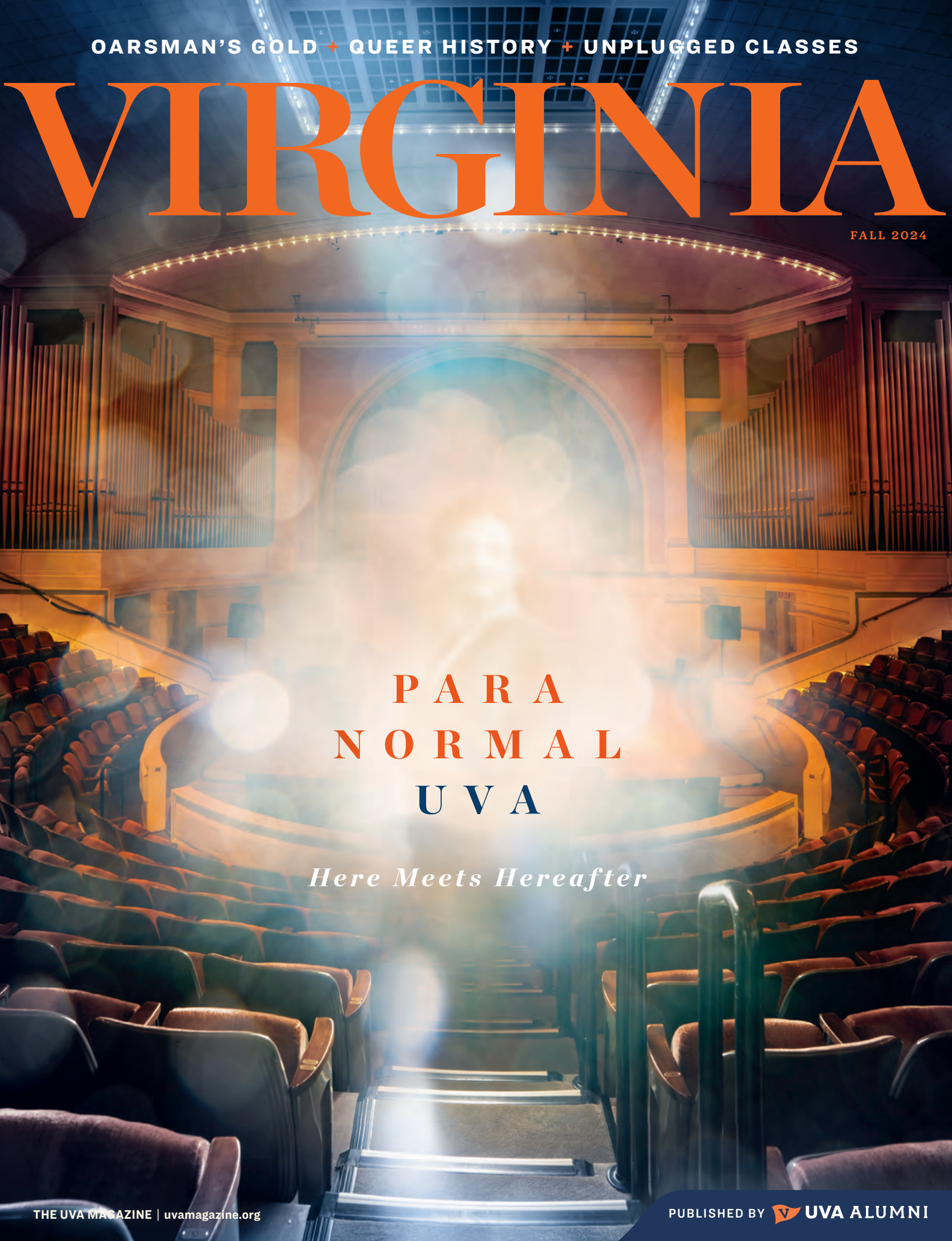
OARSMAN'S GOLD + QUEER HISTORY + UNPLUGGED CLASSES

VIRGINIA

FALL 2024



PARA NORMAL UVA

Here Meets Hereafter

THE UVA MAGAZINE | uvamagazine.org

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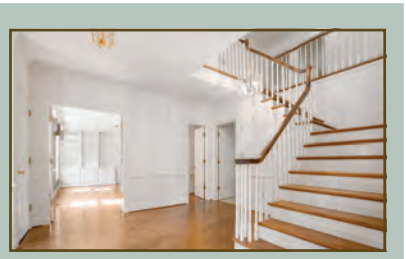
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DISTINGUISHED GEORGIAN IN IVY ON 3 ACRES









2228 Wingfield Road • $1,495,000

Set on a private landscaped 3 acre parcel next to other significant properties in the Ivy Elementary School District, this well-built & well maintained all-brick home overlooks a bucolic, permanently conserved horse farm. Generously proportioned home enjoys large foyer, 9' ceilings, hardwoods throughout & Marvin windows. Located at the end of Wingfield Road, the home provides total tranquility yet in a neighborhood setting. Original high quality interior finishes & spot-on floor plan. The parcel enjoys a large, level front lawn, large deck overlooking the horse farm, endless boxwoods & other mature, native specimens. MLS# 654171

PICTURESQUE 124 ACRE FARM W/ MAGNIFICENT MOUNTAIN VIEWS









5229 Advance Mills Road • $2,495,000

Beautiful 124 acre farm w/ magnificent Blue Ridge & Southwest Mountain views w/ approx. 50% open pasture encircled by privacy-enhancing hardwood forest. Several streams & springs, large farm equipment building, storage shed, fencing & cross fencing, well suited for horses, livestock, crops, & hay. Charming 5 bedrm, 3.5 bath Cape style home w/ main level primary, whole house generator, 2-car garage, & spacious rooms. 5 theoretical division rights. Currently in land use w/ cattle. Not in conservation easement. 10 min to Rt 29 corridor, CHO airport, Hollymead amenities, & 20 min to Charlottesville. Sally Neill (434) 531-9941. MLS# 651260

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748 LEXINGTON AVENUE
$2,250,000

Discover a newly transformed urban retreat in coveted N. Downtown, where this impeccably renovated home redefines contemporary living. Recently expanded & upgraded w/ eco-friendly materials, the residence boasts an open-concept layout that seamlessly connects living spaces to great room overlooking mature trees. High-efficiency mechanical systems ensure optimal comfort & energy savings year-round. Private outdoor relaxation & entertainment areas, incl' covered front porch, screened porch, & multiple decks, notably a spacious deck off primary suite w/ outdoor shower & hot tub. Professionally designed landscaping w/ native plants. Lisa Lyons (434) 987-1767. MLS# 654685

METICULOUSLY RENOVATED DOWNTOWN



107 PERRY DRIVE • $795,000

Urban sophistication & tranquility in this meticulously renovated home moments from the Pedestrian Mall. This residence boasts serene rear yard oasis w/ tiered gardens, Japanese terraces & 3 outdoor entertaining spaces. Inside, gourmet kitchen w/ custom cabinetry, Italian honed marble counters & center island complemented by wood burning fireplace in the great room. Primary bedrm retreat w/ floor-to-ceiling windows & spa-like bath. Lindsay Milby (434) 962-1948. MLS# 650878

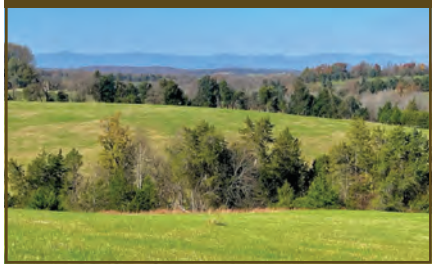
RARE HISTORIC DOWNTOWN GEM



113 ALTAMONT CIRCLE • $1,395,000

Rare opportunity to live on one of Downtown's premiere streets just a few blocks from parks, restaurants and shopping. 1920's character abounds w/ original woodwork, moldings & hardwood floors, dramatic foyer with fireplace, tall ceilings, deep front porch, & backyard oasis with swimming pool & entertaining spaces. 5 bedrooms & 3.5 baths, incl' 1st flr primary suite & elevator to main level & partially fin. basement. Sally Neill (434) 531-9941. MLS# 649220

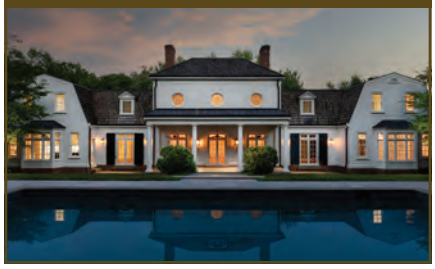
EPIC 80 ACRE ESTATE PARCEL IN SOMERSET



10000 ROCKLANDS DRIVE • $1,775,000

Located on one of Virginia's most scenic & protected byways, this estate parcel offers multiple building sites, all set in absolute privacy & tranquility yet w/ stunning, panoramic views of the countryside. Rolling topography offers about 55 acres of lush meadows & 25 acres of mature hardwoods. Fiber internet! Zero road exposure, not in any flight paths, & within 25 mins of Charlottesville. Under conservation easement w/ no division rights. MLS# 647348

130+ ACRES PRIVATE FARM & ESTATE



2405 COOPERS LANE • $5,950,000

This architecturally distinguished French provencial style Albemarle Estate is nestled among history & wineries. 133.8 acres private farm consists of 8 adjoining parcels. Stunning home w/ 5 ensuite bedrooms, expansive 1st floor primary suite, 4 wood burning fireplaces, stunning kitchen w/ seamless flow btw dining, living, library & the outdoors, plus 3-car detached garage. Located mins from Monticello, Highlands, Morven & only 20 min to Dowtown. Reidar Stiernstrand (434) 284-3005. MLS# 653189

498 ACRE EQUESTRIAN, HUNTING & FARM ESTATE



GREENFIELDS FARM • $4,250,000

Greenfields is an historic S. Albemarle hunting & farming estate suited to equestrians, wing shooters, deer hunters & anyone who wants to take advantage of the fertile croplands. The centerpiece of this storied property is a c.1905 manor home offering 12' ceilings, incredible woodwork, massive windows, endless fireplaces & modern luxuries. 3 modern, 1 bed apts in excellent condition. 25 mins from Charlottesville. 2 division rights. Add'l 258 acres available. MLS# 650686

JAW DROPPING CONTEMPORARY ESTATE ON 42 ACRES 12 MINUTES TO TOWN



1414 WALDEMAR DRIVE
$5,950,000

Sited beautifully amongst massive oak trees, this dazzling home enjoys incredible views of rolling hills & mountains beyond. The centerpiece is a great room that soars to 31' w/ walls of glass to take in the views. 1st floor master plus add'l 1st floor suite that doubles as an office. 3 bedroom suites up & guest suite in the basement. Large, covered rear porch & horizon pool. Features incl' wide plank oak flooring, geothermal HVAC, home gym, & butler's pantry. Comprised of two 21 acre parcels, the property enjoys 2 entrances & can be subdivided. Large, multi-purpose barn w/ half bath, devoted septic. Horse friendly land w/ creek. Fiber optic internet. 12 mins to town, Boar's Head, Farmington et al. MLS# 649482

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ON THE COVER: Photo illustration by Sanjay Suchak and Steve Hedberg

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⬥ EDGEMONT ⬥

Nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains is this Palladian inspired masterpiece called Edgemont—a home whose design is reputed to be the only remaining private residence attributed to Thomas Jefferson. Sited on 572 rolling acres with a tennis court, pool, pool house, and guest houses. MLS#576150 $15,000,000 Court Nexsen, 646.660.0700
www.HistoricEdgemont.com



⬥ COBHAM PARK ⬥

An exceptional c.1856 private country estate in Keswick impeccably restored and updated. The spacious and stately home offers 5-BR, 5.5-BA, 9-FP. The grounds, 286 acres of lush rolling pastures and hardwood forests, include beautiful gardens, a pool & brick pool house, springs & pond, 5 cottages, farm buildings, and a workshop. MLS#642739 $9,995,000 Court Nexsen, 646.660.0700, Represented Purchaser.



⬥ FARMINGTON ⬥

Elegant stone residence in Farmington Country Club on 5 acres with breathtaking Blue Ridge Mountain views. Balancing privacy and convenience, it's close to Charlottesville, UVA, and club amenities. Includes guesthouse, separate office,garage, pool, koi pond, and 2 garden houses. Crafted with exquisite detail, this 5-bedroom home epitomizes luxury living. $5,975,000. Tim Michel, 434.960.1124



⬥ BENTIVAR MANOR ⬥

Explore this magnificent brick home, privately situated on 88 lush acres less than 5 miles from the city. Perfectly maintained, this expansive residence features 7 -BR and 11,000+ sf. of living space. The estate boasts a diverse mix of pastures and wooded areas, significant Rivanna River frontage, and numerous trails for outdoor adventures. MLS#652353 $4,875,000 Jim Faulconer, 434.981.0076 or Will Faulconer, 434.987.9455



⬥ FIELDS OF BOAZ ⬥

A country French estate custom built on 24 acres in Ivy six miles from UVA. A combination of timeless charm and modern luxury with soaring ceilings, spacious primary suite, home office, wine cellar, and guest quarters. Wonderful views of the private pond, rolling countryside, and expansive terraces. Two unique and well-conditioned outbuildings. MLS#652608 $3,995,000 Court Nexsen, 646.660.0700



⬥ MEADOW FARM ⬥

436+/- acres providing complete privacy and tranquility. Pastoral views throughout. The gently rolling terrain lends itself to any number of productive, agricultural uses and/or a recreational paradise. Property is under conservation easement with four division rights. Located in the heart of farm and estate country just south of Charlottesville and the University of Virginia. MLS#651411 $2,985,000 Charlotte Dammann, 434.981.1250

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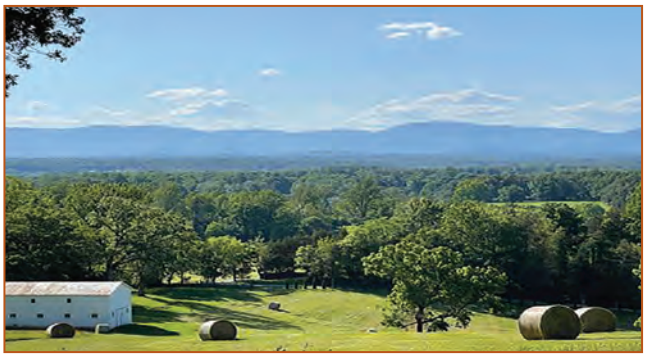
◆ BELLAIR ◆

Recently renovated contemporary home in sought-after neighborhood! 4-BR, 3.5-BA, and vaulted great room, this residence boasts superb construction and quality materials. Enjoy stunning views from the screened porch and expansive windows. Surrounded by gardens, woods, and a creek, this 5.46-acre property offers serene living. MLS#652438 $2,675,000 Jim Faulconer, 434.981.0076 or Will Faulconer, 434.987.9455



◆ KESWICK ◆

Stately Colonial on 1.37 acres with abundant light and golf course views. Professionally landscaped for privacy. Ideal for entertaining with spacious kitchen, dry bar butler's pantry, formal dining. Library with custom bookshelves and fireplace. Gracious Primary with en-suite and walk-in closet. Impeccably maintained residence. MLS#655210 $1,975,000 Mark Mascotte, 434.825.8610



◆ HIGH FIELDS ◆

Stunning 42-acre farm, a scenic 10-mile drive from Charlottesville. Nestled amidst pastures and woodlands, it offers a serene creek, an antique farmhouse, updated kitchen, three bathrooms, four bedrooms, and panoramic Blue Ridge Mountain vistas, with a substantial barn for agricultural pursuits. MLS#651245 $1,695,000 Jim Faulconer, 434.981.0076 or Will Faulconer, 434.987.9455



◆ HISTORIC STAUNTON ◆

Meticulously renovated National Historic Register home, blending modern amenities with remarkable charm. 5-BR gem boasts tall ceilings, hardwood floors, stained glass windows, and elegant trim work. Quartz kitchen, magnificent primary suite, terrace level apartment, and garden. Rare opportunity in Staunton, VA, offering luxury, fantastic proximity, and timeless beauty. MLS#653080 $1,295,000 Court Nexsen, 646.660.0700



◆ PARK STREET ◆

Unparalleled opportunity steps from Charlottesville's Pedestrian Mall. Transform into a private residence, maintain current use as offices, or envision mixed-use development. Expansive rooms, lofty ceilings, architectural detailing, large private parking. Covered porch affords views of Park and access to dining, cultural amenities, and shops. Less than two miles from UVA. MLS#654741 $1,195,000 Court Nexsen, 646.660.0700



◆ CROZET ◆

Quality-built residence, circa 2017, in the heart of Crozet, minutes from shopping, Western Schools, and Blue Ridge Mountains. This home is in good condition, and features a spacious main-level master suite, high ceilings, gourmet kitchen, screened porch, and 2-car garage. In a great established neighborhood with Blue Ridge views. $989,000. Jim Faulconer, 434.981.0076 or Will Faulconer, 434. 987.9455

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A Tip of the Hat and Farewell



Early on in my tenure here, Judy Le, our managing editor, asked me, goaded me really, to write some kind of ode to what makes UVA UVA. We needed it for our special bicentennial issue, something to lighten the weight of all the history we had compiled. She wanted something unabashedly celebratory.

The result was "A Hat Tip to U.Va." (Winter 2018), an essay that used as its jumping off point the experience of wearing a U.Va. hat anywhere in the world. Invariably, you find yourself engaged in conversation with another Wahoo as if you'd known that person longer than your family members, the ones standing over there to the side rolling their eyes.

At the time, it had happened to me in Northern Michigan. Several weeks ago, on the hiking trails at Mount Rainier, it happened again. A fellow traveler called out to me. I was wearing the hat. Then, an hour later, it happened again.

It made for the perfect bookend to my eight-plus years as editor of *Virginia Magazine*. Before heading out on the trip I announced my retirement, effective with the close of this edition. My plan, a year in the making, is to see if I can take my writing in some new directions. It's a thrilling and daunting prospect, and something I wouldn't have had the inspiration to do without the extraordinary opportunity I've had in these pages.

> This has been a dream assignment—covering the University of Virginia in all its beauty, richness, personality, intrigue and complexity.

Like the "Hat Tip" piece, this has been a dream assignment. You couldn't ask for a better beat to cover—the life and history of the University of Virginia, in all its beauty, richness, personality, intrigue and complexity. It's even better than that, because you get to tell that story, and practice the craft, in the most sublime medium of all, magazines.

Living and working in a college town holds a certain cachet. It's almost cliché. That doesn't make it any less true. Shortly after I moved here, someone offered an astute observation in the form of a greeting: "Welcome to Charlottesville, where everyone is overqualified." I've encountered that throughout Alumni Hall, where I've gotten to work alongside people who aren't just ridiculously credentialed but also exceedingly caring and dedicated.

Those traits run deep, by which I mean all the way down to the basement. That's where you'll find our small but mighty magazine team. I can't begin to describe my daily awe in seeing the ambition, ethos and attention to detail my colleagues bring to every issue of *Virginia Magazine*. And they're hilarious, disturbingly and scarily funny, which is basically a job requirement in our line of work.



The most important element of the enterprise is also the most gratifying, the readership. It goes back to the Virginia hat. I'm sure alumni from other places exchange high fives in their travels. They may even enjoy reading their alumni magazines when they get home. It's just not with the same sense of shared experience, the same sense of place. We see it in the reader surveys you graciously return to us, in our online metrics, in your comments and letters, and in your embrace of the storytelling we've been able to do. Much of the dream assignment has been getting to write for a dream audience. You're the best—fiercely devoted, intensely engaged and, goes without saying, impeccably well-educated.

Thank you for your steadfast support. Thank you for reading us. It has been an honor. As will be rejoining your ranks.

Richard Gard (Col '81)
Editor & Vice President for Communications

STEVE HEDBERG

VOX ALUMNI

Letters

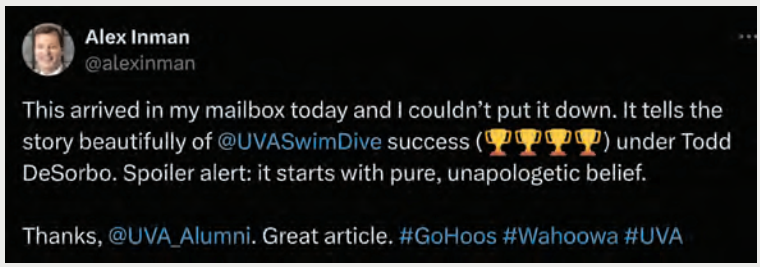


CRAZY FAST

I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed the article on Coach Todd DeSorbo and the UVA swim team that has been dominating NCAA competitions in recent years. I was at UVA when Bruce Arena was building the men's soccer program that led to five consecutive NCAA championships (early 1990s), and that makes this next year more exciting to the program than ever. Pass the men's soccer team—records were made to be broken! Also, in a time when athletes are pushing for compensation in competition for their universities, the brilliant article in *Virginia Magazine* reads with a love for the game in the coaching staff and for both the women's and men's swim teams. It reads like a team that was built to have fun and break records. Without that love for the sport, no amount of money can make a team as successful as Coach DeSorbo and our student-athletes have done. In fact, don't our student-athletes attend UVA for the education and the competition, or do they choose a team for the money?

For fellow alumni, pay attention to the run of this swim team in the coming year, as this type of success comes along once in a generation, and consider taking the time to read the article about our team and their love for swimming. "Crazy Fast" was a crazy-good article and fed the information that tells this UVA sports junkie why the team is so successful under Coach DeSorbo and his staff.

Don Rissmeyer (Engr '90)
Powhatan, Virginia



Alex Inman (Col '86)
Charlottesville

SEEING THE CHAPEL IN A NEW LIGHT

My husband, **Hank Chambers (Col '88, Law '91)**, and I chose to be married at UVA's Chapel in 1992 because we met as first-year students in the same dorm and built our relationship over six years spent in Charlottesville. I appreciated the article about the Chapel's recent renovation and the column at the end of the magazine with postcard photos.

Paula Peters Chambers (Col '89)
Richmond, Virginia



Upon the laying of the cornerstone of the University Chapel, Maximilian Schele De Vere commented that the features of the structure would "all lead the eye upward, and with the eye the heart also is lifted up, aspiring to heaven." The remark invokes the very essence of the Gothic architectural style that informed the Chapel; vertical space and detail replace horizontal emphasis as an expression of grandeur.

Externally, the Chapel is conspicuous in juxtaposition to the classical features of the Academical Village, while its expressive interior has endured limitations in lighting when compared with Gothic exemplars such as the Cathedral Church of St. Peter in Exeter. Scale and circumstance may account for this imbalance; the Chapel's light sources are much smaller, and the interior wood finishing underwent darkening perhaps in reaction to an early structural fire. Under the new life afforded by the renovation, the Chapel finally shows off its vertical space with restored and perfected wood finishes illuminated by the unobtrusive artificial lighting. Renovation meets refinement in a flash of light as visitors gaze upward into the heavens.

Robert J. Smith III (SCPS '24)
Richmond, Virginia

"ONE OF THE FASTEST MACHINES ON EARTH"

Thank you for the Time Capsule question about "cutting-edge technology" and the article "One of the fastest machines on Earth" in the Summer 2024 issue. I worked in the basement of Gilmer Hall in 1967-1968, shown in the photo on Page 28, for **Eugene Grabman (Com '55)** and Alan Batson as a burster and operator of the Burroughs B5000, misplacing output, dropping card decks, mounting magnetic tapes wrong, and having a great time, while also taking classes from graduate student **William Wulf (Engr '68)**. The machine came with an engineer from Japan named Ted. The only thing I ever

heard him say in English was "cold start," '60s jargon for "reboot."

William H. Joyner Jr. (Engr '68)
Crozet, Virginia

I thoroughly enjoyed this article! As an undergraduate taking a humanities-oriented approach in the '80s, the goings-on in other disciplines' basements seemed exotic and unknown to me, and fascinating now that I've learned the genesis of real computing power as I was there. (I knew such buildings more for having auditoria where groups would screen films on Saturday nights.) The research on this story looks time-intensive, as threads come together nicely, and a vital story unfolds through the decades. Thank you for writing this story, Ms. Hall. Your article informs of past endeavors, so we all know more about how constituent things at UVA came about and the University could become the place it is. Truly a fine piece of writing.

Doug Harris (Col '84)
Richmond, Virginia

NEW LAW BANS LEGACY PREFERENCE [U-DIGEST]

In the discussions around legacy admissions and preferences, there is an unmentioned aspect that needs to be considered. Much of the criticism regarding legacy admissions asserts that the overwhelming majority of applicants who benefit from this are white. While this is objectively true, a new concern needs to be raised. Nonwhite alumni exist in ever-increasing numbers, and now their children will be unable to take advantage of such preferences. The commonwealth's new law denies nonwhite alumni a heretofore significant benefit of being a college graduate just as they were in a position to take advantage of it. While a well-intended law (focusing on academic merit instead of familial status), the result denies an advantage to the children of nonwhite alumni that the children of white alumni enjoyed for decades.


UDigest
NEW LAW BANS LEGACY PREFERENCE
The 2023 affirmative action decision didn't address legacy admissions, but the longtime practice quickly became a target.

Perhaps a middle ground can be struck—legacy status can be used as a tiebreaker between two applicants who are otherwise equal in merit. This would correct an imbalance between less-qualified legacy applicants who were advantaged at the expense of more meritorious applicants while preserving the multigenerational family connections that are indispensable to the University.

In the interest of full disclosure, I was a legacy applicant and most assuredly benefited from that status during the application process.

Bradford Moore (Col '07)
Princeton, New Jersey

RECORD-BREAKING ADMISSIONS [U-DIGEST]

In your recent article "Record-breaking admissions," much was made of the record-breaking number of applications received by the University. Of course, with more applicants for a relatively fixed number of spots, such increases serve to make the University (and others like it) appear more selective than ever. I am proud of my UVA education and believe it is still among the best in the country. It will always be a dream school for many, as it should be.

My issue is not really with the University's admission process, per se, but with the advent of the Common Application, which incentivizes students to apply to too many schools. When each school's application had to be completed separately, students calculated how many schools they were truly interested in and willing to devote the time to preparing essays and completing academic reporting. In the 1990s, my generation applied to five schools at the most. Today, students routinely apply to 12 or 15 schools. They need only customize an extra essay or two. This new paradigm serves neither students nor colleges well. The flood of applications means too many wonderful students are getting lost in the shuffle, unable to gain access to any of their top-choice schools. And many remarkable students are taking up admissions spots they have no intention of accepting because they've applied →

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to more schools than they can possibly seriously consider.

The increased revenue of application fees may be attractive for universities, but admissions offices are inundated with more applications than they can reasonably process in any kind of meaningful, personalized way. It's time for the Common Application to be discontinued—just one piece that would restore some sanity to the college application process.

Ellen Dreyfuss Lee (Col '96)
Dallas, Texas

RENOVATING THE NAME, TOO [SPRING 2024]

First, I would like to thank and compliment you on your numerous articles in *Virginia Magazine*. The issue with photos of the renovated library is especially meaningful as I spent many hours studying in the reference room during my years on Grounds.

I was, however, disappointed to see the name change. Had I been aware the Board of Visitors was studying the issue I would have written to them directly months ago. Your article "Renovating the name, too" explains the logic behind the change nicely, but I remain disappointed. I would hope that Alderman Library, after 86 years, would remain outside the scope of the Naming and Memorials Committee.

Judging historical figures by 2024 standards has again led to unfortunate results.

Stephen M. Hoster (Col '64)
Apple Valley, Minnesota

NOT WITHOUT A FIGHT [FALL 2020]

Having just returned from my 50th reunion and the special alumnae activities honoring the women of the Class of 1974, I was delighted to read the article describing the legal battle that preceded our admission to the University in the fall of 1970. Perhaps I was vaguely aware of all the decisions made prior to our arrival, but it was certainly enlightening to read this detailed account of the history of our arrival on Grounds. Had I known then that my favorite French professor, T. Braxton Woody, author of the Woody Report, had played a role in the decision, I would have hugged and thanked him profusely when the class concluded!

Diane Dougherty McKinnon (Col '74)
Cincinnati, Ohio

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We welcome your letters.

The *Virginia Magazine* letters section is part of the UVA Alumni Association's broader Vox Alumni initiative, aimed at gaining greater understanding of alumni views and sharing insights. For letters intended for publication, please limit your remarks to 200 words and include your name, school, class year, city and state. We may not be able to publish all submissions, and we edit for length, clarity, style and civility. We give preference to letters that address the content of the magazine. The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Alumni Association.

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

Stewarding One of UVA's Greatest Resources

In our fast-paced, attention economy world, the concept of **stewardship** can be overlooked. It is often subordinated to flashier concepts of growth, innovation and change.

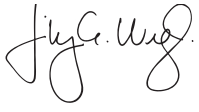
And yet, for nearly 200 years, stewardship has been at the core of the Alumni Association's work. Broadly, our mission is to steward one of the University's greatest resources: its engaged and invested worldwide alumni base. Practically, our programs and services steward alumni for a lifetime, building decades-long relationships that start on Grounds and grow through shared connection.

Virginia Magazine is another example of stewardship. An indispensable conduit of alumni voices and perspectives, it has remained a reliable constant for those who seek trusted and independent coverage of the University community. That is thanks to the close relationship *Virginia Magazine* has with more than 175,000 alumni readers, forged over years of thoughtful, award-winning reporting.

For the past eight years, **Richard Gard (Col '81)** has been at the helm of this effort. Under his leadership, *Virginia Magazine* has won 35 national awards (with potentially more coming this fall, after the time of publication) and helped alumni navigate the University's most challenging, exhilarating and defining moments in recent memory.

Nearby you might have seen Richard's editor's column, sharing that he is retiring after this issue of the magazine. Before he leaves Alumni Hall, I wanted to thank him for the difference he has made. He has stewarded *Virginia Magazine* masterfully, and we are all better for it.

With gratitude,



Lily West (Darden '12)
President & CEO

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L'EAU DOWN: SWIMMERS WIN RECORD 11 MEDALS IN PARIS

BY RICHARD GARD

Among her four medals, a school record, Kate Douglass won UVA's first-ever swimming gold for an individual event.

In medal counts for countries that swam at the summer Paris Olympics, Cavalier Nation would rank fourth, tying Canada and outperforming Léon Marchand's France.

University of Virginia swimmers won 11 medals in eight different events—five gold, five silver and one bronze. Previously, in any combination of sports, Virginia had never won more than five at a games.

Kate Douglass (Col '23, Grad '28) won UVA's first-ever gold for an individual swimming event. It came in the women's 200-meter breaststroke, where Douglass swam 2:19.24 to break her own American record.

She won silver in the women's 200-meter individual medley. And she medaled in two relays—getting gold for participating in the preliminary round of the USA women's victorious 4 x 100-meter medley and silver for swimming in the finals of the women's 4 x 100-meter free.

During the semifinals in the women's 100-meter butterfly, **Gretchen Walsh (Com '25)** set a new Olympic record of 55.38. But she couldn't replicate it in the finals, where she took silver. (The gold medalist couldn't match Walsh's earlier time either.)

Walsh continued to improve on her 100 fly over subsequent days. She swam it in both the mixed (composed of two men and two women) and the women's 4 x 100 medley relays, where she helped Team USA win two golds and set two world records. In the women's medley, her 55.03 split tied the women's world record. She also swam a leg of the women's 4 x 100-meter free relay to get a silver.

With four medals apiece, Douglass and Walsh each broke basketball great **Dawn Staley's (Col '92)** UVA record of three Olympic prizes, spread across 12 years. No Wahoo had previously won more than two at a single games.

Paige Madden (Educ '21) helped USA win silver in the women's 4 x 200-meter free relay. She won bronze in the women's 800-meter free with a personal best 8:13.00, hanging within two seconds of American Olympic legend Katie Ledecky and her Australian rival Ariarne Titmus.

Like Douglass, breaststroker **Emma Weber (Col '26)** picked up a gold for swimming in the preliminaries of the women's 4 x 100 medley relay.

In a heartbreaker, officials disqualified **Alex Walsh (Col '24)** from bronze in the women's 200 IM, her only event. She had prematurely flipped over to her stomach in the transition from back to breast. It allowed Australia's Kaylee McKeown to medal instead. A year earlier, at the World Aquatics Championships in Japan, McKeown had to forfeit the same event for the same violation, easing Walsh's path to silver that year.

Elsewhere, **Heidi Long (Col '19)** won bronze as part of Great Britain's women's eight rowing team. That upped UVA's medal count to 12, with more possible after *Virginia Magazine*'s deadline.

DEEPBLUEMEDIA/MONDADORI PORTFOLIO VIA GETTY IMAGES

The School of Data Science







Contemplative Commons



BRICKS AND MINDFULNESS

The School of Data Science's new home—a four-story, 61,000-square-foot building at the corner of Emmet Street and Ivy Road—opened this spring. The facility features four adaptive classrooms, faculty and staff offices, and a two-story central hub, according to Cooper Allen of the School of Data Science. An interactive data sculpture, visible from every floor and from the street, hangs from a skylight at the center of the structure. It features 20 lanterns that display data through LED lights. Hopkins Architects, VMDO Architects and the University's Office of the Architect worked in collaboration with UVA Facilities Management on the building.

This fall, nearly 350 students are enrolled in the school, including its first class of undergraduate data science majors. In addition, nearly 700 students are pursuing minors in data science.

A few blocks down Emmet Street, adjacent to the Dell, the 57,000-square-foot **Contemplative Commons** was set to open with limited programming in August and full programming in January, according to Connie Kresge, chief of staff for UVA's Contemplative Sciences Center. The multipurpose building will serve both as the new home for the center, which was founded in 2012, and as a hub with indoor–outdoor spaces and flexible studios that can be configured as classrooms and research labs, as well as places for quiet reflection, social interaction or physical activity. The building will feature art installations, a two-story video wall, rooftop gardens and a central courtyard lined with ginkgo trees. Under construction since 2021, the building was designed by Aidlin Darling Design. VMDO was the architect. Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects designed the courtyard and rooftop gardens.

PHOTOS BY NIC LEHOUX, STEVE HEDBERG AND SANJAY SUCHAK



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Student Life



From left: **Current Board of Visitors student representative Lisa Kopelnik (Col '25); Lillian Rojas (Batten '24); Glynn Key (Col '86, Law '89)**

THE STUDENT VOICE

Serving on the BOV can be a 24/7 role

BY SARAH LINDENFELD HALL

Stepping into the role of UVA's student Board of Visitors member this spring, **Lisa Kopelnik (Col '25)** already was well-versed in UVA's administrative processes and its leaders. She'd just served as chair of the University Judiciary Committee.

But she was surprised by how technical the conversation quickly turned. Board members dove into UVA's finances and operations, each leaning on their areas of deep expertise.

"In this role, a lot of it is just bigger thinking. What do you want to do? What do you want your impact to be?" Kopelnik says.

Kopelnik is UVA's 43rd student BOV member, part of a long line of accomplished undergraduate and graduate students who have served in the role. The full board consists of 17 voting members, who are appointed by Virginia's governor for four-year terms, and two nonvoting members who serve one-year terms—a full-time student and a faculty member. Student members represent the voice of the student body.

"I tried very hard to minimize the amount of times I used the word 'I' or 'me,' because I never wanted to come off as being about myself or showcasing my opinion," says **Lillian Rojas (Batten '24)**, who served from June 2023 to May 2024. "I wanted to make it clear that I was talking about the students. I'm the representative for the students."

Students spent years lobbying the BOV for the privilege to represent their peers, ultimately winning BOV approval in March 1983. So far, **Glynn Key (Col '86, Law '89)** is the only former student member who has also been appointed a full board member. Key, an accomplished lawyer who was foundational in the creation of the Ridley Scholarship Program, run by the UVA Alumni Association, was the student member from 1988 to 1989 and a BOV member from 2004 to 2012.

"Glynn ... was really great about reaching out to students," says **Catherine Neale Bean (Col '06)**, who served as a student representative from 2005 to 2006. Key and then–BOV member **Syd Dorsey (Arch '82, Darden '87)** took her under their wings, Bean remembers. "Being women, they started conversations with me early and often," Bean says. "We were just very regularly in touch."

The work of the board—and the student BOV member—varies widely, depending on what's happening on Grounds. Construction projects, including John Paul Jones Arena, and the creation of AccessUVA, a financial aid program, were front and center when **John Rocco Rodney (Col '04)** served.

AccessUVA "was something I was really proud to be a part of," Rodney says. "It's made a big difference, and it's a lasting program and legacy."

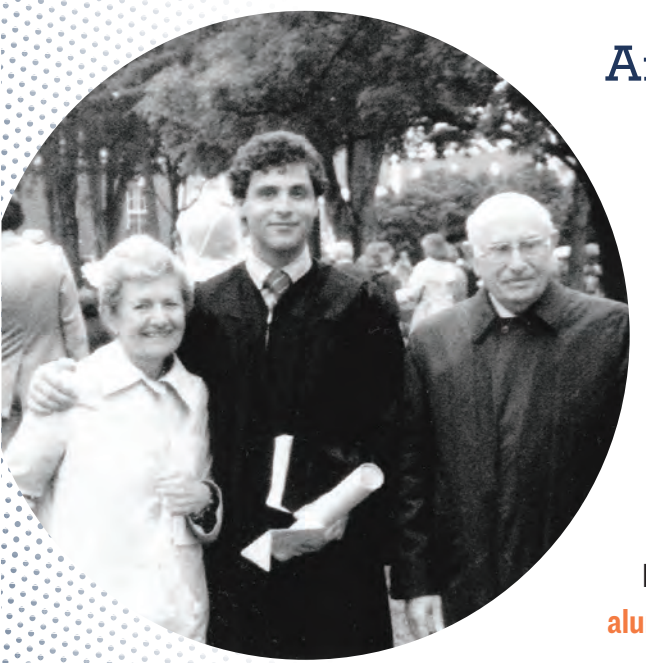
Tragedy and trauma—such as the pandemic and the November 2022 shooting that left three students dead—also can dominate the BOV's work. For **Lily Roberts (Arch '23)**, much of her term focused on advocating for student needs after the 2022 shooting.

Immediately after the tragedy, Roberts attended an emergency BOV meeting while helping other student leaders gather information and organize memorials. "As soon as I understood my role that hit, and then there were several months of trying to rebuild the community and provide different resources and different means of communication to try to sew the community back together after such a tragic event," Roberts says.

Even without major events on Grounds, the day-to-day job can prove unpredictable. Some days, Rojas was attending classes and meeting friends for dinner like any other student. Other days, she was directing students with general questions to the right UVA resources, participating in BOV committee meetings and taking part in student-led meetings. "I call the role 24/7," Rojas says. "You just never know what's going to happen."

MATT RILEY AND SANJAY SUCHAK / UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

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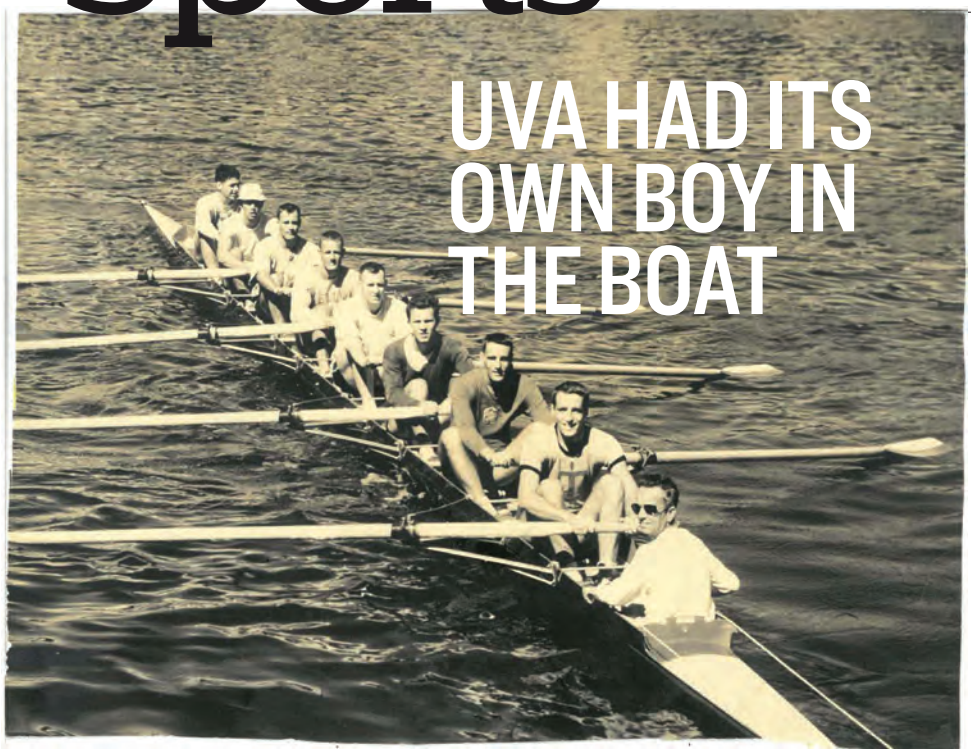
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Sports



Tom Amlong, fourth from the top, as the U.S. team trained for the 1964 Olympics.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KAREN LEE

UVA HAD ITS OWN BOY IN THE BOAT

"Unusual," "crusty" rower brought home gold 60 years ago

BY ED MILLER

Three decades after the fuzzy-cheeked University of Washington rowers depicted in the movie *The Boys in the Boat* won Olympic gold in 1936, an underdog crew of a different sort showed up at the Tokyo Olympics in 1964.

Sports Illustrated called the eight-man crew from the Vesper Boat Club in Philadelphia a "crusty bunch of adults." *The New York Times* termed them "an unusual crew." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, in a piece marking the team's 50th anniversary, went with "motley" and "ragtag."

In the middle of this unlikely bunch, the number four position on the eight-man boat, sat 29-year-old Army Lt. **Tom Amlong (Educ '61)**. When the Vesper crew crossed the finish line one-and-a-half lengths ahead of the favored West Germans on Oct. 15, 1964, Amlong, an Army brat whose parents settled in Alexandria, Virginia, became the first UVA grad to win an Olympic gold medal in any sport.

UVA athletes had been competing in the games for 56 years by then, since **James Rector (Law 1909)** took second in the 100-meter dash in the 1908 London Olympics (*Virginia Magazine*, Fall 2021). Heading into the 2024 games, UVA athletes had racked up 17 gold medals. *(See how UVA's athletes performed in Paris, Page 17.)*

Amlong, who died in 2009 at age 73, is believed to be the first from UVA to climb atop the medal stand. Though he's not a familiar name in the University's athletic lore, it's doubtful any other Wahoo left a bigger wake of mixed feelings among his Olympic teammates.

The Vesper team was indeed an anomaly. With an average age of 26, its members were older than the collegiate eights that had dominated U.S. rowing for 60 years. Four of the members were military officers. A fifth rower was a 34-year-old sheet metal contractor and father of six. Just three had rowed in college.

Into the mix came Amlong and his brother Joe, who rowed at the bow of the boat. They were by all accounts master rowers, powerful and technically advanced. They were also abrasive—arrogant, loud and brash roughnecks who seemed to delight in tormenting their teammates, especially three who held Ivy League degrees and whom they judged to be insufficiently rugged.

"Joe and Tom, oarsmen of note, were hardly nice guys and they made little attempt to be nice guys," teammate William A. "Bill" Stowe, a Cornell graduate, wrote in his book *All Together*, an account of the 1964 team.

"Antagonistic and contemptuous of everyone, including each other, they were legendary for their lack of tact," teammate Emory Clark wrote in his book *Olympic Odyssey*.

In a vote of the other six team members, Tom, older by 18 months, was chosen as the "more obnoxious" of the brothers, Stowe wrote. He avoided both "like the plague."

And yet Clark also said he found them hard not to like. And far better to have as teammates than as competitors.

"Sometimes Tom, in particular, made an effort to be nasty—it being his theory that you would row harder if you were angry and upset.

"But the most important attribute of the Amlongs was they were terrific oarsmen and very, very fast in a straight pair."

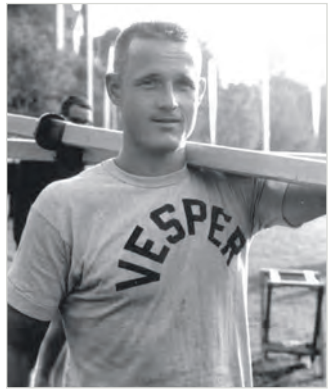
Tom Amlong's path to UVA was anything but straight. Born in Fort Knox, Kentucky, in 1935, he was the third son of Army Col. Ransom Amlong and his wife, Marguerite. One of six children, he grew up in a rough-and-tumble household, says his daughter, Karen Lee.

Ransom Amlong was stationed in the Philippines during World War II. While her husband was deployed, Marguerite took the kids to an Iowa farm to be with family. The boys were on their own quite a bit, Lee says.

"They were tough military kids."

Tom Amlong learned to row after the war, when his father was stationed in





Above: **Joe (center left) and brother Tom (center right) in Tokyo during the 1964 Olympics;** *Right:* **Tom Amlong was known as a fierce competitor.**

Belgium. He and Joe competed as a pair. They were faster than nearly everyone but didn't always win, their sibling rivalry sometimes getting the best of them.

Clark wrote that Tom, angry with his brother for some reason, would sometimes stop rowing and turn around and hit Joe, who "quite naturally would falter in his stroke."

Still, the Amlongs were undeniably talented. In 1954, they enlisted in the Army, joining the 82nd Airborne Division. Accepted into a program that allowed potential Olympic athletes to train, they set their sights on the 1956 games in Melbourne, Australia.

Beaten in the Olympic trials, they split up for the first time. Tom Amlong headed to the University of Maryland for a year and then transferred to UVA. Joe landed at the U.S. Military Academy.

Already 22 by the time he arrived on Grounds, Tom was not a traditional student. He enrolled first in the School of Engineering, then pivoted to the School of Education, with plans of becoming a math teacher. His bio in the 1961 *Corks & Curls* notes that he was a member of the Newman Club, a Catholic organization; and ROTC.

There's no mention of rowing. It had been the first intercollegiate sport at UVA, competing with great success from 1877 to 1883 before disbanding. It wouldn't resume as a formal activity until 1967.

With no team to row for, Amlong worked out on his own, packing on muscle and building stamina. Even though he wasn't competing, his time at UVA served him well.

"He loved the school," Lee says. Her father displayed his diploma in his office and told tales of School of Engineering legend "Dean Jean" Holliday, a 43-year administrative assistant who ran the department and was beloved by students.

Amlong taught high school for a year, before answering the call of military life again and re-enlisting in the Army.

Tom and Joe reunited once again on the water, and according to *Boathouse Row,* a history of rowing in Philadelphia, were recruited to Vesper by Jack Kelly, an accomplished rower who was the brother of Grace Kelly, the Hollywood actor who became Princess of Monaco.

Kelly's motivation was to return U.S. rowing to its proper place in the Olympic pantheon. After winning eight straight Olympics from 1920 to 1956, the U.S. had finished fifth in 1960.

Kelly assembled a nontraditional team—coached by Al Rosenberg, on leave from the city attorney's office in Philadelphia.

The Amlongs, who at 6-foot-1 each were short for rowers but heavily muscled, brought power to the shell and competitive tension to the locker room.

Was it real or manufactured? Lee says she doesn't recognize the man portrayed in the books written by Stowe and Clark. She believes her father, who had mellowed considerably by the time she and her two sisters came along, was driven by a desire to win and fabricated a rivalry with the Ivy Leaguers to bring out the best in them.

"They definitely played up that they were tough military kids, and they loved poking fun at these prep school, Ivy League kids," she says.

"They were obsessed, right? They wanted to win. It was no holds barred."

Stowe, who died in 2016, allowed that the Amlongs were "fierce competitors, as strong of body as they were bull-headed of mind, dedicated to whatever cause they stumbled upon." He interviewed Tom Amlong for his book and was told by his former antagonizer that he acted the way he did to bring out the best in his teammates. Amlong asked for understanding but offered no apology, Stowe wrote.

Despite the tension—or because of it—the chemistry in the boat proved to be just right. Vesper upset favored Harvard in the U.S. trials before reclaiming U.S. hegemony in the Tokyo games.

Tom Amlong retired from elite-level rowing after the games. He did a tour in Vietnam in 1968. After retiring as a military officer, he moved to Old Lyme, Connecticut, where he coached rowing and remained in top shape by running and competing in rowing events, his daughter says. He died of mantle cell lymphoma, a cancer that the Department of Veterans Affairs determined is likely caused by exposure to Agent Orange, used by the military during the Vietnam War.

Lee says her father didn't brag about being a gold medalist. He reminisced, though, about the surreal experience of crossing the finish line. The race was the last of the day, and with darkness falling, organizers illuminated the course with vehicle headlights and fireworks. Flares parachuted slowly from the night sky as the Vesper rowers received their medals.

It was like something out of a movie. The U.S. would not win the event again for 40 years.

> **"They were obsessed, right? They wanted to win. It was no holds barred."** ***—Karen Lee***



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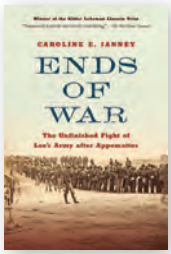
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VM Bookshelf

8 recent Civil War history books by UVA authors

BY SAM GROSSMAN

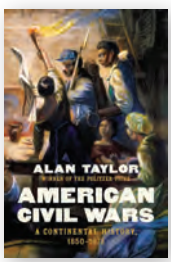
Civil War history has always been a UVA strength, especially as home to the Nau Center devoted to the subject. These recent works by alumni and faculty may teach even the most avid history buffs something new about this complex, pivotal era.



Ends of War: The Unfinished Fight of Lee's Army After Appomattox (2021)

By Caroline E. Janney (Col '98, Grad '01, '05)

Ends of War homes in on the days and weeks following Robert E. Lee's surrender to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox. While many consider that event to mark the official end of the Civil War, Caroline Janney, director of the Nau Center, asserts that in observing the events after Appomattox, "we see a far more contentious, uncertain, ambiguous, lengthy ending." Slowing down the narrative, she writes, "highlights the anxieties of Union and Confederate soldiers, civilians on the home front, and government officials." As many as 20,000 of Lee's soldiers, for example, refused to surrender. Ultimately, Janney seeks to dispel myths about the war's end and to encourage readers to reconsider existing narratives.



American Civil Wars: A Continental History, 1850-1873 (2024)

By Alan Taylor

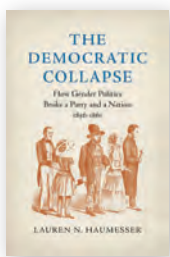
In his latest work, Pulitzer Prize-winning historian and UVA professor Alan Taylor puts the Civil War into a wider context, exploring its international causes and consequences. The political instability caused by the war, for example, led to a French invasion of Mexico. And as Canadians watched the conflict unfold, they grappled with political divisions growing within their own nation between Anglophones and Francophones. Taylor explores the 1850s through the 1870s, from early debates over the potential expansion of slavery to the beginning of Reconstruction. He focuses on the most influential leaders of the time, including Abraham Lincoln, Benito Juárez and Jefferson Davis.



The Generals' Civil War: What Their Memoirs Can Teach Us Today (2021)

By Stephen Cushman

With an approach that's both historical and literary, UVA English professor Stephen Cushman compiles a collection of memoirs, printed between 1874 and 1888, written by Civil War generals. He invites readers to delve into these primary documents—including those from William Tecumseh Sherman, Ulysses S. Grant and George B. McClellan—and provides an understanding of the postwar publishing boom that brought them to market. Cushman urges readers to consider how memory, imagination, history and literature are intricately intertwined. "What made these books important and makes them important still," Cushman writes, "is the convergence of first-person storytelling with the most extensive violence yet visited, in a compressed period of a few years, on people living in the United States."



The Democratic Collapse: How Gender Politics Broke a Party and a Nation, 1856-1861 (2022)

By Lauren N. Haumesser (Grad '15, '18)

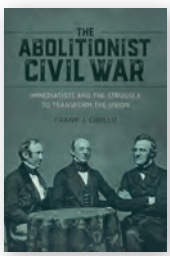
A historian of 19th-century America, Lauren Haumesser focuses on gender politics in the five-year period leading up to the Civil War. Disagreements between Northern and Southern Democrats over the roles men and women should play in their families and in society, she writes, "exaggerated and exacerbated the Democratic Party's internal disagreements about slavery." That disconnect ultimately led to the undoing of the party. Haumesser's research and analysis rely heavily on antebellum newspapers—from an abolitionist paper in Washington, D.C., to partisan papers across the North and South—which were flourishing at the time thanks to new printing technologies.



Longstreet: The Confederate General Who Defied the South (2023)

By Elizabeth R. Varon

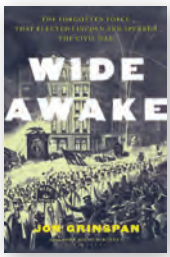
In her latest biography, UVA history professor Elizabeth Varon dissects the surprising political conversion of Confederate general James Longstreet. He served as second-in-command to Robert E. Lee—who referred to Longstreet as his "old war horse"—and directed Confederate forces to capture Black people for slavery or imprisonment. In what Varon posits is one of the most remarkable political about-faces in American history, after the war Longstreet supported Black suffrage, endorsed Reconstruction and became commander of Louisiana's multiracial militia. He was branded as a "Confederate Judas," she writes. The story of his life and career, she argues, represents "American culture's unfolding contest over the Civil War's legacies."



The Abolitionist Civil War: Immediatists and the Struggle to Transform the Union (2023)

By Frank J. Cirillo (Grad '13, '17)

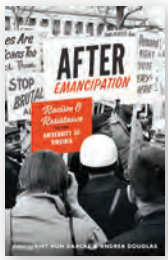
In his debut book, Frank Cirillo, a historian of slavery and antislavery in the 19th-century United States, explores the intricacies of the abolitionist movement during the Civil War. The narrative begins in the 1830s with the immediate abolitionists, or immediatists, who "demanded racial justice for justice's sake," Cirillo writes. Leading figures in the movement, including famed orator and former enslaved laborer Frederick Douglass and young educator Charlotte Forten, developed clashing schools of thought, creating a rift in the effort to form a more perfect Union. Ultimately, Cirillo argues, the abolitionists of this era fostered meaningful debates about slavery—but did little to achieve racial justice beyond formal freedom.



Wide Awake: The Forgotten Force That Elected Lincoln and Spurred the Civil War (2024)

By Jon Grinspan (Grad '12, '13)

In his new book, Smithsonian political history curator Jon Grinspan explores a little-known antislavery youth movement. It began during the 1860 presidential election when a few young Northerners appeared as bodyguards for antislavery stump speakers. They called themselves the Wide Awakes and would go on to "form companies and elect officers, don uniforms and organize rallies, vote for Lincoln and then fight for him," Grinspan writes. Mostly composed of white and Black working-class Americans in their 20s, the group became polarizing. To some, the Wide Awakes represented a powerful movement rising up against slavery. To others, they were an alarming paramilitary group. *Wide Awake* explores themes such as free speech, protest and violence that have remained relevant to American democracy ever since.



After Emancipation: Racism and Resistance at the University of Virginia (2024)

Edited by Kirt von Daacke (Col '97) and Andrea Douglas (Grad '96, '01)

This anthology explores UVA's history of racial exploitation in the years directly following the Civil War. Edited by Kirt von Daacke, a UVA assistant dean and history professor, and Andrea Douglas, executive director of the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, it features 15 essays written by UVA faculty and alumni. *After Emancipation* seeks to tell a fuller story about the century after 1865 while highlighting the "resistance, resilience, and energy of African Americans during Reconstruction and during the Jim Crow era," the editors write. The volume also includes responses to the essays from alumni, students and Charlottesville locals. "These reflections," von Daacke and Douglas write, "remind us that the University of Virginia and Charlottesville today have changed and diversified in important ways while simultaneously highlighting just how much work remains to be done to dismantle the afterlives of slavery."

Want more? Here are some other recent Civil War-related books by 'Hoos:

True Blue: White Unionists in the Deep South During the Civil War and Reconstruction (2022) by **Clayton J. Butler (Grad '19, '20)**

At the Threshold of Liberty: Women, Slavery, & Shifting Identities in Washington, D.C. (2021) by **Tamika Y. Nunley (Grad '12, '15)**

Colossal Ambitions: Confederate Planning for a Post-Civil War World (2020) by **Adrian Brettle (Grad '14)**

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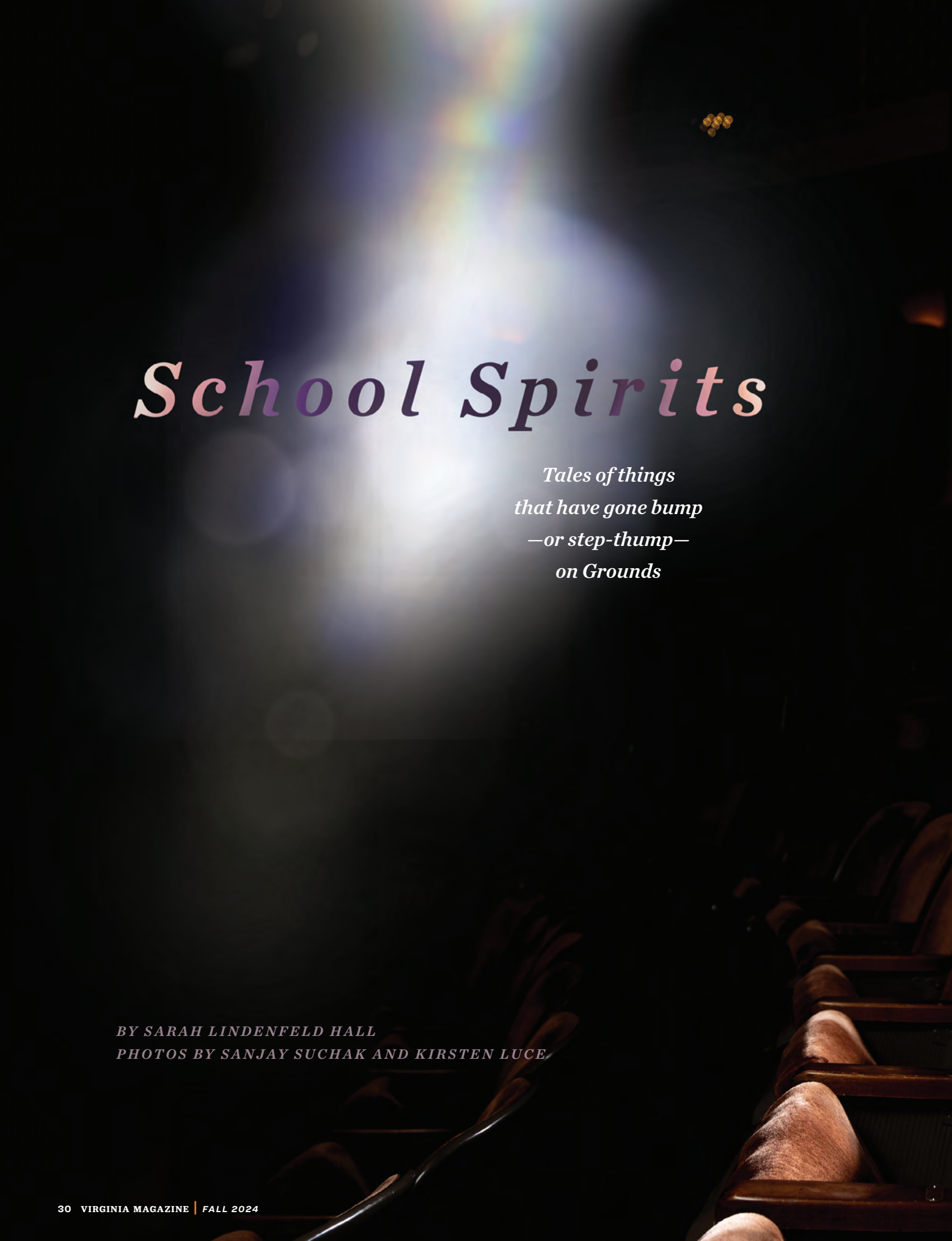


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School Spirits

Tales of things that have gone bump —or step-thump— on Grounds

BY SARAH LINDENFELD HALL
PHOTOS BY SANJAY SUCHAK AND KIRSTEN LUCE



From “creepy” laughing to misplaced items, director of music production Joel Jacobus has heard and seen his share of oddities in Old Cabell Hall.

The latched door that opened by itself. The face peering over a shoulder. An unlit flashlight in an unoccupied room lighting up on its own—with security video as proof.

When Alex Davis, director of facility operations in UVA's Alumni Hall, took the job in 2021, his predecessor David Robey told him about these spooky moments inside the building, once a farmhouse and fraternity house before it became host to the UVA Alumni Association and events. A place with a 200-year history like UVA is bound to have tales to tell—tragedies, untimely deaths, unsettled lore. And many of UVA's alumni, faculty and staff have their own tales of the unexplained.

When they tell their goosebump-raising stories, they often temper them with comments like "What I'm about to tell you is crazy" or "This is not who I am." Ghosts or spirits or apparitions, after all, aren't real. Or are they?

"I want to put that qualifier out there as well," Davis says. "Because sometimes when I hear myself telling the story, I'm like, 'This just sounds like nonsense.'"

But then the "nonsense" happens again—a light bulb lighting up in his own hand, witnessed by another co-worker too.

'A great place to murder somebody'

UVA has plenty of ghost stories, passed down across generations by faculty, staff and alumni in writing and by word of mouth.

Some, of course, are nothing more than spooky stories. In 2014, longtime UVA historian **Sandy Gilliam (Col '55)** wrote an open letter to debunk the "Myth of the Beautiful Ghost of Pavilion VI." As the story went, the "ghost" was the daughter of a professor who lived in the pavilion. She fell in love with a student, but her parents didn't approve of him. So the young couple ended the relationship, and the girl died of a broken heart, destined to haunt the pavilion forever.

Gilliam wrote that he first heard about the legend in the mid-'70s as he listened in on a University Guide presentation. He told the Guide Service to stop telling the story, which it did. Years later, Gilliam included the story on a list of "nonsensical statements" about UVA in a presentation to the Guide Service. But somehow the list got into the hands of Guides who didn't realize what it was and began recounting the tale again, Gilliam wrote. So did commercial tour guides.

"All of this," Gilliam wrote, "is pure rubbish."

But other tales aren't so easily demystified. Shannon Library, formerly Alderman Library, has been a hotbed for them.

In 2015, **Will Wyatt (Col '17)** was a student working at the library, arriving 15 minutes before it opened on a Sunday. His tasks included walking through the dark Stacks to turn the lights on.

As he went about his business on the top floor, a woman with long, flowing, white hair popped around the corner of the Stacks. "She looks at me and says, 'This would be a great place to murder somebody,' and gives me this devilish smile and starts cackling," Wyatt remembers. "And I'm just like, 'Uh,' and I start going faster, flipping the lights on, and she goes back into the darkness of the Stacks."

The library had been locked overnight, but Wyatt thought maybe the woman had somehow gotten inside. But he found no evidence of her. "The desk was positioned right in front of that door, and we never saw this person leave, so that's what made me start to think that this might have not been a person," Wyatt says.

The ghostly woman didn't scare him away from the library; Wyatt now serves as its public services manager. "Ghosts don't really freak me out much, but that encounter was a little different," he says. "When murder starts getting thrown in the mix, your head turns a little more."

'I was afraid to breathe'

Montebello, an early 19th-century UVA-owned residence, has served as home to UVA's engineering school deans for decades. From 2005 to 2015, **Sherry Aylor (Educ '76)** lived in the house with her husband, then engineering dean **Jim Aylor (Engr '68, '71, '77)**—and somebody or something that she came to call Isaac.

The first incident took place a few months after moving in. In the middle of the night, Sherry awoke to the sound of footsteps coming up the stairs. "It was step-thump, step-thump," she remembers. "I was afraid to breathe."

She could hear the TV downstairs, where she assumed Jim was having his nightly bowl of ice cream. With each step-thump, she grew more terrified that there was an intruder. She hatched a plan to roll off the edge of the bed onto the floor and make an escape once he came into the room.

Then the sound stopped. She waited before eventually going downstairs to find Jim asleep on the sofa, oblivious to any noise. Sherry started doing some research on the house and found that Isaac Kimber Moran, a Confederate soldier who lost his left leg in the war and later became UVA's bursar, had lived and died in Montebello.

In fact, when his great-niece stopped by the house to visit, she shared with Sherry that she'd seen something of Moran's in a pile of trash during a period when the house was in disrepair—his wooden leg. The kind that might make a thumping sound coming up the stairs.

During the decade the Aylors lived in Montebello, Isaac appeared a handful of times. And as Sherry is quick to note, others have experienced weird occurrences there too.

Her sister, alone inside, once bolted out of the house after hearing keys jingling but finding nobody nearby who could be making the sound. During another incident, the Aylors heard a



Sherry and Jim Aylor outside of Montebello

Sherry Aylor started doing some research on Montebello and found that Isaac Kimber Moran, a Confederate soldier who lost his left leg in the war and later became UVA's bursar, had lived and died there.

door slam. The next morning, Sherry walked down to the basement, where the heavy laundry room door was shut tight. It had always been left open.

And through a baby monitor, the couple could hear music in an upstairs bedroom—but only when their grandson was napping in the room. "I would hear this very strange music, nothing modern. It was actually a little creepy," Sherry says. They turned on the monitor when the baby wasn't in the room but never heard it.

After the initial late-night scare and as she learned more about Moran, Sherry says, she was never fearful. By coincidence, Moran's time as a soldier may have overlapped, just briefly, with Jim Aylor's own great-grandfather's, whose photograph they hung in the house as a novelty. Sherry wonders if that's why Moran decided to reveal himself to them.

"This sounds so crazy, I'm sorry, but I just felt like it was a place that was special to him, because after he lost his leg, he lived there. He got a new start. He became bursar, he had children," she says. "I just felt like this was a happy place that he liked to return to, and that was OK with me."

'Somebody started laughing'

Old Cabell Hall, home to UVA's music department, was completely closed late one night, but Joel Jacobus, director of music production, was there. Unlike many of UVA's buildings, Old Cabell is secured each night because of the expensive instruments stored inside, and police regularly check on it.

That night, about 15 years ago, Jacobus had locked the building down and completed a security sweep. "I was alone in the building, and I was working in the auditorium, installing some new equipment, when the lights in the auditorium turned off and somebody started laughing," he says, describing the laughter as "mocking." "This was at midnight. No doors slammed afterwards, and nobody went running. There were no footsteps. It was just lights turned off, laughter and then nothing."

Jacobus turned the lights back on—and pretty quickly got out of there for the night. "It was very creepy," Jacobus says. "It was not, 'Oh, some student is being annoying.' It was creepy."

From the outside, Old Cabell looks like a simple bookend to the Lawn, a traditional-looking two-story, columned

Sandy Gilliam often took residents of 33 West to the grave of Gen. Carnot Posey (Law 1836) in the University Cemetery. Posey died inside the room on Nov. 13, 1863.

structure. The building's interior, however, is anything but normal.

Opened in 1898, the "odd and unusual place," as Jacobus describes it, includes three different seventh floors. It has two different second floors, one of which you can't enter from inside Old Cabell. A staircase goes nowhere, and strange hatches appear to lead down to giant holes in the ground, he says.

"We're the most confusing building on Grounds, and I think that helps make it spooky," says Jacobus, who has worked in the building since 2004.

That mocking laughter at midnight might be the spookiest incident during Jacobus' tenure. But there have been plenty of other odd moments as well.

Jacobus' cubicle sits with other cubicles on the lobby level on the east end of the building. It's not uncommon for people to pop in to say hi, Jacobus says. But another visitor seems to be checking in from time to time during regular business hours as well.

"Many of us have experienced a sudden, incredibly strong smell of perfume, as though someone has walked in wearing a lot of perfume," he says. "And somebody gets up and says, 'Hello, can I help you?' And there's no one there. We don't know why a perfumed something has just walked through our cubicle area, and that has happened many times."

There's also the legend of "Mean Jean," a cranky housekeeper who didn't like students messing up her work. As the story goes, she died in her 70s at home in her uniform, waiting for her ride to work.

"There is a fairly strong belief that Jean came into work anyway that day, and students would get pushed from behind and occasionally hit," Jacobus says. "They would feel like they were being shoved, and they'd turn around and there was nobody there."

And then there are the unexplained items appearing inside the auditorium. Before and after a concert or talk, house managers walk through each row to ensure that no seats are broken and that no one has left a wallet or cellphone behind. Housekeeping also cleans multiple times a week.

Despite all those efforts, Old Cabell workers find items all the time, but they aren't only keys or paper tickets left the previous night. They've found programs for events five years earlier or items lost years ago. The most impressive, Jacobus says, was a wallet he found.

Everything inside was expired, but he found a name and number, which he called, and asked to speak with its owner. The person who answered was very guarded, asking what the call was all about. Jacobus explained that they'd found his wallet inside Old Cabell Hall. "He said, 'Well, he died 10 years ago,'" Jacobus recalls.

Whatever it is, Jacobus calls the phenomenon the "interdimensional trash demon." "Something is leaving gifts for us," he says.

'No friends fessed up'

Not long after **Sara Allen Harper (Arch '11)** moved into her Lawn room—33 West—she had a visitor. "A past resident of 33 West had stopped by early in the fall and warned me that there were stories about 33 West," she says. "That was in the back of my head all through the year."

Harper didn't get specifics about what those stories swirling around about the room involved, but she does remember the tour of University Cemetery that she took with the historian Gilliam and Anda Webb, senior adviser to the executive vice president and provost, later that fall.

They walked to the grave of **Gen. Carnot Posey (Law 1836)**, and Gilliam shared with Harper the story of his death—inside 33 West on Nov. 13, 1863. It was a tour Gilliam often gave to residents of 33 West, according to Webb.

Despite the ominous warning and the story of a death inside her room, Harper chalked up the room's creaks to the noises of an old building and the sounds of laughter to parties at the Colonnade Club in Pavilion VII next door. Other former 33 West residents also attributed late-night noises or the occasional knock on their door to celebrations in the pavilion.

But in the spring of 2011, Harper found something that gave her pause.

After spending the night at a friend's apartment, she'd returned to her room before dawn to pack for a conference in Washington, D.C. Nothing seemed out of place until she walked to her desk and noticed some potting soil on the floor.

That's when she realized that a fern, which had been sitting on her windowsill, had been knocked over. The planter was cracked, but it wasn't in pieces on the ground. It had been reassembled and set back on the sill.

The door had been locked. And while the window was ajar, nobody could have climbed into the room that way without a ladder because of the significant drop to the ground outside. UVA Police came to investigate, even checking for fingerprints and blood. No clues were found, Harper says.

"There was really no harm, no foul, other than me being a little uneasy about what had gone down," Harper says. "And no friends fessed up to it either."

Concerning Ghosts

Scientists and skeptics will tell you there are no ghosts—the laws of physics just won't allow it. And purported hauntings might be explained by a variety of factors, including carbon dioxide poisoning or the power of suggestion.

Sleep paralysis, which impacts about 1 in 5 people, provides another scientific explanation. As some fall asleep, muscle



movement is constrained, but vision and breathing movements remain intact. Research shows that it can trigger experiences that feel like ghostly encounters.

UVA professor Jack Chen covered sleep paralysis as one cause of ghostly sightings in his 2019 class Concerning Ghosts. For his part, Chen considers himself agnostic about their existence. "The funny thing is, I only believe in ghosts when I'm in the basement. In the daylight of my life, I'm not thinking about them," he says.

What he does know as a professor of Chinese literature is that ideas of ghosts or spirits have filtered through centuries of culture and beliefs, but in different shapes and forms.

Today, a "ghost" is often considered a disembodied soul or returned dead, perhaps slamming doors or walking up the steps of a spooky basement. In medieval China, the concept of ghost filled another category—a "demonic being," outside the bounds of the ordinary, Chen says. They often turned up in places like crossroads or inns.



In Victorian times, the idea of "residual haunting" emerged. "The theory is that the ghost is being recorded within the ether of our home or the space around us," Chen says. "It's simply a recording—a traumatic recording of intensive emotion that can't be dissipated."

New ideas about ghosts and spirits appeared with the introduction of new technologies. The history of the seance, for example, is bound up with the history of the telegraph, telephone and gramophone because they allowed us to pierce the veil of distance, Chen says. With it, people could experience what it's like to communicate across physical distances—and then started to imagine that we might be able to communicate



"The ghost is a kind of energy field. … And why we can detect them with [EMF detectors] is because they are energy fields."

—Jack Chen, UVA professor

with a grandparent who has passed on.

Today, technology is providing alleged photos of spirits or proof of their energy.

Electromagnetic field detectors are typically used to track radiation levels from power lines or appliances, for example, to determine whether there might be safety issues.

But they also are commonly used by ghost hunters who believe that spirits emit or influence electromagnetic fields. In the movie *Ghostbusters*, the characters used a made-up tool called a P.K.E. meter as a stand-in for the EMF meter.

"There's a whole history of this idea that ghosts are not really a religious framework, but a scientific framework," Chen says. "The ghost is a kind of energy field. … And why we can detect them with [EMF detectors] is because they are energy fields."

As part of Chen's class, students took a trip to then–Alderman Library with an EMF detector.

In some areas of the library, students detected radiation in expected spots, such as near an electrical socket. But then the meter detected a high reading in a place with no immediate reason—in the middle of a stairwell. Students were astonished, Chen says.

But often such findings raise more questions than provide answers. What's interesting to Chen is that even as we grow more technologically advanced, ghosts remain. "The technologies have changed," he says. "The ghost itself has not changed in any meaningful way."

And these encounters break the categories of our knowledge systems, Chen says. "We live in a very nicely settled, ordinary world," he says. "It is kind of a comfortable place. A lot of the things that we didn't quite understand, we now understand, or we think we understand. And yet we have these borderline experiences that sort of throw everything that we think is the ordinary right into this state of unknowing."

'I saw somebody behind me'

Whatever the reality is, an enduring belief about ghosts is that they seek acknowledgment, Chen says. Whether it's lighting up an EMF detector or peering over your shoulder, they're trying to communicate.

Across about 20 years during two separate stints working as Alumni Hall's facilities manager, Robey has received

What could a flashlight turning on in an empty room be? See for yourself. uvamag.com/schoolspirits

plenty of those "communications."

"I don't know that I necessarily believe in ghosts, per se," Robey says. "I can just tell you what happened. I know some staff members that worked for me were terrified. ... I never felt threatened or felt uneasy. I kind of had a weird relationship. I did talk to it at times and say, 'Hey, I don't got time for this.'"

Most of what Robey encountered was around the building's Virginia Room and Annex, an area that was once its center for functions before the ballroom was added in the 1980s.

In one case, a latched door opened by itself. "You have to literally push down on this latch to open it," Robey says. He examined the door and found nothing, so he went to the security video to see if anybody had been there. "I saw an apparition come out of this floor, and it hit this one right door, and that's what caused it to open," he says. "It was the weirdest thing."

Other times, he heard doors closing by themselves. But when he checked the videotape, he saw nothing.

Once, after a coworker told him that ghosts could turn on flashlights, he tested it himself. The security video shows him walking into the Virginia Room with a flashlight, turning the flashlight on and off, and placing it on a table unlit. He leaves the room, which is unoccupied. A few minutes later, the flashlight lights up on its own.

Another early morning, Robey went to unlock the Virginia Room and prepare it for a morning event. It was dark, and he put his key in the lock. The key usually turned easily, but this time it got caught.

"I beared down a little bit, and while I was doing that, I picked my head up and looked into the room, but all I could see was a reflection because ... I was standing with a dark room inside, and then I saw somebody behind me, real close to me," he says. "Its head, over my shoulder."

He was a balding man with a gray beard, about Robey's height. Robey turned around, but nobody was there.

Davis says he saw the same man years later. Now in charge as facilities director, Davis was talking to a colleague when they saw an older gentleman in a navy shirt and dark pants with a white handkerchief hanging out of his back right pocket. He had a receded hairline with just a little skirt of hair around the back of his head, Davis recalls. With both hands resting on a cubby, the man appeared to be taking a breather.

Davis asked his colleague, Alumni Hall's receptionist, who saw people come in and out, who the man was. She didn't know. So Davis walked toward him to see if he needed anything. On his way there, Davis briefly lost sight of the area where the man had been standing. By the time Davis got there, the man was gone.

Davis continued down the hallway, searching the only other areas the man could have gone, including the basement hallway and boiler room. Nobody else was in the building.

"That was a full-body apparition," he says. "And it just completely disappeared. I saw him well enough to think that it was a man standing there."

He relayed the event to Robey. "I told him that this is the craziest experience I've ever had in my entire life," Davis remembers. "I know that that man was standing there, and he wasn't there, and I described him, and he says that that was the same man that he saw in the reflection of the door."

Who was it? What was it? Will we ever know? Who knows?

"Certain things we feel like are settled," Chen says. "So how do we square our rational modernity of the everyday, ordinary, the sunlight world that we live in with experiences that seem to suggest that we don't quite understand the world?"

Sarah Lindenfeld Hall is a writer based in Raleigh, North Carolina.



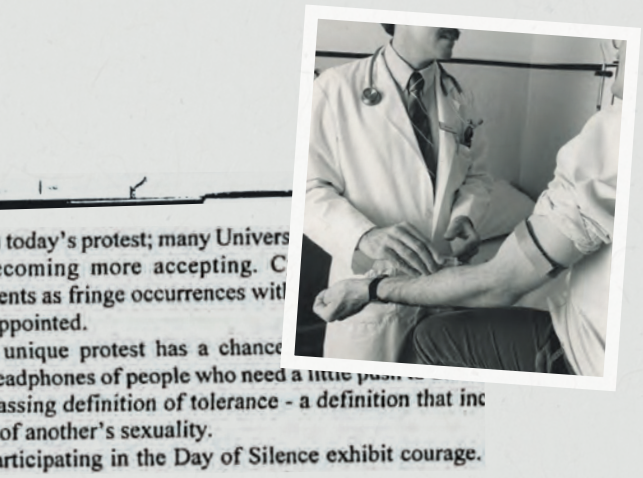
The Virginia Room at Alumni Hall



Queer History

50+ YEARS OF BUILDING LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

BY SARAH LINDENFELD HALL


today's protest; many Univers
coming more accepting. C
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unique protest has a chance
adphones of people who need a
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of another's sexuality.
rticipating in the Day of Silence exhibit courage.

CLASSIFIED
MISCELLANEOUS

Charlottesville's first Gay organization is now in the works. If you would like to help start a Gay Activist Group, please call [redacted].





THE CLASSIFIED AD

appeared in the back of the *Cavalier Daily* in March 1972, under the Miscellaneous section. It got right to the point. "Charlottesville's first Gay organization is now in the works," said the ad. "If you would like to help start a Gay Activist Group, please call ..."

Just five or six people—"a pretty nervous lot"—showed up to an early meeting that same month, according to the organization's September 1973 newsletter. "It seemed impossible to conceive of an organization like this in Charlottesville—indeed, some overzealous members of an unnamed fraternity, armed with rocks, bottles and a real shotgun, sought to prove that it would be impossible," the newsletter article continues. "But the Union survived and matured. [Its] great achievement of that truncated first year ... was simply existing."

Over the decades, the experience for UVA's queer community often tracked national sentiment. And in the early 1970s, "simply existing" was difficult enough for the LGBTQ+ community on Grounds and across the country.

In 1973, 8 in 10 people believed that same-sex relations were "always" or "almost always" wrong, according to the General Social Survey, a five-decade-old survey of U.S. adults, conducted through the University of Chicago. Sentiment remained about the same, subsequent social surveys found, until the early 1990s. →



The Resident Staff page in the 1979 *Corks & Curls*, including Bob Elkins

> **It was an ugly environment, and it was always like,**

UVA "was a hostile environment for anybody gay or lesbian," says **Bob Elkins (Col '79)**, whose status as the "gay RA" at UVA made national headlines.

No two UVA students' experiences are the same, and that especially goes for LGBTQ+ students as they navigate their own coming-out process and families and communities that don't always embrace them. They have faced pranks, threats and violence, but they have also found community.

Sometimes it was behind-the-scenes support from faculty, staff and friends. Other times, it was through student groups like the Gay Student Union, now called the Queer Student Union, or the 24-year-old LGBTQ Center. Today, across Grounds, affinity groups provide a home base for LGBTQ+ students.

In 2018, while **Chad Kamen (Col '20)** researched UVA's queer history as an intern for the LGBTQ Center, he found plenty of moments of tension and strife. But he also turned up a robust collection of "records of queer joy" too, he says—goofy drag bingo nights or collaborations with other cultural organizations. His work built on the research by others before him, including **Kyle Ranson-Walsh (Col '02)**, who wrote a thesis that covered LGBTQ+ student history at UVA and helped build a repository of early artifacts and information.

"They show moments of silliness despite it all, trying to laugh at situations that are hard," says Kamen, whose exhibit on UVA's queer history remains on display in Newcomb Hall. "That ability for humans to find joy and lightness and laughter amidst unspeakable circumstances is something that is a thread throughout all this work."

1970s: The RA

"Panel to consider removing homosexual resident advisor." The story led the *Cavalier Daily* on Sept. 20, 1976, and made it into newspapers across the country, via the Associated Press wire. It went on to detail that President **Frank L. Hereford Jr. (Col '43, Grad '47)** had assembled a committee of faculty, administrators and student representatives, including the Student Council president and a Resident Life co-chairman, to determine whether the RA in question—Elkins—could remain in the role.

By all accounts, Elkins was excelling as an RA, the *Cavalier Daily* story reported. Twenty residents on Elkins' hall in Hancock had signed a petition stating that he was performing well. Then–Dean of Students **Robert T. Canevari (Educ '59)** agreed, saying Elkins was "doing an excellent job."

Elkins also was president of UVA's 4-year-old Gay Student Union. And, as the newspaper reported, Elkins had been transparent about his sexual orientation, discussing it during interviews the previous spring.

"I acknowledged it," he says. "They asked me some questions about how I would handle myself with my residents. Apparently, I answered those questions in an acceptable manner, and they just moved on."

Still, being gay carried plenty of stigma on Grounds and across the country. At UVA, Hereford had a public relations situation on his hands.

Not much has been written about the LGBTQ+ experience on Grounds before 1970. In his book *Love in America,* **Julian Green (Col 1922)**, who would become a prolific writer in the French langauge, recounts his time on Grounds from 1919 to 1922, including his attraction to men. Amid the 1950s Lavender Scare, when LGBTQ+ individuals were removed from government positions, popular UVA history professor William Ewart

‘Oh, it’s tradition.’”

—BOB ELKINS (COL ’79)

Stokes Jr.’s contract wasn’t renewed in 1957 after his arrest in Richmond for “indecent conduct related to solicitation,” according to a 1990 *Cavalier Daily* article.

But by the 1970s, the LGBTQ+ community across the country was becoming more vocal. Cities were holding the first Pride parades, and states began repealing anti-sodomy laws. (Virginia’s would stay on the books until 2014, after it was ruled unconstitutional.) In 1971, the University of Michigan opened the first center in higher education to support LGBTQ+ students on campus.

At UVA, the launch of the Gay Student Union was giving the community more visibility, but it still faced an uphill battle. In 1973, amid questions from conservative students and despite support from the Student Council, the Board of Visitors denied $45 in funding from the Student Activity Fee, saying that the group “cultivates and advocates a style of sexual life ... which has no relationship to the educational purpose of the University.”

But the GSU kept fighting. To plead its case, the 50-member group documented its activities as a service organization in a 26-page report to the Student Activities Committee. It had brought nationally recognized speakers to Grounds; made presentations at UVA and across Virginia; took part in trainings about LGBTQ+ life and support; and held dances in Newcomb Hall as fundraisers. It ultimately won funding in 1975.

The union also had launched a Gay Hotline with Elkins as its director. Most of the 468 calls during its first month were hang-ups or prank calls. But in about 100 cases, the hotline was able to answer questions or send callers to the appropriate resources.

And it found support in faculty, staff and counselors at UVA and elsewhere who wrote letters on the group’s behalf. “Because of their role in providing information and serving as a focal point for gay individuals, a highly ostracized and stereotyped minority group, I feel the GSU should continue to function in Charlottesville,” wrote Keith Howell, then an assistant professor of education at UVA, who had invited members to speak at his class on human sexuality.

It was against that backdrop that Elkins became the Gay Student Union’s president because few felt comfortable taking leadership roles for the organization; interviewed for the RA role, acknowledging his sexual orientation; and ultimately faced questions about whether he could do the job.

For more than a week, the story played out on Grounds and nationally. Elkins’ personal life, he would later tell the *Cavalier Daily*, was left in shambles. He stepped down as president of the Gay Student Union. His parents, who hadn’t known he was gay, cut him off.

But amid the turmoil, Elkins says he found community on Grounds. **John Herring (Grad ’63)**, then-director of Newcomb Hall, covered his tuition and helped him find a lawyer—**John Lowe (Law ’67)**, who six years earlier had successfully argued a lawsuit against UVA to require full coeducation. Groups such as UVA’s Law School Council and Black Student Alliance issued statements in support. And he had a close-knit group of friends—gay and straight—to rely on.

By the end of the month, the panel recommended that Elkins remain on the job, and Hereford agreed. “There was a lot of support there, and I never thought I did anything wrong,” Elkins says. “I was just being a student and being an RA, and I wasn’t going to back down.”



Weather

The Cavalier Daily

Circulation 15,000

87th Year

University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Monday, September 20, 1976

Number 14

Panel to consider removing homosexual resident advisor

Cavalier

Assassination probe

Select panel approved



Bob Elkins (right) with husband Mark Hoyer at their Las Vegas home

It still wasn't easy. During an October 1977 Gay Student Union dance inside Halsey Hall, lit firecrackers were thrown onto the dance floor, and a smoke bomb disrupted another social event, according to a *Cavalier Daily* story. The story also recounted several incidents of members being harassed.

Elkins immersed himself in UVA life. He rose to the position of co-chair of the first-year resident staff, one of four student leaders running resident staff. He worked as a disc jockey for WUVA. "I just kept my head down, did my academic work, socialized with my friends and tried not to let it bother me," Elkins says of the overall climate.

By the time Elkins was ready to graduate in 1979, however, he had no plans to return. In a column that ran in April 1979 in the *Cavalier Daily*, Elkins wrote that the University was suffering from a disease called "tradition." That included the degradation of women, exclusion of Black students and the non-acceptance of different lifestyles like his. "It was an ugly environment, and it was always like, 'Oh, it's tradition,'" he says.

Just a year later, as a new decade opened, the Gay Student Union was attempting to partake in a UVA tradition—painting Beta Bridge. The group was hoping to draw attention to events planned for Gay-Lesbian Celebration Week, which included a concert; dances; a book fair; and a speech by Franklin Kameny, a prominent gay rights activist.

But during what should have been a celebratory week, the group faced violence. In April 1980, as members painted the bridge, nearby fraternity brothers hurled firecrackers at them and painted obscenities over their work.

After that week's celebration, an anonymous student penned a column in the *Cavalier Daily* recounting why they hadn't participated and come out themselves. "It is impossible to describe the way it feels inside (almost as if the insides of you twist up and retch), when you hear your apartmentmate say, 'If I found out I had a roommate who was [gay], I'd beat his face in and throw all his stuff into the street,' you do not conjure up a pleasant vision," they wrote.

1980s: 'More to Be Done'

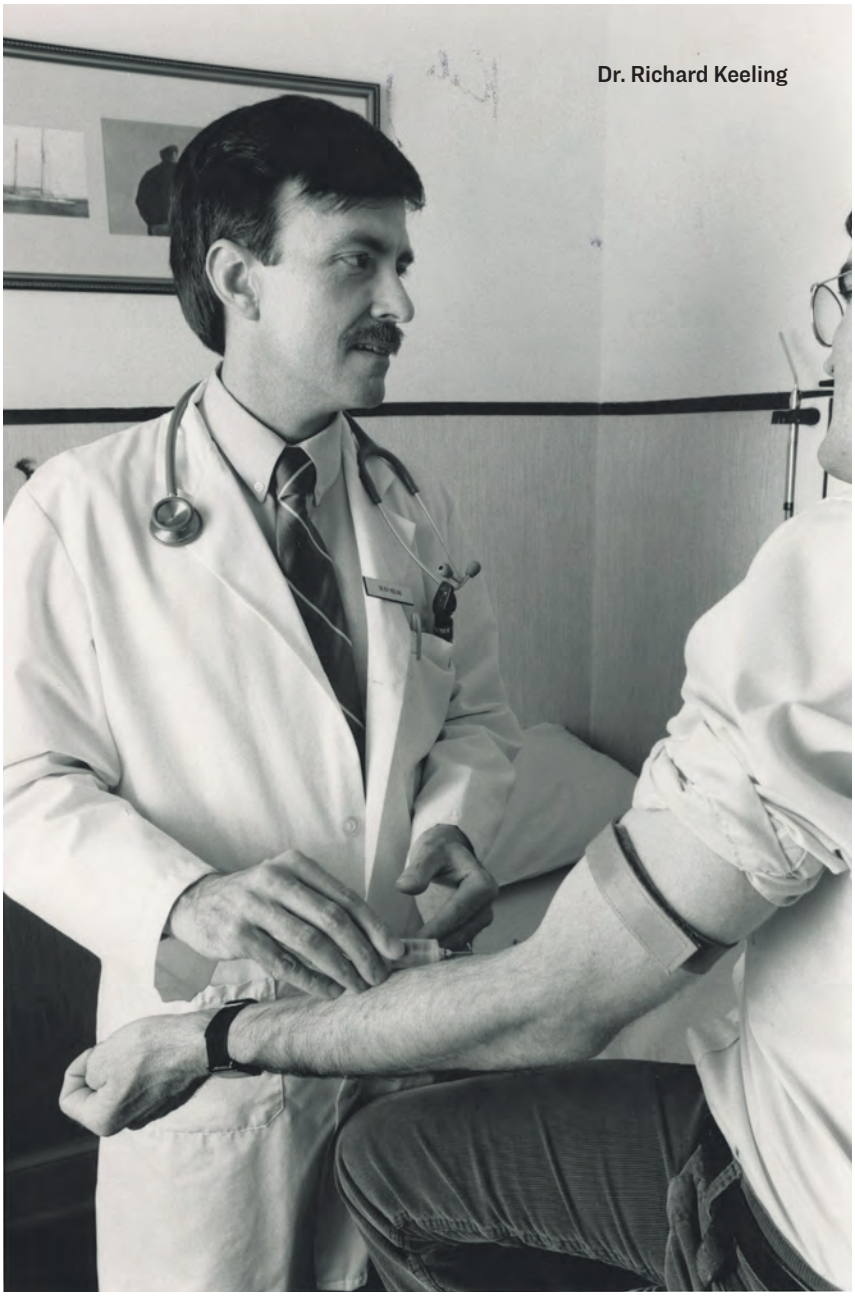
In late 1981 **Dr. Richard Keeling (Col '69)**, UVA's director of student health service and associate professor of medicine, treated a 26-year-old man with an unusual case of pneumonia. It ultimately killed him and left Keeling hunting for the possible cause. Weeks later he came across the first academic article on AIDS, according to a 1987 *UVA Alumni News* article.

The next year, Keeling launched an AIDS education program at UVA—one of the first on a college campus. He collaborated with groups across Grounds, including the Gay Student Union. UVA's tradition of student leadership was the heart and soul of the program, the article says, relying heavily on students teaching other students about AIDS prevention and healthy lifestyles.

"We started AIDS education before it became a problem. We didn't wait for a crisis or for a dozen students to get the disease," Keeling told *Alumni News*.

Across the country, as the AIDS

RUBEN PERMEL



Dr. Richard Keeling

> **We started AIDS education before it became a problem. We didn't wait for a crisis or for a dozen students to get the disease."**
>
> —DR. RICHARD KEELING (COL '69)

epidemic emerged, animosity toward the LGBTQ+ community remained high. In a June 1982 Gallup poll, 51 percent of respondents said homosexuality should not be considered an "acceptable alternative lifestyle." In the 1984 General Social Survey, 81 percent of respondents said they believed that homosexuality was always or almost always wrong.

On Grounds, disparagement of queer people was one reason **Gary Nimax (Col '87)** opted not to come out as a first-year. "There were a couple of people who were openly gay, and they were really subject of a lot of discussion and gossip and negative comments that I wasn't ready for as a first-year student," says Nimax, now UVA's assistant vice president for compliance and co-chair of UVA's LGBTQ Committee for employees.

But when he started sharing more openly about himself with friends as a second-year, he was surprised by the reaction and support. Friends either didn't care, already suspected he was gay or had another gay friend or relative.

One good friend, who is straight, was more upset that Nimax had waited to tell him. "His brother had just come out to him, and so his reaction was, 'Why are these gay people in my life not willing to share this with me?'" Nimax says.

By then, the Gay Student Union was entering its second decade and becoming more vocal, mirroring activism and awareness efforts across the country. In 1982, Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays launched as a national organization. Down the road in Richmond, the second Pride event occurred in 1983. UVA's Gay Student Union became the Lesbian Gay Student Union to reflect its changing membership in 1984.

More faculty members also were becoming vocal about their sexuality, helping to build visible forms of support for themselves and students. From 1985 to 1988, rhetoric professor Bernard Mayes and psychology professor Charlotte Patterson, both out, conducted "speakers bureau" engagements in dorms and sororities, according to an LGBTQ+ timeline that Patterson created.

The Lesbian Gay Student Union also was holding meetings, collaborating with more groups across Grounds and had launched a roommate referral service. "The LGSU is more visible than it has been in a long time," the president wrote in a 1985 newsletter. "In perspective, we're doing OK. This doesn't mean that there isn't more to be done."

ALBERT AND SHIRLEY SMALL SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARY



Community debates legacy of graffiti

By AMANDA GORDON
Cavalier Daily Associate Editor

Approximately 100 students, faculty and administrators gathered in Newcomb Hall Friday to respond to the racist and homophobic graffiti that appeared on Grounds Wednesday.

Assoc. Dean of Students Ronald Stump chaired the meeting.

Rick Turner, dean of the Office of Afro-American Affairs, Black Student Alliance incoming Vice President for Issues Tahnee Jackson and Lesbian and Gay Student Union President Wendy Mataya issued statements concerning the graffiti.

The graffiti appeared on Beta bridge, behind the Amphitheatre and at the Commerce School bus stop. It stated "No Niggers" and "No Faggots" and depicted homosexual acts.

Turner read aloud a personal statement in the form of a letter.

"The results of the lack of a clear racial harassment policy and the failure to incorporate ethnic studies courses into the existing curriculum are exacerbated by the absence of a clear message from administration and faculty that harassment of any kind — racial, ethnic, sexual — will not be tolerated in the University community," Turner said.

"I am concerned that the cowards who are guilty of this ugliness feel comfortable and perfectly free to continue their activity because the University does not have a clear written policy against such actions," he added.

Jackson read a BSA statment which includes a list of 10 demands the BSA plans to submit to University administrators.

The demands include implementation of a 13th Standard of Conduct which prohibits discriminatory harassment, a multicultural course requirement, an increase in funding for the Luther P. Jackson House, an increase in funding of the Carter G. Woodson Institute and an endowed Afro-American Studies professorship.

Mataya said the LGSU also will submit three demands to University administrators.

Those demands are mandatory "sensitivity-training workshops" for faculty and administration members, a 13th Standard of Conduct prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and "the inclusion of sexual orientation in the University's non-discrimination clause," Mataya said.

The dances continued too, and Nimax attended a few. "This was not the kind of dance where you'd put up a flier and put up signs all over Grounds," he recalls. "There was no email or social media … so it was really more of a phone tree and having a friend tell a friend kind of thing that these events were coming up."

He suspects there are few—if any—photos of the events. Nobody had a smartphone with a camera attached to their hand, he notes. But students were also more discreet. "People were much more conscious about whether someone was out or not than they are now," he says. "There was more of an assumption that you shouldn't say anything about this person being gay unless they told you it was OK."

The stigma of being queer was always in the back of their minds. Nimax remembers a friend debating whether to include their leadership role in the union on their resume. "We had this conversation about, on the one hand, do you really want to work somewhere that would see that as a negative?" he says. "But it was also the reality of the late '80s. It's easy to take this high road … if you already have a job. It's different when you're unemployed."

In March 1988, national sentiment was on full display on the Lawn as the union held a public display of affection that drew more than 1,500 spectators. As members wrapped their arms around each other and sang "The Good Old Song," some of the spectators booed and chanted "Transfer," the *Cavalier Daily* reported. Two people wore masks and rubber gloves, and fliers were distributed supporting gay genocide.

"Yesterday's events brought out a revolting display of fear and prejudice toward people who do not conform to a perceived norm," the student newspaper's editorial board wrote.

1990s: A Day of Silence Speaks Loudly

In the early 1990s, homophobia on Grounds and elsewhere wasn't difficult to find. A couple of months into the spring 1990 semester, racist and homophobic graffiti appeared across Grounds. The graffiti brought light to an "ugliness" that some felt comfortable and free to continue, in part because UVA had no clear written policy against the actions, Rick Turner, then-dean of UVA's Office of Afro-American Affairs, said in a statement at the time.

On the faculty side, Patterson, Mayes and others hoped to build a more visible network of queer faculty and staff members. They launched UVA Pride, a faculty support group, in 1992.

Both Patterson and Mayes had spent time in San Francisco, where they'd found a vibrant LGBTQ+ culture. They believed it important for more people to be out. For Patterson, being in the closet had been a horrible experience. "We did not want to be hidden," she says. "I was unusual and Bernard was unusual at that time among UVA faculty. People who we believed to be gay were not often very open."

The parties were held in Mayes' basement Pavilion apartment, and there was only one condition to attend. "You didn't have to bring anything, but you had to agree that you were open and that, if you came, we could say to somebody that you're gay. You wouldn't be hidden anymore," Patterson says. "And it worked. People really wanted free parties and free booze."

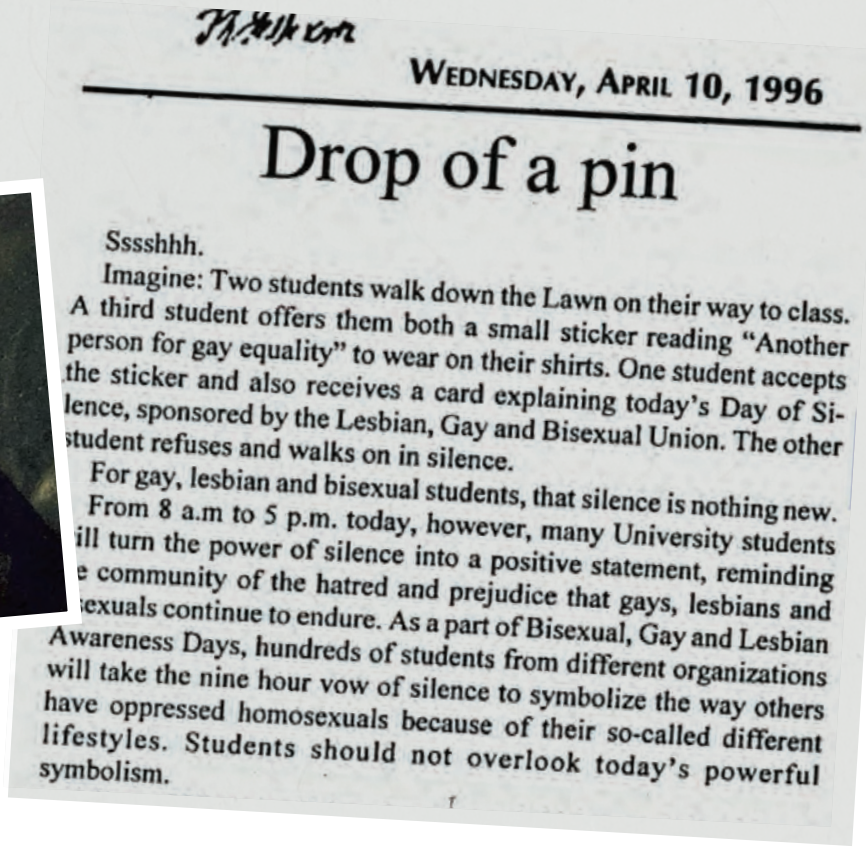
By the mid-1990s, the country was still split on civil rights for gays and lesbians. According to a 1996 Gallup poll, 47 percent of Americans believed that gay and lesbian relations between consenting adults should not be legal, compared with 44 percent who believed they should. That same year, the General Social Survey found that 66 percent believed homosexuality was always or almost always wrong, down from 80 percent in 1973.

In some ways, UVA was ahead of its time. In 1991, then-President **John T. Casteen III (Col '65, Grad '66, '70)** banned discrimination of staff and students based on their sexual orientation. (By comparison, by 2020, nondiscrimination statutes in most states didn't call out sexual orientation and gender identity as protected characteristics, according to a report from the Williams Institute at UCLA's School of Law.)

Around the same time, students were lining up to take a class taught by Patterson, whose landmark research focuses on the study of child development in lesbian- and gay-parented families. Patterson titled her class "Sexual Minorities and Human Development"



Activist Urvashi Vaid "breaks the silence" at the second annual Day of Silence at UVA.



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 1996

Drop of a pin

Sssshhh.

Imagine: Two students walk down the Lawn on their way to class. A third student offers them both a small sticker reading "Another person for gay equality" to wear on their shirts. One student accepts the sticker and also receives a card explaining today's Day of Silence, sponsored by the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Union. The other student refuses and walks on in silence.

For gay, lesbian and bisexual students, that silence is nothing new. From 8 a.m to 5 p.m. today, however, many University students will turn the power of silence into a positive statement, reminding the community of the hatred and prejudice that gays, lesbians and bisexuals continue to endure. As a part of Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian Awareness Days, hundreds of students from different organizations will take the nine hour vow of silence to symbolize the way others have oppressed homosexuals because of their so-called different lifestyles. Students should not overlook today's powerful symbolism.

> **"[The Day of Silence] just made a real statement to me and helped me realize that I was not alone."**
>
> —JESSE GILLIAM (COL '99)

so that when the registrar abbreviated it on transcripts, it became, "Sex Min Hum Dev."

She'd heard that some students worried their parents might find out they were taking the class, and that title was sufficiently opaque that it allowed some students to take the course without alarming family members, she says. "It was overenrolled the very first hour it went on the books."

But while the LGBTQ+ community's visibility was growing among faculty, staff and students, their experiences were disparate.

While touring UVA as a high school student, **Jesse Gilliam (Col '99)**, who grew up in Alaska and Northern Virginia, felt relieved when he saw a sign for the Lesbian Gay Student Union, which added Bisexual and Transgender to its name in the 1990s.

"I remember thinking, 'OK, there is a place for me even though this is a perceived conservative institution in a conservative state,'" Gilliam says. Once he got to UVA, however, he realized that "it was very much a situation where you found your pockets for you to be who you are and be safe," Gilliam says.

Not every corner of UVA felt friendly. For example, Gilliam never ventured to a football game where tens of thousands of fans shouted "not gay" with each singing of "The Good Old Song." "It's a real, overtly hostile act," he says.

Matt Paco (Col '95) did attend football games. To him, the "not gay" shout was annoying. "It's kind of one of those things that you just live with," says Paco, who was active in University Union while a student and later co-founded Queer Virginia Alumni. "It wasn't a good feeling."

But Paco, who started coming out during his third year, never experienced anything "terrible," he says. "I was very blessed [with] my friends that I did pick," he says. "A lot of them were in University Union, and a lot of them ended up being LGBTQ. We all came out later on. I found friends that have been my friends forever since."

When **Maria Pulzetti (Col '99)** reached Grounds in the fall of 1995, she was struck by the "invisibility" of the LGBTQ+ experience. It felt very different from her Massachusetts high school, which had a gay-straight alliance.

Pulzetti came out during her second semester when she happened to be taking Julian Bond's popular class covering Bond's experience organizing student nonviolent protests. She wondered if UVA students could do the same for LGBTQ+ rights.

Her idea turned into the Day of Silence—April 10, 1996—when LGBTQ+ people wouldn't speak so that the greater community would realize what they were missing. Pulzetti and other

COURTESY OF MARIA PULZETTI



UVA's queer history remains on display in Newcomb Hall.

members of the now Lesbian Gay Bisexual Union spread the word across Grounds at meetings of student groups, including the Inter-Sorority Council and Inter-Fraternity Council. "People were actually pretty great," Pulzetti says.

As many as 150 people joined in, including many straight supporters, wearing stickers and distributing note cards that explained why they weren't talking for the day.

For Gilliam, the most powerful moment that day was seeing participants in a dining hall, not saying a word. "It just made a real statement to me and helped me realize that I was not alone," he says.

Pulzetti and Gilliam joined forces to expand the Day of Silence beyond UVA. Today the event is part of GLSEN, a national organization dedicated to creating safe and inclusive educational environments for LGBTQ+ students, and reaches hundreds of thousands of students annually.

Broader support for LGBTQ+ students was coming from other directions too. By the late 1990s, 351 students and faculty members had signed on to a letter calling for the end of shouting "not gay" during "The Good Old Song." It took time and a public relations effort from UVA for the tradition to weaken. Today, many fans are shouting an epithet directed at Virginia Tech instead.

2000s: Building Community

By the late 1990s and early 2000s, years of organizing on Grounds made it possible for students like Ranson-Walsh to jump right into gay student life and activism once he arrived. Ranson-Walsh, whose father is gay, was already immersed in gay-rights activism. Even before he arrived on Grounds for his first year, he'd met Pulzetti and Gilliam and was familiar with Patterson's research.

During his first weeks as a student at UVA, he joined the union, attended the first meeting of the year with hundreds of others, got elected as an officer and was planning Proud to Be Out Week, he says.

That year, he also met **Eddie Nelms (Arch '00)**. The two, brought together by their mutual interest in architecture and placemaking, eventually began seeking a way to open something Ranson-Walsh had seen on college campuses elsewhere: an LGBTQ+ resource center. Before it opened, the gay student group had met at the Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church just off Grounds.



Anushka Dar (Col '25), president of the Queer Student Union

The two went on a "hearts and minds campaign," lobbying for a dedicated space and funding, Ranson-Walsh says. Their work paid off.

The LGBT Resource Center opened in 2000 in the basement of a building off Rugby Road with funding for a graduate

STEVE HEDBERG

assistant staffer. Soon the center moved to the basement of Newcomb Hall, and it now takes a central space across the hall from the third-floor ballroom.

Into the 2000s, the LGBTQ+ community across the country experienced growing acceptance. In 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage. In 2021, a Gallup poll found that 79 percent of respondents agreed that same-sex relations between consenting adults should be legal.

In 2019, independent group The Campus Pride Index ranked UVA No. 7 among the most welcoming colleges or universities to LGBTQ+ students across the country, in part because of its active resource center.

Today, the Gay Student Union has a new name: the Queer Student Union. It continues to provide mentorship and support through programs such as a house parents initiative that pairs upper-class members with first-years and transfer students. Drag bingo remains a popular event. And as it collaborates with other student organizations, such as multicultural or performance groups, it's also filling up the LGBTQ Center during events, says **Anushka Dar (Col '25)**, now in her second term as president.

> **"I'm very happy with where the University is today. It has grown tremendously just in terms of being a welcoming place for LGBTQ folks."**
> —BOB ELKINS (COL '79)

COURTESY OF FELIX NGUYEN-DALTON (COL '13)



Felix Nguyen-Dalton (Col '13), scholarship committee co-chair, QVA

New groups have popped up too, like Sigma Omicron Rho, which is now part of the Multicultural Greek Council. Like any other Greek organization, the gender-inclusive group operates with a rush and pledge week, but new members take part in education programs about various queer identities, President **Katrina Clark (Arch '25)** says.

She remembers attending her first rush meeting to learn more and instantly clicking with the group's leaders. "I just loved them as people instantly," she says. "I had a really good time, and I was laughing. It just felt like a very accepting environment."

And then there's QVA, formerly the Serpentine Society, UVA's LGBTQ+ alumni network. Conceived in 1998, it's an active force, providing nearly $300,000 annually in scholarships and support for students, including those who have been kicked out by their families after coming out. It also provides networking and events for alumni.

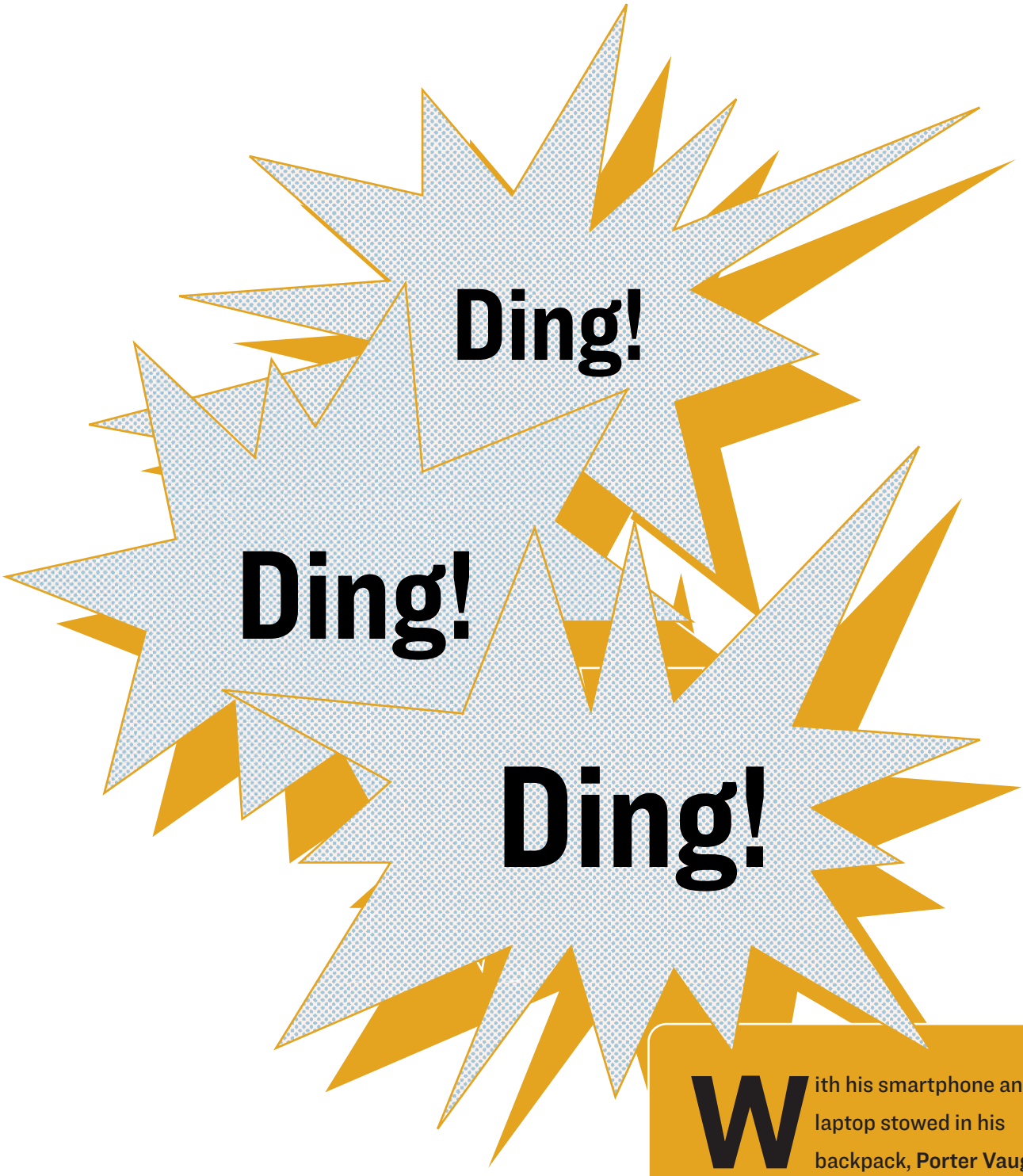
In fact, QVA's work helped persuade Elkins to return to UVA—something he had had no plans to do. In 2002, he stepped back on Grounds for the first time since he graduated and has been involved with QVA ever since. "I'm very happy with where the University is today," he says. "It has grown tremendously just in terms of being a welcoming place for LGBTQ folks."

The work of students like Elkins to build that welcoming place over the decades might have been buoyed by another UVA tradition—student self-governance, suggests **Felix Nguyen-Dalton (Col '13)**, QVA's scholarship committee co-chair. UVA values and cultivates student self-governance and provides the infrastructure to support student-led initiatives. As a result, "students keep organizing," Nguyen-Dalton says.

And as new students come in, each on their own journey and amid new personal, societal and political challenges, the need for spaces, places and community remains.

For her part, Dar spent time researching the Queer Student Union's history to create a presentation of its journey since that first classified ad. As she dug deeper into the archives, she remembers thinking, "This is the most amazing thing I've ever seen," she says. "It gave me so much hope. When I feel burned out, I just think about that history, and I think about how others have been doing this before and how they've succeeded. It really drives me as a leader, but also as a queer person just existing in the world."

Sarah Lindenfeld Hall is a writer based in Raleigh, North Carolina.



Experts agree tech can be distracting and worse. UVA is experimenting with ways to help students disconnect.

BY ED MILLER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY NICOLE RIFKIN

With his smartphone and laptop stowed in his backpack, **Porter Vaughan (Col '27)** felt more present and engaged during English Writing and Rhetoric 1510: Writing and Critical Inquiry than in his other classes last semester.

"I was more invested in what my classmates were saying and what the professor was saying," he says. "I enjoyed not having the distraction." →





The 18-student class taught by associate professor **John T. Casteen IV (Col '93)** prohibited the use of laptops and phones during class. **Bernadette Montfort (Col '27)** says it was her favorite class of her first year in college and a far different experience from the large lecture classes she took, in which students typing notes on their laptops sometimes wandered—virtually, at least—from the room. "There were always a lot of people shopping and watching random videos," she says. "A lot of people like to do the *New York Times* Wordle. You'd see them screen-switching back and forth."

Montfort sometimes falls prey to distractions herself, she says. She'll scroll social media while studying, for example. And when she gets together with friends to study, they'll often spend breaks looking at their phones rather than talking.

"I do get sucked in easily," she says.

It's a common lament among students who've come of age in a hyper-connected world with technology engineered to be addictive. By 2023, 46 percent of teens reported being online "almost all the time," writes Jonathan Haidt, a social psychologist and former UVA professor now at New York University. In a 2022 Pew Research Center Report, 36 percent of teens said they spent "too much time" on social media.

Some argue that that constant connectedness has negative effects both cognitively and emotionally. While some students are trying to limit their personal use of technology, some administrators and professors at UVA are looking at how to mitigate the issues in other ways.

Haidt, author of the bestselling book *The Anxious Generation: How the Rewiring of Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness*, is one prominent voice sounding a warning about technology and mental health. He cites alarming increases in anxiety (up 134 percent) and depression (up 106 percent) among U.S. undergraduates since 2010, around the time adolescents traded flip phones for smartphones. To him, there's a clear causation between social media use enabled by smartphones and bad mental health outcomes. He points to 13 true experiments—"the gold standard for establishing causality"—that found a significant causal effect.

Haidt, who has been called a "digital absolutist," has called for a ban on smartphones in schools. Other academics are not as convinced of the need, nor of the causal link between social media and declining mental health among teens. Still, few dispute that there is a correlation.

There appears to be general agreement that "spending time away from technology and social media has psychological and cognitive benefits," Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Brie Gertler wrote in an email.

Indeed, putting down phones or closing computer screens makes it easier to concentrate, a half-dozen students interviewed by *Virginia Magazine* said. Unplugging during class leads to more engagement and participation, as well as a better grasp of material, they said.

Conversely, scrolling social media too long can cause feelings of anxiety, inadequacy and loneliness.

"The more time I spend on my phone, the worse I feel," says **Max Manoff**

"THE WORLD WE LIVE in has those devices, and we need to learn how to use them responsibly, while recognizing the effects they have on ourselves and our relationships and certainly on learning."

—Michael Palmer, director of UVA's Center for Teaching Excellence

(Col '27), whose weakness is Instagram sports videos.

Mai Hukuoka (Col '27) found her first-year roommate through Instagram. She's also active on Snapchat and TikTok, although she finds that spending too much time on such platforms "kind of drains your energy," she says.

Stepping away is hard, though. No one wants to feel they might be missing out.

"Everyone knows they are on their phone and social media way too much," Hukuoka says. "We're all aware of it, but sometimes it's something you can't escape."

Citing evidence that adolescents who spend more than three hours a day on social media double their risk of anxiety and depression symptoms, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy has called on Congress to require a tobacco-style warning for users of social media. As of the summer of 2023, the average adolescent spent 4.8 hours per day on such platforms, he wrote.

"The mental health crisis among young people is an emergency—and social media has emerged as an important contributor," Murthy wrote in a June op-ed in *The New York Times*.

Nicole Ruzek, chief mental health officer at UVA Student Health and Wellness, says her office does not track how many students report feeling overwhelmed by or addicted to phones and social media. But she's aware that many feel it's a problem.

"Anecdotally, I've heard a number of students talk about needing to take a vacation from social media," she says. "Frequently, they'll uninstall the apps from their phones in an attempt to get it under control."

Ruzek says one trend she's following is a jump in students reporting social anxiety, or feeling that they have trouble making friends, having a conversation or generally fitting in. Social anxiety has begun outpacing general anxiety as a diagnosis that "is always at the top, in terms of numbers," she says.

The 2022 annual report of the Center for Collegiate Mental Health at Penn State confirms that trend. It highlights the fact that over a 12-year period, the number of students seeking services for social anxiety at college counseling centers nationwide increased more than students seeking services for any other area of distress.

Isolation during the pandemic and increased usage of phones and social media are possible contributors. In general, though, figuring out exactly why mental health concerns are on the rise is a challenge. Ruzek believes there are multiple factors beyond the effects of technology.

"I think there is definitely a clear correlation between the rise in mental health concerns and technology advancing and becoming more available," she says. "I think there's still some question about causation. Is this the thing that's causing the problem?

"I think it's complicated. I don't know that we can only point to technology as the cause of young people's mental health concerns. But I definitely think it's one thing to look into more deeply."

In her experience, college students—digital natives who have grown up with smartphones and social media—are well-informed and savvy when it comes to recognizing when using them becomes a problem.

"I think there's a lot of awareness there," Ruzek says.

As for technology's effects on learning, Michael Palmer, director of UVA's Center for Teaching Excellence, says most students are also aware of the need to unplug from social media and other distractions during class. He believes the biggest abuses take place among younger students in larger classes and fall off as students advance in their academic careers.

"Compared to other universities, I don't know if UVA is any different," Palmer says.

Palmer's work sometimes involves observing classes to provide feedback to faculty. From his perch in the back of the room, he can see what students are doing on their laptops.

Most are taking notes, he says. "Then you'll get the occasional student shopping or watching a soccer game or stuff like that, but I don't know if that's as prevalent as people are led to believe."

Minimizing distraction during class is only half the battle. The biggest impact of smartphones and other devices on learning is their effect on memory, Palmer says.

"WHAT I NOTICED is that students were paying more attention to one another. The class discussions got better."

—John T. Casteen IV (Col '93), associate professor

Memory begins with sensory experience—smell, touch, taste, sight, sound. The vast majority of short-term memories are immediately forgotten. Otherwise our brains would be overwhelmed.

When something catches our attention, our brain begins to process it. The goal in learning is to get it from working memory to long-term memory through a process called consolidation.

It typically takes hours, or longer, Palmer says. Cellphones can interrupt the process by not giving the brain time to rest and do its work, Palmer says.

"So when students immediately get out of class and they're texting, they're texting while they're doing homework, or they're not sleeping because they are TikTokking all night, it has a detrimental effect on long-term memory."

Still, Palmer is not a proponent of banning phones and other devices in classrooms.

"The world we live in has those devices, and we need to learn how to use them responsibly, while recognizing the effects they have on ourselves and our relationships and certainly on learning."

If not a ban, how about a break? UVA offered students a hiatus over the summer, in the form of "tech sabbatical" courses requiring students to put away their phones and laptops as part of their coursework inside the classroom and to commit to screen-free hours outside of it. The idea came from President **James E. Ryan (Law '92)**, who was inspired by an article in *The New York Times* on the success of such classes at other universities.

In the request for faculty proposals for courses, the provost's office outlined the stakes. Many students turn to their phones to "fill any spare moment," the request stated. It cited the "far-reaching cognitive and emotional effects, such as diminishing the ability to sustain focused attention, interfering with relationships, and impairing sleep."

Offering the courses as a pilot program during the short-format summer session provided an opportunity for students to develop "a more thoughtful relationship to their devices," the proposal stated. UVA expects to offer additional tech-sabbatical courses in the upcoming academic year.

Four faculty members developed tech-free summer courses. Adema Ribic, an assistant professor of psychology, was scheduled to teach Neural Mechanisms of Behavior, a course focused on understanding high-level concepts in behavioral neuroscience.

Ribic was hoping the course would give students a deeper, hands-on understanding of the material. She also viewed it as something of a professional challenge.

"I wanted to see if I could run a science course without technology," she says.

Instead of using computers, students were to conduct old-school experiments using analog props: "Glass prisms for discussing brain plasticity, stopwatches for discussing myelination, yarn for understanding sound localization," per the course description.

Ribic says she's found that many students are overly reliant on technology and trust it blindly. Students in her larger classes can also be distracted, she says. Among a class of 150 she taught recently, there were about 10 who spent the time playing video games.

"It's their time," Ribic says. "I can't do much but simply teach them what I know."

She's also noticed that students are less likely to ask questions than they once were. She's hoping that conducting experiments by hand in a less formal atmosphere over the summer will encourage them to be more thoughtful and engaged.

Such experiments are how neuroscience developed and how she learned, not so long ago, as an undergrad in the early 2000s.

"I'm from Bosnia," she says. "It was right after the war, and we had nothing."

In her tech sabbatical course, Studies in Modern and Contemporary Lit, Assistant Professor of English Adrienne Ghaly sought to address a problem seen in her field: a lack of reading stamina among students. It's a concern among academics like her, whose primary genre is the novel.

"For many students, increasingly, reading very long stretches of text at a time is challenging," Ghaly says.

Blame the constant pings and notifications that come with reading in a digital format such as a laptop or phone. Given that students must be online so



much to complete their work, it's unfair to fault them for reading distractedly, Ghaly says.

One of her aims in developing the course, which focused on novels concerned with climate and humanitarian crises, was for students to "retrain the cognitive pathways" that encourage immersive reading. Students read physical novels and texts and wrote reflections, in longhand, on not just what they'd read but how they'd read—whether for small details, for big ideas, for argument, or for something else.

In one class early in the session, students decamped to the library to find an ideal space for reading. They reported back on their reading endurance, or how long they could go without taking a break. Some said they could read for the entire 20 minutes of the exercise. Others could go just 90 seconds, Ghaly says.

Liv Jean-Louise Galbreath (Col '26), who took Ghaly's course, says she found it helpful in thinking about her own reading stamina and attention.

"I'd never focused on how I was reading, or how long," she says.

For Casteen, developing his course, The Contemporary Essay, for the summer tech sabbatical is a continuation of his practice of keeping devices out of his classrooms.

Casteen is not anti-tech, he says. But he discovered while teaching during the Semester at Sea program, when an internet connection was unreliable, that unplugging elevated the experience.

"What I noticed is that students were paying more attention to one another. The class discussions got better. There were fewer conversations where they would ask me a question and I would answer it. They would ask another student a question about something that student had said. So a lot of the learning became more lateral, which is what anybody wants out of a seminar."

Casteen recently finished a term as director of studies at UVA's Brown Residential College and says that in his five years there on Monroe Hill he's witnessed a decline in social interaction, even among students who've gone out of their way to be part of a close-knit living and learning community.

"Students are pulled strongly enough toward screens that it is in my experience, in five years here, always swimming against the current to get them to attend events and seek out the experiences that have historically made college, college," he says.

Casteen's job at Brown involved teaching all the college's first-year students. He says "100 percent" of them recognize the ways their phones are addictive and unhealthy and holding them back.

The tech sabbatical courses are intended to show students other ways to experience college, he says.

"It's meant to offer something they didn't know college could give them, which is: You can decide to disengage."

When students realize this, when they've unplugged and taken a hike; or gone to a play, concert, or lecture; or simply walked Grounds with Casteen as he points out, for instance, what a hawk looks like, or a walnut tree, it can be a revelation for them.

"You know, they get it, they feel it. It is as if they have been underwater, and they are surfacing, and breathing."

Ed Miller is senior editor of Virginia Magazine.



THE FUTURE OF STUDENT ADVISING IS BRIGHT

If you're like most UVA alumni, you remember how connections with faculty members and advisers on Grounds changed the course of your study, career or personal development. Those connections can be especially crucial for new students as they adjust to college, choose their classes, and consider their academic and personal goals. Several major new undergraduate advising initiatives are aimed at strengthening these relationships and making sure students are receiving the support they need.

UVA already enjoys excellent graduation rates and an exceptional first-year retention rate of 96 percent, so there is a lot we have been doing right when it comes to student advising; we also have expert faculty members who are eager to help students. However, a 2022 faculty-led advising task force found room for improvement in pre-major advising—that is, advising during a student's first year or two on Grounds. Students were too often matched with faculty advisers in different fields of interest, and sometimes felt they could not get the help they needed, while faculty members saw advisees infrequently and felt unable to effectively assist them.

Addressing these concerns and improving advising will help UVA to continue to provide the best student experience in the country and prepare our students for fulfilling careers and lives. Thanks to the task force recommendations and leadership from our provost's office, deans, and Board of Visitors—especially former members **Elizabeth Cranwell (Col '86)**, Babur Lateef, and **Barbara Fried (Col '04)**—we've made significant strides, including developing a holistic approach, designing a new first-year experience, and implementing digital solutions that make the process easier and more effective.

First, the task force and its partners envisioned a future of advising at UVA that is holistic, focused not only on students' academic paths, but also on their personal and career development. UVA offers an abundance of academic opportunities, study abroad programs, career and internship possibilities, and student support services—but students can only benefit if they know about them. A more holistic advising system will help advisers quickly connect students with the resources that will benefit them most, providing opportunities they might otherwise miss out on.

A new dorm-based experience, called Hoos@Home, was a big step forward. Last year, we piloted this program, which included weekly academic and career advising sessions, to build relationships, get students thinking about their goals and share information. After enthusiastic feedback, the pilot will expand in the fall to include more than 1,900 students.

The Hoos@Home program is partly based on lessons learned from the School of Engineering and Applied Science, which revamped its undergraduate advising program several years ago to assign first-year students to introductory courses with the instructor serving as their adviser. Instead of meeting with their advisers twice per year, students saw them in class weekly, leading to many more opportunities to build a meaningful relationship.

Similarly, in the College of Arts & Sciences, a first-year curriculum, called the Engagements, offers four half-semester courses that introduce big ideas in a small class format. Students build relationships with the outstanding faculty teaching these courses, and the ultimate goal is to more fully integrate pre-major advising into Engagements courses. The College is also adding advising specialists for transfer students, students interested in health or STEM fields, military-affiliated students, and students with more complex academic needs.

Many of these changes focus on fostering strong, one-to-one relationships between students and advisers, which is and should be the top priority. However, we've also introduced technology upgrades to support these in-person relationships. The most significant is a course planning tool called Stellic, which streamlines the course selection process, helps students identify courses that will satisfy requirements they need, and facilitates collaboration among advisers. A new one-stop website for students and families, called Discover Your UVA, also helps new and returning students easily find information about student services, resources, and leadership and service opportunities.

Our students deserve every chance to succeed at UVA and to benefit from the mentorship and connection that good advising can provide, as well as the many resources we are fortunate to have. These changes help students access opportunities early in their time at UVA, build relationships with faculty members and advisers who are well-positioned to help them achieve their goals, and get support and guidance when they need it. Perhaps most simply, the best possible advising will give our students the best possible chance to reach their full potential and thrive, both now and far into their future. I cannot imagine a more important endeavor.



JAMES E. RYAN (LAW '92)
President of the University of Virginia



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UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA

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Martha D. Anderson (Nurs '74)
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Patricia H. Fralix (Nurs '74)
Jacquelynn Zimmer McKnight (Col '74, Grad '79)
Gerard R. Mullins (Educ '74)
Therese Cartier Vogel (Nurs '74)
Richard T. Bryant (Col '75)
Paul J. Zoukis (Col '75)
David S. Boger (Med '79)
Denise Forbes Eastham (Nurs '79)
Phyllis A. Manning (Col '80)
Martin M. McNerney (Law '80)
Ruby Cooper (Col '85)
Karen Hopkins-Gerald (Col '85)
Kenneth M. Perry (Col '85)
Joanne Beauvoir Brown (Col '86)
Carey R. Blackstone Jr. (Com '87, Darden '97)
Kimberly J. Blackford (Col '89)
Gabrielle Iezzi (Engr '89)
Lisa Jeannette-Pettaway (Col '89)
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Maria Garnett Ward (Col '89)
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Katrina L. Walker (Col '92)
Veronica Reaves Whitley (Col '92)
Veronica A. Ayala-Sims (Col '93)
Carla Wheaton Brady (Col '93, Med '97)
Michelle N. Johnson (Col '93)
Deidra Jane Perry-Massie (Col '93)
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Kathryn Hoffman Hill (Com '95)
Nicole B. Jackson (Col '95)
Phyllis Montgomery (Educ '95)
Lisa Renee Norman (Col '95)
Eren Atkins Page (Col '95)
Suji Kang Baak (Col '96)
Kendall W. Holbrook (Engr '96)
Wendy Jan Kvancz (Col '96)
Dara Ebun Sanderson (Col '96)
Sally K. Torgler (Engr '97)
Anikar Chhabra (Med '98, Intern '99, Grad '04)
Malia N. Fischer (Col '99)
Tiwanica A. Moore (Col '99)
Karen R. Robinson (Col '99, Law '02)
Mia Matthews Foster (Col '01)
Natosha Dillard Webb (Col '01)
Nicole D. Brown (Col '02)
Brendan O. Downey (Col '02, Educ '14)
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Rashanda M. Grimes (Col '03)
James W. Head (Col '03, Law '06)
Tracy Barger Semler (Engr '03, '03)
Zudayyah Leah Taylor-Dunn (Engr '03)
Brian C. Barry (Law '04)
Evita Byrd (Col '04, Educ '10)
Jeremy S. Maloney (Arch '04)
Michael A. Megliola (Col '04)
Meredith Lawrence Slater (Col '04)
Jeffrey T. Strup (Engr '05)
Andrei Galatanu (Com '08)
Michele A. Parker (Educ '08)
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Tracey N. Fetherson (Col '10)
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Time Capsule

BY JUDY LE

As a new school year starts on Grounds, we asked you: What was the most important thing you brought to move-in? And what did you bring and end up not needing at all?

By far the most-mentioned item, from the 1960s to the 2000s, was a fan. **Kristin Powell (Col '92)** wrote: "A big fan! (Not my mom, though she helped me move in; an actual fan.) Fans were a must when I moved into the top floor of Watson at the end of the hot East Coast summer of 1988. Didn't need my own sheets, since the laundry service was super convenient! 😄" **Taylor Lillard (Col '04)** wrote: "Most important thing: A FAN. (There were no air conditioners in old dorms.) Ended up not needing so many snacks (not enough space in my single room, and my mom packed WAY too many)!"



ISTOCK

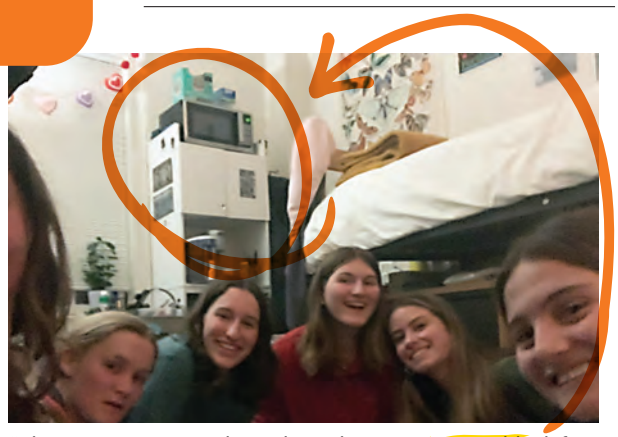
"An air conditioner was our most important item in married housing; totally didn't need the sofa."
—Anna Burnley (Grad '89)



"Tony Chachere's Creole seasoning salt. As a homesick girl from Louisiana/Texas, I couldn't have survived first year without it."
—Michelle Jones Coles (Col '02)

"The most important things that I moved in with were an air purifier and a dehumidifier. The dorms could be so dusty and humid, and those two machines were absolute lifesavers."
—Jordyn Anthony (Engr '24)

"Arriving from the West Coast,
I didn't come to UVA with a great deal of personal items. I certainly needed shorts and T-shirts for that hot and humid weather! I didn't need all the books from undergrad that I shipped by train to Charlottesville."
—Pete Fontaine (Grad '90)



"The most important thing I brought was a storage block for my roommate's and my mini fridge. It held so much stuff and made breakfast in the dorm really easy! I brought but never wore rain boots for rainy days." *—Abigail Gruener (Col '25)*



"I brought a basic tool set: hammer, Phillips and flathead screwdrivers, wrench, measuring tape, etc. It came in a pink case and was a graduation gift from a family friend. Before the end of move-in weekend, every single one of my New Dorms suitemates had used it to set up their rooms! (I did not need all the clothes I brought with me—I definitely overpacked.)"
—Sarah Morrow Cerniglia (Col '03)

"A mesh shower caddy was so important. Needed a desk lamp too." *—Kimberly Liu (Col '26)*

"I packed the morning of move-in (not recommended), so I had less than I needed. But the most important thing I brought was definitely a mattress topper." *—Halle Barredo (Col '25)*

"A Smith Corona electric typewriter. I came from South Florida by plane—I needed everything I brought. My roommate from Northern Virginia brought the stereo." *—Cobie Whitten (Col '80)*

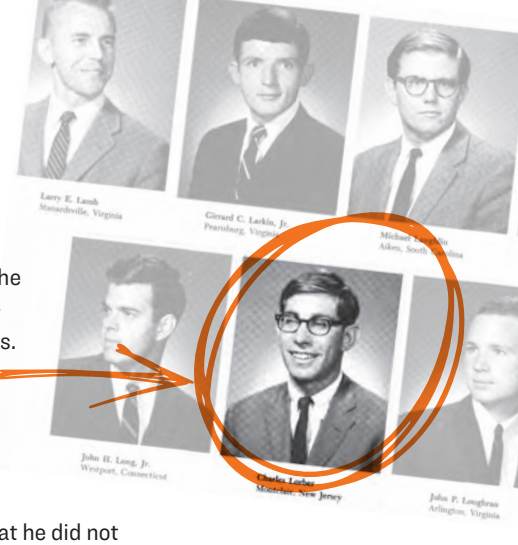
"My record player and records. I didn't need all the records because I bought new ones."
—Sandy Lee-Muzik (Educ '75)

"Most important was a stereo and good speakers."
—Carolyn Schoen Predmore (Col '74)



STEVE HEDBERG

"Not needed: In the words of the *Yellow Journal* that year, I brought my R.E.M. tapes since no one else would have them." —Tim Jarrett (Col '94)



Several alumni from the 1960s and early 1970s mentioned bringing coats and ties. **Charlie Lorber (Com '66)** wrote: "My most important items were ties and jackets, something I never wore until coming to UVA in 1962." (On the flip side, Lorber noted that he did not need his bowling ball.) When **John F. Cushman Jr. (Col '72)** arrived in September 1968, he said, "My parents and I had the coats and ties but not the dress shirts. Fortunately, my roommate (best friend in high school) had not arrived. His father, a respected local Baptist minister, and my next-door neighbor, a retired Marine major, broke into the family house, secured the shirts, and brought them to me." However, "after the semester break, I returned with long hair, Levis, and boots. I also de-pledged my fraternity. I am happy to report that this sudden change had no adverse implications for my years at UVA."

CORKS AND CURLS



ISTOCK

"Cinder blocks to raise my bed for underneath storage! I ended up not needing that water-boiling thing to cook noodles in and such. The first-year meal plan and Bonnycastle basement were more than enough!"
—Brooke Van Rensselaer (Educ '02)

"I brought a footlocker and a suitcase. That's it. There was nothing I didn't need. It was a different time."
—Ken Lambert (Col '73)

For our next issue:
What is the kindest thing someone—known to you or a stranger—did for you while you were at UVA?

Tell us at uvamag.com/timecapsules, and we'll select some to run in the Winter issue.

Class Notes

2024 HONOREES

A longtime faculty member, student leaders, accomplished student-athletes and exceptional incoming students are among the members of the UVA community who received awards from the Alumni Association and the Bolívar Network this year.

From the Alumni Association



Distinguished Professor Award
Brian Helmke
Engineering professor Helmke is a national leader in the field of biomedical engineering. He designed UVA's undergraduate research curriculum from the inception of the biomedical engineering degree in 2004 and has served as a reliable faculty member in the department. Helmke is a dynamic educator actively committed to the personal growth of his students. His research centers on the relationship between cell mechanics and cell function, with a focus on cardiovascular disease.



Ernest H. Ern Distinguished Student Award
Tichara Robertson Lewis (Col '24)
This award honors students who exemplify outstanding academic and leadership performance and make exceptional contributions to university life. As Student Council president, Lewis expanded the council's financial capacity to support first-generation and low-income students by $750,000. She is a Sonja Hoel Perkins Scholar, Echols Scholar, and Public Policy and International Affairs Fellow, and she was the founder and president of the Black Queer Club at UVA. In addition to the Distinguished Student Award, Lewis has been awarded the Kente Cloth Award and the John A. Herring Scholarship for Social Awareness. She completed her studies with dual degrees in political and social thought and African American and African studies.







Gray-Carrington Scholarship Award
Nicholas Chu (Col '25)
Matthew Hunter (Col '25)
Naomi Shumpert (Col '25)
This scholarship honors integrity, achievement, leadership and humility. Chu is president of the a cappella group the Hullabahoos and serves as recruitment chair of Phi Delta Theta fraternity. A member of the men's soccer team, Hunter is vice president of external relations for the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, an organization focused on peer mentorship of student-athletes, and also serves as vice chief executive officer of the Black Economic Empowerment Society. Shumpert is a resident adviser in Housing and Residence Life, a fellow in the Meriwether Lewis Institute for Citizen Leadership, an Echols Scholar and treasurer of the Black Voices Gospel Choir.





T. Rodney Crowley Memorial Scholarship
Noah Chizmar (Com '25)
Marlee Morgan (Com '25)
This scholarship honors leadership, sportsmanship, character and integrity. A member of the men's lacrosse team, Chizmar is a Dean's List student who has been named to the ACC Academic Honor Roll every semester since enrolling at UVA. He is a member of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, as well as the Citizen Leader and Sports Ethics Community Impact Fellowship. Morgan, a sprinter on the women's track and field team, is a McIntire Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging intern and assists in developing programs that engage the McIntire student body. As a UVA cohort mentor, she helps first-year students facilitate trusting relationships through clear communication and appropriate boundaries.



Molly Bass Memorial Legacy Scholarship
Tyler Crawford (Col '28)
This scholarship was created in 2023 by the parents of **Molly Bass (Col '88, Educ '90)** to honor her 27 years of service to the UVA Alumni Association and her role in creating the Alumni Family Scholarship in 2009. The second recipient of the scholarship, Crawford is an incoming first-year student and fourth-generation 'Hoo from Richmond, Virginia. While in high school, she founded the organization A Book For Me, which has provided over 12,000 books to low-income children in the Richmond area. She is a rock climber, tennis player and actress, and she has extensive volunteer and mentorship experience.



Sky Alland Scholarship
Carson Breus (Com '25)
Covering full tuition and fees for the next academic year, this scholarship honors enterprising spirit, leadership, humility and devotion to UVA. Breus is an Echols Scholar and serves as Honor Committee vice chair for sanctions. In that capacity, she helped implement an expanded range of punishments aimed at improving the quality of justice while preserving the integrity of one of the University's longest traditions. Breus has also made an impact as an intern with CAV Angels, a nonprofit that has invested more than $23 million in 50 UVA-connected companies. In addition, she has served as an ambassador for the Jefferson Trust, a grant-making organization that funds innovation at UVA, and tutors 40 student-athletes.

From the Bolívar Network



First Year Scholarship
Estefania Carvajal (Col '28)
This scholarship provides funds for an exceptional Hispanic/Latinx high school student from Virginia to incentivize them to attend UVA. Carvajal comes to UVA from Venezuela by way of Lynchburg, Virginia, where she served as a patient representative for the emergency department at Lynchburg General Hospital and held the competitive position of Beacon of Hope intern. As a young student in Venezuela, she led volunteer groups distributing food and other goods to those in need, and she has since worked as a tutor, translator and photographer. She plans to study chemistry and human biology.

Indicates a corresponding photograph or video online at **uvamagazine.org/classnotes**.

CM Indicates Contributing Member of the Alumni Association

'60s

Oscar R. Aylor (Col '62 CM) was honored by Appalachian State University in April with a lecture hall named in his honor in the College of Health Sciences. His career in health services management and policy included several senior hospital executive positions and university faculty appointments, including at App State, where he was the inaugural director of an undergraduate major in health care management from 1972 to 1981 in the university's Walker College of Business. This major has more than 1,500 alumni. Aylor retired in 2018 and lives near Charlottesville, where he serves as a member of the Hospital Ethics Committee at UVA Health.

David Landin (Col '68, Law '72 CM) was honored by the Virginia Bar Association with a resolution recognizing his work on behalf of UVA, alongside his work on behalf of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello as a trustee. He was also honored for more than five decades of service to the legal profession, including as president of the Virginia Bar Association, the Virginia Law Foundation and the Virginia Association of Defense Attorneys, as well as his chairmanship of the VBA Committee on Special Issues of National & State Importance, which he chaired for almost half of its existence since its founding in 1974.

Ed Offley (Col '69) has been named *Naval History* magazine's "2023 Author of the Year" by the U.S. Naval Institute for a series of articles on the Battle of the Atlantic, the 1983 U.S. invasion of Grenada and a 100-year-old World War II battleship sailor.

'70s

John Warley (Law '70 CM) was awarded an honorary doctor of letters degree by The Citadel on May 4 in rec-



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ognition of his contribution to The Citadel War Memorial. Warley composed both the inscription that greets visitors to the memorial as well as the narrative history of the college etched into the walls. He is also the author of a history of the school: *Stand Forever, Yielding Never: The Citadel in the 21st Century*.

Howard Berryman "Berry" Edwards, M.D. (Engr '71, Med '78 CM) has been the publisher of BehaveNet, an online encyclopedia of psychiatry, including sleep medicine and addiction medicine, since 1995.

Col. Richard Kingman (Col '74 CM) and fellow Air Force ROTC alumni from 1973 to 1977 attended the 2024 Joint Service ROTC Awards Ceremony at UVA to present the inaugural Colonel James A. Ball Outstanding UVA ROTC Instructor of the Year award. Ball served as the assistant professor of air science at UVA from 1971 to 1975 and was a lifelong friend, mentor and example to the officers he helped train, as well as someone who reflected the best traditions of the U.S. military, the Air Force and UVA. Also attending the April 16 ceremony were **Col. Barry Bryan (Col '76)**, **Col. James Holaday (Col '75 CM)**, **Lt. Col. John Valliere (Engr '76 CM)**, **Bruce Webster (Engr '74 CM)**, and **Michael Skojec (Col '76 CM)**.

Harry L. Thomas (Col '76 CM) was inducted into the Arlington (Virginia) Sports Hall of Fame in October 2022. He was inducted into the Washington-Liberty High School Athletic Hall of Fame in January 2019. Thomas was co-captain of the UVA baseball team in 1976; was a second-team All-ACC pitcher in 1974; and made the All-ACC Academic Team in 1974, 1975 and 1976. He is co-holder of the ACC record for strikeouts in a game, with 19 in 1974. For the past 48 years, Thomas has been an agent and wealth management adviser for the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Co. His son **John Thomas (Col '00)** also pitched for the UVA baseball team.

Paul B. Terpak (Col '77, Law '80 CM) has been named to the Virginia Lawyers Hall of Fame, an honor given to about 0.1 percent of lawyers in Virginia every year. The Hall of Fame honors Virginia lawyers who have been in practice for at least 30 years. Criteria for inclusion include career accomplishments, contributions to the development of the law in Virginia, contributions to the bar and to the commonwealth at large, and efforts to improve the quality of justice in Virginia. Terpak practices with Blankingship & Keith in Fairfax.

Hayden Saunier (Col '79 CM) has published her sixth collection of poetry, *Wheel*, with Terrapin Books. Saunier's work has been awarded a Pushcart Prize, *Rattle* Poetry Prize and Pablo Neruda Prize, and has been published in journals such as the *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *diode*, *Pedestal*, *Plume*, *River Heron Review*, *Thrush* and *VQR*. Her work has also been featured on *Poetry Daily*, *Verse Daily* and *The Writer's Almanac*.









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’80s

Jacqueline Toner (Grad ’80, ’82) has published *True or False?: The Science of Perception, Misinformation, and Disinformation*. The book, Toner’s latest for middle-grade students, explores what psychology can tell us about how critical thinking can become derailed. It is her ninth publication with Magination Press, the children’s book imprint of the American Psychological Association.

Roger Millar (Engr ’82 CM) was elected a Distinguished Member of the American Society of Civil Engineers in March 2024. Distinguished Membership is the highest honor ASCE can bestow. Millar has served as secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation since his appointment by Gov. Jay Inslee in 2016.

Mark Scharf (Grad ’84 CM) has won the 2024 National Playwriting Competition sponsored by Theatre Rocks! in Ennis, Texas, for his play *Winter*.

George T. Snyder (Col ’85 CM) was presented with a lifetime achievement award from the Pittsburgh chapter of the Turnaround Management Association. TMA Pittsburgh is a group of professionals dedicated to the local corporate renewal, restructuring and turnaround management community.

Patricia A. Steenberg Leonard (Col ’88 CM) has been elected to the executive committee of the board of directors for the Armory Art Center in West Palm Beach, Florida. The Armory Art Center provides art classes for artists of all ages and abilities and is a premier space for exhibitions, art salons, lectures and special events. The Armory also provides healing arts programs serving military veterans, teens and young adults who have experienced trauma. Leonard has served on the board since 2021.

Tresa Chambers (Col ’89 CM) has launched Mawu Greetings, a line of culturally inclusive greeting cards and stationery derived from her vision to live in a world where there are no more starving artists. She is especially focused on elevating the personal and collective economies of Black and Brown artists. Mawu Greetings will feature their designs and will provide a chance for customers to learn more about the artists by producing and hosting virtual and in-person events to help them connect more deeply with the artists’ brands and works.

’90s

Sean McGee (Darden ’90) has been named to the 2024 Forbes Best-in-State Wealth Advisors list. McGee is a senior vice president and wealth management adviser with Merrill Lynch Wealth Management in Yardley, Pennsylvania. He is a chartered financial analyst, certified financial planner and certified plan fidu-









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A breathtakingly beautiful 86-acre Keswick area farm nestled up against the Southwest Mountains. The well-proportioned residence and accompanying outbuildings are sited to take in views in every direction. The home was thoughtfully renovated in 2001, retaining its original character including floor-to-ceiling wormy chestnut paneling in the study. There is a guest cottage, small stable, gym on the property as well as impeccably maintained fields, and fencing. Not under conservation easement but surrounded by protected land.

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PETER A. WILEY | 434 422 2090

SPRING HILL

$1,795,000 | MLS 630710

Beautiful 207+ acre farm in a protected enclave of Madison County with incredible views of both the Blue Ridge and Southwest Mountains. The natural beauty and privacy are unparalleled. An attractive farmhouse with a c. 1804 section is perfect as a weekend getaway or guesthouse leaving numerous incredible building sites for a main residence. Additional improvements include a large pond with dock, pool, manager's cottage, a center aisle stable with 8, 12 x 12 stalls and finished office space above, garage and good farm buildings and farm infrastructure An excellent candidate for conservation easement.

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GREENVILLE

$6,995,000 | MLS 650903

One of the State's finest examples of Classical Revival architecture, sited on 716-acres of rolling, highly productive cropland with long frontage on the Rapidan River. The home is instantly recognizable with its 4 massive Doric columns and "M" shaped copper roof. Built in 1854, the residence was meticulously restored by Alexander Nicholson to its present condition. The river and its lowlands offer endless recreation including some of the area's best duck hunting. Additional improvements include a restored, period summer kitchen, conservatory, pool and pool house, stables, numerous cottages, and farm infrastructure.

JUSTIN H. WILEY | 434 981 5528 | PETER A. WILEY | 434 422 2090

ciary advisor. McGee has been named to the Forbes list every year since 2018. He lives in Flemington, New Jersey.

Lois Waybill Alderfer (Nurs '90, '91) received the Founder's Award from the Virginia Council of Nurse Practitioners. The award honors a member who has founded, pioneered or made significant historical contributions to the shaping of the organization. Alderfer is a family nurse practitioner who has practiced at the Blue Ridge Medical Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center, since 1991. For the past seven years she has also served as chief medical officer.

The Rev. Jon Paul Sydnor (Col '91 CM) has published *The Great Open Dance: A Progressive Christian Theology*. Sydnor is a professor of theology and religious studies at Emmanuel College in Boston. His book systematically reinterprets the Christian intellectual tradition through the lens of social progressivism.

Michele Bresnick Walsh (Col '92 CM) has been elected chair and CEO of the law firm Gordon Feinblatt. Walsh is the first woman to occupy this role in the firm's 71-year history. She began as an associate at Gordon Feinblatt in 1997 as a business and securities lawyer. She currently chairs the firm's business and securities practice groups, serves on its executive committee, and chairs its Finance Committee and Talent Acquisition Committee.

Richard E. McDorman (Col '94, Educ '24 CM) was awarded the degree of education specialist (Ed.S.) in curriculum and instruction with a specialization in English as a second language from the UVA School of Education and Human Development on May 19, almost 30 years to the day after his first degree from UVA, a bachelor's in linguistics with highest distinction. The Ed.S. is McDorman's fourth academic degree. He serves as the chief academic officer of Language On Schools, a position he has held since 2016. He also works as a specialized contractor for the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation and is an independent translator for Spanish into English. He has lived in Miami since 1999.

Nayna Agrawal (Col '98) received a commission from the Bechdel Project in New York for her play *Brad Pitt's My Bitch*. Her play *Slut* will be produced this October in Arkansas.

Ginny Bowen Olson (Col '98) has published her first book, *Strategic Marketing for Nonprofits*. The book, filled with tips and tricks to implement marketing strategy and increase brand awareness, is based on her role as adjunct professor of marketing for nonprofits in the Master of Public Affairs program at UNC Greensboro for over a decade and from working with organizations in the civil society sector. Olson is president and founder of Brand Elements Coaching.

Lori Spiller (Educ '99, '20) has retired after 35 years of teaching in Hanover County, Virginia. Spiller served as a special education teacher for 14 years and as a reading specialist for the past 21 years. Her plans for retirement include a beach home and a part-time job in a library or bookstore.

'00s

Russ Petrin (Col '00 CM) has been promoted to executive director at Morgan Stanley Wealth Management and also recently attained the additional title of alternative investments director, which recognizes his team's proficiency in and commitment to investments that go beyond traditional stocks and bonds. Petrin lives in Highlands Ranch, Colorado, with his wife, Carrie, and 12-year-old-son, Sam.

Justin Humphreys (Col '01) has won a Rondo Hatton Classic Horror Award for Book of the Year for his biography *George Pal: Man of Tomorrow*. Humphreys also published *LIFE Hollywood*, a two-volume coffee table book set of classic Hollywood photos from the archives of *Life* magazine with captions and linking essays by Humphreys.

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Class Notes

Sara Shukla (Col '02, Educ '06) has published her debut novel, *Pink Whales*, a story about marriage, secrets, escape and deceptively tidy little lives. It explores the complexities of a marriage amid change, modern parenting and the desire to fit in—no matter how old you are and, sometimes, no matter the cost.

Cynthia Cook (Col '04) was promoted to head of portfolio management for United Educators insurance. Cook will oversee execution of strategic corporate initiatives, driving key projects, establishing governance and reporting frameworks, and ensuring organizational alignment. Cook joined UE in 2013 and most recently served as associate vice president of risk management. Before joining UE, she worked at the American College of Cardiology, the Heart Rhythm Society and the National Automobile Dealers Association.

Sabrina du Pont-Langenegger (Col '04 CM) has founded Good Friends of the First State, a nonprofit all-woman organization whose mission is to inspire hope and provide financial stability to struggling women and girls in Delaware, her home state. Good Friends provides one-time limited financial assistance. Women are referred through social workers and health care professionals. The organization helps with needs such as housing, transportation, medical expenses, utilities and child care. Classmate **Vera Gerrity (Col '04, Law '08 CM)** serves on the board of directors.

Becky Krystal (Col '05) has been named recipes editor at *The Washington Post*. Krystal has worked at *The Post* since 2007 and recently completed a six-year stint as a staff writer and recipe developer. She has also worked for the TV Week, Sunday Source and travel sections.

Ben Rosenthal (Com '05 CM) has been named an Entrepreneur of the Year 2024 Southwest Award winner by Ernst & Young. Rosenthal is co-president and CEO of Standard Meat Co. in Fort Worth, Texas. Entrepreneur of the Year is a competitive awards program for entrepreneurs and leaders of high-growth companies.

Ashleigh J. Owens (Col '06 CM) was named chief assistant district attorney of Richmond County, New York (Staten Island). She is the first woman to hold the position.

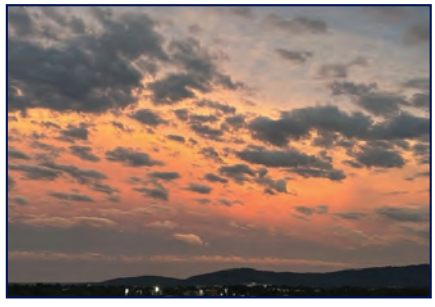
Natalie Morris (Col '08, Law '12 CM) and her husband, Christopher Hanway, welcomed identical twin girls, Kathryn and Clara Hanway, to the world on June 30, 2023. The family (including two greyhounds) lives in Alexandria, Virginia.

'10s

Frank Garmon Jr. (Grad '10, '17) has published *A Wonderful Career in Crime: Charles Cowlam's Masquerades in the Civil War Era and Gilded Age*, a book uncovering the shadow world of one of America's most enigmatic and cunning criminals. Cowlam is the only person



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known to have received pardons from both Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis. He possessed an extraordinary ability to blend into new surroundings and spent much of his life on the move, changing his name almost as frequently as he changed his story. Garmon is an assistant professor of American studies at Christopher Newport University.

Susan Shapiro (Col '10 CM) and husband **Zach Shapiro (Engr '09 CM)** welcomed their second child and first baby girl, Selma Finette, on March 28, 2024, in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Hannah Holtzman (Grad '11, '13, '18) has published *Through a Nuclear Lens: France, Japan, and Cinema from Hiroshima to Fukushima* (SUNY Press, 2024), a book that examines the increasingly reciprocal nature of Franco-Japanese cultural exchange through films that center on nuclear issues. In a study that includes formal and theoretical analysis, archival research, and interviews, Holtzman shows the emergence of a new kind of nuclear film, one that attends to the everyday effects of nuclear disaster and its impact on our experience of space and time.

Kaitlyn Badlato (Arch '13 CM) and Oscar Granberry Adams IV were engaged March 16, 2024, at Maine Maritime Academy, Adams' alma mater. Badlato is the daughter of **Julie Kruger-Badlato (Com '82 CM)**. Adams is the son of **Nancy Bizier Adams (Col '78 CM)**. They met in 2022 and live in Arlington, Virginia. Badlato works as a medical planner and architect at HKS Architects, and Adams works as a management consultant in Deloitte's government and public sector practice.

'20s

Kamran Kowsari (Engr '20) and **Masoud Bashiri (Engr '20)** have founded UniversityCube, a social network for students and faculty designed to prioritize educational content and foster a supportive environment conducive to learning and scholarly engagement. UniversityCube is a space for academic peers to connect, collaborate and share knowledge. It aims to bridge gaps in academic connectivity and empower users to make informed decisions about their education.

Emma Radcliff (Col '22) will be pursuing a master of philosophy degree in Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic at the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom starting in October. She recently completed a working gap year in Iceland, which included singing as a member of the Reykjavik choir Söngsveitin Fílharmónía. She spent the summer as a program assistant at the Ravinia Steans Music Institute in Highland, Illinois, North America's longest-running not-for-profit music festival.





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In Memoriam

'40s

Nell P. Wright (Nurs '44) of Raleigh, North Carolina, died June 13, 2023. She earned her nursing degree at UVA. After graduation, she served in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps as a second lieutenant stationed at locations including Fort Rucker, Camp Butner and Fort Benning. After World War II ended, she worked at Richmond Psychiatric Hospital before leaving the nursing field to take care of her family. She later returned to nursing, working at Virginia Tech Student Health (now known as Schiffert Health Center). In 2011, she participated in the Flight of Honor program, which flew World War II veterans to Washington, D.C., to view the newly erected memorial for their service. She loved volunteering—leading groups like Newcomers and Go-Getters—and had a keen interest in helping wounded veterans. She loved to read, discuss books and play dominos with her neighbors. She was known as a great Southern cook, famous for her pork tenderloin and her gravy and biscuit breakfast. Survivors include two children, three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

'50s

Ralph H. Harrison Jr. (Engr '55 CM) of Earlysville, Virginia, died June 30, 2023. He earned his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering at UVA, where he was a member of the Naval ROTC program. After graduation, he was commissioned as an ensign in the U.S. Navy, earned his wings as a naval aviator and served in the U. S. Naval Reserve. He retired as a captain after 30 years. In civilian life, he worked in the defense industry, representing defense contractors in their contracting efforts with the Pentagon. In his leisure time, he was an avid golfer, playing well into his 80s. He was also an active member of the National Aviation Club in Crystal City, where he enjoyed swapping stories with fellow aviators. He was predeceased by his wife of 62 years, Betsy. Survivors include his daughter and his son, **Ralph H. Harrison III (Com '83 CM)**.

Benjamin Altschul (Com '56) of Hamilton, New Jersey, died May 6, 2024. He earned his bachelor's degree from UVA's McIntire School of Commerce, where he was a member of Zeta Beta Tau fraternity and the ROTC program. Upon graduation, he was commissioned in the U.S. Army as a first lieutenant. He left the Reserves as a captain. For several years after his military service, he worked at Stern's department store in New York City before returning to his native Norfolk to join his father and uncle in the management of Altschul's department store. He later became interested in real estate development and management and established Ben Altschul Realtor. During this time, he was a member of the Norfolk Board of Realtors. He loved sailing on the Chesapeake Bay, exploring the Blue Ridge Mountains, taking long walks at the Norfolk Botanical Garden and hosting dinner parties. Survivors include his wife of 47 years, Candace; and several cousins, nieces and nephews.

Howard E. Gill Jr. (Col '56 CM) of Virginia Beach, Virginia, died Feb. 13, 2024. He earned his bachelor's in religious studies from UVA, where he was a Lawn resident and a member of Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity, the IMP Society, *Corks & Curls*, T.I.L.K.A. and the P.K. Society. He also served as chairman of the Honor Committee his fourth year. After graduating, he joined the U.S. Navy. He was deployed on the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt and retired as a lieutenant colonel in the Navy Reserves. Following his military service, he joined the Thomas Rutherfoord Insurance Agency. He spent his career in the commercial insurance industry until retiring from HRH Insurance in 1998. He specialized in providing coverage for construction companies and was active in many professional organizations, including Associated General Contractors of Virginia and Builders and Contractors Exchange. His community involvement included serving as chairman of the Norfolk YMCA and a board member of the Barrier Islands Center. He loved the outdoors, especially the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Survivors include three sons, including **John A. Gill (Col '85 CM)**; sister-in-law **Susan Harris Gill (Educ '87 CM)**; 16 grandchildren, including **Greer Gill (Col '22, Com '23)**; and four great-grandchildren.

Robert S. "Bob" Bersch (Com '57, Law '60 CM) of Roanoke, Virginia, died March 28, 2024. He earned bachelor's degrees in both accounting and law from UVA, where he was a member of Theta Delta Chi fraternity, the marching band and the glee club. He also earned a

Intellectual history, taught with a Brooklyn sensibility



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Joseph Francis Kett, co-author of *The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*, whose wide-ranging intellect and barbed Brooklyn patter captivated decades of students in some of the history department's toughest classes, died in April at 86.

"He was the funniest person on Grounds," says retired history professor and close friend Michael F. Holt. At the department's faculty-vs.-grad-student softball games, "Joe always pitched because he could needle the batters while he was pitching to them."

Kett launched generations of graduate students into prominent teaching careers and held undergraduates in his thrall through his signature course, American Intellectual & Cultural History. In 1995, just past the midpoint of his 47 years at the University of Virginia, he received one of its highest honors, the Alumni Association Distinguished Professor Award.

The exacting standards of his classroom reflected the rigor of his Jesuit education, first at Brooklyn Preparatory School and then the College of the Holy Cross. Kett went on to Harvard University for master's (1960) and doctoral (1964) degrees.

His widow, Eleanor Kett, remembers picking him up at the airport after his UVA job interview in March 1966, when Joe was a Harvard instructor during their first year of marriage. She navigated another Boston snowstorm to get him, then listened as he told her about the springtime beauty of the Grounds he had just seen. They packed up and moved in time for his September 1 start.

Kett's scholarship swept in grand concepts across long arcs of American history. His first book presented a history of how the American medical profession took form. Next came histories of adolescence in America, of adult education and, most abstract of all, of the American notion of merit. "He wrote books on things that weren't topics until he wrote books on them," Holt says. "He got these things that seemed very elusive … and historicized them."

More mainstream was his collaboration with UVA colleagues E.D. Hirsch Jr. of the English department and physicist James Trefil. In 1987, Hirsch published the *New York Times* bestseller *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*. It included an appendix the three professors compiled, listing some 5,000 important events, personages and concepts. The next year, with Kett and Trefil elevated to Hirsch's co-authors, the three spun off *The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*, which in subsequent editions grew to 672 pages.

The hard work took place over Friday lunches on the Corner at an upstairs Mexican restaurant. Hirsch rode point on the humanities, Trefil the natural sciences and Kett the social sciences. "We were such regulars that when we showed up they would bring out our glasses of wine before we ordered anything," Trefil says.

Hirsch served as group leader, Kett as reality check. "He was kind of a solid anchor, the common-sense guy," Trefil says. "Joe is a real no-bulls--t kind of guy."

His students learned to appreciate that about him too. An anonymous course evaluation from 2007 described Kett as "hilarious … eager to chat with us all after class … fascinating and brilliant. … I'd recommend him in a heartbeat." The student added, "TOUGH paper grader though: I quote, 'Good paper, but your prose needs a diet. C+.'"

In addition to Eleanor, his wife of 58 years, survivors include daughter Jennifer Kett; son **John Kett (Col '92, Arch '98)**; and five grandchildren, among them **Hannah Kett (Col '22)**. ***—Richard Gard***

master's degree in law and taxation from the College of William & Mary. He practiced law in Washington, D.C., for several years before joining the Roanoke law firm of Eggleston, Holton, Butler and Glenn as its first tax partner in 1970. In 1978 he formed his own firm, Robert S. Bersch Law Offices, which later became Bersch, Rhodes and Butler. He founded the Bersch Law Firm in 2005 and later started a new division of that firm, Wills on Wheels. He retired in 2020 after 60 years of practice. He was an accredited estate planner through the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils, a fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel, and a past president of the Roanoke Valley Estate Planning Council. His hobbies included vocal and instrumental music, travel, tennis, baseball, and all UVA sports. He played drums in the Roanoke Valley Community Band and sang in local choirs. Survivors include his wife, Martha.

Charles Leon Gaudry Jr. (Col '58, Med '62, Fellow '68 CM) of Jacksonville, Florida, died Feb. 4, 2024. He served in the U.S. Navy for two decades, retiring with the rank of captain. He earned his bachelor's degree in biology and his medical degree at UVA, where he also completed his medical fellowship in pediatric hematology and oncology. He was a dedicated athlete, lettering in four sports at UVA, serving as captain of the wrestling team and becoming an Atlantic Coast Conference champion in wrestling his senior year. He was the president of his graduating class of 1958, as well as a member of Zeta Psi fraternity, Skull and Keys, the P.K. Society, T.I.L.K.A., The 13 Society and the Z Society. After his medical training, he became a physician in the Navy specializing in pediatric hematology and oncology and family practice medicine. His Navy career included postings in Maryland, Texas, Florida and California. Among his professional achievements were appointments as the chairman of the Department of Family Practice and director of the Residency Program at the U.S. Naval Hospital. After his retirement from the Navy, he became chairman of the Department of Family Practice at University Medical Center and chief of the Hematology Division of the Department of Pediatrics of the University of Florida Health Science Center. He enjoyed sailing, bird-watching, running, tennis, hiking and kayaking. Survivors include his wife, Dodie; two children, including **Justin Gaudry (Col '91)**; three siblings; and four grandchildren.

Malcolm "Mac" Gwynne Jones Jr. (Engr '59 CM) of Waynesboro, Virginia, died May 7, 2024. He received his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from UVA, where he was a member of the football team and treasurer and president of Chi Psi fraternity. He also served on the Student Council and the Fraternity Alumni Council. After UVA, he worked for the E.I. DuPont Co. in Parlin, New Jersey, before returning to his native Waynesboro to pursue a career in real estate and development. He purchased the Barnwell Insurance Agency from his uncle, Warren Barnwell, and added real estate services to form Barnwell & Jones, where he remained the president and owner until his retirement in 2013. During his career he primarily focused on commercial development. He sat on many advisory committees and boards of local businesses and nonprofits. He was a founder of the local chapter of the Junior Achievement program, as well as the Fall Foliage Festival. He served as the chair of the Long-Range Planning Committee of Waynesboro Community Hospital. He enjoyed attending UVA football and basketball games with his family and spending summer vacations in Hilton Head Island. Survivors include his wife, Judith; three children, including **Allison Kent (Jones) Evanow (Col '86 CM)**; son-in-law **William (Bill) Arthur Evanow (Com '83 CM)**; and four grandchildren.

Sherwin Klein (Grad '59, '81) of Oakton, Virginia (formerly of Hillsdale, New Jersey), died June 10, 2024. He earned his bachelor's degree in philosophy from Brooklyn College and his master's and doctoral degrees in philosophy from UVA. He was a professor emeritus of philosophy and business ethics at Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey. During his career, he published three books and many articles on philosophical topics, including the books *Ethical Business Leadership: Balancing Theory and Practice* and *Business Ethics: Reflections from a Platonic Point of View*. He enjoyed spending quality time with his family, snorkeling in Hawaii and the Caribbean, watching baseball, and listening to Bach. Survivors include two children, including **Charles Klein (Col '92 CM)**; and four grandchildren.

'60s

William Joseph Allen Jr. (Com '60 CM) of Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, died April 10, 2024. He earned his bachelor's degree from UVA's McIntire School of Commerce, where he was a member of the Delta Sigma Pi professional business fraternity. He served in the U.S. Air Force as a pilot, with tours of duty in both Japan and Korea. After his military service, he became an investment adviser with Blythe & Co. After learning the business, he settled in Raleigh, North Carolina. He cemented a career as a certified financial planner, working for Reynolds, EF Hutton, Paine Webber and UBS. His love of aviation eventually led him to purchase a P-51 Mustang, which he taught himself to fly. Survivors include his wife of 63 years, Sherrod; two children, including **William J. Allen III (Col '85 CM)**; a sister; and four grandchildren.

Harold Collier (Com '60 CM) of Lee's Summit, Missouri, died June 5, 2024. He earned his bachelor's

Calm amid the storming of Carr's Hill



DAN ADDISON

James Randolph Roebuck Jr. (Grad '69, '77), the University of Virginia Student Council's first Black president, who helped moderate the antiwar turmoil of May Days 1970 and went on to a 35-year career in the Pennsylvania legislature, died in May. He was 79.

The last Student Council president selected by the other representatives—he passed reforms that opened the office to direct student elections—Roebuck headed student government for just one semester. But not just any semester.

Rising fervor on college campuses against the Vietnam War boiled over on May 4, 1970, when Ohio National Guardsmen opened deadly fire on unarmed Kent State University protestors. At UVA the next day, the Student Council endorsed calls for a student strike. Roebuck cast the tie-breaking vote.

In an iconic moment on the steps of then-Alderman Library, he presented President Edgar F. Shannon Jr. with strike ultimatums. A Ph.D. candidate studying diplomacy, Roebuck recited them with trademark calm and in the reassuring style of a moribund tradition, coat and tie.

The week's events, known as May Days, continually thrust the two presidents together. They led the Old Cabell Hall memorial service for Kent State's fallen. When the Chicago Seven's Jerry Rubin and lawyer William Kunstler incited a University Hall crowd to storm Carr's Hill, Roebuck raced ahead and huddled with Shannon inside the residence. After Shannon's career-defining speech denouncing the war, in which he urged students to sign a letter to Virginia's U.S. senators, Roebuck headed the delegation that delivered it to them.

"We didn't always agree," Shannon said later, "but we had confidence in each other as human beings."

"Both of them were under tremendous pressure in different ways," says **Kevin Mannix (Col '71, Law '74)**, Roebuck's vice president and self-described wingman that night. "I always saw Jim Roebuck as someone who was trying real hard to fulfill his role as a Student Council president but also be a reasonable participant in the process."

Arthur H. "Bud" Ogle (Grad '71), the more confrontational predecessor student president, remembers the personal strain Roebuck endured: "He was a very gentle person who did not like to have fights."

The Philadelphia native did his undergraduate work at the historically Black Virginia Union University, where he also served as Student Council president. Roebuck's first taste of activism came freshman year. In an oral history, he told of how Virginia Union students in 1963 crowded ticket lines at whites-only Richmond movie theaters. Knowing they would be refused, they ensured that the businesses' favored patrons experienced some frustration in the queues themselves.

Roebuck earned his doctorate in history in 1977 and taught at Drexel University for six years. When Drexel denied him tenure, he contested it in the federal courts, then moved on to focus on politics.

In 1985, Roebuck won a special election to the Pennsylvania General Assembly, where he later became the Democratic Party chair of the Education Committee and longtime leader of the Black Caucus. As at UVA, he earned a reputation for seeking consensus. In 2020, Roebuck, then 75, lost to a much younger, more liberal primary challenger.

In the oral history, recorded in 1994, Roebuck reflected on his time at UVA, when calls for integration, coeducation and opposing the Vietnam War all converged. "I would like to believe I was … part of a group of individuals … who were committed to making change at Virginia," he said. "We tried to help the University see that those things were right to do." ***—Richard Gard***

degree in commerce from UVA, where he was a member of the glee club. During his college years, he was drafted and served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps, stationed in Verona, Italy. He embarked on a 38-year telecommunications career, working in management at Centel and Frontier Communications. His work took him to various locations, including Virginia, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois and Minnesota. He served as president of the Virginia Telephone and Telegraph Association. In retirement, he enjoyed embarking on cross-country road trips and savoring his beloved homemade biscuits and gravy. Survivors include his wife of 62 years, Polly; four children; and 10 grandchildren.

Robert Gerald "Jerry" Bass (Grad '61 CM) of Lynchburg, Virginia, died May 30, 2024. He graduated from Virginia Tech and went to graduate school at UVA, earning a doctorate in organic chemistry. After a few years working at DuPont, he embarked on a 35-year career in higher education, helping to develop Virginia Commonwealth University into a top research university. He enjoyed mentoring students and took a special interest in first-generation college students. His research focused on polymer chemistry and included work in support of NASA's aerospace program. He was active in professional organizations, elected as a fellow of the American Chemical Society and as executive officer of the Virginia Academy of Science. He was awarded VCU's Distinguished Service Award in 1992, and upon his retirement from the chemistry department in 1998, he and his wife established the Gerald and Susan Bass Scholarship. He enjoyed volunteering with Meals on Wheels, cheering on the Cavaliers and traveling the globe. Survivors include his wife of 65 years, Susan; his sons **Robert C. Bass (Col '82 CM)** and **David G. Bass (Grad '90)**; his grandchildren Eleanor and **Daniel Bass (Col '21, Med '22 CM)**; and a sister.

Ben Eldridge (Col '61) of Fredericksburg, Virginia, died April 14, 2024. He earned his bachelor's degree in mathematics from UVA, where he was a member of Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity. He later attended graduate school at American University and the University of Maryland. He worked at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab before serving as chief mathematician for several companies, including Honeywell, Tetra Tech and Applied Hydro Acoustics Research. In the latter years of his career, he focused on research and algorithm development in the field of adaptive signal processing. In 1989, he won the H.W. Sweatt Award at Honeywell for outstanding creative and technical achievement in his field. He was also a legendary banjo player and a founding member of the Seldom Scene, a bluegrass band in the Washington, D.C., area. In 2014, he and the other original band members were inducted into the International Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame. He retired from the band in 2016 after a 45-year tenure. Survivors include his wife, Barbara; four children; and seven grandchildren.

Mary June Davis Dalton (Nurs '63) of Richmond, Virginia, died Dec. 19, 2023. She earned her bachelor's degree in nursing from UVA, where she was a member of Kappa Delta sorority. She went on to work as a registered nurse in the Richmond area for 45 years. Survivors include three children; son-in-law **Anthony J. Romanello (Col '92 CM)**; eight grandchildren, including **A. John Romanello Jr. (Educ '18 CM)**; and two great-granddaughters.

William Howarth (Grad '63, '67) of Princeton, New Jersey, died June 6, 2023. He earned both his master's and doctoral degrees in English at UVA. He then served for 51 years on the faculty at Princeton University, specializing in American literature of 1850 through 1950. He taught many courses on transcendentalism, Walden and Thoreau, and he supervised many theses and dissertations. He was a trustee of Princeton University Press and chairman of the Center for American Places. He reported on American literature for publications including *National Geographic*, *Smithsonian* magazine, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. Survivors include his wife, Anne; two children; and two siblings.

Hunter Neal "Chip" Conner (Col '64, Educ '65 CM) of Greensboro, North Carolina, died May 31, 2024. He attended UVA on a basketball scholarship. He excelled on the court, scoring 1,157 career points. In his fourth year he won the coveted First Team All-ACC award. He was also a member of the IMP Society and the track and cross-country teams. After earning both a bachelor's degree and a master's in education from UVA, he taught and coached basketball at Lane High School in Charlottesville. He then worked as an assistant coach at UVA for several years before becoming a head coach at the University of South Florida. In 1980, he moved back to Virginia to begin a career in real estate, selling homes until his retirement in 2015. Survivors include his wife of 60 years, Clara; three sons; two brothers; and 10 grandchildren.

Thomas M. Ammons III (Col '66, Law '69 CM) of Virginia Beach, Virginia, died March 19, 2024. While earning his undergraduate degree in political science from UVA, he served in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve for two years. He served as vice president of the student body, was a member of the Raven Society and Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity, and lived at 4 East Lawn his fourth year. He also earned a law degree at UVA and a master of laws degree from the London School of Economics at the University of London. Beginning in 1970, he practiced civil rights litigation in Mobile, Alabama, specializing

in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination in employment. He then practiced real estate law in Virginia Beach and, in 1989, was appointed by the General Assembly to serve as a judge on the Virginia Beach General District Court. He remained on the court until retiring in 2005, serving as chief judge for five years of his tenure. He loved animals, especially dogs and horses. He served as a board member of the Virginia Beach SPCA for over 20 years. In 2016, the Norfolk SPCA created the Thomas M. Ammons III Award for contributions to animal welfare. In 2005, he volunteered at an animal shelter in Gulfport, Mississippi, that had been heavily damaged by Hurricane Katrina. He became certified in disaster animal rescue by the Humane Society and in horse rescue by Virginia Tech.

Richard K. "Dick" DeScherer (Col '66 CM) of New York City died March 23, 2024. After earning his bachelor's degree in government from UVA, he received a law degree from Georgetown University and a master of laws in legal taxation from NYU Law School. During his legal career, he helped guide the establishment and growth of Bloomberg L.P. and mentored many young lawyers in the process. In addition to serving as personal lawyer to Michael Bloomberg for many years—including during his three terms as New York City mayor—he was a member of Bloomberg's board of directors for nearly four decades. He was also senior partner at Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP, where he also served as co-chairman, for more than two decades. He served on the boards of the S.L.E. Lupus Foundation, Lincoln Center, Baryshnikov Arts and the National Dance Institute. He also served on the Governing Council of the Miller Center at UVA. Survivors include his wife, Jennie; his children **Christopher K. DeScherer (Col '93 CM)** and **Kate Anne DeScherer (Col '00)**; and five grandchildren.

Carolyn Andrews Isaacs (Nurs '66) of Fort Wayne, Indiana, died March 13, 2024. A native of Norfolk, Virginia, she knew from a young age that she wanted to be a nurse and earned her nursing degree at UVA. She started her career as a nurse in Albemarle County, Virginia, and later worked as an obstetrics nurse in Fort Wayne. She was passionate about childbirth and helped many women through challenging pregnancies, including as a Lamaze instructor. She also pursued many creative and artistic talents, including oil painting, flower arranging, gardening, scrapbooking, card-making and quilting. She was known for her beautiful, colorful quilts that she gave to loved ones and people in need. Survivors include her husband of 58 years, **James Chisholm Isaacs Jr. (Engr '64, '67, '70 CM)**; five children; and two grandchildren.

John Holloway Newman (Law '69 CM) of Naples, Florida, died April 27, 2024. He was a U.S. Army veteran. He earned a bachelor's degree in government from Centre College, followed by his law degree at UVA. He joined the New York City Wall Street law firm of Brown & Wood (later Sidley Austin), where he had a distinguished career in the corporate and securities department. He retired from Sidley Austin in 2015. He was appointed to the board of trustees of Centre College in 1990 and was proud to serve as a member of the board until 2021. From 2002 through 2016, he was vice chairman of the board of directors for the Center for Family Representation, which provides legal and social services to families in the New York City boroughs of Manhattan and Queens. Survivors include two children, a brother and a sister.

'70s

Peter Hufford Lowry (Law '72) of Camden, Maine, and formerly of Cincinnati, died April 17, 2024. He was a veteran of both the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Army. He earned his undergraduate degree from Harvard before spending four years in active duty with the Marine Corps, with one year in Vietnam. He received his law degree from UVA and worked as a lawyer in Washington, D.C. At age 38, he switched careers, attending medical school and reentering military service as an Army physician. He commanded a clinic in South Korea and was chief of primary care at the Army hospital in Fort Eustis, Virginia. In 1993 he took a position in the occupational medicine department at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, remaining there until 2001. After a few more active-duty assignments, he was a staff physician at the U.S. Army hospital at Fort Knox, Kentucky, until his retirement in 2013. He spent most of his retirement in Maine, working on an old family farmhouse and enjoying his children and grandchildren. Survivors include his wife, Ruth; four children; and three grandchildren.

Col. Gerald "Jerry" Huml (Educ '73) of Blacksburg, Virginia, died May 11, 2024. He graduated from Cornell College in Iowa in 1961 with a bachelor's in physical education and was immediately commissioned into the U.S. Marine Corps. He served in locations including Vietnam, Okinawa and Berlin. He received major medals for his service, including the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star. He earned his master's degree in education from UVA in 1973 and served as UVA's Marine Corps ROTC instructor for three years. After retiring from the Marines in 1990, he served as the Marine Junior ROTC instructor at Highland Springs High School in Highland Springs, Virginia, for five years. He enjoyed playing sports, fishing and spending time at the beach in Emerald Isle, North Carolina. Survivors include his wife of 61 years, Ann; three children, including **Dina Hyde (Col '85 CM)**; son-in-law **David Hyde (Engr '84 CM)**;

five grandchildren; and a great-granddaughter.

Gerald Randall "Randy" Bonney Jr. (Col '76) of McLean, Virginia, died April 18, 2024. He received his bachelor's degree in economics from UVA and his master's degree in business administration from the University of Chicago. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and a certified public accountant. He took great pride in his work, holding financial and treasury management positions at MCI and Intelsat. Most recently, he was employed at American Systems as corporate finance and risk manager. He was a voracious reader, an avid music lover (a lifelong Deadhead), and a dedicated father to his daughters and his two West Highland terriers. His favorite vacations included visiting Notre Dame in Paris and listening to live jazz in New Orleans. Survivors include his wife, Carol; two daughters; and three brothers.

'80s

James Dower "Jim" Comerford (Col '81 CM) of Atlanta died April 21, 2024. He earned his bachelor's degree in history and government at UVA, where he was a member of Kappa Sigma fraternity; a Student Council representative; and a guest pundit for student weekly *The Declaration*, where he famously predicted the 1980 Reagan landslide state-by-state. He counted professors Boots Mead and Irby Cauthen as mentors and Larry Sabato as a lifelong friend. After earning his law degree from the University of Georgia, he began his career with a small law firm in Marietta, Georgia, and went on to practice in some of the Southeast's leading firms, specializing in government affairs. He left the practice to establish his own group of investment partnerships and business ventures. He maintained a lifelong connection to UVA and was an early supporter and long-serving board member of Sabato's Center for Politics. He donated most of his prized collection of political memorabilia to the center, which will be naming its new library in his honor. He knew the full story behind every political pamphlet, button, sticker and poster. He also served on the Atlanta selection board for the Jefferson Scholars Foundation. Other passions included his Irish heritage and his home state of Georgia. Survivors include his wife of 36 years, Camilla; three children; and a granddaughter.

William T. Fansher (Col '83) of Chesterfield, Virginia, died Aug. 7, 2023. He was the valedictorian of his 1972 Norfolk Catholic High School class. He earned his bachelor's degree in German language and literature from UVA. A native of Norfolk, Virginia, he had a long and meaningful career working for Virginia National Bank. He maintained a lifelong love of the University and found great joy in being an intensely loyal and knowledgeable fan of all UVA men's and women's sports. He was known for his fierce loyalty to his friends and his love for his pets. Survivors include four siblings and several nieces and nephews.

'90s

Eddie Jerome Robertson (Col '95) of Charlotte, North Carolina, died Feb. 16, 2024. While earning his bachelor's degree in psychology at UVA, he was a member of the football team. He was an accomplished sales executive, spending years working at Aerotek, Dun & Bradstreet, AFCO and Redi Carpet. He enjoyed attending his daughters' basketball and volleyball games and grilling in his backyard. Survivors include his wife, Brandi; two daughters; his father; two brothers; four sisters; and a host of other family and friends.

'10s

Natalie Marie Shea (Col '18 CM) of Virginia Beach, Virginia, died Sep. 28, 2020. At UVA, she pursued her interest in anthropology, but also developed an affinity for Russian language and history. She graduated magna cum laude with a double major in anthropology and Slavic culture and language. Her dedication and academic achievements resulted in her induction into the prestigious Phi Beta Kappa honor society. She loved travel, and her adventures included two solo trips to Central and Eastern Europe. That love of travel also led her to a job organizing study-abroad programs for universities and businesses at WorldStrides. She enjoyed cooking and was a lover of international foods—the hotter and spicier the better. She was a self-taught baker, could pickle anything, and made a great Thanksgiving sweet potato casserole. Survivors include her parents, Jennifer and **John Shea (Engr '88)**; siblings **Jack Shea (Engr '20 CM)** and Lucy; her grandparents; and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

'20s

Elijah Berlin Witt (Engr '26) of Crozet, Virginia, passed away May 15, 2024. He had recently completed his second year at UVA, where he was pursuing his bachelor's degree in computer engineering. He was a Jefferson Scholar and a Rodman Scholar as well as a resident adviser. He'd recently been selected as a UVA summer orientation leader. He worked as an engineering teaching assistant and a mathematics instructor at the M-Cubed Summer Math Academy facilitated by the 100 Black Men of Central Virginia. In addition to his passion for engineering, he also loved astronomy and could often be found peering up at the night sky with his high-powered telescopes. He was known for his eagerness to both teach and learn. Survivors include his parents, Andrea and Howard; two siblings; four grandparents; and many aunts, uncles and cousins.



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Retrospect

ALEXANDER G. "SANDY" GILLIAM JR. | *MAY 4, 1933–JUNE 8, 2024*

TINKER, TALE-TELLER, SOLDIER, SEVEN

BY RICHARD GARD



The black, cloth Seven Society banner on display in the church vestibule looked remarkably good for its age, only a little rumpled, and, oh, the stories it could tell. Those qualities made the tribute all the more fitting for the person being remembered in the sanctuary just beyond, **Alexander G. "Sandy" Gilliam Jr. (Col '55)**, who died June 8 at age 91.

He was a man of many talents and job titles, who always seemed to find himself near the seat of power. He was the Board of Visitors whisperer, the body's secretary for 18 years. He served as special assistant to a decades-long succession of University of Virginia presidents. In a prior life, he served as an aide to overseas ambassadors, to the U.S. secretary of state and to a Virginia governor.

It was Gilliam who deftly maneuvered Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip through their paces when they came for lunch in a newly restored Rotunda in 1976. He arranged for butcher paper to cover the dome's oculus, lest the midday sunbeam cause Her Majesty to squint. Gilliam had spent weeks with a stopwatch rehearsing every beat of the royal visit and then, after a job well done, clocked 20 minutes in a cold shower with a whiskey and soda.

"He was Mr. Protocol. You always go to Sandy," says **Gordon C. Burris (Educ '67)**, who worked with Gilliam over the years in his own variety of UVA roles with athletics, the Alumni Association and fundraising. "The whole thing with Sandy was his instinct for the University of Virginia."

It was in his blood. "Gilliams have been coming here since 1829," he said of his alumni pedigree in a 2012 oral history that encompassed multiple sessions, a medley of well-told anecdotes and a nearly 200-page transcript. Born in Baltimore and raised in Washington, D.C., Gilliam spent summers during World War II in Charlottesville visiting his maternal grandparents. He remembered as a child running up and down the circular staircases of the two-story Stanford White Rotunda Dome Room, formerly the library stacks.

He embodied the Old U and dressed the part in khakis and Bass Weejuns. Gilliam was often this publication's first call for a backgrounder on UVA history. It always repaid the investment. With

He was the Board of Visitors whisperer, special assistant to several UVA presidents and, in a prior life, member of the Foreign Service.

DAN ADDISON



The Eli Banana Fund

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uncanny accuracy and a wry Virginia drawl, he would avoid the highways and take you along the most scenic route to an answer.

Gilliam came to UVA in 1951 hoping to become a renowned physician like his father. After a close brush with organic chemistry, he converted to a history major. He thrived, and he fully immersed himself in UVA life. He became a lifelong loyal Beta Theta Pi fraternity brother, lived on the Lawn, helped edit *Corks & Curls* and joined the Jefferson Literary and Debating Society. He answered the tap of the T.I.L.K.A. ribbon society and the summons of the Sevens.

Gilliam returned to UVA for graduate work in history after two years as a conscript in the U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corps. The oral history includes a Cold War story of his reconnoitering East German bad guys from a park outside Frankfurt. With a buttoned-up trench coat concealing the .45 in his shoulder holster, he hid in the bushes, only to be found out by young lovers looking for some cover of their own amid the shrubbery.

Back on Grounds—"the Grounds," he twice corrected his oral history interlocutor, "always with a definite article"—Gilliam felt the strong pull of the social life he knew too well. "I just could never quite decide whether I was a graduate student or an undergraduate," he said. "I did all my coursework for my master's, but I didn't get the thesis written and I left."

While teaching history at St. Christopher's School in Richmond, Gilliam resolved to join the Foreign Service. He served two years in Tel Aviv, where he developed a fascination with the Mideast, and three in Chad, where he developed coping skills for the dysfunction of what he described as "a very unhappy embassy."

Stateside in the mid-1960s, he synthesized dispatches from the field into twice-daily reports for his boss, Secretary of State Dean Rusk. Gilliam capped his diplomatic career with three beloved years in Beirut.

A go-to source on UVA history, he would avoid the highways and take you along the most scenic route to an answer.

In 1971, he joined the staff of Gov. A. Linwood Holton, a progressive Republican. Gilliam managed correspondence and other incoming and rose to troubleshooting generalist. He worked alongside fellow Wahoo **Staige Davis Blackford (Col '52)**, the governor's press secretary, who returned to Charlottesville to become assistant to the UVA president. When Blackford transitioned to his legendary editorship of the *Virginia Quarterly Review*, he put Gilliam up to succeed him.

Gilliam arrived in 1975 to assist newly installed president **Frank L. Hereford Jr. (Col '43, Grad '47)**. It was for Hereford that Gilliam orchestrated the royal Rotunda visit and with whom he said he had a particularly close relationship.

He found less joy during the relatively short presidency of Hereford's successor, Robert M. O'Neil. Gilliam's firefighting included jumping in as interim dean of international studies. Later, he got a battlefield promotion to interim vice president for development.

"Geez, for how long?" he asked, recalling the response: "Well, long enough to find a real vice president."

Amid the tumult and endless impaneling of task forces, Gilliam momentarily entertained an invitation to put in for U.S. ambassador to Chad. In a cover letter accompanying his revisions to the oral history transcript, he wrote, "I am stymied on exactly how to handle the O'Neil years."

Early in the presidency of **John T. Casteen III (Col '65, Grad '66, '70)**, Gilliam's portfolio expanded to include secretary to the Board of Visitors. Throughout his board work, he tried to stay at the center of the action, not letting the position devolve to something merely administrative. He had mixed success. "During my time, it was sort of off and on, depending on the rector, depending on the situation," he said.

There was no equivocation in the standing ovation the board gave its long-serving attaché upon his retirement in 2009. As UVA spokeswoman Carol S. Wood reported at that time, "Asked to say something in response, Gilliam—who is seldom at a loss for words—replied simply: 'It's been fun.'"

And it had. "I don't think he would describe it as work," John B. Gilliam said of his father's University career. In his eulogy at St. Paul's Memorial Church on the Corner in late June, he said Sandy Gilliam practiced what he preached: "Do what you love; love what you do."

In retirement, the man of many titles took on two more: protocol officer, to oversee the visits of heads of state and other dignitaries, and history officer, to curate and write University history. He stayed busy until his health declined over the last 18 months of his life.

"I tell people that this place just doesn't seem to be as colorful as it used to be. The faculty is less eccentric than it used to be," Gilliam said at the end of his recorded memoir. To which, he said, a fraternity brother replied: "Well, I'm delighted to see that you're trying to carry on the tradition."

In addition to his son John, survivors include his wife of 51 years **Katharine Scott Gilliam (Grad '66)**, son **Alexander G. Gilliam III (Arch '97)** and five grandchildren.

Richard Gard is the editor of Virginia Magazine.

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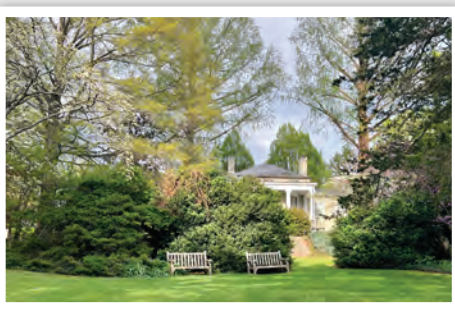
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