



Terra Firma

2014

Earth Science and Geography

Dear alums,

It's hard to believe that two years have gone by since our last issue of Terra Firma hit the web. At that time, I had just finished my first year as department chair. As of this newsletter, I'm wrapping up my final year in that role, and I want to express my thanks to my colleagues for making my life as chair so enjoyable and relatively painless. I could not imagine a more wonderfully collegial and dedicated group of teacher-scholars and supporting staff to work with, a sentiment that I am sure you alums share as you look back on your time in Ely Hall. I also want to thank you for all of your support over the last three years. From your helpful responses to our survey during the Earth Science program review in 2012, to your willingness to come back to campus and share your post-graduate experiences with our current students, to your gifts to our department in support of student research and field experiences, you have given back to our department in many ways, and your generosity inspires us to continue providing our students with the highest quality education possible!

The last two years have included a number of highlights worth sharing. We have carried on the tradition of celebrating Charles Darwin's birthday with a 4-bus fieldtrip to the American Museum of Natural History in 2013 and a screening of the sobering and important documentaries about climate change and water resource depletion *Chasing Ice* and *Chasing Water* in 2014. Several students presented posters at professional meetings, and others have been admitted to graduate school at institutions such as Rice, SUNY Buffalo, and Columbia. A number of faculty members received grants from state and federal agencies, two published new editions of textbooks, and all published papers or presented conference papers at major meetings over the last two years. One even got to accompany U.S. congressional aides to China to help our legislators better understand the changing dynamics of the global economy.

The Warthin Museum of Geology and Natural History was hopping with activity, hosting many new natural history exhibits, an evening event about the mineral quartz, and numerous school and scouting groups. Wednesday afternoon Geo-tea continued with fun events like pumpkin carving thrown in around Halloween. So too did departmental travelogues, now called "Field Notes," in which students and faculty delivered presentations about interesting excursions both across the globe and more locally. Building improvements included new furniture in the GIS lab and other classrooms, a kitchen remodel, and vintage lighting scavenged from Sanders physics that has been installed in the faculty office wing.

Perhaps the most noteworthy event of the past two years involves our alumna Elizabeth (Liz) Titus Putnam, who came to campus in September of 2013 to assist in planting 1100 trees on the Vassar Farm and Ecological Preserve. The Student Conservation Association, a non-profit organization that partners with the national parks to build trails, control invasive species, and develop educational materials, among other tasks, was the brainchild of Liz, who described her vision in the senior thesis she wrote in our department back in 1955. She and a friend went on to found the SCA, which has employed over 60 thousand students in national parks and other public lands since 1957. It was wonderful to join in the efforts to invite Liz back to campus and to hear her inspiring stories of environmental conservation.

While Liz is perhaps our most famous alum, please know that we are proud of you all and are in awe of your many accomplishments! In the coming months we will be launching some improvements to our departmental website. Chief among these will be a new set of pages giving information about what our alums have done with their Vassar degrees in Earth Science (Geology) and Geography. The idea is to help current and prospective students understand the myriad career options available to them as graduates from our department, and we hope to feature as many of you as possible. If you have not heard from us already, please feel free to send us an update about what you are doing, and we will happily feature your story on the pages. Also, as I mentioned in the last issue of Terra Firma, feel free to friend us on Facebook at Vassar College Earth Science and Geography. We love to hear from you and also use the site to post interesting geoscience news items and fieldtrip photos.



All the best from Ely Hall,

Kirsten Menking

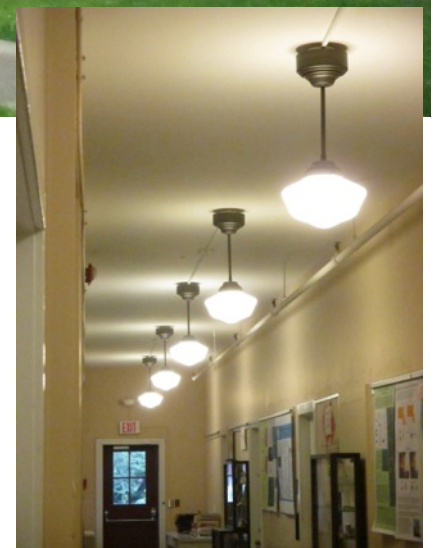
Outgoing Chair, Earth Science and Geography

ELY Hall Renovations Complete!



After three years of complete renovations to the exterior of Ely Hall, we are now completely weatherproof. New windows, new mortar, new roof, new floor in the Aula. In the winter, the building was a little *too* efficient, and we had to dial the heat back significantly!

Although the exterior is finished, we continue to make improvements and updates to the interior as well. Last summer, we refinished the furniture in Ely 204, reconfigured 202 and the kitchen, and over last Winter Break, updated the GIS lab, creating custom furniture that accommodates current computers and monitors. We are replacing lights all over the building as well, repurposing more efficient fluorescents and CFLs from renovation projects all over campus to turn over our aging lighting systems. This summer, we will have a fire-rated wall built around the back stairs to provide a safer exit for the upstairs classrooms!



Mostly.

Field Trips 2013-14

We continue to pursue learning in the field in the Earth Science & Geography Department, both locally, and thanks to the Mary Laflin Rockwell Fund, in locations farther afield.

In the Fall of 2012, Jeff Walker taught a freshman course called "Volcanoes and Civilization". During October Break, they headed West to Yellowstone National Park, and Craters of the Moon NP as well, tracing the path of the **Yellowstone Hot Spot** from Twin Falls, Idaho all the way into the park. They even got a chance to connect with Barbara O'Grady ('74, Geology) and spent a great day together looking at pyroclastic flows, fossilized redwood trees and geothermal hot springs.



Field Trips



In Spring 2013, Jill Schneiderman took her Sedimentology Class to the **Mojave Desert and Death Valley**. Staying at the Desert Studies Center in Zzyzx, California, the first days were spent in Mosaic Canyon with its marbled dolostone, looking for Cambrian fossils of trilobites and oncolites at Emigrant Pass, and seeing Depression era caves carved out of the soft rock near Shoshone. Adding to this the magnificent architecture off the Kelso Dunes, and the evaporates of the Death Valley Basin, there was no better way to see the continual process of sedimentation, evaporation and cataclysmic events that have led to the rugged landscape of the Nevada California deserts.



Field Trips

We logged thousand of miles in Vassar Vans all over New York! Mary Ann Cunningham and Lois Horst took her class to the Adirondacks for the Conservation of Resources class, Yu Zhou explored local immigrant communities in Poughkeepsie in her Economic Geography class, the Stable Isotopes class went with Stephanie Peek to Union College to work with Dave Gillikin, and Jeff Walker and Jill Schneiderman took many field trips to Hudson Valley quarries and other sites to examine local processes. We don't stay still for long here!



Class of 2013



Earth Science Theses

Jeremiah Bernau

Landscape Consequences of Pennsylvanian Natural Gas Development: Fragmentation effects of unconventional gas development upon the future of Pennsylvania's old growth forests.

Patrick S. Donohue

Fault Dating in Rosendale, New York Using Clay Polytype Quantification

Gary D. Linkevich

*Manual and landmark-based morphometric comparison of two populations of *Campeloma*, sp. across the K-Pg boundary*

Joseph Wheeler

Clay Mineralogy of the MH-2 Core, Snake River Plain, Idaho

Adriana Provenzano

From Nature Sanctuary to "National Dump": A Walk through Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument

Geography Theses 2013

Kara Conley

Whose Destiny?

The Rise and Development of Place Branding in Syracuse, New York.

Laura Green

Hollaback!: Challenging Street Harassment and Gendered Access to Public Space in New York City

Zachary Kent

Bicycle Politics in New York City: Rights to the City on Bedford Avenue and Prospect Park West

Samantha C. Loewen

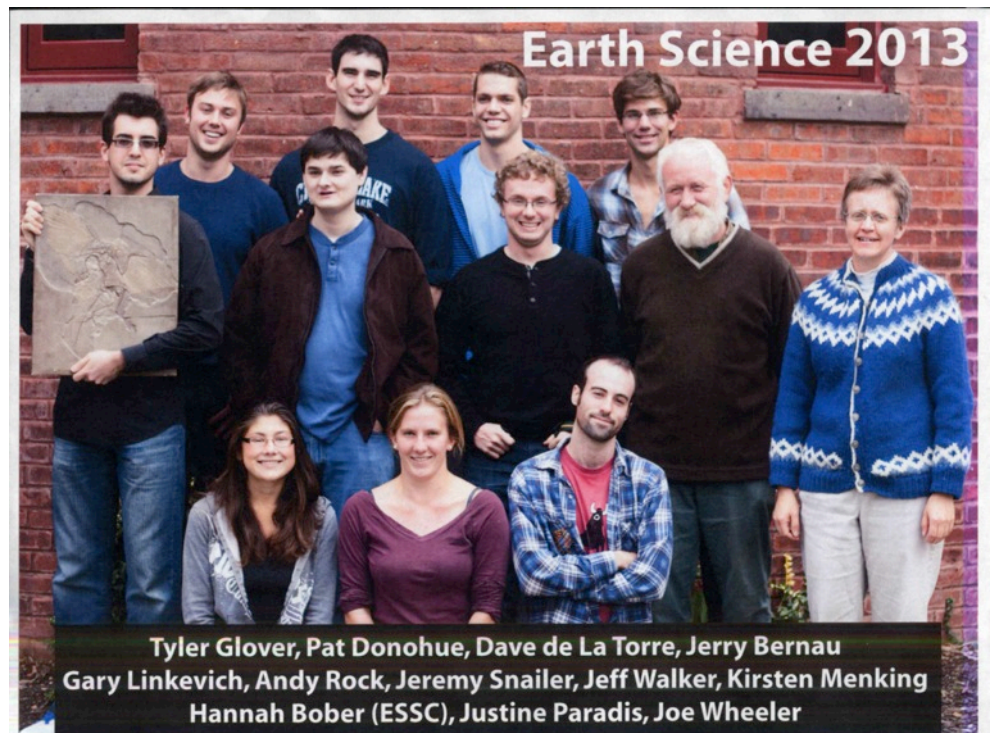
White Food, Black Spaces: Food, Privilege, and Gentrification in Crown Heights, Brooklyn

Alexandra Magill

Historical and Contemporary Modes of Racism in Baltimore, Maryland

David A. Orkin

The Poughkeepsie Farmers Market: Whiteness and the Logic of Food Access



Geography Theses 2014

Michael Kiel

Tempelhofer Feld and the Right to the City: Towards Better Democracies in Berlin

Victoria Larson

Stripping Autonomy: Coloniality and the Production of Territory vis-à-vis Canada's Exotic Dancer Visa Program

Olivia May

"They are our Prisoners:" The Gitmo Uighurs and the Making of the United States

Kaitlin Reed

We Are Salmon People: Constructing Yurok Sovereignty in the Klamath Basin

Tobiah R. Sola

Reflection, Reproduction, and Challenging at the Brooklyn Zen Center: Complexifying Cultural Capital, Gentrification, the Mindfulness Movement, and Scale

Spencer Tilger

Contesting Green Lifestyles in the Emerald City: The Urban Sustainability Fix to Capitalism and the Production of Exclusion in South Lake Union, Seattle



EARTH SCIENCE MAJORS 2014:
CHARLES WISE, MARLENA CROWELL, SARA DROTZER

Earth Science Theses 2014

Charles Wise

Crack Systems Analysis of the McCartys Flow, New Mexico, USA

Earth Science and Society

Sara M. Drotzer

LIVED EXTRACTIVE EXPERIENCES AND THE CREATION OF SACRIFICE ZONES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Faculty and Staff Notes



Mary Ann Cunningham Classes and projects continue to keep me busy and entertained, although I did make time to in recent weeks to stroll through the flowering crabapples by Sunset Lake and to catch some of the warbler migration. I continue to teach GIS and cartography classes, and I continue to be impressed at the quality and creativity of the projects students have produced. Come by some time, and you can see some of them hanging in the hallway in Ely. This past year I also taught some of my other favorite classes. Lois and I took the Conservation of Natural Resources class and trip to the Adirondacks last October Break, where we did some very nice field projects on biodiversity, invasive species, old growth forests, water quality, and other questions; this spring I got to do the Arctic Environmental Change seminar, in which we were downloading and reading IPCC climate change reports as they came out (a little breathless when they're Tuesday's reading and the IPCC delays publication until Monday!), and other late-breaking climate studies. Climate issues have been taking up increasing amounts of my extracurricular time, too. I've taken over Jeff Walker's place as faculty coordinator for the College Committee on Sustainability (a committee ably headed by Alistair Hall, '11), and in that capacity, among others, I've been trying to encourage the college to find ways to be energy efficient, sustainable, and climate smart. It's a challenge, but we're finding good will all around, and that makes it an exciting project to be involved in. Alistair is working to create an alum network of people interested in working in sustainability, so if you are interested we'd love to hear from you!

Brian Godfrey just finished a four-year term as director of Urban Studies. He sought to infuse into the program more spatial, regional, environmental, and global perspectives on the study of cities. For example, he created a new course on 'Cities of the Global South' (GEOG 252) to examine urbanization in the developing countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. His regular course on "Urban Geography: Space, Place, and Environment" (GEOG 250) now focuses primarily on American cities, and he is currently planning a new multidisciplinary seminar on "Global Ghetto: Ethnic Geography in Divided Cities." His recent scholarship has focused on urban and regional issues in Brazil, Latin America, and the Amazon. He is now revising a book chapter on ethnic geography in America, which theoretically examines ethnic place-making in New York City, Poughkeepsie, and San Francisco. He also plans to write new chapters on cultural heritage and contested memory in Rio de Janeiro, globalization and Latin American regionalism, and South American urbanization. Fortunately, he will be on leave during 2015 to complete this list of scholarly projects!



Lois Horst Wow! So much happens over two years.

I had to go back through my old calendars to refresh my memory, but we have hosted so many events, so many school kids in the museum, and just had the usual fun. In October of 2013 I once again traveled to the Adirondacks with Mary Ann's Conservation of Natural Resources class. As always, we found October to be a beautiful time of year to tour the mountains. This year we actually climbed to the observatory at the top of Whiteface Mt. (from the parking lot) instead of going up by elevator (which was out of order due to electrical maintenance work). Scouring winds, scary heights, but with breathtaking views, that was the highlight of the week for me. In January I passed my 10th anniversary as Administrative Assistant in the department, and I am into my 24th year of working at Vassar—now that's something to be proud of! Of course, it wouldn't have been as much fun if it weren't for the great people I get to work with everyday.



My interest in natural history has expanded as my husband Jeff and I have started planning for an eventual retirement to CA. I need to learn all the plants and birds for the west coast now, a daunting task but one that fills me with excitement. They have more than one species of hummingbird out there!

My largest role at the moment, though, has emerged as grandmother to five beautiful children (three of them have parents, as well as this grandma, who are Vassar grads). My family is growing and everyday I recognize how fortunate we are to be happy, healthy, and loved. May none of us ever lose sight of that! With the tragic loss of our friend and colleague, Phil Thibault, this past week, I am determined to live each day as fully as possible, and to spread around the good cheer, that always followed Phil into a room, to everyone I meet.



Rick Jones I continue to support the department as the Lab Technician, driver, graphics specialist, griller, and jack of all trades. In addition, as Collections Manager of the Warthin Museum, I have been involved heavily in the Vassar College Artifacts Project, an effort by the college to preserve Vassar's teaching collections of historical and interesting equipment and materials. In the last two years, both the Physics and Astronomy and Biology Departments have had to move their substantial collections as renovations have gotten underway, and I have had to select, catalog and find places for hundreds of objects that might otherwise have disappeared from campus. This VCAP initiative is culminating in displays, built into every new renovation project- we are in the middle of the design phase of that project which should debut with the opening of the new science building.

Otherwise, I am busy teaching my sixteen year old twins to drive, watching their school and music careers blossom, and I continue to try and get enough time to work in the studio as a visual artist.

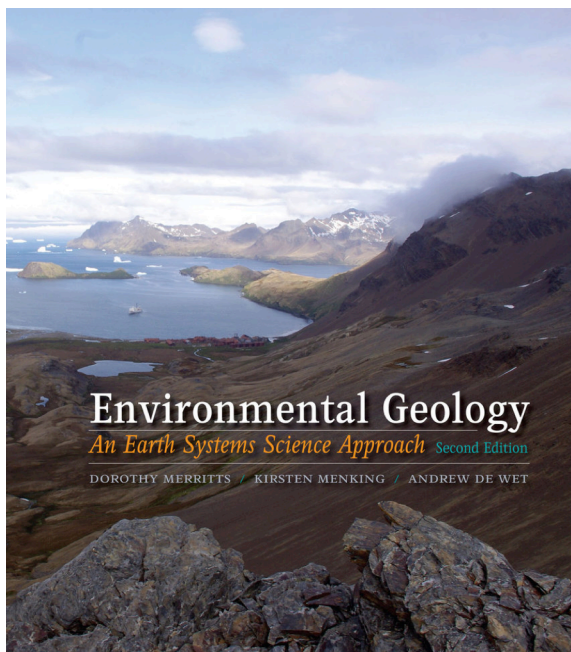


Mary Kosloski taught Paleontology and the Fossil Record, Conservation Paleobiology, and Earth History at Vassar this past year. She very much enjoyed talking about the evolution, ecology and history of different organisms (particularly snails) and introducing students to how we run fossil field trips in the Hudson Valley region (i.e., we observe fossils in outcrops directly adjacent to the Thruway). At the annual Geological Society of America meeting in Denver, CO, she co-chaired a session on predation in the fossil record. In that session, she presented research done with Vassar Student Emma Telischi on the evolution of shape in snails. Additionally, she co-published a paper on assessing predation frequency in (wait for it) snails.

This summer, Mary is informally exploring the geology of Colorado from landfills and igneous intrusions, Dinosaur National Monument via whitewater raft, to the sources and sinks of the Colorado River and more. She is excited to incorporate her experiences into her fall courses, including her freshmen writing seminar on Hot Topics in the Geosciences. She is excited to spend another year at Vassar before departing for the University of Iowa.

Brian McAdoo is still presently enjoying his leave working to help establish the new Yale-NUS College in Singapore. Perhaps one of the more enjoyable highlights was working with a group of students on post-disaster recovery in Banda Aceh, Indonesia (a three-hour flight from Singapore, vs. 3-days from New York!). Almost 10 years after the tsunami, the region is infused with an optimism that is fueling an economic boom. We were expecting to discover that the influx of massive amounts of well distributed foreign aid would be largely responsible for this new-found resurgence, however after speaking to locals in the numerous *toko kopi* (coffee shops) that have popped up since the tsunami, we learned that the end of the civil conflict between the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Indonesian government was equally responsible. This was confirmed by a trip to a prospering coffee plantation (photo) that has been doing quite well over the last 5 years. Of course this plantation is being threatened by *sawid* (palm oil) demand, which is changing land-use in SE Asia at a staggering pace.... But that is quite another story.





After five years of labor, **Kirsten Menking** "gave birth" this spring to the second edition of *Environmental Geology: An Earth Systems Science Approach*, a textbook written with colleagues at Franklin and Marshall College and published by W.H. Freeman. In a time when it is difficult to get students to read, Kirsten aimed to make this the "Harry Potter" of textbooks, so compelling they wouldn't want to put it down. Only time will tell whether she succeeded, but reviews from Jeff Walker's Earth, Environment, and Humanity class, which got a sneak preview of the text last fall, have been positive. If you're on the hunt for a new introductory textbook, please contact your Freeman rep. and have a look. While she's not in the textbook writing business for the money, it would be wonderful to make more than \$4 an hour, which is what she's presently gotten paid for the thousands of hours of work put into the book. The more people who adopt the book the better!

In other scholarly news, Kirsten published a paper in late 2012 on late Pleistocene and Holocene climate change on the Shawangunk Ridge as recorded in sediments from lakes Minnewaska and Mohonk. Several of you will recall helping out with the coring in mid-winter, and you should know that you're all mentioned in the acknowledgements section of the paper. From studying the pollen, plant macrofossils, and general sedimentology of the cores, it turns out that the region experienced a centuries long drought in the middle Holocene, which, if it were to recur in the future, would cause serious trouble for New York City's water supply.

In addition to being a major feature of Kirsten's research, water was a big theme in her teaching this year. In the fall, she taught a freshman seminar called *Water and Cities*, which explored water resource issues in rapidly urbanizing areas. Using Los Angeles, Mexico City, and New York City as case studies, the class took fieldtrips to the Old Croton aqueduct, Croton dam, and Ashokan reservoir along with trips to Poughkeepsie's first in the nation water treatment plant. In the spring, Kirsten taught an intermediate level groundwater course entitled simply *Water*. Students spent about a third of the semester out in the field carrying out a number of tests on Vassar's teaching wells at the farm field station. They also spent a snowy February afternoon sampling snow at Black Rock Forest in Rockland County to estimate groundwater recharge potential.

In personal news, Kirsten and her now 15-year-old son joined the Baden Powell Service Association, a traditional scouting organization open to all regardless of age, gender, or sexual orientation and have been enjoying camping, learning how to tie a bunch of different knots, and basic orienteering. Kirsten also continues to sing in Cappella Festiva along with Jeff Walker and a number of other Vassar faculty, assorted IBMers, local music teachers, church organists, and other members of the Poughkeepsie community. Music has been a really fun part of her life the last several years.



Students in *Water* (hydrogeology) sample snow pack to estimate groundwater recharge potential.

Joe Nevins Over the past two years, Joe has taught the senior seminar—allowing him to work closely with our fantastic students in their final year at Vassar. During this time, he has also served as the Chair of the Geography Program, and as the Director of Vassar's Independent Program, which allows students to pursue majors of their own design in close collaboration with faculty advisers. He continues to grow older, ride a bicycle, garden, and spend a lot of time with his daughters (Amina, now 7, and Sayako, 11).



Jill Schneiderman Since the last issue of Terra Firma, the theme that has dominated Jill's life probably would have to be travels in the field. Thanks to the Rockwell Fund, Jill was able to take her sedimentology students as well as a few other earth science majors to Death Valley National Park and the Mojave National Preserve during Spring Break in 2013 staying at the Desert Research Station at Zzyzzx (try pronouncing that! It's supposed to sound like crickets, so they say!) Students in the class focussed on particular topics such as volcanogenic sediments, lake sediments, alluvial plain sedimentation, and desert varnish and ventifacts, and prepared poster presentations on these subjects based on their studies in the desert southwest. And as part of the International Studies Study Trip which she co-taught with Rachel Friedman, professor of Greek and Roman Studies, Jill led a two-week field trip to Israel and the West Bank along the length of the Jordan River watershed during Spring Break 2014. Despite a campus fracas about the politics of traveling to this part of the Middle East, Jill says she's glad she stood up for her academic freedom to travel to the the region with 27 students to learn not only about water issues but the rich history and culture evident from the northernmost portion of Golan Heights down to the Red Sea. For some of us geoscientists "going to source," long-considered the hallmark of a Vassar education, means going into the field to find answers to questions. Also, Jill spent one month during the mid-year break at the University of Bologna lecturing in the history of science.



Students in the Water and Cities freshman seminar stand inside of the Old Croton aqueduct, the first water supply tunnel to bring fresh drinking water from "up-state" to New York City.



Jeff Walker I have been having fun teaching a variety of courses, and embarking on a new and exciting research project on hydrothermally altered basalts from southern Idaho. One highlight was the Volcanoes and Civilization freshman course which took an October Break field trip to Yellowstone Park with funding from the Rockwell Fund. Although some of the roads were already closed for the season (by snow!), the class visited all the major geyser basins, climbed Bunson Peak, and saw abundant wildlife including bison and mountain goats, while staying at a plush field camp in Gardiner, MT, operated by the Yellowstone Association. We were even joined at the Norris Geyser basin by Barbara O'Grady (VC, '74 Geology).

During the Spring of 2013 I was on sabbatical during which time I got to know the new X-ray diffractometer (the old D-5000 was replaced with money from an NSF grant) by advising two senior theses: Patrick Donohue separated illite from a fault gouge in the Rosendale area (north of New Paltz) and trying to determine how much of it was detrital and how much authigenic (formed during the faulting event). This is part of a larger project by a host of structural geologists to date the last movement on the fault - Acadian or Alleghenian? At the same time, Joe Wheeler studied hydrothermal clay minerals from a deep geothermal exploration hole on the Mountain Home Air Force Base just south of Boise, ID. He identified a restricted zone of corrensite (regularly interstratified chlorite/smectite) while the rest of the hole was all smectite. The corrensite is plugging fractures, so understanding its conditions of formation will be useful information for geothermal prospecting in basaltic terranes.

I taught two courses in the Fall of 2013, "Field Geology of the Hudson Valley" and "Earth, Environment and Humanity." It was a lot of work (both classes were pretty big and there was lots of grading each week), but I was gratified when a large number of students from both classes showed up in other classes the next semester, and some declared an Earth Science major. During Spring of 2014 I taught "Soils and Sustainable Ecosystems" to another large class. Since I normally teach Soils in the Fall, with a field trip during the first lab, I had to re-imagine the course, and then postponing the field labs back because the snow refused to melt and the weather refused to warm up. As it was, it rained on nearly every field day, including a cold soaking drizzle on the day when the students were digging soil test pits for their final project. In the end, their presentations were excellent, and the farmers (from Aberdeen Farm in Clinton, NY) were appreciative of the student's recommendations, and are actively looking into implementing some of them.

I am looking forward to teaching Volcanology as a senior seminar in the Fall. This will be the first time teaching volcanoes at the senior level, and the first time without a field trip for a long time, because my son (Peter, VC '09 Music) and daughter (Laurel, VC '11, Earth Science) are getting married in the Fall (not to each other). And while Laurel's wedding is during October Break, and she is the one of my children who might understand me missing the wedding because of being on a volcanoes field trip, I don't think I will risk it.

Yu Zhou taught five courses this year, including a new course on Environmental China. She also advised for 5 senior theses in Geography, Asian Studies, Environmental Studies and Urban Studies.

"I had a busy year editing a new book for China's technology industry, which will be published by Oxford University Press. In conjunction with the book, I co-organized a conference on Finance and China's high-tech industry in Beijing with professor William Lazonick at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, and Policy Institute of China Academy of Sciences in Oct. 2013. The conference involved experts from the United States, Japan, Canada, Denmark and China.



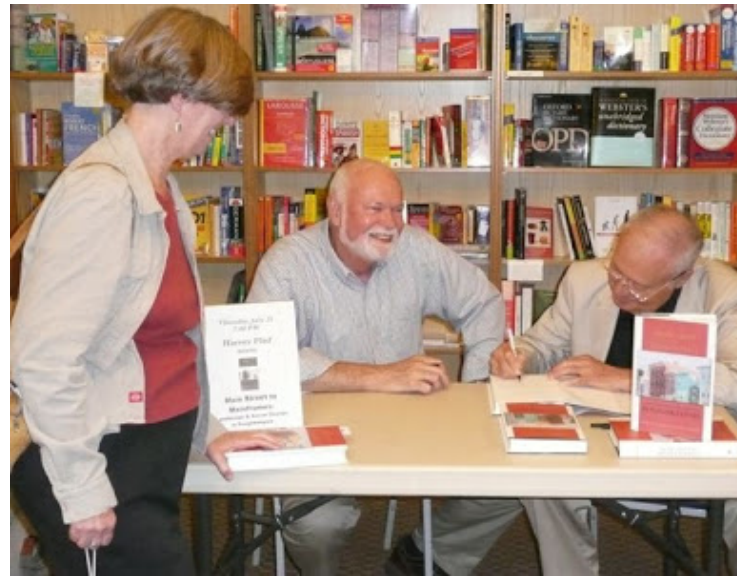
I also organized a workshop with the book chapter's authors in April. After the workshop was finished, I led a tour of the beautiful Vassar Campus for the visitors from Canada, Germany, and other states of the US. Next thing I know, the campus pictures are all over Facebook and Wechat (the largest social media network in China). Such are the days of social media.

My research in the last two years has been on green building development in China and high-tech industry. As Chinese high-tech industry and environment have received a lot of attention, there is a lot to learn in these areas. I am also working with Asian Studies, Environment Studies and Sciences and Societies program at Vassar to draft a proposal for Luce Environment and Asia program. I am also delighted that I received a grant from AsiaNetwork that allows me to participate in a traveling seminar with 12 other faculty members from different liberal art colleges around the country to India for three weeks this summer. I also received a Collins grant from Environment Research Institute at Vassar to do additional work on green building in China. This is going to be an exciting summer.

On the family front, Kaitlyn is a freshman in high school with the excitement and challenges of teenage girls. Kevin is a sophomore at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and major in Computer Science and Interactive Media and Game design, something he always liked.

Harvey Flad, Geography Emeritus,

continues to be quite productive a decade after his "official" retirement. His co-authored 450 page volume *Main Street to Mainframes: Landscape and Social Change in Poughkeepsie*, co-authored with Emeritus Professor of History Clyde Griffen and published by SUNY Press in 2009 continues to sell well and underlies the many, many requests for information about the history of the Poughkeepsie urban region and Hudson Valley by other scholars, urbanists, historians and newspaper reporters. Since its publication five years ago Harvey has given numerous book signings, lectures, and field trips, including some for both Bard's art history and environmental studies and Vassar's urban studies programs, as well as the Victorian Society of New York and interview footage in the film *The Seer of Poughkeepsie*, which can be accessed on Vassar's You Tube site. As a result of the book's three chapters on the history of



IBM in Poughkeepsie, Harvey was asked to author a chapter on IBM's history In Kingston; after seven months of research involving hours at the IBM archives, it is published as "IBM's Early Days in the Hudson Valley: Poughkeepsie and Kingston," in *Kingston - the IBM Years*, ed. by Ward Mintz and published by Friends of Historic Kingston and Black Dome Press (Delmar, NY, 2014). Another project related to Poughkeepsie's history involved editing and vetting maps and signage produced by both Scenic Hudson and the Dyson foundation for visitors to the Walkway Over the Hudson and Upper Landing Park on the city's waterfront. Other volunteer work in land use planning has been as an appointed member of the city's Waterfront Advisory Committee and as a Board member of the Mohonk Preserve. Meanwhile, Harvey continues to study the art and landscapes of the Hudson River School; for example as an invited panelist on "Landscape, History, and the Hudson River in the 19th C.," at the 35th Annual Conference on New York State History held at Marist College.

A final note on personal history that became central to a global story: In May the kidnapping of over 200 school girls in Nigeria by an Islamist terrorist group called Boko Haram became an international story. Over 50 years ago, from 1962-64, I was a Peace Corps volunteer teaching geography (and many other subjects) in the very region of the atrocities. I was invited to write a short essay as a blog for the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) in which I offered support for a project that offers education scholarships to young women and girls in northern Nigeria. The program can be accessed on the Peace Corps Nigeria Alumni Foundation (pcnaf.org) website.

Alumnae/I Notes

Please come visit us when you are in town! We always have time to hear what you have been up to, and welcome you to come tour the building and see what's new.

Pictured at right from Reunion Weekend are:

Lois Horst, '04,
Krysia Skorko, '04,
Prof. Menking,
Jared Siegel, '09,
Emily Vail, ENST '08,
Nate Kimball, '09,
Kira Stein, '09,
Wilson Salls, '09, and
Ellen Kingsbury Viereck, '49!



ALUMNAE Notes:

Michael Kiel ('14, Geography) I'm working as an immigration paralegal primarily for artists and living in Brooklyn.

Zach Kent ('13, Geography) I've been bopping around a lot since graduation. I spent the summer and fall in Denver doing equity and sustainability work with Denver Bike Sharing, the winter teaching snowboarding in Winter Park, Colorado, and am currently teaching English to public high school students in in Purén, in the south of Chile. I'll be moving to Santiago at the end of the summer to satisfy a life-long dream of working in a bakery, while I try to decide whether or not grad school is up next.

Jeremy Teperman ('11, Geography) I've been working with the NYC Compost Project in Queens for just over a year now. My job is to educate people about composting and provide technical assistance to people who are composting on-site (at community gardens, apartment buildings, schools, churches etc.). I just finished co-teaching an eight-week Master Composter class, which was lots of fun. Other than that, I am learning more about fermenting (sauerkraut + kombucha under my belt, still working on sourdough) and looking for an affordable place to live in Queens!

Hannah Kuhlberg ('10, Geography) Since graduating, I have been building a natural food business with my father: The Better Bean Company. Our fresh, ready to eat beans are now in 700 stores across the United States. I've held nearly every position in the company from production to accounting. Now I am our director of marketing.

I'm currently living in Los Angeles to grow our business in this new market. AND - I am expecting my first baby any day now! We are having a home birth so I don't know the sex of the baby yet.

Hannah Ewert-Krocker ('09, Geography) helped start a public Montessori middle school (with an urban farm!) in Denver this past year. After spending the last few years working at a community development non-profit, she is riding the wave of guiding middle schoolers through the ups and downs of life, school, and Justin Bieber's public image. This summer, she plans to celebrate five years of living in Denver with mountain bluegrass festivals, backcountry trips in the Tetons, late night summer bike rides, and teaching her first vinyasa yoga classes. She also recently acquired a cat.

Abby Kreidler ('08, Earth Science) I just completed phase one of my graduate program at the University of Texas: nursing school in one year! I'll sit for my boards at the end of June to become an RN and then begin my Master's in Maternity Nursing in the Fall. In the mean time, I'm working for a non-profit that provides free Doula services (birthing coaches) to women in need, applying for nurse residencies and jobs in Labor & Delivery, and trying to recover after such a crazy year. Seems like I'm a million miles away from my environmental roots, but Vassar Geology will always be in my heart.

Libby Murphy ('08, Earth Science) I just graduated with a double M.S. in Climate Science and MBA in Sustainable Business from Bard College. I'm still helping regional municipalities adapt to climate change through my position as Climate Specialist at the Hudson River Estuary Program, part of the NYS DEC. However, I am also building a startup business called Up Homes that builds custom better designed, more sustainable mobile homes. On a personal note, last March my fiancé and I enjoyed a strenuous backpacking trip in Big Sur with 2009 Vassar Geo graduates Nate Kimball, Wilsons Salls and Jared Siegel. Other than that I'm enjoying living in New Paltz and playing in local Irish and punk rock bands!

Kathryn Thomas ('09, Geography) I am moving back to the east coast after three years in South Dakota, and will be living in Flushing, NY. I will continue working for the Ev. Luth. Good Samaritan Society as their Corporate Archivist. If anyone knows the area and can recommend good restaurants and interesting activities, let me know!

Katy Hutchinson ('08, Earth Science) is transitioning after 5 years of teaching elementary school Spanish to teaching Seventh Grade Science at KIPP Academy in Boston. She's thrilled to have the opportunity to put her science knowledge back to work.

Adam Jost ('08, Earth Science) lives in Burlingame, CA with Anna Payne-Tobin Jost (Biology '08), and is finishing his fourth year as a graduate student in the Dept. of Geological and Environmental Sciences at Stanford University. When he's not busy researching the geochemical evolution of the earth's surface, he's running trails and streets throughout the SF Bay Area. Adam and Anna will be finishing their graduate work next year, and plan to move to Boston in Summer 2015

Deborah Bergman ('07, Geography) Last July I got married to my husband, Richard Gonzalez, in Los Angeles with a lot of great Vassar friends around me. I graduated from Loyola Law School last May and have been clerking at the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California since shortly after my wedding. In September I am moving back to Phoenix to clerk on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. So much of my career and life path post-undergrad are due to the border trip I took with Joe Nevins during my senior-year spring break at Vassar.

Michael Mazik ('04, Earth Science) I had a tough decision to make; I was admitted into a MS program through San Jose State University, as well as a teaching credential program (for Earth Sciences) through the University of Northern Colorado. After long and serious thought, I decided on the school in Colorado. I will be moving out there in August, seeing as I have been offered a job through Monterey Peninsula College as an Instructional Specialist for the summer, through the Mathematics department, and this goes through the end of July.

I am also a groomsman in a good friend's wedding in August, happening in Santa Cruz (or rather, just outside the city). I honestly can't wait to move, because the people I am sharing a house with are super-pretentious, and moving is in my best interests. But, that's another story altogether.

Steve Raciti ('03, Geology/Environmental Studies) In September, I'll be starting a new position as an Assistant Professor of Biology at Hofstra University. At Hofstra, I will continue to study urban plants and soils, particularly as they relate to carbon dioxide fluxes, non-point source nutrient pollution, and global environmental change. I will also contribute to Hofstra's undergraduate and masters programs in Biology and Urban Ecology. I have enjoyed my time as a Senior Postdoctoral Research Associate at Boston University, but I look forward to new challenges and adventures in the New York City area.

Brooke Crowley ('02, Geology) Life has been full for me. I just wrapped up my third academic year as an assistant professor at the University of Cincinnati and am enjoying catching up on some things over the summer. I also have a conference/ fun trip planned to Hawaii that I am very excited about. I have been enjoying my job. It keeps me busy and challenged. Life is not boring. I think about Vassar often and look forward to our reunion in a few years. I often think back to the classes I took and am so grateful for the time that the professors put in to our labs and activities. They were invaluable for me as a student and they have also helped me shape my own courses.



Vassar Geology students on a field trip to the Bitterroot Mountains, Montana, in the 1920's with Professor Thomas Hills.



Ian Saginor ('01, Geology) I just got tenure and am now an Associate Professor at Keystone College in Northeast PA. I've been working on a research project involving 3D printing applications for Geoscience education and will be leading a new fieldtrip to Iceland next year. I have a 2 year old son named Jacob who is taller than most 4 year olds.

Carl Johnson ('00, Geology) I live in Saint Johnsbury, VT with my wife Abby and our two children. Donley, age five, will have a future either in paleontology (given his expertise in dinosaurs) or in sedimentology (given his expertise in the sandbox). Florence, age one, is learning to identify soils based on taste. We live on Diamond Hill, which is known for its large and well shaped quartz crystals, though I have not yet found anything besides sixty pound quartz blobs. I teach general science at Gilman Middle School in a failed rift zone, the Connecticut River valley. With only 39 students in grades five through eight, Gilman is perhaps the smallest public school in the country to serve only the middle grades. As a teacher, working with small classes and having four years to get to know each student is a luxury. Though the poverty and isolation in northeastern Vermont can cause challenges, my students are eager and engaged, charming and fun. I would love to hear from anyone interested in skiing (Burke), mountain biking (Kingdom Trails), or otherwise visiting our area.

Russell Dover ('99, Geography) My family is just moving back to the NYC area from Mexico City after a short five-month sojourn. I recently changed roles at my employer from a regional role dealing with our Latin American businesses to a global role. Currently I am dealing with the excitement and exercise of having a very active one year old with two busy working parents.

Craig Nelson ('95, Geography) I'm still living in New York and putting my geography skills to work as a freelance writer and editor for a number of different clients including Google Maps, Not For Tourists and Frommer's guidebooks, and a travel blog called EuroCheapo.com. I'm looking forward to seeing the newly renovated Ely Hall on my next trip up to Vassar.

Dave Palmieri ('95, Geography) My wife, Sandra Martinez-Zuniga and I are living in Durham, North Carolina. Sandra works for an educational agency at Duke University and I am teaching US and World History at Raleigh Charter High School. At the school I also lead Model United Nations and a community work group focused on sustainable agriculture. We are enjoying exploring the outdoors with our wonderful two year old son, Ari.

Daniel Weber ('94, Geography) After 15 years in Texas, I moved from Dallas to Cincinnati to start working for Macy's in their Area Research department in 2013. One of my colleagues is originally from Poughkeepsie. I also joined the Cincinnati Men's Chorus, the local gay men's chorus, and have been with them for two seasons now.

Sydney Neer ('78, Geology) I continue to work for an engineering and environmental firm (URS Corporation) doing soil and groundwater investigation and cleanup. Enjoy it very much. Never bored. On a personal level, my husband and I continue to travel when we can. I just made my 1,000th scuba dive in Bonaire.

Marsha Findlay Bourque, ('74, Geology) I continue to enjoy consulting work, following a career in petroleum exploration and production and in my niche as a deepwater operations specialist. I have been delivering technical training courses since 2002, and have especially enjoyed working in Europe and the Middle East. When not traveling and working, my geologist husband and I divide our time between Houston and our vacation home in Santa Fe, New Mexico, exploring the geology along the way. Our continued excitement about geology always enhances our travel experiences, wherever we go.

Caroline (Carrie) Bryan ('73, Geology) I'm in my 3rd year doing donation-related computer work for the Kansas City Zoo in Kansas City, MO. Also making and selling lap and baby quilts online: look for PixiesQuilts on www.etsy.com. Have started to make arrangements to retire: fixing up my house for sale and looking for retirement opportunities on East and West coasts.

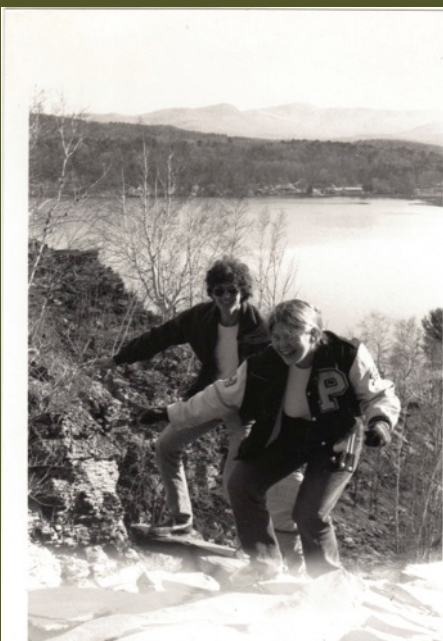
Rosemary Pusateri ('71, Geology) Continuing my decades as an environmental activist, nowadays almost entirely focused on protecting Lake George, NY where we live. I say almost entirely, because recently I joined the Conservation Society of Pohnpei. My husband Frank and I this past winter had a month long adventure island hopping to Guam, a couple islands of Hawaii, and Pohnpei and Kosrae in Federated States of Micronesia. As I told friends, I could barely keep my head above water with all there is to see underwater. I snorkel, and Frank dives.

Laurel Bybell, ('67, Geology) After working for the U.S. Geological Survey for 34 years as a micropaleontologist specializing in Cenozoic calcareous nannofossils, I retired 6 years ago. Since then, I have continued my involvement with the USGS as a Scientist Emeritus. I completed a few scientific papers, review scientific articles, assist with the NAGT selection process, am liaison for the USGS Scientist Emeritus Program, and last fall was the scientific and language editor for abstract volume for the 14th conference of the International Nannoplankton Association in Reston, Virginia.

In between all this, I take care of my granddaughter 2 days a week, make costumes for and dance in our Regency Period English Country Dance group, and spend a lot of time designing and managing our 2-acre yard in the countryside.

Susie Harman Cleland ('66, Geography) In 1965 I wrote a thesis for the Geography Department, entitled 'Problems of Population Increase and Mobility in Southeast England Focusing on Thetford, Norfolk, As A Specific Receiving Area'. Since then, I have not had an opportunity to go back, but this autumn I am planning to walk from Thetford to Hunstanton (some 50 miles) with my classmate, Linden Hangar Berry '66 and her husband, Carl. It will bring back fond memories of nearly 50 years ago!

VWalkerHart I, and my husband, Henry, continue to live in our home in Woodbury, CT. No exciting news in the Earth Science field. I continue to be interested in the preservation of open space.



Dan Golin 1962-2014

One of four Geology majors in 1984, along with Bruce Taterka, Michelle Feller Anderson, and Allison Kozak. Allison, pictured at left with Dan 'rocksurfing' at Lake Bomoseen, NY, reminds everyone that "he had a quirky, memorable personality & loved to climb the outside of Ely. Dan was a psychologist & left behind a wife & two kids."

His obituary is here:

http://www.themountainmail.com/obituaries/article_58405426-94d2-11e3-bac5-0017a43b2370.html#user-comment-area



The Warthin Museum of Geology and Natural History

We continue to enjoy regular visitors from local schools, Boy Scout Badge earners and the community. Every year, we are encouraged that local science teachers are rediscovering the Museum as a resource for learning outside of the classroom.

We are also enjoying our continued role as a safe place for objects that need a temporary home while buildings get remodeled. These Brendel flower models are from the late 1800's, and made in Germany, of papermache, gelatin, wire, and paint.



Glass Invertebrates Conservation

Residing in the Biology Department for the last 127 years have been some delicate glass invertebrates, mostly Cnidarians, but an octopus, and some hydroids as well. These pieces were made by Rudolph and Leopold Blaschka, who later would create the Glass Flower Collection at Harvard.

Recently, it became obvious that they were not in ideal conditions, being moved around and too much light. Using funds from the same 'Museum fund' that they were originally purchased with, we brought in a curator from Cornell, who restored a few broken pieces, cleaned the fragile pieces as much as possible, and gave us advice on further care.

We are enjoying their ghostly presence in the museum, where they reside until Olmsted Hall has completed renovations, and the proper display case is set up for them.



The **Vassar College Artifacts Project** has had a very active two years, as the new science building rises from the mud, and existing buildings (New England, Olmsted, and Sanders Physics!) all undergo extensive renovations.

VCAP is dedicated to preservation, display and restoration the objects of Vassar's teaching history. Often these items have been discarded as they become less useful, but they still have a story to tell, and many items are beautiful objects in their own right. The Warthin Museum has provided expertise, research and hours of manpower to make sure the history of Vassar is preserved. The attic of Sanders Physics proved to be the most complex project- all 150 years of Vassar's science teaching history was represented there! With the construction crews ready to begin demolition, we removed hundreds of objects...a hand cranked electrostatic machine longer than a VW. A Samuel Morse telegraph. A Blink comparator, one of only two known to exist in the U.S., the other being at Mt. Palomar, used to visually discover Pluto. Olmsted was the next challenge- we moved 200 wax models to Mudd Chemistry for climate controlled safekeeping, and hundreds of taxidermy birds are now in storage. We are now moving on to items from Psychology and Computer Science.

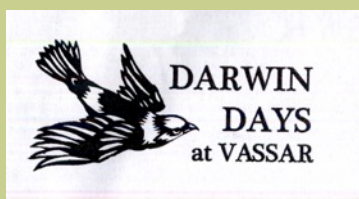
VCAP



Two ways to find out more about VCAP:
Our WordPress blog: <http://pages.vassar.edu/vcap/> OR
<https://www.facebook.com/VassarCollegeArtifactProject>

Darwin Days

Darwin Days at Vassar, a collaboration between the arts and science continues to be celebrated around darwin's birthday. In February 2013, we took FOUR coach buses, or 220 Vassar students, to the American Museum of Natural History in Manhattan.



For the 2014 event, we presented ***Chasing Ice***, a screening of James Balog's award winning documentary about disappearing ice fields around the world. Naturally, ice cream was served at the showing in Blodgett Auditorium.



We Love Surprise Visitors! Last Fall, **Bob Gosse** and his wife, Lois Gosse, stopped by the museum. Bob is the grandson of Geology Professor Thomas Hills, who with Scott Warthin, built the Yellowstone Geyser model in 1942. This model still works perfectly, and Bob was delighted to see it again, and told us of a childhood roaming the nooks and crannies of Ely Hall. We also had a visit from **Diane Kelly**, co-designer of Zygot Games ***Bone Wars, the Game of Ruthless Paleontology***. Bone Wars re-enacts the ruthless academic war between Edward Cope and O.C. Marsh, providing players the opportunity to dynamite a rivals' finds, steal them, or merely rename them, giving you valuable prestige points! Diane was visiting and happily noticed that we had a copy of her game in our display on Marsh and Cope and the contributions to paleontology.



On June 5, our department lost a great friend and colleague, Phil Thibault. Phil worked for the Dutchess County Office of Computing and Information Services (OCIS) and taught Cartography and GIS classes at Vassar for several years. As leader of an award winning county GIS group, he has also provided data, support and online resources that have made classes better and work easier for generations of students in these courses.

Phil was severely injured when a tree he was cutting fell on him, and he died of his injuries, peacefully and with his family by his side, 4 days later. He is greatly missed by his family and colleagues.

Phil's obituary can be read here:

http://www.hudsonvalleyfuneralhomes.com/memsol.cgi?user_id=1324053

We are deeply grateful for Phil's collegiality and friendship over the years.