Hoosac Alumni Reminisce



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HOOSAC SCHOOL

FREE OF CHARGE

Alumni

Edition

Coming Back

by Henry Perez '76

I was so nervous about coming back. Forty years is a lifetime. Although most of the memories of my time there are still amazing, some weren't. Probably one of my greatest regrets in life was not being able to attend my commencement service in 1976. I was suspended two weeks prior to it. Over the years, I've shared that story. Most people think, "No big deal," but if you're a part of the Hoosac community, you totally get it. Hoosac was more than just a school, it was family.

When I walked into Tibbits Hall, I was flooded with feelings that I had buried long ago. In that moment I realized the emotional bond I had with my alma mater. Hoosac was not

just good for me, it was good to me. When I think about my time there, I think about the wonderful people God allowed into my life.

Ashton Crosby was my Headmaster. He was both a friend and a father to me. When my older brother was murdered during my junior year he embraced me, time and time again. I cried when his name was read during the Memorial Service. He taught me how to "enunciate," tie a bow tie, and literally gave me the tuxedo off his back one night. He asked me to take it. He said I would need it someday. He was right! He saw things in me that I didn't see in myself. Coming from the inner city of New York, I didn't have much. My Hoosac family adopted me, and generously gave me more than what I needed, and definitely more than what I deserved. I learned love, acceptance, and forgiveness there; qualities that would mark my life forever, and values that I would pass down to my children. I returned to Hoosac to open arms and warm embraces. My daughter, Hannah, who kept prodding me to come back, joined me on the trip. Our 3,000-mile road trip from Los Angeles was well worth it. I have her to thank for my remarkable journey back. We built a memory together that will last us a lifetime. Thank you to all the faculty and staff for who you are, and what you do.

Deus Regit!



Sherri Klein Nancy LaPorte

Staff Writers:

Peter Bouchie '07 William Neal Irwin '96 Andy Olmsted '52 Henry J. Perez '76

Middle photo: Henry Perez '76 and his daughter, Hannah. Below: Neal Irwin '96 with Henry.





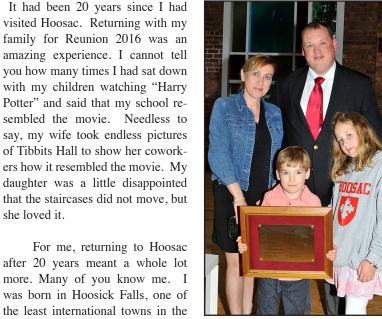




2016

If Not For Hoosac

by William "Neal" Irwin '96



largest leading construction companies. If I had not learned to accept cultural differences I would not have been able to marry the love of my life, Ayse Irwin (Ayse is from Turkey) Without her I would not have my most precious possessions - my children, Sena and Atilla Irwin.



say, my wife took endless pictures of Tibbits Hall to show her coworkers how it resembled the movie. My daughter was a little disappointed that the staircases did not move, but she loved it.

For me, returning to Hoosac after 20 years meant a whole lot more. Many of you know me. I was born in Hoosick Falls, one of the least international towns in the world. It was at Hoosac that I met people from around the world who opened my eyes to new cultures. It was there that I developed my love of travel, style, and international cuisine (Korean noodles anyone?). It was at Hoosac that I learned to play lacrosse, soccer, and hockey. It was at Hoosac that I made my best friends (big shout out to Nick Johnson '96, Masayuki Nagira '94, Ben Murray '94). That's right, after 20 years we all still get together!

Neal Irwin with his family at the 2016 Reunion.

If it had not been for Hoosac, I would not have played lacrosse for the Citadel Military college in the SEC for three years. If it were not for Hoosac, I would not have been able to climb the corporate ladder at 84 Lumber to international sales. As the international sales rep I was able to work with companies like China Construction (one of the world's

I know many of us had quite different experiences but we all have so much in common too! I hope that at the next reunion I can see all of you once more. Let's get together by the bonfire, tell some stories, and watch our children run around carefree. You cannot imagine how happy it will make you feel. Hope to see you and your families at the next reunion!

Top: Neal at the Reunion with Nick Johnson '96, Ben Moss '85, Headmaster Dean Foster, and (in back) Seton Ijams '75.

1996



A Curmudgeon's Tale

by Andy Olmsted '52

The old school had an aroma of Pine-Sol, food, and soft coal. I met Fr. Wood and went up to my assigned room. Lynwood Bronson '51 was my first roommate. He had tacked up "Wanted" posters and an invitation to a debutant ball on the walls. My mother was horrified! Our rooms were monastic cells on the second floor of Boutin Hall. The old dining hall was where we had the pageant. The Kremlin (building) wasn't used – we were never allowed to go in there.

It was second semester when I enrolled so I didn't go through 'new boy' week then, but I did the next fall, because I was still considered a 'new boy.' The older students made 'new boys' do things like wear outlandish costumes and do their work for them - anything they could get away with. We worked – mopped floors mostly – or helped "Messy Bessy" in the kitchen. She was a nice lady - got a big buy on potatoes one time, and we ate potatoes for lunch and dinner for quite a while.

Yule Log – I started out as Star of the East. The second year I made it into the big time and I was a torchbearer /Elizabethan and in the sword dance. We had a guy named Frank Butcher who wrote most of the Yule Log music. He lived on campus, but worked at a bank in Troy and rode the bus back and forth every day. He used to be a choir master in England and prepared us for the Yule Log. We started practice right after Thanksgiving. Ivy garlands (yes, they were ivy) hung across the dining hall 'til Bleeze - some of the leaves would eventually fall off into our soup.

I was a Prefect during my second year, along with Frank Bulkley '53. Two prefects for 45 kids. Frank snuck one in on me my first year when he said to me "Come on – let's go someplace – where'do ya want to go?" I replied "I sure would like to go see my girlfriend in Delmar." We hitchhiked 36 miles all the way to Delmar and I saw my girlfriend, but had to call my mother to get back to Hoosac – boy was she upset!

We had a student council – our job was to take care of certain guys, and it was tough because the first year we could smoke and the second year we couldn't, which was a problem, because most of those little scallions smoked! To conceal evidence of smoking they'd go so far as to put bleach on their fingers. We didn't wear knickers. We wore ties and jackets or sweaters. I learned to dress in 15 minutes. At graduation, somebody had a car – so we went to the Merry-Go-Round (a bar), which after that was closed for 90 days.

I was there three years - Vth Form, VIth Form, and a PG year because of math. I was co-captain of the soccer team with Keith Adams '54. Our arch-rival was Northfield Mt. Hermon School. If you could walk you played sports. My first year in baseball North Bennington beat us 89-2. I played center. The little guys all played - beating anybody back in those days was a big deal. We played Berkshire Farm, Albany Academy, Vanderheyden Hall, Buxton, Albany Home for Children. I got thrown out of one game for dangerous play, but we beat Albany Academy that day. We didn't have a gym. We practiced in the Armory and at Wood Flong (used to be a factory) in Hoosick Falls, and occasionally at the local high school.

I was married in All Saints Church by Fr. Wood. He came all the way from Boston, even though he was in the last stages of cancer. He was quite a guy. He got all his old classmates to get together and buy the school a new station wagon. The only vehicle we had was an old truck, which we used for Saturday clean-up. The only one of us who could drive was Henry T.E. Coolidge '53.

A few of us were moved to the 'new' campus location in the middle of the school year - so some kids lived there had to walk down to the 'old' campus and back. I didn't move up until my PG year – I had a private room in Wood Hall - it was great, and I was in charge of all the little kids. At that time the only buildings were the Tibbits Mansion, Wood Hall, Lewisohn by the pond, and the carriage house, which we used as a Chapel. Fr. Wood held mass at 7:00 a.m., Vespers at 5:00 p.m. All of us who were Episcopalian had to serve as altar boys. In this pic "A group of Wood boys" is Paul Nash '51, Dave Bliss '54, John Pulsifer '54. Oh yes I remember most everybody... John Austin '53, Burt Seller '52, Sid Cullingham '52, Danny Adams '51, Regnar Plesner '51, Huc Hauser '52, Henry T. E. Coolidge '53, who was my roommate when we moved up to the new school.

Top: All Saints Church in Hoosick, NY.

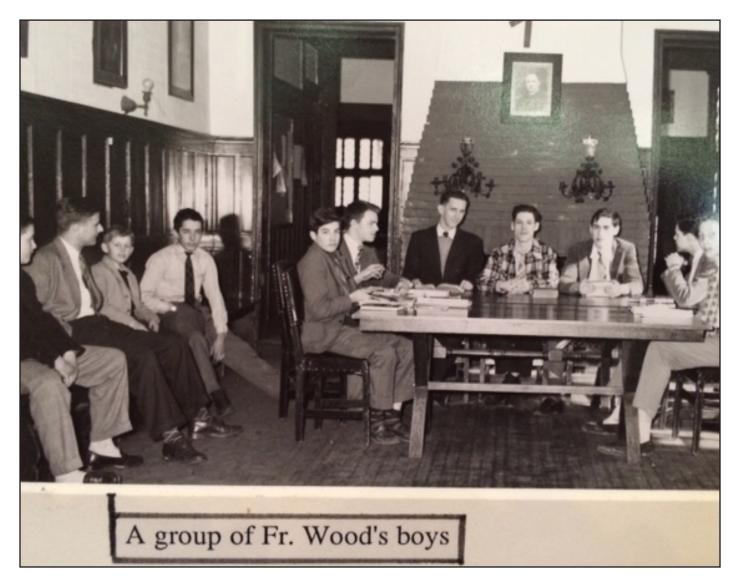
Middle: Andrew Lee Olmsted, Class of 1952

Below: A group of Fr. Wood's boys, listed above by Andy.

1952









Above: At the 125th celebration, Andy threw out the first pitch at the Antonian/Graftonian softball game with Headmaster Dean Foster.

Keep the Owl Pride in Your Heart

2016 Missionary Service Speech by Peter Bouchie '07

Good evening, For those of you don't know me my name is Peter Bouchie (class of 2007), and I used to be the king of this school.

I am honored and extremely grateful to the Hoosac Community in letting me speak to you today.

Every time I get the opportunity to come up to Hoosac I am overwhelmed with the memories and friends that I made here.

I remember my first day like it was yesterday. I was unpacking in my room when my roommate showed up. I had never met him before. All I knew was that he was from outside Boston, and was a goalie on the hockey team. Little did I know, this roommate would be the biggest character I had ever met in my life, and his Boston accent put mine to shame. That man's name was Blake Boyer ('07). The second person I met was a kid from Prince Edward Island, Canada, whose family farmed potatoes. His name was Andrew Stewart ('07). Andrew was the first of three Stewart brothers to graduate from Hoosac, the last one being William who will graduate tomorrow.

As many of you know Friday night dinner has a strict dress code, one that I was not aware of before walking to the Dining Hall. On the first Friday night I was approached by Mr. Ryan who asked me where my Hoosac blazer was. I told him I didn't have one yet. Sensing that I was bit nervous, he said, "Hold on," and ran to his car. He came back a few seconds later and handed me a blazer with the Hoosac insignia on it. "Here, try this one on." It was four sizes too big, but it didn't matter to me, I just wanted to fit in. Thanks to Mr. Ryan, he made sure my first Friday night dinner went smoothly. So, Ry guy, thanks for the jacket, bud, it's still too big, but it's still in my closet.

I learned many lessons throughout my year at Hoosac, one of them being discipline. I grew up very Catholic, going to church before school everyday with my family. It was certainly not my favorite activity to start the day. I was excited at the thought of having a year away from my family, and getting to sleep in little bit longer in the morning before school. That all changed when I was awakened by the sound of the bell, and Mr Thompson banging on my door yelling at us to get up for Chapel. "Chapel?," I kept asking. I thought I got away from going to church when I came here - boy was I wrong! Every morning that bell would ring, and I would run into the shower, then run back to my room, getting dressed as fast as I could, and race down Pitt hill while trying to tie my tie - hoping I had shaved my face!

Another great lesson Hoosac taught was independence, I had never really left the city of Boston unless my father was driving to hockey games all throughout the East Coast. I had certainly never lived away from my family for a long period of time. Many students at Hoosac come from far away places. I realized when I got here that I lived the closest to home, and that it was three and a half hours away by car, certainly not an 18-hour plane ride.

Hoosac is a place where you learn to grow academically, and athletically, and gain a newly developed sense of independence for the future. When I moved on to college after my year at Hoosac, I saw many kids struggle with being on their own and taking the reigns of their independence as an adult. Hoosac helped me bridge the gap between high school and college in more ways than one.

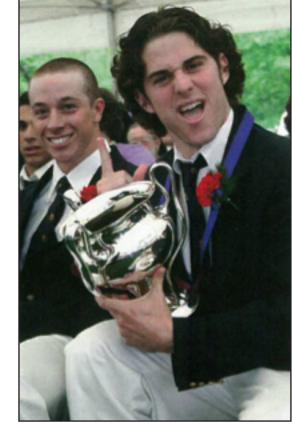
This is a special night here at Hoosac School. It's a night to reflect on a great year, and to be grateful for what you've accomplished, and the memories you've made. It's a night to appreciate all the hard work you did, and the early morning chapel services you attended, even if you were late a time or two like myself.

The friends you've made at Hoosac are from around the world and will last a lifetime, because the bond you make here is stronger than any bond I have come across in my life.

Keep the Owl pride in your heart forever. I know it has never left mine. Congratulations to the class of 2016. DEUS REGIT!

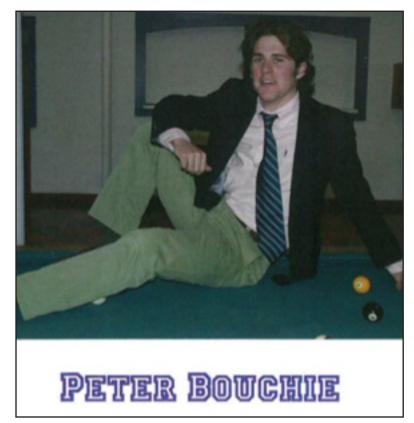


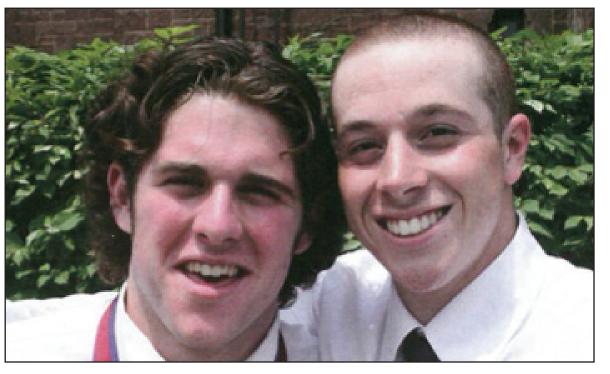
Blake delivering his Missionary Service speech to the class of 2016



Awards at Prize Day 2007!







Pete with his roommate, Blake Boyer '07 at graduation

Owlet Memories - Quotes from Past Issues

VOL. No. 1 Alumni Owlet 2010:

Hoosac has helped me to possess willingness to learn, motivation to advance, manage time, and speak English. I wish to continue to demonstrate my academic potential and expand my intellectual horizons with the skill sets acquired from Hoosac. ~*Ryan Shin '04*

When I became a Dining Hall Steward I learned my tasks from the current steward. When my time as steward was up, I, too, passed this information on to the next generation that was taking my place in the Dining Hall. I strongly believe in the gift of taking something that is learned and giving it back to the next generation. *~Greg Banks '92*

Hoosac made me a person who really wants to help others in all kinds of ways. Sacrifice and an attempt to understand others makes human society happy. This is a valuable lesson that I got from the mentors who worked for Hoosac.

~Tommy Kim '07

Hoosac opened so many doors for me that had previously been closed. I was the editor of the Owlet newspaper, and the Owl yearbook, both jobs and interests that springboarded me into writing for the college newspaper, and a writing career that spanned graduate school and ten years on Wall Street as a business writer.

~Jan Hadwen Hubbell '74

I held my own when I was the only girl in my class and on the recreational hockey rink. I discovered that learning can be fun and I was taught everything from history to how to drive a tractor.

~Lisa Hughes '75

I realized very quickly that this was the first time in my life where I felt like my peers, my teachers, and my teammates were all a part of my family. The Hoosac community was a family away from home and this was evident in the classroom, in the dorms, and especially in the ice arena.

~Kyle Shearer-Hardy '07

In 1934 the first Asado was held at Owl Spring. "Hicks" Graves officiated at the Argentine custom, when whole lambs are trussed up on sapling poles before an open fire. The very first one had been cooked the year before at the school campus. It was Ascension Sunday. It was a beautiful day for devouring lamb, salad, rolls, pie, and cocoa. A tradition was established.

on to Italy, Europe, Venice, and New York City as an artist. One could say my career as a designer started there in the basement of Tibbits Hall.

~Geoffrey Stevens '70

Digging out of this storm was a difficult task. ...a mild panic crept through the Dining Hall. Heavy shadows fell over the now-flattened, snow-covered hills. Mr. L. came bursting in with faculty trailing behind him; all holding lanterns. He announced that we were going to have study hall. What? Hadn't he seen the state of the bathrooms, with our plumbing out? Was this guy crazy? As it turned out, we were the crazy ones to ever think we were getting out of our academic responsibilities on Mr. L's watch!

~Elizabeth M. Beers '88

Everyone who has ever attended has that special memory, that special place in their lives that belongs to Hoosac. Whether it be Yule Log, Asado day, trips into Bennington or Friday Night Banquets, those memories help to mold us into what we are today. We are successful business men and women, mothers and fathers, and superior citizens because of those we have met and those who have had a hand in our lives.

~Janet Stiegman Fellow '89

The recipe for merry-making is simple: one part boredom, one part ingenuity, and a group of exceptionally smart and creative people. Pranking is part of any school life, but in the years of the late 1970s we were especially good at it. ...I speak of the "Great Waterfight" of 1976.

~Geoffrey S. Jade Barrett '78

Hoosac was a perfect fit for me. There certainly were kids that complained about Hoosac. In contrast however, I remember many alums coming back for Friday night talks or other events. Many would say, "Cherish these times at Hoosac, kids, they will be the best years of your lives." I knew we had it good, I relished in the adventure, friendships, learning, and the growing that was happening. ~*Leif Counter '91*

Hoosac allowed me to mature into someone I had always wanted to be. It also made me realize that I could always follow my dreams wherever they led me. It showed me that in eight months, perfect strangers could become family and could become people that you can count on.

~Mathieu Cyr '04

The sense of responsibility Hoosac engenders within all who atous activities outside of the routine of classes, clubs, and teams. I chose the camping course.

~Richard Modecki '99

Mr. Crosby was the reason I majored in English in college and went on to graduate school on a teaching fellowship, completing an M.A. and most of a PhD. *~Lance Roepe '66*

We were like family, taking care of each other. The advice and lessons from faculty members taught me a lot. There were other international students like me who were far from their homelands and the close relationships at Hoosac made us feel like we were not alone. ~*Ye Ra Han '09*

Respect, sincerity, and genuine care are the things that Mr. L gave his students. When I was seventeen those were very important things and they made a real difference in my life. *~Benjamin Moss '85*

Stories, I have many, but usually there is thrown in a reference to a magical time when I acquired my corner stone at Hoosac.

~John C. (Chris) Metzger '67 I am grateful to Hoosac for the great gifts it has given me, not the least of which is the realization that the ride and destination are one and the same thing. Deus Regit.

~Thomas Cochran '66 I walked in through the big red doors in Tibbits, not knowing what to expect. I came here wanting to experience a small school with diversity and many opportunities. Coming here gave me a confidence and maturity as a student that I took with me. *~Whitney Kelly '04*

VOL. No. 3 Alumni Owlet 2012:

If it weren't for Hoosac, I wouldn't have have met my husband, and I wouldn't have had my two beautiful sons. I cherish all of the wonderful memories I made there.

~Jackie Hyde Houran '02

As it turns out, I loved my four years at Hoosac. I did not go on a hunger strike and I came back for three more years of crazy memories. I created enough memories to tell stories for a lifetime without ever repeating the same story twice.

~Christine Brown '07

I loved playing hockey. As a southern boy there was nothing like getting out there on the pond, in our intramural rink of 2' boards, and running after the puck on the sides of my skates...what great fun we had! And then there were the more spiritual experiences, such as just walking through the snow to the dining hall in the early morning light. ~John Ober '71 Father Wood and Father Dunkerly guided us well... it is a testimony to them and others that Yale, Brown, Bard, and other great universities accepted the fruits of their labors.

~Ray (aka Dutson) Brown '51

My first memories of Hoosac were with my father and mother in 1964. We came up to Hoosac as a family for an application interview and the Asado. Sweet smells of roasting lamb on a spit. Back then that was the alumni reunion weekend. *~Dr. Clive Bridgham '68*

I was more blessed than I deserved to spend two years at Hoosac School. I have a lifelong friend in George Wayne Butler, and two years of memories, some faded, and some extremely vivid to this day.

~Chaplain (Colonel) Malcolm Roberts III (US Army Ret.) '62

Because of Hoosac's size, everyone had a one-on-one relationship with our Masters, like it or not. Everyone played sports. If you didn't make the varsity, you were J.V. Every one sang. If you didn't make the choir, you were in the chorus.

~George Wayne Butler '62 I was the only Chinese girl at Hoosac back in 2000, and with the help and support of friends and faculty, my English improved dramatically, and I adapted well into American high school. I became a Prefect in my second year. At graduation, I left Hoosac, but the friendships continue. *~San Hung '02*

In the years following (graduation) I often recollected with fond memories my time at Hoosac, and when my daughter Holly was born in 1983 it wasn't long afterward that I envisioned making her part of the experience.

~George Funkhouser '71

I never forgot what Hoosac did for me. I hope the students now at Hoosac realize what they've got – a chance of a lifetime.

~*Richard "Dick" Phair '43* Students read my articles and talked about them. As a result, I fell in love with the Owlet. My enthusiasm for the newspaper grew my

siasm for the newspaper grew, my position in the Owlet moved to junior editor and, eventually, to senior editor. I loved Friday when I printed out the newspaper.

~Seung Hwan "Ryan" Shin '08

VOL. No. 4 Alumni Owlet 2013

I loved Hoosac from the moment I set eyes on it. I was embraced by

VOL. No. 5 Alumni Owlet 2014

From Pitt-Mason to both the Chapel and Tibbits Hall it was almost a straight shot down hill. We poured water on the hill from time to time (in winter) to ensure that the two loafer-width grooves we had made in the ice and down the hill would deliver us to class as quickly as possible.

~George Hall '71

One of the funnier highlights was Brad talking about Father Cannon's dog, "Hamilcar," and an unfortunate incident with another dog during a meal in the dining hall. I laughed so hard I cramped... search your memory banks; you'll start laughing very hard too!

~Scott Meade Strasenburgh '74 Three of many favorite memories from Hoosac: Playing guitars with Spoon Dickey; English class with Dan Verdery; The Boar's Head Yule Log festival - always a most special time. ~Mark Haven '74

Our first tour of discovery led us to the bell tower. Since the administration was basically all new, no one seemed to have a key to the tower and it certainly wasn't on anyone's list to search for it, given the challenges facing the school. Being enterprising young men and certainly seeking an adventure "to go where no man has gone before."

~J. Kenneth Desmond '68 Coach Dickie, who understood boys better than anyone, and was like a second father to all of us, had the keen observation that after a Yule Log or a parent's weekend, all the mothers could not stop raving about how well dressed and good mannered the boys were, albeit Christian Gentlemen. ~Jim Millar '68

You may come alone but before any time passes you are part of this amazing family. As a day student it was a bit different, yet you were still a part of the family.

~Wanda Wrzenski Williams '84 VOL. No. 6 Alumni Owlet 2015

I knew the school and staff better than anyone in my day; I was there for five years and at least three summers working off tuition. I'm pretty sure I played every part in the Mummer's play. The school was so small then that most of us had to play two sports a season so we could field a team. ~*Austin McGrath '85*

Our favorite chaperone was the beloved coach, Harry Dickie. He was one of the finest examples any young man could have possibly had and his good influence got many of us off to a good start. *~Charles T. Barnes '65*

~Francis Whitcomb '41

VOL. No. 2 Alumni Owlet 2011:

I was the first and only student in the new art class set up in Tibbits basement. I went on to college and

tend is a wonderful life-long lesson. Thank you, Hoosac!

~Arnie Fallon '73

One memory that stands out is the long weekend in February where, instead of classes, we got to join in on a symposium. These were vari-

It was a great class, the last for all purposes at the old buildings in Hoosick, and what a time we had. the students and teachers and felt like I was home.

~Lizzette Huber Winters '83

It seems to hit you later in life that while you were there you were surrounded by people who really cared for your well-being and development! It is true that all Hoosac Alumni have a common bond and a feeling of unity. *~Kevin Backus '90*

The school taught me values and respect for others, something that is invaluable to one's future. I have nothing but fond memories of those years. Thank you, Hoosac. Deus Regit. ~Lewis G. Pierce '68

There were two reasons I picked Hoosac - The campus and H. Ashton Crosby. The latter, as anyone can imagine that has had the pleasure of knowing Ashton, can fill volumes.

~Chip Jarman '73

Running down the slippery hill to get to chapel on time - I still remember today how nervous we were to be late, being so afraid to make the whole hockey team run hills.

~Francis Lavoie '10

After graduating from Hoosac, I spent a summer at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts studying Shakespearean acting.

~Andrew Sherman '93

Every year we had a dance or two with girls' schools like Emma Willard & St. Agnes. I recall with laughter how they would blindly pair us off by age, grade, and I think, height. Believe me, it led to some very amusing "pairings."

~Scott von Stein '65

