

The Murdock Muse July, 1995

R.I.P. KENNETH ANDREW MURDOCK
Aug. 27, 1914 - June 13, 1995
--Bob Murdock

The Murdock Muse has lost one of its most enthusiastic readers, "Uncle Ken," who was also a generous contributor. Muse readers remember his circus stories, Block Island trip reports, and reminiscences of life with his late beloved wife, Millie.

Ron Murdock called us on June 13 to report the passing of his father. "It was actually a blessing," said Ron. "Dad had broken his leg in a fall outside his home a few weeks ago and was hospitalized for several days. With that trauma and other ailments, he never really recovered. After going home from the hospital, he received around-the-clock care from my daughter-in-law, Becky."

Uncle Ken lived to celebrate his 80th birthday. He now joins Millie, who died in 1991, and oldest son Brian, who passed away March 28, 1995. He is survived by his second son, Ron; youngest son, Keith; and several grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Ron said that one of the last times he saw his father smile was when he was told that the Murdock Muse for June had arrived.

Growing up in Massachusetts, my earliest memories of Uncle Ken were much like my recent impressions: a friendly, gentle man with a good sense of humor. When I was about seven he took me to see "Little Lord Fauntleroy" and "Captains Courageous." In those days he had a part-time job on a bakery truck that made house calls, while going to school at Fitchburg Teacher's College. He taught at grammar schools for several years. But when I was a freshman at Gardner High, I was surprised and delighted to see him appear one day as a substitute teacher in my Science class.

The school management must have been delighted too, as he started teaching regularly in high schools soon after that. Nancy and I saw Ken and his family often when he taught in Warren, Mass. and we lived near by. He was a well-liked educator, later teaching in Thomaston, CT until retirement.

[Ed. note: Muse readers are invited to share any remembrances of Uncle Ken. Send by mail, or phone us: (410) 944-1950.]

QUILT AUCTION
--N. Murdock

Muser Rosalind Revilock-Frost, a painter who recently turned to quilts as her medium, made a quilt for a charity auction recently. Her in-laws, Orrel and Charlie Frost, bought the quilt at the auction. "We just had to have it, after watching it being made," reported Orrel.

HOWLETT REUNION QUIZ
--Michelle Boudreau

What? Howlett Southwest 1995 Reunion

When? Sunday, July 2, 1995
12 noon to ???

Where? Templeton, Mass., Gregg and Carla's camp. Take Rt. 101 or 2A to Templeton Center. At the flashing light, take a sharp left onto Hubbardston Road. Go 1.2 miles south to Hogan Road on the left. Take it (Templeton Fish and Game private road) to the end, then left on Rainbow North. The camp is #86. Phone, 939-5027.

Who? Everyone's invited, especially the regulars.

How? What do you mean, how? Isn't that enough information? Oh, you mean "how do I know what to bring?" Okay. Bring swim suits, kids, cameras, a little money for the raffle (septic fund). Hot dogs, hamburgers, chips, some soft drinks will be provided. Supplementary food dishes and beverages will be appreciated.

ARTIST ACCEPTS QUILT COMMISSION
--N. Murdock

Valerie Davidson has agreed to create the center medallion for the Murdock Reunion quilt. She has a novel approach to the "family tree" portion: Each person will be represented by a separate leaf. She plans to embroider the trunk and branches and print the information about Douglas and Christel Murdock at the roots. Then she will select a different color of leaves for each generation, with a somewhat lighter tone of the same color for spouses. She will use her graphics knowledge to do the lettering for "Come Alive in '95" and "Murdock Reunion."

Now aren't you glad you're going to send us your 6 1/2" quilt square this month? This is a great way to commemorate the reunion.

MURDOCK REUNION REMINDER
--Bob Murdock

Saturday, Aug. 19 at Sally and Ernie Bacon's ranch, Jordan, N.Y. Dotty Salminen gave some details in the June Muse, and we will give it a good pitch in the Aug. Muse.

MUSER'S FATHER DIES
--N. Murdock

Ian Murdock reports that Becky's father died Thursday, May 25, after being diagnosed with lymphoma a week earlier. On Monday Becky flew to Reno to visit him, and Ian drove up to get her Tuesday. Wednesday Becky's mother called to say he was worse, so they drove back to Reno. The next day Becky's dad died in her arms. "She was such a good daughter," said Ian. "She said 'I love you' at least a hundred times."

OLD FRIENDS AND NEW

-- Nancy Murdock

"You're going where?" my friends asked. To Binghamton, NY, to attend the institution of our former rector in her new parish. At the last minute, Sr. Warden Karen Burdneil arranged rides for me with two different groups, giving me 5 more hours (since I wasn't driving) to work on the two quilts I was taking to Noreen.

Caral Nolley, her friend Stan, and I arrived in time to sample the hot, cheesy bean dip at Noreen's before going to the supper put on by church members. This set the pace for the 3 days - food, glorious food, and more food. I met my hostess, Suzanne Young, a lovely lady soon to turn 83. She made me very welcome in her beautiful home with its pretty garden.

Monday Suzanne drove Caral, Stan, and me around the city, pointing out all the landmarks. She also introduced us to the betting parlor, where she had to go pick up her winnings! We had a delightful walk in the small, exquisite botanical garden. Suzanne took us to lunch at the Binghamton Club, where I chose a grand fruit salad in a half pineapple. The afternoon event was a house blessing at the rectory, followed by high tea.

The institution was a gala affair, with a long procession of clergy, acolytes, crucifers, three choirs, Vestry, and other parish representatives, with children and balloons at the rear. It was Noreen at her most celebratory, a rare departure from the usual quiet institutions in the diocese. Her friend Bishop Alex Stewart of MA gave a wonderful address, and the music was superb. But Karen said it really hit home that we were saying goodbye to Noreen when the Bishop of NY said, "Greet your new rector!" and everyone stood and clapped. We topped it off with a Bishop's reception (more great food, especially chocolate). I met Sheila, a fellow quilter who had made a gorgeous stole for Noreen. Everyone was kind and hospitable.

Suzanne and I had an extra day, since Bill and Sue Lee decided to leave late Tuesday. We found a terrific quilt shop with a tremendous sale. Partway through the weekend, Suzanne asked, "Is it always this way with you? Do people always feel as if they have known you forever?"

A DIFFERENT VACATION

--N. Murdock

Valerie Davidson and her son Jerod are planning a makeover of their house in lieu of a vacation this summer. The owner will provide the paint. Val and Jerod are deciding whether to exchange rooms, one way to make sure they do a thorough job of cleaning and rearranging. It's also time to replace the couch at the next sale of sofabeds. "We've been her 15 years," Val says. "It's time for a few changes."

HUBBARDSTON SENIORS' RAFFLE QUILT

--N. Murdock

Dotty Salminen reports that the Senior Citizens' Group has a particularly beautiful raffle quilt this year. They decided to feature hand quilting on a mauve and off-white queen-sized quilt with hearts and lace. There are 30 blocks, each quilted separately with 1" batting. These will be sewn together and assembled with another layer of 1" batting and the backing.

Their group is the only one in town doing raffle quilts, and they always make about \$2,000 at 3 tickets for \$1. They begin selling on Founder's Day (early June) and end on Field Day in August. I have thus advised my quilt guild to get the tickets printed so we can start selling, even though the quilt isn't yet finished. If Hubbardston can do it, why can't we?

Dotty, who started the quilt group, also began a garden club about 6 months ago. They now have 40 members! Her latest project is learning to paint. The Council on Aging pays an art instructor to come to the Center to teach. Dotty is very pleased with her first two paintings, one of which is already framed. What do you bet she will start an Art Guild next?

AT LEAST 360 BUTTONS

Nancy Murdock

In the May Muse, I reported on our church project of quilts as a parting gift to our rector, Noreen. The two that I took to Binghamton came out very well. The Signatures Quilt, which has medium blue sashing, will go in Noreen's living room. The "Celebration" quilt will go in a guest room.

"Celebration" contains a wide variety of methods, mainly by non-quilters. The sashing is a bright print, but what makes it really stand out is the buttons that were used instead of quilting. Hazel Lambert and her mom, Edith Edmonston (82), offered to do the buttons, which were donated by Bill and Sandra Hiscock. The ladies spent many hours designing and stitching, with Edith pulling her oxygen hose behind her as she carefully placed just the right button. "There are at least 360 buttons, plus beads," reported Hazel, "including my grandmother's buttons."

SALE, ANYONE?

N. Murdock

Carol Howlett had the dubious honor of working at a sale on Memorial Day, the first holiday since the Blue Laws change that made it legal to stay open on a holiday. Since there was no precedent, the store didn't schedule enough people. Carol was in Jewelry by herself, with a sale of 40% off Timex watches and 75% off all gold. "I got lunch at 2:00," Carol said. "I never did get any afternoon break!"

KIDS' COLUMN

A MODERN FABLE

Wendy, Annie, & Jill Morgan

We've been enjoying the Muse so much! Here is a contribution from Annie. In school her class studied Demi. They read many fables and tried to guess the morals. They studied many beautiful pictures in a fan shape. Then they each wrote their own fable & drew a picture to go with it. Annie's original is very beautiful and in color. She copied it in black ink so it would copy better. We sure are looking forward to the reunion!!

THE TIGER AND THE PEACOCK

--Annie Morgan, age 8

Once upon a time there lived the most beautiful peacock. Everybody wanted to be like her. Especially the tiger. "The most best thing in the world is how pretty I am," said the peacock, "and I am the prettiest. You're never going to be as pretty as me."

One day a hunter came into the forest. The tiger hid and the peacock did too, but the hunter saw her feathers. He plucked all her feathers off. The peacock was no more beautiful. The tiger had learned her lesson. And the moral of the story is: Beauty isn't Best.

REBA

--Colleen Clark

Reba is a good cat. She died a few days ago. She was the greatest cat I have ever seen, who has ever died. I'd loved Reba and I still do. I miss her. She had an operation a few days ago. She died. I miss her, but I'll always love her.

JOKE CORNER

Q. What can you take that you can never give back?

A. A bath!

CONCORD CLIPS

--Cathy Howlett

Work has been rather hectic, so I've taken to making lists to remind me of: 1) things that need doing, 2) messages to pass on, 3) family members' schedules, 4) stuff I forgot once already. Recently the younger staff members were playing a little game, betting on who would appear how often in what tense on one of my post-its. But all my special projects have been completed (leases completed for copiers for 2 centers, new health insurance plan brokered and in effect for all 3 centers, summer program budget proposed to owners) and now I can get down to the business of being a business manager. This has been a month of milestones for the rest of the family. Sean lost his Uno's job just as he was finishing his first year in the Criminal Justice program at the Tech. Since he has a free summer for a change, he decided to go into something physical, and took a job at Shop n' Save doing late night deliveries. He began the job this week and, in typical Howlett over-achiever fashion, has already been given an entire aisle to order and stock and care for. He said tonight, "It feels great to be really physical again!" It also feels great to be able to meet the payment and insurance on his new (first) car.

John has made yet another educated-oriented decision. As soon as he finishes his BS in December, he'll enroll in the RN program at the Tech! He intends to stay in the mental health field, perhaps with the same agency.

Our oldest daughter has made a similar decision! Lori has begun the enrollment process in RI. Her year at UMass was spent in the nursing-BS program, so she has some tests to take in order to skip some courses. Two years' experience at Rentham State and the Ark has convinced her to continue in the field she loves. Our son-in-law Bill has also felt the influence - he has decided to look into correspondence courses in finance business management. We all hope he'll be pain free after his surgery next month and be able to follow his dream.

We witnessed the culmination of one of Sarah's dreams Tue. evening, at her confirmation ceremony. The Penacook area of Concord is truly a small town, and our church is a small town mission church. That really came home to me as I met folks or spoke on the phone - to the doctor's office, at the drug store or post office. Quite a few people from the parish took a moment to offer congratulations or comment on her reading during the ceremony. As all these rituals are supposed to do, Sarah's confirmation strengthened my sense of community.

Time to feed the birds and squirrels. We've been pleasantly surprised by the number of critters in this suburban yard: sparrows, lots of finches, rose breasted grosbeaks, and the usual doves, robins, chickadees, jays, and cardinals. We even have a couple of flycatchers! [Ed. Note: Sarah also graduated from Concord High on June 17.]

PORTRAIT OF MARY ANNE

--Barbara DiStefano

She sits on the beach, feeling the sun
 One hand idly sifting the sand
 She flips her hair out of her eyes
 Then checks the tan on her hand.

She gazes longingly out at the sea
 A faraway look in her eye
 Is she thinking of other lands
 Or how the gulls learned to fly

The tide is creeping toward her feet
 She dares it to touch her toes
 The ocean determines to claim her spot
 She reluctantly retreats a few rows.

The mood now broken, she looks at her watch
 It's time to go in for the day.
 Sadly she knows the week's at an end
 And home is too far away.

4/29/91

I wrote the above poem as an assignment from Mary Anne's junior high teacher. A parent was requested to write a description or poem or draw a picture of their child. We had just had a great vacation at Hilton Head. So I whipped this off, and Mary Anne said it was the best parent assignment. Wendy will cater this summer, including a monks' retreat and name band crews that come to Ithaca. Mary and a partner now have their own business, "A Perfect Fit," doing design, creation, and alterations. Dan and Carolyn are moving back to their home in Moravia; he's commuting to home weekends. Dave, a plumber, is remodeling his kitchen.

INTERNET

--Missi Morgan

I have gained many friends over the Internet by e-mail. I'm wondering when we'll be able to e-mail articles to the Muse. The Internet is definitely addicting but very interesting. I can e-mail to Dad, though sometimes picking up the phone is easier. It's nice, though, because if I find an interesting article, I can just forward it to him. I can also e-mail Tim in MD. If any Musers have e-mail, let me know your address. Mine is MMORGAN@MECN.MASS.EDU.

Once you get on e-mail, it's hard to go back. Because of technology, you can now mail someone a letter and they'll get it in a matter of minutes. People on the net refer to regular mail as s-mail or snail-mail.

There are so many other fascinating things to do on the Internet. I have sent a message to the Endeavor Astronauts when they were on their last mission, I can join groups who discuss particular topics (and there are groups for everything out there!), I can look up government information (public access, of course), I can even get the want ads! By using the program "gopher" and the "veronica" service, I can ask the computer to look up any documents that have a particular word in the title. It has an amazing library to choose from: U of Minnesota computer system, U of Michigan computer system, even some from other countries.

I'm one of the lucky ones to have access to this. Hopefully in future years, people will be using this like they use phones!

SENIOR EDITORS:

Nancy A. Murdock
Robert D. Murdock

STAFF COLUMNIST:

Eugene A. Murdock

STAFF JOURNALISTS:

Sally Bacon
Michelle Boudreau
Denise Chapman
Pamela Clark
Valerie Davidson
Barbara DiStefano
Missi Morgan
Benjamin Murdock
Christel M. Murdock
Darrel Murdock
Jason Murdock
Nicholaus Murdock
Sean Murdock
Dorothy Salminen
Cathy Howlett
Dawn Wylie-Hiscock
Carol Howlett
Carol Murdock
Angelica Howlett
Carlton Martz
Margery Aukstikalnis
Ian Murdock
Roy Murdock

STAFF CARTOONIST:

Khendra Murdock

STAFF ARTISTS:

Natalie Murdock
Colleen Clark
Nikki Oman
Timothy Murdock

STAFF REVIEWERS

Charles and Orrel Frost

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS:

Polly Soberg
Annie Morgan
Wendy Morgan
Arthur Murdock
Jerod Davidson
Toy Oman
Lorenza Soto
Richard Clark
Regina Howlett
Lennie Schlicke
Adrienne Blevins

The editors also thank all who call each month with news.

To become a member of the Murdock Muse staff, submit three offerings: letters, articles, cartoons, pages of jokes, etc. You may get on the mailing list by submitting articles, etc., by sending a donation, or by telling us how wonderful the publication is and how much you would like to receive it each month.

DEADLINE

If you have anything to include in the Muse, please send it so we'll receive it by July 19. Mail it to us at:
4 - D Fallridge Ct.
Baltimore MD 21244.

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

"The moral of the story is, Beauty isn't Best."
--Annie Morgan

JULY CELEBRATIONS

--Bob Murdock

Congratulations to Donald F. Lytle, the educator well known to many Muse readers. July 3rd will be his 81st birthday!

Chelsea Harvey (granddaughter of Orrel and Charlie Frost) turns 12 on the 4th of July. Two candles for Casey Phillips on the 10th. Robert Foster Howlett (Michelle Boudreau's son) will be 18 on July 11. Mike Doane's big day is the 12th. He, too, will turn 18. On July 14, Calder Leskinen will be 7. He's Barb DiStefano's grandson. Chris Howlett turns 26 on the 19th, the same day that Derek DiStefano will be 21.

The 24th is a birthday for Sue Witmer, Lennie and Bob Schlicke's daughter. And Alyssa Rogers (granddaughter of John and Cathy Howlett) will be 6 years old on the 31st.

Anniversaries: Sarah and David Cole's 9th, on July 19. Sarah is Marcia Howlett's daughter. Lori and Bill Rogers celebrate 7 years on the 24th. Alyssa (see above) is their daughter.

And it will be 6 years on the 29th for David and Amy Leskinen. David is Barb DiStefano's son.

IN THIS ISSUE

--N. Murdock

What a jam-packed issue! We have 2 drawings and a tribute to her cat by Staff Artist Colleen Clark. Annie Morgan sent her first offering, a beautiful fable she wrote and illustrated. Staff Columnist Gene Murdock wrote a poignant article on hitchhiking in days of yore. Several Staff Journalists sent terrific articles. We have Valerie Davidson's hilarious continuation of her childhood friend Pam Clark's theme of nicknames. Cathy Howlett gave an amusing insight into her job and upbeat updates of her family's career and educational plans. Pam Clark wrote a humorous story of a kitchen disaster with a splendid cure, and a lyrical description of her garden's spring offerings. Barb DiStefano shared a beautiful poem about her daughter, and Missi Morgan waxed enthusiastic about e-mail and Internet. We have several reports about quilt projects, vacation plans, work "fun" and a trip to Binghamton. Sadly, we report two deaths: Becky Murdock's father and our own beloved "Uncle Ken" Murdock, noted Muse supporter who once said that he thanked God every day for this opportunity to keep in touch with family. On a happy note, don't miss Michelle Boudreau's info about the July 2 Howlett Reunion on page 1. And don't forget the Murdock Reunion on August 19, Saturday.

Your Senior Editors will be camping in Hubbardston July 1 - 3, then visiting the Frosts in ME July 4 - 7. We'll attend Robert Howlett's wedding July 8 and come home on the 9th.