

The Briar Wire

THE SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE ALUMNAE NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2019 | VOLUME 5 | ISSUE 7

My fellow alumnae and friends,

The dog days of August are here, and for many of you, it means that it is finally time for vacation and a brief respite. We are all preparing to launch the fall with exuberance that we are starting the second year of the new vision for Sweet Briar. Here on campus, we continue to host camps and programs that attract potential students and some that bring in auxiliary revenue for the College. The most exciting time for many of us is to welcome the fifth annual Sweet Work Weeks group of over 100 alumnae, families, and friends of Sweet Briar to spruce up the campus inside and out and prepare for the class of 2023. This “big idea” that commenced five years ago has taken off, helps the College immeasurably, and is a model for engagement for all colleges in America!

Sweet Work Weeks is being led by Vikki Schroeder '87 and Kathy Pegues '71 as well as Ann Gateley '70. These 5-year veterans are leading projects inside and out: painting residence halls, landscaping, working in the Admissions Office and the library, just to name a few. This working group is now part of the Alumnae Alliance and reminds all of us about our commitment to the College — and makes it fun to be part of the continued renewal and stewardship of Sweet Briar.

This school year, additional activities will be open to alumnae and friends — from admissions recruitment and local club events to book clubs and travel programs. All alumnae who hold leadership positions in their classes, clubs, Reunion, and the Alumnae Alliance Council are welcome to return to campus for our annual leadership summit on Founders' Day weekend (Sept. 20-22; see page 6 for details).

As we set our goals for the year, it would be amazing if each of us could set our own goals to help the College by:

1. Recruiting two to five new students,
2. Mentoring at least one current student, and
3. Finding an internship for at least one student.

All of these essential actions, our relationships, and our commitment to the next generation are what set Sweet Briar apart. To pass it on, to lend a hand and to ensure that you are helping Sweet Briar recruit the best



Pearl, the mascot of the Alumnae Relations and Development Office, prepares to paint Dew, one of Sweet Briar's residence halls. This project will be the seventh residence hall that Sweet Work Weeks volunteers have painted in three years.

the brightest is alumnae engagement at the highest level.

Come to campus this year to experience all of our enjoyable activities and community events, and which take our students to new heights and inspire all of us to be curious and better. The Reunion classes of 0's and 5's are already beginning to plan their return to campus, especially the Boathouse and the Dell. Remember, Reunion is now open to all classes, so this year we may have close to 40 classes represented as we did this past June.

Lastly, please know how grateful we are to you as we welcome the class of 2023 (with close to 130 new students) and almost 400 students on campus. We are growing, and with each year, we are building a bright future for the next generation of women of consequence.

With gratitude,

Mary Pope M. Hutson '83
Vice President for Alumnae Relations and Development

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A note from Mimi Garrard '58, 2019 Distinguished Alumna Award recipient

When told she would be receiving the Distinguished Alumna Award recognizing her achievements in her career in modern dance, Mimi wrote a letter to the Sweet Briar community. She was not able to accept the award at Reunion, but wanted to share her gratitude with alumnae and friends of the College. Her letter follows below.

I am deeply grateful for the Distinguished Alumnae Award. However, I regret I am not able to travel to Sweet Briar because of the health of my husband who is in the late stages of Parkinson's disease.

I owe my best friends, my career, and my husband to Sweet Briar College. My dearest friends are Alice Gaskell '59, Susan Dean, Judith Bell and Teeny Bell '58, and Mary Gearhart '78. Lew Thomas (at SBC in 1957), a former dancer with Mary Wigman, introduced me to modern dance and arranged a scholarship for me to study one summer with Alwin Nikolais. That summer changed my life. The integration of mind, body, and spirit in dance was exhilarating. Choreography and improvisation were fascinating and I was hooked. I moved to New York City after graduation and began studying with Nikolais and his colleagues at the Henry Street Playhouse full time. I later joined his company and he produced my concerts at the Playhouse for ten years. My friend Alice Gaskell kept talking to me about James Seawright who was a friend of her brother. James was from my home town but I had lost touch with him. However, I decided to get in touch and soon we were dating. All important aspects of my life today started at Sweet Briar College.

After my company began touring in the 1970s, Sweet Briar invited The Mimi Garrard Dance Company to perform in their lovely theater on several occasions and I began hosting a workshop in our loft in Soho for Sweet Briar College dance students. Mary Gearhart '78 attended and she began working for me after she graduated. She was my company manager, stage manager, lighting



Mimi Garrard's photo from 1958 The Briar Patch.

and graphics designer, and company supporter for many years. Sarah Skaggs attended one of our workshops in our New York City Loft. She was a very talented student who became an outstanding dancer, choreographer and teacher. I am very proud of her achievement. Mark and Ella Magruder who head the dance program at SBC danced with my company for a short but fruitful while.

What I remember most about SBC in a more academic way, was the chance to think. My friends and I had endless discussions about the nature of reality, who we are, and what is the meaning of life.

In closing, I would like to stress the importance of the arts as part of an academic curriculum. Science needs creativity and at its highest level it is as much an art as a science. We need jobs today, but we also need to find jobs that suit our talents and our interests. ■

Sweet Briar College announces exceptional fundraising results, raising \$18.5 million in fiscal year 2019



During fiscal year 2019, Sweet Briar College received gifts and pledges totaling \$18.5 million. This includes generous donations from alumnae and friends of the College, foundations and corporations. Of that total, \$10.2 million was for fiscal year 2019 and \$8.3 million will come as future support. Since 2015, the College has raised \$63.9 million.

"Sweet Briar has had a spectacular year that opened with recognition by U.S. News & World Report that we are among the most innovative schools in the country," said President Meredith Woo. "S&P Global Ratings has also upgraded the rating for bonds issued for Sweet Briar College for three years in a row. Our success is owed to the support of our alumnae and friends. I'm humbled by their passion and generosity and we at Sweet Briar are singularly committed to being worthy of their support."

Donations impact every aspect of College life. This year, alumnae and friends provided funding for scholarships and travel for prospective students, both of which help the College recruit and retain the best students. Donations supported the College's Grants for Engaged Learning, which enable students to do in-depth research, travel abroad and participate in other hands-on learning experiences. Gifts have also helped Sweet Briar develop agricultural enterprises, rededicating itself to traditional strengths. In addition, donations enable the College to bring well-known speakers to campus. In 2018-2019, Sweet Briar welcomed writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, artist and activist Morehshin Allahyari, Bettina Ring, Secretary of Agriculture and Natural Resources for the Commonwealth and Jim Hubbard, the undersecretary for natural resources and natural resources at the United States Department of Agriculture, among others.

Sweet Briar is grateful for the extraordinary support as we enter the second year of the new academic vision and repositioning of the College by educating the next generation of leaders in America. ■

Increased alumnae participation: Giving makes a greater impact than you think!

For class leaders and staff members alike, alumnae participation is one of those things that is greater than the sum of its parts. On the surface, it's black and white, a simple calculation that gives us a number. Dig a little deeper, and it becomes a formula that represents more than just giving.

Let's start with the technical components. To calculate participation, we use the total number of solicitable alumnae as our denominator. "Solicitable" means that an alumna has not asked the College to take her off of mailing lists or solicitation lists, and that Sweet Briar has at least one type of contact information on file for her (address, phone, or email).

The numerator is the total number of alumnae donors. When calculating class participation, the same calculation is used, just on a smaller scale: the total number of donors in that class divided by the total number of solicitable alumnae in that class.

$$\frac{\text{Total Alumnae Donors}}{\text{Total Solicitable Alumnae}}$$

Now, for the "greater impact" bit: Alumnae participation is used by U.S. News and World Report as one of seven factors in ranking colleges and universities. So, the higher our alumnae participation rate is, the higher our ranking will be each year. In addition, many granting agencies that fund colleges and universities use alumni participation as a factor in considering potential grants.

In short, increasing alumnae participation rates at Sweet Briar will make us more appealing to prospective students and their families as well as to potential grantors.

Nationwide, colleges and universities are experiencing a decline in their alumni participation rates. While Sweet Briar experienced a boost in the 2015 and 2016 fiscal years thanks to the efforts to save the College, participation in the 2019 fiscal year was 21.5%, lower than the three previous fiscal years.

For the 2020 fiscal year, Sweet Briar seeks to reach an alumnae participation rate of 30%, close to the same number of alumnae supporters in the 2016 fiscal year. Working with the Class Leaders Working Group of the Alumnae Alliance Council and teams of class leaders from all of the living classes, we will rally alumnae to demonstrate what sets Sweet Briar apart from the rest! To get in touch with your class leaders or Alumnae Relations and Development staff, please call (800) 381-6131 or email alumnae@sbc.edu. ■

**Alumnae participation
goal for the 2020 fiscal year
(July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020):
30%!**

CLASS CHALLENGES RESULTS

Final overall participation rate: 21.5%

Class Year	Giving June 30, 2019	Participation June 30, 2019
1940	\$0	0.0%
1941	\$25	8.3%
1942	\$3,350	50.0%
1943	\$29,296	18.2%
1944	\$11,475	45.5%
1945	\$5,400	19.0%
1946	\$61,905	17.2%
1947	\$9,512	25.7%
1948	\$21,390	28.2%
1949	\$119,247	55.2%
1950	\$7,775	20.0%
1951	\$38,381	45.7%
1952	\$22,471	35.0%
1953	\$29,047	34.6%
1954	\$522,891	50.7%
1955	\$132,826	38.5%
1956	\$15,875	28.9%
1957	\$178,555	40.7%
1958	\$336,231	28.4%
1959	\$561,844	38.7%
1960	\$739,402	38.4%
1961	\$103,952	32.3%
1962	\$394,294	39.6%
1963	\$586,933	41.0%
1964	\$242,315	55.9%
1965	\$88,030	38.9%
1966	\$423,303	38.8%

Class Year	Giving June 30, 2019	Participation June 30, 2019
1967	\$97,685	35.0%
1968	\$133,831	54.6%
1969	\$76,074	35.9%
1970	\$168,706	31.8%
1971	\$49,994	23.2%
1972	\$463,535	30.4%
1973	\$38,475	23.3%
1974	\$137,216	29.4%
1975	\$358,271	28.9%
1976	\$69,968	17.5%
1977	\$27,853	13.8%
1978	\$239,860	29.5%
1979	\$105,220	22.6%
1980	\$57,442	21.1%
1981	\$128,839	20.9%
1982	\$157,284	23.5%
1983	\$97,733	35.9%
1984	\$62,666	31.2%
1985	\$41,582	16.3%
1986	\$29,283	23.3%
1987	\$32,835	12.3%
1988	\$26,061	17.4%
1989	\$27,754	22.8%
1990	\$79,615	15.7%
1991	\$7,486	12.2%
1992	\$19,678	13.6%
1993	\$21,772	14.9%

Class Year	Giving June 30, 2019	Participation June 30, 2019
1994	\$4,852	13.9%
1995	\$33,975	18.5%
1996	\$31,450	31.9%
1997	\$12,301	18.5%
1998	\$15,080	19.9%
1999	\$13,581	18.1%
2000	\$7,002	8.3%
2001	\$19,927	11.9%
2002	\$5,360	11.2%
2003	\$18,293	12.9%
2004	\$13,425	15.1%
2005	\$6,159	9.3%
2006	\$6,009	12.9%
2007	\$4,642	11.3%
2008	\$4,853	10.1%
2009	\$5,330	11.1%
2010	\$2,632	6.3%
2011	\$3,441	10.3%
2012	\$5,735	8.6%
2013	\$580	4.8%
2014	\$335	4.3%
2015	\$655	4.1%
2016	\$927	7.5%
2017	\$790	2.9%
2018	\$208	4.1%

Updated June 30, 2019.

Decade winners (participation and/or giving)
Reunion award winners (see below)

Reunion Giving and Participation Awards

The Nancy Dowd Burton '46 Award

1959, 60th Reunion

Given to the class celebrating an anniversary Reunion year with the highest total giving to Sweet Briar in the current fiscal year.

The Centennial Award

1954, 65th Reunion

Given to the class celebrating an anniversary Reunion year with the highest total giving to Sweet Briar over the last five years since their last anniversary Reunion year.

The Nancy Godwin Baldwin '57 Award

1999, 20th Reunion

Given to the class celebrating an anniversary Reunion year with the highest percentage of its members attending their Reunion.

Participation Award, 25th through 50th Reunion Classes

1969, 50th Reunion

Given to the class celebrating an anniversary Reunion year between their 25th and 50th years with the highest participation in giving to Sweet Briar.

Participation Award, 5th through 20th Reunion Classes

1999, 20th Reunion

Given to the class celebrating an anniversary Reunion year between their 5th and 20th years with the highest participation in giving to Sweet Briar.

Join Us! Fall 2019 Schedule of Events

August

Event	Date	Location
New Students Arrive	8/17	Campus
Opening Convocation	8/21	Campus
Short Session Courses Begin	8/22	Campus
Field Hockey	8/30	Sweet Briar, VA
Soccer	8/30	Sweet Briar, VA
Field Hockey	8/31	Sweet Briar, VA

September

Event	Date	Location
Soccer	9/4	Baltimore, MD
Field Hockey	9/6	Lancaster, PA
Tennis	9/7	Sweet Briar, VA
Soccer	9/7	Front Royal, VA
Tennis	9/8	Sweet Briar, VA
Short Session Courses End	9/11	Campus
Soccer	9/11	Sweet Briar, VA
Short Session Exams and Break	9/12 - 9/13	Campus
Field Hockey	9/14	Hackettstown, NJ
Field Hockey	9/15	Bryn Athyn, PA
Step Singing	9/16	Campus
Long Session Courses Begin	9/16	Campus
Soccer	9/18	Chambersburg, PA
Founders' Day Weekend	9/20 - 9/22	Campus (see page 6 for details)
Alumnae Leadership Training Conference	9/20 - 9/22	Campus (see page 6 for details)
Riding - NCEA	9/21	Sweet Briar, VA
Tennis	9/21 - 9/23	Fredericksburg, VA
Field Hockey	9/21	Sweet Briar, VA
Soccer	9/21	Sweet Briar, VA
Soccer	9/25	Sweet Briar, VA
Field Hockey	9/25	Amherst, VA
Riding - NCEA	9/27	Athens, GA
Soccer	9/28	Greensboro, NC
Field Hockey	9/29	Baltimore, MD

October

Event	Date	Location
Field Hockey	10/1	Harrisonburg, VA
Families Weekend	10/4 - 10/6	Campus
Riding - NCEA	10/4	Sweet Briar, VA
Field Hockey	10/4	Sweet Briar, VA
Swimming	10/5	Greensboro, NC
Soccer	10/5	Sweet Briar, VA
Faculty Recital	10/6	Campus
Presentation and Lecture by New Yorker Staff Writer Ariel Levy	10/9	Campus

October (continued)

Event	Date	Location
Soccer	10/9	Sweet Briar, VA
Swimming	10/12	Lexington, VA
Field Hockey	10/12	Sweet Briar, VA
Soccer	10/12	Sweet Briar, VA
Soccer	10/14	Sweet Briar, VA
Field Hockey	10/16	Buena Vista, VA
Soccer	10/16	Lynchburg, VA
Riding - NCEA	10/18 - 10/19	Auburn, AL
Swimming	10/19	Raleigh, NC
Soccer	10/19	Sweet Briar, VA
Soccer	10/23	Roanoke, VA
Riding - NCEA	10/25	Felton, DE
Swimming	10/25	Hampden Sydney, VA
Swimming	10/26	Sweet Briar, VA
Soccer	10/26	Emory, VA
Field Hockey	10/26	Ferrum, VA
Soccer	10/30	Sweet Briar, VA




November

Event	Date	Location
Soccer	11/2	Harrisonburg, VA
Swimming	11/2	Misenheimer, NC
Reading and Presentation by Madeline Miller, Author of Circe	11/7	Campus
Swimming	11/9	Lynchburg, VA
Gager Concert	11/10	Campus
Swimming	11/15	Greensboro, NC
Thanksgiving Break	11/22 - 12/1	Campus

December

Event	Date	Location
#GivingTuesday	12/3	sbc.edu/give
Swimming	12/7	Sweet Briar, VA
Holiday Pops & Vespers	12/8	Campus
Long Session Courses End	12/13	Campus
Reading Days & Exams	12/14 - 12/17	Campus
Winter Break Begins	12/18	Campus
Last Day to Make a Calendar Year End Gift	12/31	sbc.edu/give

KEY

-  Athletics Events
-  Campus Events (open to the public)
-  Academic Schedule

Check our website for updates and the latest events at sbc.edu/events.

Founders' Day and Alumnae Leadership Training Conference 2019: Celebrate and Recommit to Sweet Briar!

September 20-22, 2019

Founders' Day Activities

Convocation

Process to Monument Hill

Memorial Service
for the Williams Family

Memorial Service at Burial Ground
for Enslaved Founders

Community Dinner

Events subject to change.

Alumnae Leadership Training Conference

*An opportunity to visit campus and learn
how to better serve our alma mater.*

Open to registered alumnae
volunteers:

Council Co-Chairs

Council PlusOnes

Admissions Ambassadors

Class Leaders

Club Leaders

Save the Date!

2020 All-Class Reunion

*Open to all alumnae and friends,
honoring classes ending in 0 or 5*

May 29 - 31, 2020

Bookmark sbc.edu/reunion
for future updates!

Activities include:

Sessions and training
on volunteer roles

Help with Sweet Briar Connects

Cheer on Vixen Athletics!