



"One Day in May"

(May 15, 2020)

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Class Year: 1973

Connection to the College (student? faculty? alum? friend of the College?): Alumnus/alumna

Describe your day today -- did you go out? what did you do for fun? did you cook or eat anything special? did you do work or chores? who did you spend time with?

The day began cool and slightly rainy. My second husband Don (I was a widow; we've been married almost 2 years and are both retired) and I got up around 8:30 to go to the lawyer's to make corrections on Don's estate trust documents. We're of the age when a will and estate plans are important. We'd decided to make wills before we went on a month-long cruise to the South Pacific in mid-March to mid-April. Of course Covid-19 changed those plans and our cruise (along with everything else) got cancelled. But in a pandemic, wills become REALLY important.

Shortly after we returned home, Don's daughter Susan and children Allison and Ethan appeared in our driveway! They drove in from Richmond, IN to say hello and to get carry-out lunch at the Legends restaurant in my old neighborhood of Irvington, about 20 minutes south of us. It was a delight to see them, particularly for Don. Having to be separated from family is very hard. We brought out folding chairs and visited for about an hour at the appropriate social distance in the carport. Susan and Ethan sat in the back of their van.

Our home is in the woods, with lots of birds and other wildlife. While they were here, they got to see and hear two pileated woodpeckers chasing each other and calling very loudly for several minutes. They are large birds with very loud, harsh calls; the pair come frequently to our suet feeders on the balcony overlooking our wooded valley. We've enjoyed watching the variety of birds at these feeders; for older people stuck at home as we are, it's liberating to see that something is free to fly wherever they want. After Susan and family left to get the Legend's famous fried chicken and macaroni and cheese, we had lunch and Don made jello with fruit salad for later. My gray cat Delbert came upstairs and sat next to me on the bench at the dining table; he has become so affectionate! After lunch, we worked a bit on a jigsaw puzzle depicting the state of Indiana. Don particularly enjoys puzzles. I would usually rather read, but the absence of so many things we used to participate in means one gets tired of the limited range of activities available and need to trade off. I've been reading a variety of mysteries interspersed with science; most recently, Peter Brannen's *The Ends of the World* about the five great extinctions of life on earth. It's depressing - a reminder that human life will not last, any more than the trilobites or dinosaurs lasted. In fact, we seem to be determined to make the age of humans the shortest and last of Earth's ages.

This afternoon we drove to the local Ace Hardware. We bought 4 bags of cypress blend mulch and a flat of single yellow dahlias to plant outside the front door. They'll be cheerful along with the blue ajuga and gold daylilies already there. Like us, most people wore masks. Don hates to wear his. Then we drove to the Kroger grocery store, where as usual, I go in and Don remained in the car. He's 80; I don't want to risk him. As usual, it was crowded, but most (by no means all) people wore masks. I usually wear white gloves as well. Don needed a set of 4 \$10 gift cards to McDonald's for high school graduates living at Brooklawn Child and Family Services in Louisville. Since I was there, I made good use of the trip by purchasing bananas for our breakfast, brown sugar for Don's cookie baking, and vegetables, shrimp and chicken for some new recipes I'm trying during quarantine. Many things are beginning to open up, but I

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Electronic Submission

have no intention of going out; in spite of our idiot president Trump insisting the country reopen, it won't be safe until everyone can be tested frequently and a vaccine is available. Later tonight I'll go on Amazon to order a hair trimmer so I can cut Don's hair, a new kitchen scale and knee pads to work in the garden. We also will take a walk on our hilly, wooded dead-end road and play Parcheesi, then I'll finish the day by writing in my daily quarantine journal.

What do you remember best about being on campus in May of other years?

In 1973 the quadrangle was so filled with trees you couldn't see the buildings from the opposite side of the quad. Many of those trees were blown down in the 1974 tornado. I lived with several other women in an old white clapboard house that was the first Sigma Chi house in Indiana. I remember seeing it half demolished, and the bathroom walls that a classmate had painted with flowers were still partly standing, visible from outside. It was right next to a favorite hangout, the Campus Cabin, owned by the Kuntz family; they made wonderful Beatleburgers (a cheeseburger topped with a fried egg). The Cabin housed a huge display of wooden paddles with names of individuals or fraternities/sororities, and a pinball machine that was usually in use. Both were destroyed by the tornado.

My classes were in Classic and Goodrich Halls, with art classes in the basement of the old building near the overlook. Highlights were the cultural programs featured several times each term at Parker Auditorium. I remember seeing classical Indian dance for the first time, hearing Paul Winter when he was still playing Brazilian-inspired music, and hearing Buckminster Fuller. It was long before personal computers; I typed my papers on a manual typewriter and made corrections with White-Out. The only person who had a small refrigerator in her room was a diabetic classmate who needed it to keep her insulin cold. The only TVs were in the basement lounges of the dorms. Freshmen and scholarship students couldn't have cars. Women were still subjected to curfew, and a dress code was still in force my freshman year. Women had to wear skirts!! That was abolished by my sophomore year, and I don't think I ever wore a skirt at college again.