Tribe were hired to carry goods and small boats over the escarpment. Montessor envisioned a more efficient method and utilizing the efforts of some 650 men, he oversaw the construction of a wooden gravity railroad at the site. This system of rail utilized two sets of tracks over which cradles or sleds were lifted or lowered by rope fed through pulleys at the top of each incline. When one sled lowered, it acted as a counterweight to the one being raised. This innovative tram system is today considered the very first railway constructed in the United States.

Evidence of collaboration between Montessor and Pfister includes mention of the two men on a map of Fort Erie, in which Pfister is listed as the map-maker and Montessor as a contributor. It would prove a worthwhile relationship for the young Pfister.

As the French and Indian War ran down, Pfister was one of only a handful of retired or semi-retired officers to remain at Niagara. Sometime around 1765, he and

another officer, John Stedman, secured a commission for sole proprietorship of commercial operations along the portage. This contract procured under General Thomas Gage allowed Pfister and Stedman to profit £10 (roughly equivalent to £1,800 today) or more for all non-Army related transport over the escarpment.

Sometime prior to 1770, though maintaining a half-interest in the bustling commercial operation of the portage, Pfister had relocated to Albany, where he met and married Anne Macomb. By 1772, he had become a naturalized citizen of Great Britain. This action did not go unnoticed by the percolating American rebellion.

Escalating tensions between Great Britain and the American colonies in 1776 resulted in Pfister being called before the Albany Committee of Correspondence, Safety, and Protection to address rumors of his loyalties to the Crown. He was ordered by the committee “not to take up arms in the present war between Great Britain and the American states.” Pfister signed the order, pledging he would remain neutral in the conflict.

We might never know for certain whether Pfister had any intention of keeping his promise. He had seen enormous prosperity under British rule and amassed substantial holdings as a result of the portage and his service to the Crown, including a land grant on a quiet hillside just outside of Hoosick, NY.

White House of Hoosick

Having served in the French and Indian War, Pfister applied for unimproved lands in the vicinity of Troy and was awarded 2,000 acres on the Nepimore Vale along the Hoosic River in 1766. A decade later and he had constructed a home, a carriage house, and a barn on the property. Each of these buildings is still in use today more than 240 years later.

The home, which has been altered some to accommodate various changes in use, boasts the same exterior it did when it was constructed. The stucco finish made the home stand out among the greenery of the hillside, giving it the nickname the “White House of Hoosick.”



Artist Edward Lamson's depiction of a meeting between British Supervisor of Indian Affairs, Sir William Johnson, and leaders of the Iroquois Confederacy at Johnson Hall

Though Pfister was aware of escalating tensions between British and American forces, he may have underestimated the determination and fortitude of those supporting the American rebellion. Or perhaps his interest in the preservation of the status quo was one he pursued over enormous personal risk. Whatever his reason, Pfister ignored the parole he signed before the Albany Committee of Correspondence and prepared for war.

A Confrontation Along the Walloomsac

In the summer of 1777, working alongside Lt. Col. Friedrich Baum, Pfister secretly assembled a small battalion of 318 largely German-speaking men under orders from General John Burgoyne.

Gen. Burgoyne had reclaimed Fort Ticonderoga in July, but as he pressed south toward Albany, he began to run low on supplies. He set his sights on Bennington and ordered Lt. Col. Baum and Col. Pfister to capture a provisions storehouse in the town.

On August 14th of that same year, Col. Pfister tucked his hand-drawn map of the Hudson-Champlain corridor inside the breast pocket of his jacket, said goodbye to his family, and mounted a horse for the hamlet of Walloomsac to join Burgoyne's forces.

Known today as the Battle of Bennington, this battle along the Walloomsac River on August 16th left 207 British and Loyalists and 30 Americans dead. By the day of battle, the Americans had garnered support from more than 2,000 militiamen, leaving the British outnumbered nearly two to one. Though Gen. Burgoyne had been warned of possible conflict at the site, he had severely underestimated the size of the American militia collected as far east as New Hampshire, leaving his troops vulnerable.

During the conflict Col. Pfister and Lt. Col. Baum suffered life-threatening injuries. The two were captured and carried to the nearby home of American Jonathan Armstrong. By sunset the following day, both men had succumbed

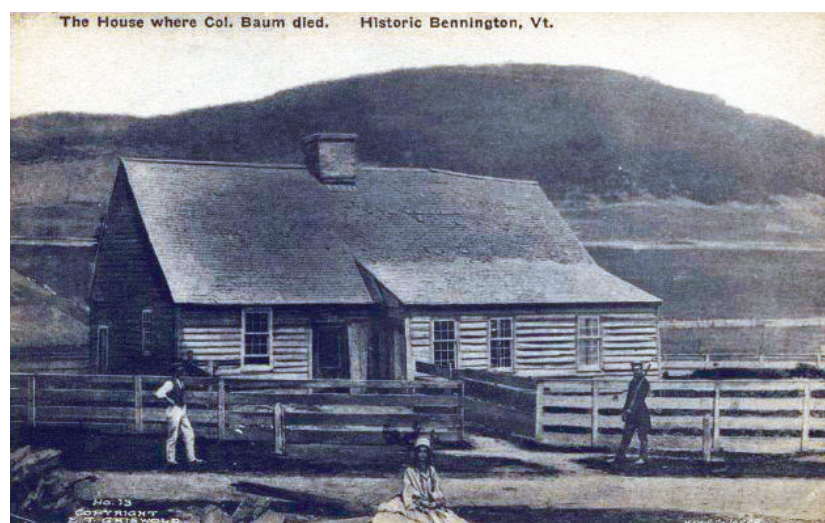
to their injuries and were buried along the banks of the Walloomsac River. Although the site of the crude burial is not known, a small stone monument and plaque today marks the location of the former Armstrong home.

Upon capture, Pfister was searched and items on his person confiscated. Among these artifacts was a neatly folded map of such intricate detail that Armstrong chose to keep it in his personal collection. He kept it despite the smudges of Pfister's blood that had by then settled into the linen weave, mapping an elegy of man's life truncated by war.

What is today the bustling campus of Hoosac School was a solemn place nearly two and a half centuries earlier. On the threshold of Dudley Cottage, Anne Pfister received the news of her husband's death; her life and the lives of her children were transformed in an instant.

History suggests she may not have been forced off the land immediately. David Pitlyk, an historic site assistant with the NYS Parks Service, said the judgment against Pfister under the Confiscation Act was not signed until 1783. Anne may have been permitted to stay for at least a year before she made the journey westward to Michigan, her family having ties there in what is today known as Macomb County.

In 1800, George Mortimer Tibbits purchased the



Home of John Armstrong where Lt. Col. Baum and Col. Pfister were carried after capture at the Battle of Bennington. The two died the following day and were buried on the banks of the nearby Walloomsac River. Today, a stone monument marks the site of the former Armstrong home



Francis Pfister's Plan of Niagara (1771) Courtesy University of Michigan Clements Library

2,000 acres confiscated by the Americans after the war. Tibbits would leave a lasting legacy on the Nepimore Vale. A legacy that does not overshadow the history of his predecessor, but is built upon it. So that generations later, the narratives of men like Francis Pfister, much like the ancient bells of All Saints on old campus, ring still.

Special thanks to the New York State Park Service Historic Site Assistant, David Pitlyk, for his contributions of primary witness accounts from the Battle of Bennington. Special thanks also to Phil Holland, a resident of Pownal, Vermont and the author of *A Guide to the Battle of Bennington and the Bennington Monument*, for his guidance. Much gratitude to Jonah Spivak for his tour of the site and careful explanation of the confrontation. Thanks also to the Bennington Museum for showcasing and preserving some of the remaining artifacts collected from Pfister following the battle.

Note A number of accounts relating to the burial of Baum and Pfister indicate Pfister was buried face down. While perceived as an act of disrespect, it is more likely the individuals burying Pfister knew his family and wished for them to be able to identify the remains for reburial at a later date. One primary witness account indicates Pfister's body was later located and reburied in New York.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

In my mid-20s, the mother of three young children, I was diagnosed with an aggressive form of blood cancer. Though life-saving, the treatments were brutal. Each combined a chemo- and immunotherapy regimen involving a brief hospital stay after which I was sent home with high-dose steroids and other drugs to combat the residual effects of the toxic cocktail. Four pills every so many hours for seven days. I stopped sleeping, developed blisters in my mouth and throat, and was too weak to sit upright without breaking into a drenching sweat. I felt a kind of defeat I had not known before. And in the darkest moment, when I cradled the final four pills of that first week of treatments, I made a decision. I wasn't going to continue.

"I can't do this," I whispered. "But you have to," came the inevitable retort.

For years, I reflected on this moment with shame. You hear about patients "battling cancer" like warriors on horseback engaged in sword play with a white cell mutation. But I didn't feel like a warrior. I felt like a coward.

It would take several years before I saw this moment for what it really was; a moment of courage. Because while I knew with my brain and shaking body I could not possibly take any more pills or infusions, I did. I stretched out the final dose, attempting to swallow one pill every hour until they were gone.

Today, I'm cancer-free and old enough that my young children are nearly all grown. The experience helped me understand that courage is often masked in those moments when we must draw upon it. I see it now in others. Especially in the students, faculty, staff, and our school administration, who have demonstrated enormous courage while attempting to maintain some semblance of normalcy during a pandemic that has claimed the lives of millions worldwide. It isn't over yet, but we are far enough from the start to see how we've grown as a community. In some cases, putting differences aside in support of the whole or masking our own anxiety so that others might feel a bit less afraid. Or in the case of our Headmaster Dean Foster, telling one of his classic dad jokes to rile a laugh out of us.

It's been a trying year, but a year of wonder, too. Let us go forward in the spirit of courage that has carried us this far, knowing we will look upon this time not as a time when we gave up, but gave it our all. -SG

The Factory



Christophe poses beside his work while at an exhibition in Germany

By the time **Christophe von Hohenberg** '71 graduated from high school, he had already traveled the world and rubbed shoulders with artists like Andy Warhol, Lou Reed (Velvet Underground), and Baby Jane Holtzer. His step-father, Wendy Hilty, was an accomplished photographer, who gave Christophe his first camera, a twin lens Rolleiflex which he still uses today.

"I was very much a rebel hippie mod; Jimmy Hendrix dress style, Kings Road London Fashions, dreaming of traveling through Europe, Morocco, India, Nepal. The Hippie trail. Wanting to become a Renaissance man and mixing with European students," Christophe said of himself at the time he first set foot on Hoosac's rolling campus.

He landed at Hoosac after meeting the then-

headmaster, Donn Wright. "He showed up in a suit wearing sandals and I came to the conclusion after speaking with him that Hoosac was the type of school I would enjoy and relate to."

It was not.

But that doesn't mean Hoosac didn't have its influence. "I had a meeting with the headmaster; he brought out my feelings and understood what I needed."

Christophe transferred to Stowe in Vermont, then went overseas for college at Schiller, where he spent time in Germany, Spain, and eventually landed in Paris, France. It was in Paris, where Christophe realized a kind of unadulterated exhilaration in capturing a scene. "I shot to capture great pictures: People, street scenes, nudes... Whatever made me happy; constantly experimenting and open to everything," he said.

“I started assisting photographers in Paris and then spent three years assisting photographers in New York.” He said he made use of connections developed through associations with these photographers. “The key was networking. Out every night meeting people. One night at a dinner party, I met one editor from *Vogue* and that’s where my editorial magazine career began.”

Christophe went on to become a staple figure in the NYC art scene, where he exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art and regularly showcased work in publications like *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair*, *Marie Clair*, *Rolling Stone*, and *the New York Times Magazine*.

Andy Warhol, the famed artist and filmmaker who is credited with starting the Pop art movement of the 1960s, took notice of Christophe and asked one day:

“Why don’t you take a photo of *me*?”

Christophe arranged for Warhol to come to his studio, but the shoot never took place. Warhol suffered complications from what was anticipated to be a minor surgery and died unexpectedly at age 58.

Instead of capturing Andy Warhol, *Vanity Fair* asked Christophe to cover his memorial service at St. Patrick’s Cathedral. Christophe recognized it as Warhol’s “last and tragic exhibition,” marking the end of a Warhol-inspired Renaissance in New York City.

The photos from Warhol’s service in April of 1987 would be published a decade later in Christophe’s book, *Andy Warhol: The Day the Factory Died*. It is a work hailed by many as a “time capsule” of Warhol’s role in developing the pop art movement. “It was important to publish my book as a memory and tribute to the man I wish I had known better.” The book garnered both the Photo District News Photo Book Award and the AIGA Book award.

The Day the Factory Died was followed by *Another Planet: New York Portraits 1976-1996* chronicling two decades of Christophe’s work in the city, and demonstrating the breadth of his work. Faces of lesser known figures intermingle with iconic personalities from the period, including portraits of the late Christopher Reeve.

“Shooting Christopher Reeve for an advertising campaign was a very moving experience,” said Christophe. “We were good acquaintances back in the 80s. He had just finished shooting Superman in the late 70s when we first met at Indochine Restaurant... I lost touch with him. Then around 2002 or '03, Film Director Robert Leacock hired me to shoot stills.”



"A Portrait of Luna" by Christophe von Hohenberg

Christophe said the actor, who was at that time paralyzed and relegated to a wheelchair from injuries sustained from a 1995 horseback riding accident, didn’t recognize him at first.

“I was overwhelmed seeing him in his wheelchair. He could not even move his head which seemed to be supported by some sort of brace. After Robert finished filming, it was my turn to shoot stills.”



*This image was captured at a museum in Mexico City and is featured in Christophe's book: *Shadows of the Gods: Mexico City**

Christophe wanted to reconnect, so he asked the veteran actor:

“Christopher, remember the days at Indochine and the wild nights at Xenon’s with Vitas? His eyes opened up, and smiled, and he said, ‘I had not thought about those days in years.’”

Christophe said the experience was heartbreaking, yet inspirational. “My God! To be trapped mentally without a body, full of memories and desires. He fought on and on for years. He was a fighter, he was Superman to the end. A bloody hero in my book.”

Following on the success of *Another Planet*, Christophe published a new collection; this time capturing scenes of street life in Mexico City. *Shadows of the Gods: Mexico City* is an exploration of another

city where Christophe lives part-time.

Though the digital age is upon us, Christophe says he still shoots 90 percent on film and said the feeling of capturing an image on film is all about process. “It’s a feeling; like driving a car with a clutch. Being part of the road. You are feeling the car and the steering wheel, down shifting, then back into third gear. Think of the painting on canvas or watching street artists do their thing on street walls. You feel, compose, smell, think, process and feel the shutter ‘click’ and got it!”

He said his advice to his teenage self is this: “Life is a big tree with many branches. Don’t get stuck on one branch. And remember, no matter what one says, there’s always another point of view. The trick is finding one that works for you.”

THE KEY WAS NETWORKING. OUT EVERY NIGHT MEETING PEOPLE. ONE NIGHT AT A DINNER PARTY, I MET ONE EDITOR FROM VOGUE AND THAT'S WHERE MY WORK BEGAN.



Christophe regularly photographed celebrities, including Paul Reubens "Pee-wee Herman," pictured opposite. Said Christophe: "Pee-wee was shot in my New York studio for Interview Magazine's story about celebrity hats. Pee-wee brought in a Dixie Cup, but it kept on falling off his head, so instead he choose my lamp shade

Blue Jay

AS A TEENAGER, **TOM WHIDDEN '66** SAILED AROUND LONG ISLAND SOUND IN A 14-FOOT VESSEL CALLED THE 'BLUE JAY.' TODAY, HE'S RANKED ONE OF THE TOP SAILING PROFESSIONALS IN THE WORLD. BUT HIS STORY DOESN'T START WITH A HUGE WIN. AS WITH MOST REAL CHANGE, IT BEGAN WITH A DEVASTATING LOSS

The United States had claimed victory over the America's Cup for 132 years when in February of 1983, the American defender vessel *Liberty* was overtaken by an Australian boat. For Tom, it would serve as a pivotal moment.

"It was the biggest challenge of my life, to pick myself up from having lost the longest winning streak in professional sports history and to win it back," said Tom. "If you looked at the 11 guys on the boat that day, I would say six of them were crying, a few were despondent."

Instead of giving in to defeat, Tom focused on his fellow crewman, a famed yachtsman and Olympic winner, Dennis Conner. "We looked at each other and said '*Let's go figure out how to win it back.*'"

Winning back the Cup would prove difficult. The US usually had the advantage of being the defender, meaning they automatically qualified to race during the following event, but the Australian win meant not only would they be racing in foreign waters with varying currents and winds, but they would have to qualify against a huge influx of new contestants from across the globe.

"Losing in '83 taught me a lot," said Tom. "I learned a lot

about what you shouldn't do. And the one thing you should never do is assume you know, because you don't know."

Tom and the team decided to begin building their boat and testing it in the waters off Hawaii. "We had to figure out where we went wrong. We built two boats that were really too big and too heavy and too high-wind-oriented to win the trials."

Tom went on to explain, "At that time, in October, November, and December, when the trials ran, were historically lighter air months, but the race in February is historically windy." This meant the boat design needed to account for both light and strong winds.

"We built another boat, still on the large side and it turned out to be good for the Cup, but we were pretty sluggish in the early trials. Thank God it got a little windy and we only had to be in the top four to graduate to the semis and the finals."

Heading in to February, viewers in the United States tuned in to ESPN after midnight to watch the daytime coverage in Australia. It represented one of the largest viewing audiences for the network, despite this inconvenience.

"The rest of the series we went back and forth. We got ahead of them in the first cross and went around the race

course just barely holding them off, but in the end we beat them. And to win a race in light air was fantastic. We went on to win the next four,” said Tom, flashing a smile at the memory. He said the homecoming was tremendous with a private flight offered by the airlines back to the United States, parades, and a White House visit with then-President Ronald Reagan and Vice President George Bush. Later that year, Tom accepted a position with North Sails, a decision that would revolutionize the sport.



Tom said it was his willingness to take risks that led to the company’s success. “I had a conviction that we needed to change and if we didn’t change, it wouldn’t work. If you don’t risk, you don’t gain. I was hell-bent on changing the game and we’ve changed it forever.”

Now every America’s Cup boat uses North Sails from the sails to the masts to

The American vessel, Liberty, was overtaken by an Australian boat in the 1983 America's Cup, leading Tom Whidden '66 to rethink sailing. Today, the technologies developed by Tom's company, North Sails, is being used by America's Cup winners, in aerospace and flight applications, in bicycle designs and in Formula 1 racing



Today's sails are molded with carbon fiber on forms. Change inspired by the 1983 America's Cup loss have lead to boats that are five times faster than any sailing vessel on the water in 1983

the rigging. So much so, that the subtleties between designs vary little and the race is now a far more reliable measure of the competence of the crew.

Sails today are molded with fine carbon filaments, rather than woven and cut, maintaining flexibility, while also reducing the potential for fraying and unnecessary drag. The technologies developed by North Sails since Tom took over have been applied by airlines like Boeing for use in the creation of a carbon fuselage to racing bicycle frames and F1 motorcars. It can be said that thanks to Tom's dedication to improving the sport, boats today are traveling at five times the speeds they were when he participated in his first America's Cup race.

Tom said his time at Hoosac prepared him for his time crewing a vessel in the America's Cup. "I learned how to live with people in close contact. I learned how to motivate people. I learned how to interact with grownups as well as young people. I learned a lot about myself and integrity and telling the truth. I learned I didn't know it all and there was a lot out there in the world to learn. Hoosac taught me that."

"You know, I figured out how to put one foot in front of the other and learn from my mistakes and I got some good

breaks. Never would I have imagined I'd make a career out of being a good sailor or that I'd be in the America's Cup or Sailing Hall of Fame."

Tom's advice for students today is the advice he has followed since his time at Hoosac: "I figured out a lot of stuff. One thing I figured out is you can work just as hard to lose. Losing is a bad option. I learned from the America's Cup that it's not just a race; it's a game of life. You have to be a good person, you have to raise money, you have to be a good team leader, you have to work well with others, you have to have strong ideals, strong convictions. You have to have integrity. The irony is that the boat design is important, but it's not the most important thing needed to win the Cup."

"You're never going to do 100 percent, so do as much as you can. You're going to have failure and you're going to have losses, but it's how you deal with your losses and what you learn from them," he added.

Tom Whidden has come a long way since he's time aboard the *Blue Jay*. What hasn't changed is his desire to change the way we think about sailing. "I had a conviction that we needed to change; and if we didn't change, it wouldn't work." -SG

*I WAS HELL-BENT ON
CHANGING THE GAME
AND WE'VE CHANGED
IT FOREVER.*



When Tom was asked to take over at North Sails, he said he would only do it if the company agreed to invest in technologies that would revolutionize sailing

A black and white close-up portrait of Kevin McGuire, an older man with light-colored, slightly messy hair and a goatee. He is looking upwards and to the left with a thoughtful expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

Setting the Stage

*He was in 2,800 showings of one of Broadway's most spectacular productions, *Les Miserables*, and has starred in everything from *The Secret Garden* to *Phantom of the Opera* to *Pure as the Driven Snow*, a play written by former Hoosac Headmaster, Ashton Crosby. Kevin McGuire knew that the only way to accomplish his dream of theatre was to set the stage.*

Photo by Richard Lovrich

Kevin said his first memory of Hoosac was while passing the campus in the car with his father, James F. McGuire, who had coached baseball at the school in the 1940s. “What’s that?” he asked, looking up at Tibbits mansion on the hillside. “Oh, that’s the new campus of the Hoosac School,” his father explained.

Growing up in a Catholic family, Kevin was sent to the local private school, St. Mary’s, in Hoosick Falls. It was there, during the performance of a school play being judged by members of the community, where Kevin met then Hoosac headmaster Ashton Crosby.

“Ashton was one of the judges. When I met him he said, ‘You were very good. Why don’t you think about coming over to Hoosac?’” Kevin laughed, “Now, being an Irish-Catholic boy, this is a long trip, but my father, because of the play’s response, said, ‘Okay, you can go over to the Episcopalians.’”

During his time at Hoosac, Kevin’s passion for theatre grew exponentially. “We did original plays; I did an Arthur Kopit play called *Indians*, we did *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*; big productions. We did Shakespeare in English class. I think because we were the group that we were, Ashton wanted us to get on our feet and doing stuff because he knew we all wanted to do that. It was a pretty artsy group at the time. There was a definite creative vibe there.”

While Kevin had appreciated the academic education he received at the Catholic School, Hoosac provided an experience beyond the constraints of the more traditional institution.

“I think my parents understood that you can only teach to your own level of your own view of the world,” he said. Hoosac’s faculty, then as now, came from a wide variety of backgrounds and belief systems, as did the student population.

“I felt like my uniqueness was nurtured at Hoosac,” said Kevin, who grew up in the neighboring town of Hoosick Falls and often rode his bicycle to school from his home on Center Street. He said the faculty made a big impression on him early on.

“Elizabeth Grinnell taught music and botany. I was in the dining hall looking out the window and saw this little BMW drive up. She got out of her car and she had this fantastic hair. She went to Harvard, had her Doctorate in Botany, and taught at Columbia. She ended up staying at Hoosac. They gave her the apartment at Tibbits and

she was there the whole time I was there. She was a big influence. I spent one summer between Vth and VIth Form on her farm working and going to concerts. I drove her to Toronto to Stratford for the Shakespeare Festival and we saw like five plays. She was very instrumental.”

Hoosac’s Headmaster at the time, Ashton Crosby, played a pivotal role in Kevin’s early life: “Ashton certainly was great. He was a wonderful teacher and a wonderful man and a great source of inspiration to me,” Kevin said.

One of those moments came when he least expected it, with the arrival of a student who was unlike anyone Kevin had met before.

“We had a student in our class who had some challenges. He was a math genius, but had trouble with coordination. Apparently he had been hit by a cab when he was only two years old and had suffered some brain issues. And we were all sort of ultra cool idiots who thought we were special because we were there. And we were mean to him.” Kevin’s voice grew soft.

“It was hard to be with him. We bullied him. But then Ashton called all of us into his office and he said, ‘*You have no idea how disappointed I am in you boys. I cannot believe that you would do this. You have to stop. You have to think about what you’re doing. You have to think about being a human being. You have to love people. You have to embrace him. He wants your approval. Get your \$h%t together, People.*’”

The moment shook Kevin. “I was so upset that I had disappointed him, that I then took this student under my wing and learned a big lesson. That my mirroring of him and being afraid of him for what he had somehow reflected on me and I was projecting that back onto him. What I learned at just 15 was that accepting him for who he was brought loyalty beyond belief. He loved everybody, which is rare. He cared. He was kind. And he was indeed extremely smart. He just couldn’t do any of the things we were all good at. And I couldn’t do some of the things he was good at.” Added Kevin, “He helped me with my math.”

“It was part of growing up and learning and that was something unique to Hoosac,” added Kevin.

Like many alums, Kevin stayed in touch with his former headmaster long after graduation. “You know, I taught him in NYC. He came in for a private acting class and when he came in to audition, I burst into tears. He

saw everything I did in New York.”

Kevin said he had worried about not developing the kind of friendships he'd had growing up in a small town like Hoosick Falls, but that this worry soon dissipated and was replaced by a concern he would be seen as pretentious by the classmates he left behind. “I don't think people really understood why I was going over there,” he said. “But I found the more I kept coming home and just being Kevin McGuire from Center Street in Hoosick Falls, whose father worked at the Wood Flong; they were reassured.”

Following Hoosac, Kevin pursued acting at Washington College, where a department head told him, “I think you're actually going to do this, Kevin. There's a program in London I want to tell you about...” That program sent Kevin to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) in London. “I went my sophomore year, lived in London, and was like 18.”

The summer following, Kevin joined the Williamstown Theatre Festival as an apprentice and remained for four summers. That fall he attended the prestigious Circle in the Square Theatre School on Broadway in Manhattan. He then applied to the Juilliard School and was one of only a handful of students accepted.

While at Juilliard, Kevin joined the Acting Company where he spent the next three years traveling extensively and honing his skills as an actor. “We did Shakespeare and *The Country Wife* and *Waiting for Godot*. Classics. We took them all over the country. We rehearsed in the summer - two or three plays at a time - then took them

on the road in September and came back in June.”

The Acting Company today is one of the most highly revered classical acting groups in the country, traveling across the United States and abroad. “I can honestly say I've been to every college campus in the United States,” said Kevin. “I have been in tiny towns all across this country.”

Touring today is a part of life, he said. “I think it brought a great awareness at a young age of how similar we are in our values and our love of country and religion, whatever that might be. But how incredibly different we are as well in how we go about it. It made me more tolerant. It made me less judgmental of people who don't agree with me. I try to listen. I try to be open.”

After years of dedication to his craft, Kevin landed a role as Jean Valjean in the Broadway production of *Les Miserables*. He said the moment he knew he had achieved his dream was when the curtain opened on the first live performance. “I just went *Oh, my God! I'm on Broadway!* And then you have to think, *Who the hell do I think I am? This is unbelievable!* It was astounding. It absolutely was what I wanted to do.”

In the 2,800 performances that followed, Kevin learned to explore other aspects of the role. “Your technique tells you to try different

things. I remember the overture would start and I'd think there's a Kevin McGuire out there in the last row who needs to be inspired, so I'd better be brilliant eight times a week. And then I'd try something different. I'd think I'm going to work on managing Jean Valjean's anger for the next three and a half hours or I'm going to work on something and make little changes that you know are different, but the audience has no idea.”

Kevin suggests students today

who have a dream they'd like to develop must work hard. “You can't be a dilettante. I know people say this and it sounds cliché, but I was given so many messages when I was young that this is what I should do and I wanted to do it but thought it's not possibly going to happen. So, while

I was at Hoosac, I thought I was going to college to be a history teacher.”

But then his father gave him some advice. He said, “Kevin, the first person in NY that calls you a horse; don't pay any attention. The second person that calls you a horse, you say, ‘Well, I've heard that before, but I'm getting over it and I'm going to move on... The third person who calls you a horse; buy a saddle.’”

“I kept waiting for that third person to tell me I was a horse so that I would become a history teacher, but that never happened,” Kevin laughed.



Kevin McGuire today



Kevin came to Hoosac from nearby St. Mary's, where his performance in a school play was noticed by then-Hoosac Headmaster Ashton Crosby

Photo courtesy Capital Repertory Theatre

“So, you have to listen. Being an actor; being an artist is not something you can bully your way into. Even the nuns saw it in me. That’s why they put me in plays.”

Kevin expressed the importance of a decent education. He said you don’t have to go to the most prestigious college in the world to go after your dream, but said it’s important to develop your skills whether at Juilliard or a liberal arts college. “These undergrad programs have great theatre departments.”

And finally, Kevin tells current students to put the time into reading. “Read a lot. I did. It stimulates your imagination. It also helps you become more articulate. You have to be able to know what words mean you have to have a vocabulary. You need to understand syntax and grammar and how you construct a story as an actor. And you have to expand your mind because you have to play all kinds of people in all kinds of situations.”

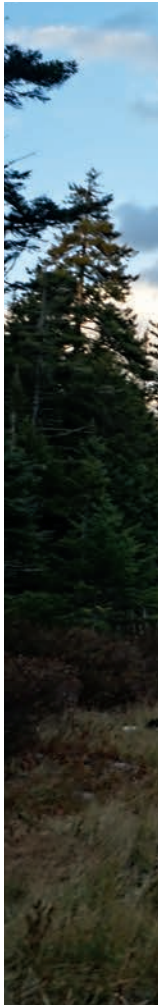
Looking ahead, Kevin said the pandemic has stalled his plans. “It’s been brutal since March. I was in a show in

March. We opened on a Tuesday; we closed on Thursday. The theatre has been hit so hard and I don’t do anything else.” Kevin has taken the extra time to work on a role he has spent his life wanting to play, King Lear. “I am taking the time as an opportunity to do that so when we’re ready to go I will be playing King Lear somewhere. That’s my dream part, so I thought what can I do?”

Kevin also took time out of rehearsing Shakespeare to rekindle one of his old roles while at Hoosac. His voice talent was overdubbed with last year’s performance, bringing to life this year’s virtual performance of the Boar’s Head & Yule Log pageant. As an alumnus, Kevin hopes students will seek out mentors to guide them on their journey, setting the stage for their dreams, as Hoosac faculty helped him do all those years ago. -SG

Improve your act online

Check out Kevin McGuire on Capital Repertory Theatre's *Got a Minute* series on YouTube



There is a place between two ecosystems where the benefits from each create a unique micro-habitat capable of supporting more biodiversity than either habitat alone. Hoosac is like that. Our students and faculty bring together an array of different backgrounds, cultures, languages, and stories and offer something of themselves to the whole. For Stephen Langdon '88, this buffering between worlds gave him a strong foundation in turbulent times.

"It's funny; Hoosac was first posed as a threat," said Stephen, who had grown up in a small town near the Canadian border. He had never heard of the little Episcopalian school in Upstate New York until that moment. "It was a difficult time. My parents were separated and considering taking work in different places. My brother was away at college. So when they threatened to send me to boarding school, in a moment of teenage defiance and the accidental wisdom of youth, I called them out and begged them to send me."

The son of an Episcopalian minister, Stephen realized early on, "Hoosac was a safe harbor in what was otherwise a stormy time of life."

He credits the small class sizes as particularly beneficial for him. "It allowed me to feel engaged and develop a personal relationship with my teachers and it prevented me from slipping quietly through the cracks."

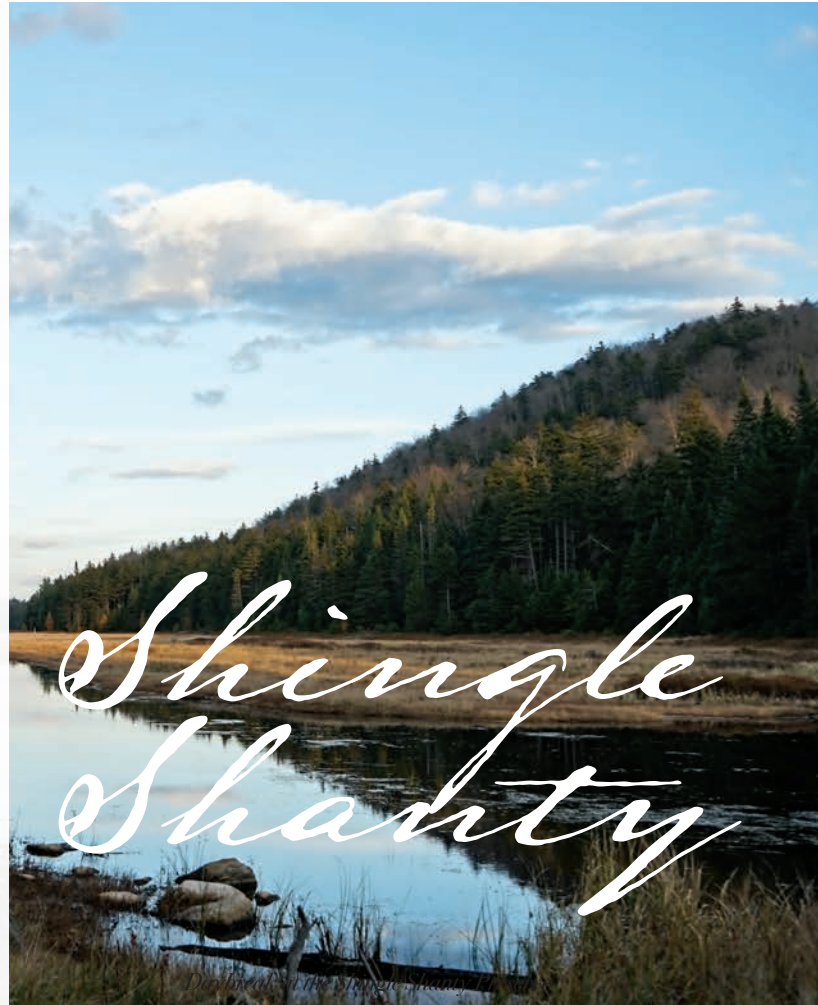
He went on to reminisce about some of the Hoosac faculty who inspired him.

"Richard Guilder, the Latin teacher and lacrosse coach, would chant third declension nouns for us to memorize with the same enthusiasm he shared coaching lacrosse. Randal Krum, the Hoosac School music teacher played the first movement of the Moonlight Sonata late one night in the dining hall with the lights out during a full moon. It remains one of the most beautiful and memorable performances I have ever experienced."

Back home in the northern Adirondacks, Stephen had found his greatest lessons were often discovered while outdoors: "Tree climbing, fort building, throwing rocks across the river with the other kids in town or stacking firewood; those experiences taught me to enjoy being outside and outside with a purpose."

Stephen took that love of nature with him to Hoosac, where this passion was nurtured.

"John Applegate, our biology teacher, took the reflector telescope in the observatory and focused it on a rose-breasted grosbeak while it was singing one chilly Saturday morning. It was absolutely mesmerizing to see this animal in such detail, working so hard to sing its song which I had never paid much attention to before."



Such experiences helped him later in life, when he was asked to choose between a high-paying indoor job and a job working as Director for a non-profit in the mountains. "I chose the latter."

His love of the outdoors didn't go unnoticed at Hoosac. "I recall getting into trouble a few times for waking up before dawn and hiking up the power lines behind the athletic fields to watch the sunrise. Mr. Lomuscio found me coming back one morning shortly after 6 am and wondered what the heck I had been up to. I reminded him that the rule specified we needed to be in the dorms by eight pm and lights out by 10, but there was no rule about getting up at 4:30 am." Stephen laughed, "That didn't go over particularly well."

Stephen recalled walking around the Tibbits forest, ice-skating on the pond or paddling across it in the spring, and making use of the school's observatory whenever the opportunity presented. But he said the relationships he formed with other students were of particular importance.

"Your peers often see you as you really are and correct and forgive your childish stupidity. These are among the most important lessons of boarding school. For a kid from rural white northern NYS, Hoosac was the most culturally diverse setting I had yet experienced. I credit my love of kimchi, shortwave radio, 80's Hip Hop, as well as my knowledge of Korean and Indonesian swear words to the

diversity, brilliance, and hilarity of my fellow classmates. More importantly, these life lessons in open-mindedness, kindness, and forgiveness are with me to this day.”

The experiences at Hoosac shaped Stephen’s desire to pursue a career in ecology. Today, he’s the Director of the Shingle Shanty Preserve, a remote, private tract of land in the Central Adirondacks used for biological research by a number of high-profile organizations, including Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History.

“Our mission is to facilitate scientific research focusing on ecology, geology, and the environment. This 15,000-acre property is a remote, relatively pristine spot at the top of three Adirondack watersheds. The Adirondacks are the largest state or national park in the continental US, and one of, if not the most ecologically intact regions at this latitude around the globe,” Stephen explained.

“New York State is incredibly diverse ecologically. The Adirondacks are part of the transition between far northern ecosystems and temperate ecosystems. It is still just cold enough to support plants and animals that range from Shingle Shanty all the way to the Arctic circle.”

The research conducted at Shingle Shanty informs researchers of the broad impact changes in micro-climates have on plant and animal species. A recent 2019 study revealed changes in migratory patterns of birds responding to changes in climate. Said Stephen, “Our research provides a strong case that yes, the northern birds are moving northward and the more southern birds are replacing them, just as predicted by climate change models.”

Stephen said scientists at the site are not just looking at the negative impacts of climate change, but how the ecosystems are responding.

“A soil ecologist from Skidmore College has been researching the effect of different species of fungi that help native trees grow in order to understand how to maximize carbon sequestration in forests. These mycorrhizal fungi help trees absorb nutrients through their roots and get carbohydrates in exchange,” said Stephen. “The National Science Foundation funding that

supports this work will help us understand how forests can serve as natural buffers to climate change.”

The peatlands prevalent within the Shingle Shanty property play a huge role in carbon storage. “Peatlands are wetlands where the plants grow and die, but because of the cold and wetness, that dead vegetation doesn’t decompose, but accumulates,” Stephen explained. “Around the globe, northern peatlands account for about a third of the terrestrial carbon on Earth. Maintaining and enhancing the carbon stored in peatlands is a critical part of managing climate change.”

In a year demonstrating the impact climate has on everything from disease vectors to increasing intensity of forest fires to rapidly rising ocean acidity, Stephen holds out hope.

“Hope lies close to home. Another function of these peatland ecosystems is that they are home to unique biodiversity of plants and animals that like the cold.” The growing season at Shingle Shanty is just 19 days. “What this means is that some of these low-lying cold northern wetlands may persist and act as refuge for cold-tolerant species for a long time into the future. Our work helps us identify these places and enhance their resilience in this changing world.”

Stephen says students today should take the time to observe their natural environment. “Shut off your phone and consider the words of Aldo Leopold, ‘The weeds in a city lot convey the

same lessons as the redwoods.’ One must simply observe.”

“Find a mentor,” Stephen continued. “I have learned much about the natural world and science from old Adirondack hunters and trappers as I have learned from PhD ecologists. And of course, lift your eyes to the mountains. They are a great source of strength.”

From Shingle Hollow, that lowland out front of the sloping Tibbits property to Shingle Shanty, Stephen Langdon carries with him the lessons he found in that place where two worlds nurtured a passion that continues to this day. -SG

www.shingleshanty.org



Stephen Langdon is the Director of the Shingle Shanty Preserve in the northern Adirondack Mountains

Courage Under



ERIKA SEITZ IS KNOWN FOR PUSHING THE LIMITS WITH HOT PEPPERS, BUT TODAY, SHE'S PUSHING LIMITS SHE NEVER IMAGINED

*T*here's a longstanding debate in the DC Universe about whether Batman qualifies as a superhero. By the old definition, Batman does not possess superhuman powers, thereby dismissing the possibility of being characterized as a superhero. However, this definition has evolved to include individuals who affect positive change in the lives of many. Batman now qualifies and so too might the doctors, nurses, and emergency medical professionals during the Covid-19 crisis.

Erika Seitz '00 may not think of herself as a superhero, but she certainly is by definition. As a registered nurse working in the cardiovascular intensive care unit of the Community Heart and Vascular Hospital in Indianapolis, IN, the Covid-19

pandemic meant long hours, a set of ever-evolving regulations, and a PPE shortage. Rather than give up, Erika relied on her favorite pastime, a passion for hot peppers, to see her through.

Erika said it was her love of the outdoors that drew her to Hoosac's rolling, wooded campus. "My parents had sent me to an Outward Bound program one summer and there was another teenager there who attended Hoosac and talked about it all the time." The idea of a campus tucked away in the rolling mountains of upstate New York appealed to Erika, who loved the outdoors.

"My home in New Hampshire was set on a pond, so I was always catching fish, frogs, and exploring every inch of it," said Erika. "While at Hoosac, I knew I wanted to study biology; the sciences were some of my favorite classes."

Erika described Hoosac as an opportunity for personal discovery: "I was so curious about the world and Hoosac stood out to me as being different because it provided the opportunity for me to embrace different cultures, cuisines, and activities."

In particular, Erika said a camping trip with fellow students and now-Headmaster Dean Foster represented a pivotal moment in the young woman's life.

"For the first time I was treated not as a student, but as a fellow human and even a friend. We talked for hours in front of the campfire and I felt valued as an individual," said Erika of the experience.

After Hoosac, Erika took an interest in nursing, eventually earning a degree in nursing and a Master's in Nursing Leadership from Franklin Pierce University. At the same time, she discovered a passion for peppers.

"About five years ago, I went to a friend's house for dinner and saw a Trinidad Scorpion pepper plant in front of their tenant's part of the house. She warned me about trying it and told me it's the second hottest from the Carolina Reaper. I rarely listen to warnings; I needed to know for myself, so I tried it." Erika suddenly experienced a moment of clarity. "I was fascinated by that such a tiny pepper could pack

that immense of a spice and I needed to know more.”

Today, Erika grows some 200 pepper plants, making everything from hot sauce to ground pepper to enjoying them raw. “It’s super fun. My favorite is marinating them in chili chocolate Khalua, smoking them, then dehydrating the mix until the alcohol is smoked out and they become candied like chips. At that point you can eat them or crust it or finely grind them.”

It is peppers she turns to now as part of a coping strategy in handling the stress of nursing during a deadly pandemic. “Eating tacos and really hot peppers. Life has given me an extra 30 pounds since the Covid-19 pandemic started,” she said. “In the beginning, as a health care provider, I was scared. I’m not someone who watches the news but many of us nurses were glued to it because the terms ‘not enough PPE’ became a scrolling marquee in our heads. I wanted to crawl in my closet and never come out.”

Erika’s cardiovascular intensive care unit began seeing Covid patients requiring lung bypasses and her fears about PPE were quickly realized, when the hospital began asking the nursing staff to reuse their N-95 masks for multiple shifts. “Historically, anytime we have had an illness requiring a mask, we would put on the precautionary gowns, apply the mask, perform the care, then discard the mask. Now, we use the same mask over multiple shifts and that’s the new standard. And we wear the mask for the entire 12-hour shift.”

Other adjustments came in the form of rapidly changing procedures and protocols. “Each shift comes with a new standard of care, a new family visiting policy, a new medication, and a new precaution. I’ve never had to adapt so



Erika on vacation in 2015

quickly to new and different things at such a rapid pace.”

Erika said she tries to think about her patients and their families when she feels overwhelmed with the changes: “Communicating to patients through a mask eliminates lip reading and sometimes body language. Talking to family members for hours on the phone interrupts our already busy shift, but I don’t discredit that these things are important. I try to put myself in their position a lot. I would want my family to know everything happening with me, and I would want to know everything happening with them.”

For Erika, finding the courage to continue through trying times isn’t just risking her life to help another. “It’s about being vulnerable and self-confident regardless of the perception and the outcome.” She calls on Hoosac students to do the same: “Vulnerability is so rare today. Society and social media have taught us to hide behind a computer and a phone. In order for our students to be successful and courageous, they need autonomy and a place to be vulnerable. They need to know all the time that they are worth it and while they are on a beautiful campus isolated from their city life and families, they need to know they are a trusted and valued member of society.”

For Erika, each person represents a different book, a unique story, and without taking the time to read those books and listen to those stories, we limit our worldview. She carries this lesson with her today while responding to the challenges each day brings in her new role.

“Everybody has a story and all of our stories are different. Hoosac taught me the importance of embracing our relationships with others.” -SG



HOOSAC TAUGHT ME YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE LOCKED INTO ONE GROUP; THERE ARE NO RULES TO THIS. THE PERSON WHO MAKES A HIT RECORD DOESN'T READ A BOOK AND GO, 'WELL, THIS IS THE WAY YOU DO IT;' THEY JUST CREATE MUSIC.

NO REQUEST

Grammy-award winner **Jesse Gladstone '98** failed every written test in music theory. "I was not a great book learner. I have ADD and I'm a little dyslexic." For some, that would have been the end of a career, but Jesse had learned a vital lesson from his time at Hoosac School: "Hoosac taught me you don't have to be locked into one group; there are no rules to this. The person who makes a hit record doesn't read a book and go, *Well this is the way you do it*; they just create music."

Instead of giving up, he committed to working harder on the practical side, earning a reputation for his MIDI savvy and other technical skills in sound engineering. It was a decision that put him on the path for several

grammy nominations and one win.

Before he came to Hoosac, Jesse was an urban kid with a core group of friends, not all that unlike him. Hoosac represented a big change. Not only would it expose him to cultures different from his own, but Jesse was the only Jewish student at an Episcopalian boarding school.

"At Hoosac, I was an outsider," said Jesse of his first months at the small prep school. "I was ripping up and down campus on a skateboard with a boombox on my arm, acting crazy. There was the dress code and I found loopholes. They were like you have to wear button-up shirts, so I'd wear flannels with a tie. I sewed the patch on the wrong side of the jacket."

Jesse didn't think he'd fit in, but in the end, the school helped him discover who he was as an individual. "I look back and think that was an amazing experience. I got to live with a person who barely spoke English and I got to help teach him English and he taught me all the swear words in Korean."

He said the change wasn't recognizable until he returned to visit family and friends over that first break. "The whole dichotomy had changed."

Hoosac also had its musical influences. While Jesse brought to campus music of Wu-Tang Clan, his Korean roommate was introducing him to Korean hip hop. "I had no idea what they were saying, but all I could think is this is different. This is cool."

After Hoosac, Jesse wasn't sure what he wanted to pursue. His mother was a successful artist, so he tried following that path for a period of time, but it just didn't sit well: "It just felt like High School, Part II."

Instead, he took a job at a local hardware store, and worked to keep music in his life by DJing house parties. It was about this time when Jesse's brother mentioned a music school in NYC, the SAE Institute. "I went in there with no thought of this is what I'm doing in my life. I was just happy not to be working at a hardware store."

Looking back, it was a critical moment. "I've always been very heavily invested in music. It was always a very important part of my world."

Jesse began to recognize that while he struggled with the book learning part of classes, he excelled on the practical and technical side of sound engineering. "For some reason I just understood it. Practical exams I got A++."

Following graduation, Jesse wasn't sure what he was going to do. "I had no plan. I sat home for two to three months going, *Now what do I do?*" The answer came with a phone call from a friend who was working at the NYC-based music studio, Chung King. Chung King, the birthplace of hip hop was a studio that recorded for the Beastie Boys, Kanye West, Jay Z, and other large acts including Aerosmith, Depeche Mode, Lady Gaga, and Beyonce.

There was one small catch. Jesse would have to start as an unpaid intern, which meant 48 hours each week without pay. "I was like, okay, that's difficult, but cool." Jesse's parents saw it as an extension of his SAE experience. They said, "You got a year, go for it. Six



Grammy-award winner Jesse Gladstone '98 struggled in audio school with book-learning, but realized the secret to success came from dedication. A decade later and he has received seven grammy nominations and won a grammy for Best R&B album

months later and my friend was gone. Nine years later and I was still there."

Jesse said he knew this was an important opportunity. "The key to success was devotion and just being there. All the time. I've got this opportunity to do something here and I'm going to lock in. The place was open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, so there was no reason for me not to be there. I'm going to go to the studio and hang with Antonio Banderas, I'm going to hang with David Bowie. This is my life now. For the first time, my parents saw me committing to something and they just wanted me to keep going."

The first year wasn't easy: "Free intern. Scrubbing toilets, taking out the trash, being berated by my boss. But I just never wanted to leave. I would go out to a nightclub, then go back to the studio. And that was the key to being successful. If you're there all the time, the

people who are doing something are eventually going to ask you to do something for them. That's the get-in. Person A doesn't show up for work, then you do the job."

Over the span of several months, Jesse transitioned from unpaid intern to staff assistant, eventually working as a sound engineer. He said in addition to being committed to his work, another success came from his personality. "I love music, but I'm not a fan. The studio liked that because you don't want your staff being all fanned out. I didn't care who you were. You're a human; I'm a human; we're here to do a job. Yes, you're the reason we're here, but you are no more important than anyone else in the room. Without the producer, you don't have music; without the mix engineer, your music sounds like garbage; without the executives, you don't have the money to do it. It's a team effort."

This led to the studio assigning Jesse high-profile clients including the legendary Steve Lillywhite, who produced U2, Dave Matthews Band, Talking Heads, Simple Minds, Peter Gabriel, Phish, and Counting Crows.

"Music was my lifeline. I skipped holidays. I was always in the studio. I was completely in it. There was no other option at that time. In my head I was like this is it; this is what life is going to be. This is my career. I'm home. I felt like I belonged somewhere. It just kept being amazing. Meeting hero after hero after hero. Getting to work on albums with people I



Jesse DJs live and online under DJ No Request. Photos courtesy Jesse Gladstone

never in a million years thought I'd ever get to meet let alone help create music."

It was during this time, Jesse began working with R&B singer Maxwell. "I never would have thought R&B would have been part of my life, but I worked on that album for an extended period of time." The record was an immediate success landing five grammy nominations.

"I was riding high. Not only was there the five grammy nominations for Maxwell, but I had worked with Depeche Mode, also nominated. So, in one year, I went from completely obscure to seven grammy nominations."

Just before Jesse was awarded a grammy for his work on Maxwell's album, he received a phone call. "It was one of the studio managers." The music industry was changing.

They had been forced to close the studio. "Everything in the world is happening and I go into the studio for the last time and they've literally taken crowbars to the marble floors and the studios were ripped apart. I went from the biggest moment in my career to no longer having representation or a studio and I didn't know what was going to happen."

Later that month, he won a grammy. It was a bittersweet moment. And fortunately, his work with big names in the industry meant connections that would eventually land him a job in audio. He continued DJing under the name "No Request," playing clubs up and down the east coast, "I was playing some of the largest venues in NYC including Webster Hall, Slake, Avant

Gardner, and SRB."

When the pandemic hit, like most people, he wasn't sure what to do. "I have anxiety, so super stressed out. Nobody knew anything about this (Covid) thing. We thought it was a death sentence," he said. "Especially here; I'm 15 min from the epicenter of the outbreak. We had some of the highest numbers. I had a little breakdown."

Then a friend suggested he move his DJing online. Since he wasn't working during the pandemic, he decided to promote himself on the TWITCH, a live-streaming service with opportunities for monetization. The move helped him refocus his energy and because he had a number of followers already, within just a week, he was able to monetize. He didn't have the means to do it full time, but it was something that got him through lockdown, and got his name out to an even broader audience.

Today, he defines success not so much by the grammys on his shelf or the followers online: "Success is happiness. Success is the friends you have, the family you have, the respect that you've gained from your peers and overall how you perceive yourself. Really, you're the only one you have anything to prove to."

He said Hoosac taught him that early on. "Hoosac showed me different ways to live; it thrust me into being on my own. I came back from Hoosac and stopped being a follower; stopped caring what everyone thought. I understood how to talk to adults at that point. Understood what was important and what was not. I learned skills in dealing with people at Hoosac and learned how to operate in the real world."

"That's something that Hoosac gives you; it gives you individuality."

With more time to reflect of late, Jesse said he hopes to make it back to Hoosac sometime after the pandemic. "I've thought about seeing Tibbits again; about walking into Whitcomb again, or up into the woods to the bungalow we built, if it's still there."

What remains for certain is that success does not come from waiting, but from doing. Jesse demonstrates this trait on the daily. Don't wait around for a request; make your music. -SG

***THAT WAS
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A tribute to Lance Roepe '66

by Tom Cochran '66

Lance and I met in the fall of 1964 when we arrived at Hoosac as newly minted 5th Formers. We lived in the same dorm (Wood Hall), took the same classes, sat elbow to elbow in study hall and the dining hall, stood in the chapel and sounded out Latin phrases as we learned the Ode and generally shared the adventure of exploring the mysteries of our new home, Hoosac School. We got to know each other very well in pretty short order.

I found Lance to be kind and gregarious, gentlemanly, articulate, and good humored. He turned out to be the kind of student an admissions director would hand pick to greet prospective families and give campus tours. He was, and remained through his life, the Perfect Hoosac Ambassador.

In our 6th Form year we were roommates sharing the long west-facing quad on Tibbits third floor with Geoff Peck and John O'Neil. We were an oddly matched foursome but we got along well, Lance's imperturbable Buddha-like vibe in no small measure responsible for this domestic harmony. A hardworking student, he also provided the less academically ambitious of us a model of scholarly industry.

He did well in all his classes but the one area that particularly inspired him was the literature we read for our English masters, Ashton Crosby (5th Form) and William Reifsnyder (6th). Shakespeare, Chaucer, British and American poets of all periods, novels by Thomas Wolfe and Ernest Hemingway—Lance devoured them all. It was his announced ambition to write the Great American Novel and although (far as I know) he never accomplished this, he avidly pursued studies in literature and writing at Muskingum College and, later, in graduate school at Ohio University.

In our senior year, Lance and I bonded as obsessive collectors of Cracker Jack toys. I don't remember how it started but by the middle of that year, by dint of twice daily purchases at the Tuck Shop (x2), we had amassed an enormous array of Cracker Jack prizes: Cars, trucks, locomotives, ships, airplanes, zoo animals, dogs, cats, fish, figurines, tops, rings, whistles, charms of every

description, and a small library of tiny books to list just a few. The collection grew to cover an entire bureau top. We were hooked. (Once when Lance bought a box that had no prize in it, he wrote a faux-irate letter of complaint to the Cracker Jack Company; they responded with a mildly sarcastic note of apology and a small box of toys.)

Of course, as we approached our graduation date, this sprawling treasure created a dilemma for us: what would become of this, the product of our single-minded expenditure of focus, energy and allowance (not to mention later visits to the dentist)?

It would be a crime to abandon or break it up. We at last decided to find a secure hiding place for it in our room. I don't know if we were planning a killing on the collectibles market 50 years hence or that we simply hoped it would Rest In Peace.

Sadly, the collection is no longer there. I checked (we had found a nice niche above a tile in the drop-ceiling). What became of it remains a mystery; I hope it fell into deserving hands. I told Lance it was gone but he went to his grave refusing to believe it.

Lance spent the bulk of his adult years in California. He became a transit worker, for 30-years piloting a large city bus through the streets of San Jose, and eventually became the C.E.O. of the transit union there. More important, especially in his later years, he resumed the role of Perfect Hoosac Ambassador, staying in touch with fellow alumni, forging new connections within the Class of '66, unearthing long silent and inactive classmates and hooking them up to the Hoosac network. On numerous occasions through the years, I would pick up the phone at home to hear his sonorous, made-for-radio baritone greeting me and catching me up with news of old classmates. We would shamelessly reminisce, discuss politics and the state of the world, and enumerate the tolls the years had taken on ourselves.

These were always welcome calls. I will miss them. Farewell, Lance. Deus Regit.



// I remember the way Hoosac grew in me; the reverence learned in the disciplined life that required all of us from diverse backgrounds to live together and share our experiences.

And though my life has morphed dramatically several times since my teaching days, I return now and again in reverie to the Valley of the Owls with thankfulness for the values, reverence, and knowledge that have sustained me through the inevitable vicissitudes of a road less traveled: Hoosac made all the difference...

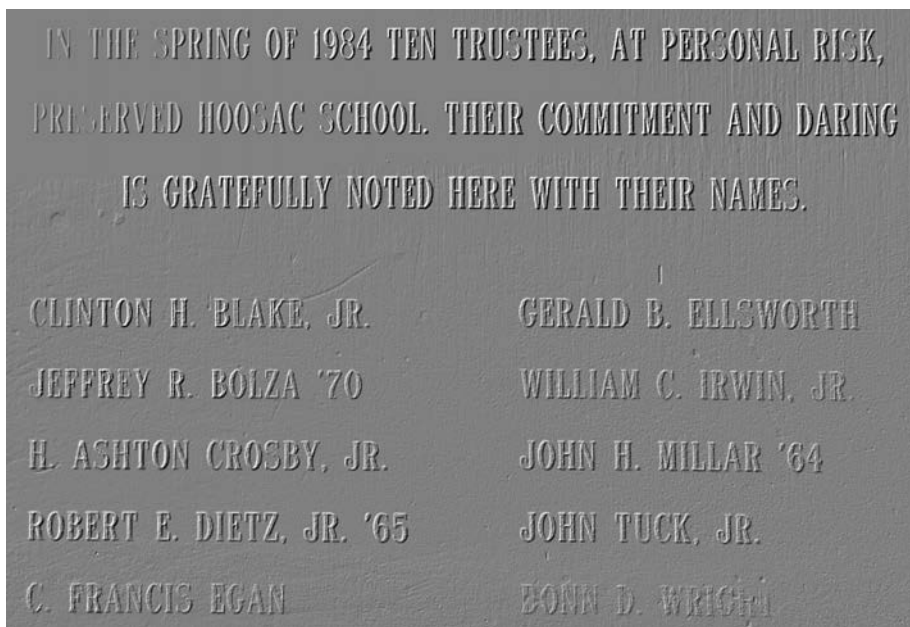
To my classmates of 1966, I am happy to have known you. I learned so much from you all. Wherever you are now, remember your days at Hoosac. You were there. You made a difference."

Lance

Saving a legacy

Former **Hoosac Trustee William “Bill” Irwin** recently passed away in January of this year at his home with his family by his side.

Bill was one of the 10 trustees who in 1984, when the school was struggling to remain open, pledged their financial commitment to preserving Hoosac's legacy. The plaque at left acknowledges their stewardship and hangs still in Tibbits Hall.



Blue Blazers, Passports, and Education

A tribute to former Hoosac Trustee William Irwin from his son

My father was a simple man, born in what today we would call Cherry Hill, NJ. As an insurance salesperson in Brooklyn, he met my mother at a cocktail party in Manhattan. I once asked him how he was able to get such a swanky event and he said that every man should always pack a blue blazer. As long as you were dressed properly and had an education, you could talk your way into any social event in NYC.

My father and mother moved to the countryside close to my dad's best friend Bo Andersson from Sweden. Together, they traveled the world. As a child, I would hear their stories of my dad and Bo gallivanting to places like Jamaica. One thing my father always carried with him was his passport. He would always say that you never know when the opportunity would come up to fly out of the country on someone's private jet.

One may think this is a little far-fetched, but my father believed it so much he joined the Board of Trustees of Hoosac School. My father insisted that the school would bring an international experience to the small town of Hoosick. Later, my father left and moved to South Carolina. Even though he had left, my Godfather Bo joined the Board and kept a watch over me with my Aunt Debbie while I attended Hoosac.

My father believed in education. It was his life's mission to bring international flair to the United States. He was so

proud of me and all the international friends I made while at Hoosac. He felt that these experiences are what lead to my becoming an international sales person for 84 Lumber. He loved accompanying me to meet with companies like China Construction.

While Hoosac was my base, it was in conjunction with my father showing me that anything was possible. You see, he never saw problems; just situations that needed fixing. So when there was not enough skilled staff in the hospitality industry in South Carolina, he formed a company and received permission from the governor of SC to go to Trinidad and Tobago to start an international program. My father met with the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and arranged for workers to come and work in the United States. He believed in helping people from every country and lifting people through education.

While my father died on January 1st, I am proud to say that I will continue to serve on the Hoosac Board of Trustees and continue a legacy of helping the school provide an international education, keeping a blue blazer and passport with me at all times.

Sincerely, **William Neal Irwin '96**
Hoosac Class of 1996
Hoosac Board of Trustees 2015-Present



In Memoriam



Brendon Russell D'Arcy '90, age 47, of Niantic passed away Thursday, April 16, 2020. He was a lifelong Connecticut resident.

He attended Windsor Public Schools and graduated from Hoosac School in Hoosick, N.Y., studying music under professor Randy Krum. He continued his education pursuing his love of music at The Hartt School in West Hartford. His music endeavors included music

composition as well as the mixing of music and musical instrument lessons. He enjoyed playing with his friends in several bands over the years including, *Bill's Imagination*, *Emphasis Orchestra*, *Vector Chicken*, *Rocket Martin*, *Shad Derby* and most recently playing keyboard for the band *Night Flight*.

Brendon developed a passion and expertise in the culinary arts. He studied Classical French style cooking and worked under chef Claude Martin at the Metro Bis in Simsbury. Years later he became a chef at the River Tavern in Chester. He ultimately became an independent chef/caterer.

Brendon inherited his love for sailing and boating from his Grandpa D'Arcy. Many a summer day were spent boating or sailing with family and friends in Hamburg Cove, Long Island Sound, the eastern United States coastline from Maine to Florida, and Virgin Gorda. Those days often culminated in Brendon serving a 5-star dinner to the day's participants.

He was active in the sport of pickleball, introduced to him by his uncle, "Turbo." The sport allowed him to meet and befriend many wonderful people.



John Martin (Jack) Settle '63 died on Wednesday, August 19, 2020, after a more than two year journey with cancer which he traveled with grace and his insuppressible sense of humor. The only child of Allan and Dorothy Settle, Jack joined the large Lister family when he married Nancy Lister-Settle. Their blended family includes Allan Settle, John

(Nicole) Talbott Settle, Skyler and Dane of Madison, WI, and Morgan (Penny) Johnson, Charlie and Harper of Oakland, CA. Jack grew up in Davenport, IA, St. Louis, MO, and Washington, DC. He lived in upstate New York, northern Michigan, Vancouver, BC, Seattle, WA, and Iowa City, IA before moving to Dallas Center, IA in 1978.

Jack was an expert fine woodworker, a talented photographer, a master gardener, and he could make or fix just about anything. He loved music and poetry and road trips. This all came together in Ely, MN where he spent summer days enjoying the beauty of the north woods and the peace of the lake in his rowboat, which was itself a work of art.

Jack was a life-long learner, a gift he attributed to both his parents and to his years at Hoosac School. The Hoosac educators and education were dear to him.

Jack's greatest affection was for his people: those in his beloved family, those in his tight circle of close friends, those in his community, those with whom he worked, and, lately, those whose care he found himself needing. His passion for justice kept him mindful of those near and far who needed his solidarity. Many who met Jack as young people have carried his love and devotion into their adult lives. To know him was to love him.



Peter Van Bomel appears standing behind the wheel of the tractor in this yearbook photo. He was a dedicated yeoman for Hoosac School and active in theater and club hockey

Peter A. Van Bomel '70 passed away on Thursday, January 14, 2021, at the age of 71 due to Covid-19.

Born in Rye, NY., Peter attended Rye Country Day School and graduated in 1970 from Hoosac School in Hoosick, NY. Peter moved to Florida where he attended St. Petersburg College and Pinellas Technical School to advance his knowledge in electronics.

In the 1980s, Peter relocated to Wilmington De., where he met his wife of 20 years, Gretchen. Peter was contracted to EI Dupont as a maintenance/safety engineer for over 22 years.

Peter was predeceased by his wife Gretchen. He is survived by two brothers, David, Wilmington DE. and Robert, Clearwater, FL.

Sen. David Matsuura '80 was born in Allahabad, India. The son of the late state Sen. Richard Matsuura, the younger Matsuura successfully ran for his late father's seat in 1998. He was also a businessman, who took over the family's orchid business, a ranch manager, a Realtor and was involved in forestry.

He died last April in Honolulu of a stroke.



Lance B. Roepe '66, a San Jose resident who formerly lived in Campbell CA, passed away on December 23rd, 2020 after a recent bout with a recurring illness at 72 years of age.

Please see **Page 34** for a tribute written by fellow classmate, Tom Cochran.



Richard Egan McConnell '55 was born on June 26, 1936 in Pennsylvania and passed away in Unalaska on July 30, 2020.

Richard grew up on the East Coast, and spent some of his teenage years in and around New York City. He was a veteran of the United States Air Force, joined the U.S. Merchant Marine where he was certified for various

seaman duties. During his years as a Merchant Mariner, he traveled the world and even made a stop in the Port of Dutch Harbor.

Richard eventually opened own business installing heating and boiler systems and repairing Toyo stoves. Richard spent more than 38 years living in Unalaska, and he called it his home.

Why I Give to Hoosac



Mark W. Rippa '89

Mark Rippa '89 is a Licensed Clinical Stretch and Therapeutic Massage Therapist who specializes in mobility and muscle function for professional athletes. He applies his techniques to pain-management and muscle activation to improve athletic performance. In 2018, Mark started a wellness company that offered these and other therapeutic services to the public. His reach extends to other fitness facilities in need of his clinical expertise. He chose to give to Hoosac because of the influence the school had on his ability to remain adaptive and committed to creating opportunities.

I came to Hoosac School after struggling to keep my grades up in public schools where there had been 30 students to one instructor. It was tortuous for me to keep up with the rest of the class and I knew I needed help. The smaller class sizes at Hoosac allowed me to get more individualized attention and was key to my success.

Hoosac helped me on my path today by helping me realize I can do anything if I put my mind to. The supportive community built my confidence. It showed me how to be creative, innovative, think outside the box, and be persistent till I achieve excellence. Hoosac taught me that passion is the most important step in achieving high performance

in a new field of interest. Without passion, everything is done with half-heart and that will only give you half results. You have to show up with a strong drive to learn new material to achieve positive results in your favor.

Finding inner strength takes believing in yourself, letting go of the past and being mindful in the present. It takes dedication, hard work and believing there's something bigger we are meant to achieve. I did well in the pharmaceutical industry, however after 19 years in talent acquisition, I felt I could do more and serve another purpose, so I left my comfort zone and dove in. My story in changing careers at 46 years old is a good example, we can do anything we put our minds to.

Self awareness, drive, patience, commitment and a willingness to go above and beyond to create opportunities. Investing in education has rewarded me in life and helped me achieve more in furthering my career and developing a path in making my dreams come true. I love my new career and I am excited to see where it takes me. And I'm happy to give back the educational institution where it all began.

Mark worked with Hoosac School to include his alma mater in his estate plan.



Famous Hoosac Alums
B. Niven Busch
Class of 1921

Before becoming famous for his work as a writer and filmmaker, B. Niven Busch, Jr. was a Hoosac student. Following graduation in 1921, Busch spent time in New York City writing for both *Time Magazine* and the *New Yorker*.

Early success left him wanting more, so he abandoned his familiar New York for San Francisco where he became a prolific American

author and filmmaker. By his death in 1991, Busch had completed 15 novels and more than 20 films, including the *Postman Always Rings Twice* (1943) and *Duel in the Sun* (1946), based on his novel of the same name.

In 1938 Busch was nominated for an Academy Award for *In Old Chicago*, but did not win. However, Alice Brady was awarded Best Supporting Actress for her role in the film.

HOW TO GIVE

Mark Rippa included Hoosac in his estate plan, naming Hoosac School as a partial beneficiary in his will. This is one of many ways to give a legacy gift. Like Mark, you can leave your estate in full or in part to Hoosac, name Hoosac School as a life insurance beneficiary, or donate a policy no longer needed by your family to the school. If you would like more information on legacy giving, please contact the Development Office. We're happy to help you navigate the details.

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To Be **HOOSAC**



...is to Belong

No matter the distance or years that have passed since you graduated, Hoosac will forever be part of your story. Experiences at Hoosac shape and inform the people we become. And just as you once walked these hallowed grounds in your journey of becoming, so too does a new generation of students.

Hoosac gave us the space we needed to uncover our strengths, to make and correct our own mistakes, and to discover what it meant to be part of a global community. For ours is a community made up of cultures from around the world and as part, we learned tolerance, acceptance, and how to say 'good morning' or 'good day' in other languages (and maybe a few other choice phrases).

Our school is the embodiment of optimism, good character, strong academic, athletic, and spiritual foundations, and so much more. Hoosac supported us through those tumultuous early years and now nurtures the bonds we made so long ago through a vast alumni network.

Where we were once the underdogs, today we're the success story. Success born out of the strength of our community. And as a strong community, we must build on a foundation of giving to carry us into the future. So please locate the giving envelope inside this issue and consider a gift in support of your school, Hoosac School.

www.hoosac.org



SCAN ME