The Fairbanks: A Family Connection

Henry and Martha Edmonds Fairbank, ’40 and ’42, consider Whitman College a family matter. And it is — from Martha’s father, Harold Edmonds, class of 1915, to Henry’s great-nephew Charles Rambo, class of 2006, and, in between, nearly 20 Whitman relatives.

The Fairbanks have remained true to this legacy for more than half a century. Martha served as a class representative for 28 years, soliciting contributions to the College while holding her classmates together with her news-filled letters, and she and Henry have added the spark of their enthusiastic attendance at the Senior Alumni College every year since 1986.

The Fairbanks also have contributed financially to Whitman through annual giving, multiple gift annuities, and a charitable remainder unitrust. In addition to making a significant contribution to Whitman, they receive charitable tax deductions as a result of the gifts as well as an income for the rest of their lives from the annuities and trust.

Martha and Henry's personal and professional lives have been a credit to the College where they obtained their grounding in the liberal arts. On the physics faculty at Yale for 18 years, then a professor at Duke University, and now professor emeritus, Henry has made notable contributions in physics. Martha has given many volunteer hours to her community and served more than 20 years as organist and choir director at their church.

“People often use the phrase ‘Whitman family’ when referring to our College,” Martha commented recently. “We certainly think of Whitman in that way since so many members of our Edmonds and Fairbank families have been a part of Whitman. In my letters soliciting gifts from my 1942 classmates, I always refer to Whitman as ‘our college.’ ”
Four Whitman alumni visited campus October 2 and 3 as part of the Career Center’s Alumni Career Series. Clockwise from above, Gail Patricelli, ’93, Linda Storm, ’84, Beth Bartel, ’94, and Martin Wagner, ’83, explain their work to students.

A post-doc researcher at Cornell University, Patricelli conducts research on the behavior of Australian bowerbirds; Storm, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Washington, studies the ethnobotany of Mima Mounds across the U.S.; Bartel works as a GPS field engineer with UNAVCO monitoring volcanoes; and Wagner, an international environmental and human rights lawyer, is managing attorney of international programs for Earthjustice in Oakland, California.

Kristin Grahn, ’95

Painter steps up in San Francisco art world

Much as Kristin Grahn, ’95, enjoys her day job, she would happily trade it in for a full-time version of her night job — painting.

“I would love to be a full-time artist,” said Grahn. “I would grow personally as an art-maker, and my work would get so much better so much faster.” While Grahn is still a ways off from a self-supporting art career, the October opening of her first ongoing show at San Francisco’s Shivaani Gallery marks her transition from amateur to professional.

“It’s been so satisfying to show my work and share my vision with other people,” said Grahn, “and it’s just one more step in establishing a legitimate artistic career.”

Inspired by American abstract expressionists including Joan Mitchell and Clyfford Still, Grahn’s non-representational style minimizes literal imagery and lets the medium itself become the message. Her signature mosaics are composed of various-sized canvases tiled into one abstract presentation. “One canvas can be abstract and one can contain an image,” said Grahn. “Then I tie them together with a theme or visual elements such as lines or colors.”

Grahn, who currently works as a land rights agent for PG&E, majored in both sociology and studio art at Whitman. She originally planned to pursue a career in social work, but the investigative research she conducted as part of her sociology thesis left her disillusioned by the politics and bureaucracy of social work. Art, she realized, was much more empowering and hopeful.

“Art is my own thing and it comes from within me. I have control over my own projects, and I’m practicing making inspired, balanced, and unified things,” said Grahn.

Born and raised in Seattle, Washington, Grahn has an artistic eye and creative edge that “runs in the family.” But Grahn is the first family member who has made the leap to professional, a leap that was initially “pretty nerve wracking. It’s not a well-beaten path, so it was tough to know what to expect,” she said.

While certainly her most public showcase thus far, the Shivaani Gallery collection is not the first display of Grahn’s work. Her first solo show opened last year at a hip Bay Area bar, and she currently has pieces hanging in a variety of locations, including CitiBank in downtown San Francisco. Grahn is already anticipating the next step up in galleries — and a more art-focused day job in academia or a museum. If all goes as planned, she will enter graduate school in the fall of 2005 to pursue a master of fine arts degree. In the meantime, she’s busy refining her style, painting more, and she hopes, selling more work.

“Sometime it’s hard to let certain pieces go,” said Grahn, “but I’m getting used to it.”

— Valarie Hamm, ’01

Career series brings young alumni to speak with students

Kristin Grahn’s signature mosaics were on display at San Francisco’s Shivaani Gallery in October.
25th Reunion of the Class of 1978

ROW 1: Kevin and Emily Rust (with Blake, Carole, and Holly), Jim Edmunds (with Kelsey and Evie), Janet Saunders Smith and Steven Smith (with Michael and Mahnya), Fitch Spencer (son of Summer Larch), Karen Nelson Howe, Deborah Lattimer, Julie Lefevre, Kristin Olsen Scates, D. James Scates (with Bosa), Mary Deming Barber and Alan Barber (with James and Thomas).


The Whitman Collection

Jan Warford Fisher, ’52, is coauthor of a book for teachers, The Key Elements of Classroom Management (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, September 2003). Jan retired as a staff development specialist with Newport-Mesa Unified School District, Newport Beach, California, and she is former coordinator of the California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program at the University of California, Irvine. She now serves as a consultant to southern California school districts and works in pre-service education at California State University, Fullerton. In The Key Elements of Classroom Management, Jan and her coauthors share techniques for managing time and space, student behavior, and instructional strategies. Contact Jan at jantfisher1@aol.com.

Reunion of the Class of 1982 and 1983


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Reunion of the Class of 1984

ROW 1: Linda Storm, children Spencer and Geo Newland, Timmy and Sean Nagle-McNaughton, Conor Dowling, and Andrew Jauhiainen;
Catherine Lyman Jauhiainen (with Sarah), Jessica Allen, Dan Drais, ‘83, Maria Donny (with Ella), David Hands.
ROW 3: Mary Ellen Block, Susan Stoltz, Diane Valach, Nancy Cobwell Forrest, Maggie Burns, Liz Paulus, Jim Mendesha, Laurie Silken, Marcy Kaufman Caulthorn, Paul Caulthorn, Lysle Wilhelmi, Christie Hauy Moetze.
ROW 4: Chris Griffin, John Houck, Kristen Nibson Farley, Steve Heywood, Bruce Bignold (with Francesca), Carol Howarth, Christina Masting, Bob Burton, Amy Gibbs Burton.
ROW 5: Matt Miller, ‘80, Karen Carson Miller, Peter Harvey, Brandy Jensen, Sarah Green-Ziegler, Eric Ziegler, ‘82, Cole and Sam Ziegler, John Eskew.
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ROW 5: Matt Miller, ‘80, Karen Carson Miller, Peter Harvey, Brandy Jensen, Sarah Green-Ziegler, Eric Ziegler, ‘82, Cole and Sam Ziegler, John Eskew.
5th Reunion of the Class of 1998


blue moon

May 2004 will mark publication of the 17th edition of blue moon, the College’s annual literary arts magazine. Entirely student produced, the magazine features the work of Whitman students, staff, faculty, and alumni.

Submissions

February 2, 2004, is the deadline for submissions to the 2004 edition of blue moon. Up to three prose pieces (10-page limit for each piece), four poems, and five pieces of art (including photography) may be submitted. For more details, contact Calandra Childers or Annie Marshall, editors-in-chief at childecl@whitman.edu or marshaam@whitman.edu. Submissions can be mailed to blue moon, Whitman College, Walla Walla, WA 99362, or sent via email attachments to bluemoon@whitman.edu.

To receive blue moon

The 2004 edition of blue moon will be published in May. To receive a copy, send a check for $12, payable to ASWC, to blue moon, Whitman College, Walla Walla, WA 99362. Please include your mailing address. For international addresses, send $15 in all to cover extra shipping charges.