RATIONALE FOR FURTHER READING.

1. Edina, Minnesota produced two of our classmates who either have provided a story or are the lead in another story.
2. Learn about the “Living Well, Dying Well” Program scheduled for Friday afternoon at 3:00 in Weitz Center for Creativity, Cinema
3. Learn who in our class received 2016 Alumni Association Awards

Content

2. Classmate, Fred Groat, details how an interest in palindromes led to a partnership with Michael Rebmann (Carleton 1962 - 1964, University of Minnesota), the use of Carleton College’s IBM 1620 computer, and a citation in the *Pacific Journal of Mathematics*.
3. Classmate Gary Reiter completes the history of Carleton College swimming. Included are the transition to the new pool, the origins of water pool (currently a major club sport), a swimming marathon, and a vintage stopwatch. Dick Porter will be at the Reunion to answer questions raised by readers.
4. Former faculty member, Patricia Lamb, received a 2016 Alumni Association Exceptional Service Award.
Reunion Update

135 Class Members Coming: 202 total.

Gift Committee Report

A full report from the Gift Committee will arrive soon. It is a remarkable success story.

All members of the Gift Committee and, especially the co-chairs Eric Carlson and Mimi Davidson, want to convey to the class how very grateful to all who considered and who have given, regardless of the amount.

Awards and Recognition

2016 Recipients of Carleton Alumni Association Awards:

- Eric Carlson ’66 • Distinguished Achievement
- Thomas Merritt ’66 • Exceptional Service
- Mary Watson ’66 • Exceptional Service
- Stephen R. Lewis, Jr., President Emeritus • Exceptional Service
- Patricia Lamb, Professor of Physical Education, Athletics and Recreation, Emerita • Exceptional Service

Program Information

Program on “LIVING WELL, DYING WELL” (Class of 1966):

Be sure to save time in your reunion schedule for this panel of our classmates! Steve Smith, M.D., will talk about lessons learned from his years as a hospice and palliative care specialist. Arline Roller Hinckley, M.S.W., will discuss the habits of those who live long and happy lives, advance planning for medical treatment and her experience with Death with Dignity Laws and those who choose to use them. Bruce Hanna will provide insights from his experience of caring for, losing, and grieving a loved one and leading groups exploring aging and loss. Judy Wickwire Nadal will share her wisdom from a long career as an RN and director of a small inpatient hospice. Expect a lively discussion between the panelists, bits of levity and some time for questions. All panelists will be available to continue the conversation after the formal discussion. Afternoon, Friday June 17, Weitz Center for Creativity Cinema.

Program on “Facing the Uncertain Future”

Organized and moderated by Lawrie Cherniak, with planned participation by Marilyn Arneseon Moyle, Michael Gordy, Rick Heydinger, Tom Hinckley, Marcy McGarrahough Andberg, and Bob White. This program will be on Saturday, June 18, Olin 149. From Michael Gordy: “Since the subject of our meeting here is ‘facing an uncertain future,’ perhaps I should begin by mentioning that the future has always been uncertain. If that really is a problem, it is not new. A newer problem, and one that may be unprecedented, is the way that the future of humanity has become increasingly certain over the past forty years or so, and I’d like to share a few thoughts about that.” Please join the group and participate.

More information on the Program can be found in the Carletonian for the Class of ’66 - 50th Reunion - 2nd Edition. Also, check out our 50th Reunion Web Page.
Stories from Classmates

The picture below of the Sayles-Hill pool nicely links two stories from classmates. Part I of Gary Reiter’s History of the Carleton College swim team was in the last issue; this issue contains Part II. Fred Groat, the 8th person from the left in the pool, writes about a long friendship.

Every time I receive one (which seems like every few weeks), I get upset for not having contributed anything myself. Time is running out, in more ways than one. I have found that I cannot keep up with the newsletters. But I have been keeping them in a file (a few still un-read) promising myself that I will read all of them, but first my story.

The effort and planning into keeping the Class of ’66 informed and together are very impressive. And obviously you started this a long time ago. My birthday happens to be July 1. One of the first reunion-related pieces of correspondence I received was a birthday greeting arriving on almost exactly July 1 last summer. I was struck by how early your effort started. Of course mass mailings using a database with birthdays is nothing new. BUT I was very flattered that there were some hand-written personal greetings from some classmates which told me you actually remembered me! Thanks guys—among others, Tom Merritt and Lawrie Cherniak, who wrote: “He’s Alive! He’s Alive!”

Thoughts about and memories of Carleton: Where to begin? I will try to avoid the political and social and gender and climate change/environmental topics, which abound in some of the newsletters I have read. Avoiding such topics for me will be difficult to do, of course. Those few of you who remember me might recall that I was a very active political Conservative while at Carleton. What an embarrassing mistake in my youth! But I have turned hard-Left. I might write something about my reversal in political position, my concerns about social justice, global warming, the need for more Diversity, etc. in a later edition. But for now, here is a little Carleton story, completely a-political and completely true, about me and a fellow classmate, Mike Rebmann.

Michael Rebmann was a member of the “Big Noise from Edina” contingent in our class. I remember a sense of intimidation with all the classmates from Edina (and suburban Twin Cities), Winnetka (and suburban Chicago), and Mamaroneck and Long Island. It seemed like half our class was from one of those places. I was just kid from a small town in Iowa. I remember looking up to Mike who was a member of that elite summer program of 1962. Mike was one of the smartest and sharpest people I met at Carleton, which is really saying something
when you consider how many really smart people there were at Carleton. I got to know Mike in the fall of 1963 when we sat next to each other in a Physics class – Classical Mechanics. He helped me with homework problems. Mike Rebmann could come across as a bit surly, but (at least with me) he was a very nice guy. We became roommates for the Spring term of our sophomore year in Burton 417, great location, where I lived for the remainder of my wonderful time at Carleton.

Mike and I were aspiring Physics majors, but we both ended up majoring in Math. But he was in a much higher league than I when it came to mathematics. Mike (who also happened to be quite a lady’s man) not only taught me a lot about math but other subjects, if you get my drift. Mike Rebmann did not graduate with us at Carleton. He transferred to the University of Minnesota in our junior year where he graduated with a degree in math. But we stayed in very close touch and I visited him several times at his home in Edina and at the U of M while I was still at Carleton. What an irony that after our graduations in 1966 we ended up at Yale and Harvard. (At least we lived up to the reputation of Carleton.) Mike was working for his PhD in mathematics at Yale, and I was in the MBA program at Harvard. We visited each other in New Haven and Boston a few times.

While Mike was in his junior year at the U of M (and I was still at Carleton) he told me about “numeric palindromes” and an interesting problem about them. A palindrome is when you get the same set of letters or digits forward or backwards– like the word “radar” or the name “Hannah.” We normally think only of words, but it applies to numbers also. 1966 is not a palindrome, but 66 is ... or 7447 or 15751, etc. There are several interesting palindromes in English, and a Carleton class of ’66 connection. (Remember the incredibly long palindrome, which was printed in a class-of-66 reunion publication many years ago? Drabant, etc. submitted by Sarah Weems I think.) But I will stick to the math story.

As with many math topics it gets complicated; but the basics are very simple. Take any simple, positive integer–like 8, or 28, or 53, or 162, or whatever. Keep the number of digits small to make it easier to follow. Reverse the digits and add the two numbers. If you start with a single digit number like 8, the reverse is also 8, and of course the sum is 16. If you start with 28, the reverse is 82, and their sum is 110. For 164 the reverse is 461. 164 + 461 = 625. After each step of adding a number to its reverse digits, check to see if the addition results in a palindrome. If so, STOP. If not, take it another step, and (if no palindrome) take another step, etc. Starting with 53 yields a palindrome after just one step, namely 88. 28 produces (28 + 82) equaling 110 which is not a palindrome, but 110 + 011 yields 121 which is a palindrome. After just couple of steps 164 yields a palindrome of 2662.

If your eyes haven’t glazed over by now, check it out! There is a natural tendency of the digits to converge to a palindrome. Of course all this has absolutely no practicality in life–like many of the things we study and many brain-teasers. But this math topic caught the interest of our classmate Mike Rebmann back in 1964-65 and he talked with me about it.

Most simple two-digit or three-digit numbers yield a palindrome after only a few iterations. But not all. The conjecture or issue is how many steps it will take to get to a palindrome—or are there “sum” numbers (pun intended) that will never yield a palindrome. And how could anybody really find out. Back in 1964-65 this was like exploring beyond our galaxy. Big clunky office calculators with paper tape did exist, but they could not accommodate more than nine or ten digits. And no calculator (then or now) had a function to reverse and re-enter the digits. Exploring such a problem had to be done by hand, with a lot a patience and very long and wide sheets of paper!

Computers were in their infancy. Do you remember that Carleton was on the cutting edge by obtaining an IBM 1620 computer? It occupied an entire room in the basement of Laird Hall, and required a huge (and noisy) air conditioning system just to support it. There was a course offered in programming the 1620 as part of the math curriculum, and I took that course in my junior year. All this was not without controversy. Some math purists at the time (like professors Dyer-Bennett and Kenneth May) looked down their noses at computers and the notion that you could actually have a “for credit” course on using a computer.
I was very excited about what one could do on the computer and told my good friend Mike Rebmann all about it. At the U of M, Mike at the time was only involved in “pure math” and had no access to their limited computer facilities. He described to me his interest in this palindrome problem and how tedious it was to reverse the digits, add the numbers, visually check for a palindrome, etc. ad nauseam. The light bulb flashed! (That was before eco-bulbs.) Almost simultaneously:

“Fred, do you think you could program the computer to do this?”

“Mike, I think I could program the computer to do that!”

I specifically remember Mike telling me that one of his professors at the U of M said that he thought it would be almost impossible to do this on a computer. That did it! During the spring of 1965 I started to write a program for the IBM 1620 to do this, but I couldn’t get very far due to on-going classroom demands and limited computer room availability. During the summer I was working at a John Deere factory near my home in central Iowa. But on some weekends in the summer of 1965 I drove to Carleton (nearly 200 miles) and met Mike. With special permission from Graham Kimble (computer services manager and instructor) we had complete access to the computer. We used it non-stop for hours on end. One weekend in August it was so hot and we ran the computer so long that we had to stop when we blew out the dedicated air conditioner.

It was quite tricky and time-consuming to develop a program to do this, given the limitations of programming languages and the limitation of my skills at the time. We finally succeeded in writing a program to automate the process. The program was on punch cards. We would enter a starting number on the computer console which was sort of like an electric typewriter. After each iteration the program would check for a palindrome. If not obtained, the number would be reversed and re-added and checked again, etc. As the numbers got longer, the computer cycles slowed down to several seconds for each iteration. So we had to spend a lot of time streamlining the program. When a palindrome was finally obtained, a special message “Hooray, a Palindrome!” would print out on the console, and the program would stop.

Some starting numbers seem to never end with a palindrome, which was of course a major part of the project. We made history by pushing beyond all limits at the time. How far did we go? The program self-aborted when the numbers got so long that they exceeded the computer’s memory of 128K!

I have fond memories of all that. Somehow I don’t recall talking very much with any of my math professors at Carleton about it. But Mike said it created quite a buzz at the U of M when he showed the results to some people there. Supposedly we wrote the first computer program ever for that specific problem.

If you are still awake and have read this far, you might be asking if we or if Carleton ever received any formal credit or recognition for this work. Yes, quite remotely we did! There was a math professor in California named Charles Trigg who was well known in this field. (What an apt name for a math guy.) Mike Rebmann actually contacted him about our work. They exchanged a number of letters and phone calls about it all.

In our computer programs we had to give a name for the various computations. (Names could not exceed 6 or 7 characters in our programming language of the time.) I/we came up with the term “versum” for the sum of a number when it is added to its “reversal” of digits. “Reverse-Sum,” i.e. versum, get it? Professor Trigg thought that was a great term and started using it in his math journal articles. See inset on next page, where Mike and I and Carleton are cited. That is my only remote claim to fame for my work at Carleton.

I stayed in touch with Mike for several years after college, and I knew that he moved to Silicone Valley long ago. But as unfortunately happens with so many of us, we dropped out of touch. I tried to locate him last year. He is living in Saratoga, California. I made a special effort to visit him on a trip to California early this year. Sad to say that Mike Rebmann, although still alive and ambulatory, is in very bad shape. He had a very debilitating stroke three years ago. He lost a lot of his razor sharp brain. I reminisced with him about the above story and many
others. At first he showed only spotty memories. But such conversations with stroke victims are very helpful. More of his memory came back as we talked.

I feel good that I made the effort to visit Mike. But I feel very badly that I did not make more effort to keep in touch with him and many other classmates. I must admit that I get goose bumps and a little lump in my throat as I re-read and think about this story.

And by the way, I stuck with my promise to not harp on political topics, and my conversion to the hard-Left. I will try to submit something on that later.”
High Tide: Dick Porter and I were swim captains senior year. Fortunately, the class behind us had some swimming talent including Cal Wadley, Carl Strippel, Bill Johnson, Jim Kloek, Jon Hopeman, and Hal Hart. In the fall 1965, we moved out of Sayles-Hill and into the new Thorpe pool where we hosted the Midwest Conference championship during the winter of 1965-66. We had individual triumphs, but Cornell College had more. My memory is that Carleton was second overall or fourth (editors’ note: based on the ’66 Algol, hard to say).

By June, 1966, I was sorry to leave behind all those names and relay split times and dates still painted on the wall of Sayles-Hill pool.

Thorpe pool had the nice strong chlorine smell but lacked the pungent odors of the Sayles-Hill locker room. I walked downstairs in Sayles-Hill many years after graduation stopping by on my way home from a deposition and trial in Rochester. I found the pool and locker room replaced by a book store operated by that college across the Cannon River. The memory of that night leaves a sour taste even now. The only comfort was the Sayles-Hill basement rest rooms were in the same location, and I could get an egg salad sandwich upstairs.

Now, with this 50th reunion bash and Carleton College fund-raising needs, I have sold all my long term investments in the Cedar Strip canoe and the Dn ice boat, as well as the laser sailboat. My wife was right that these boats just wouldn’t show much capital gain. I have taken the proceeds and willed both the cash and my ashes to Carleton suggesting an appropriate marker stone be placed along the Sayles Hill walk way with a commemorative slogan for the swimmers of 1962-1966.

Perhaps, just the simple: “their names were writ on water.”

Ebb Tide 1: Water Polo: The origins of organized water polo at Carleton College insofar as I can trace the lineage: Bob Miller ’63, who had been the class of 1966 freshman swim coach, and John Stout ’62 began organized Carleton College water polo in Sayles-Hill swimming pool in 1962 as an off season swimming conditioner and informal pre-season swimming workout.

NAIA rules required that no formal swim team training occur except during very circumscribed dates. With the key to Sayles-Hill pool, the class of 1966 continued organized Carleton College water polo and expanded the sport to several teams. Team members included former swim team members, a few roommates, and sometimes just those souls looking to lose a tough hangover.

Now, water polo is a formal Carleton College coed club sport of athletic renown and significant dedication (editor’s note: learn about water polo at Carleton).
Ebb Tide 2: Marathon: During the spring, 1966, four swimmers from the classes of 1966 and 1967: Carl Strippel, Hal Hart, Jon Hopeman, and Gary Reiter swam a freestyle relay in Thorpe pool: a 100-mile continuous marathon relay in less than 24 hours. When Willard was told about the relay he spoke the truth: "if I’d asked you to do it, you wouldn’t have.” The 100-mile swim marathon was reported in the Carletonian and New York Times of the day. Carl Strippel and Jon Hopeman insist even now that this marathon relay remains the highlight of their lives.

Ebb Tide 3: the Clebar Vintage Stop-watch: I still have the stop watch Willard Toumi gave me to use during freshman swim team training in 1963 and 1964. "Carls XI" is inscribed on the back casing. The watch is a rare Clebar 10 second sweep hand of the base metal Swiss style. The picture below is of a 60 second sweep stopwatch of about the same vintage.

No doubt the watch is quite valuable. I have decided in all fairness to return the watch to Carleton and its current Knight freshman swim coach although the watch hasn’t worked since it fell in the pool in 1965. I will insist that the current coach meet in the bookstore basement of Sayles-Hill to complete the transaction. Hopefully, Dick Porter will be there, too.”

Interesting Connections