



# Alumni Memories

Do you have a memory of your time at Livingston: a favorite professor, dorm, event, club/organization? Email us at [info AT livingston.edu](mailto:info@livingston.edu) to share your memories!

[Also see Deans' Reflections.]

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*Top photo: The New Academic Building (later named Lucy Stone Hall) on Rutgers' Kilmer campus (later named Livingston campus), circa 1973.*

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# 'Education Is the Main Topic of Discussion' in 1973; Graduates Have 'Set the Pace' for Classes to Come

*Noah Hart, Jr., a 1973 graduate of Livingston College at Rutgers University who attended the college for two years, edited its 1973 yearbook, Livingston in the Retrospect, 1969-1973. In the yearbook he included the following reflections on Livingston's first four years:*



On September 11, 1969, Dean Earnest Lynton addressed 300 students and faculty members on the newest branch of Rutgers University, Livingston College. One of the few times in the history of higher education in the United States had a dean of a predominately white higher education institution addressed such a racially mixed student body, and faculty.

Twenty-five per cent of Livingston's student population was Black or Puerto Rican, the highest in the nation for a predominately white higher education institution. The faculty was composed of scholars from throughout the United States and the world. There too, minority people composed at least twenty per cent of the total.

On May 31, 1973, the students who entered Livingston that day in September, 1969 will graduate. They will be among the first official graduating class from Livingston College.

Then University President, Dr. Mason Gross called the opening of Livingston "A historic event," because it was something new.

Livingston is still "something new", and has a great deal to accomplish. From the 700 students who made up the original Livingston College class of 1969, has sprung a student body of 2800.

The college has grown from the mud coated, and pebble ridden, always growing embryo of 1969, to a modern and attractive addition to the Piscataway Township landscape.

Student life centers around a large games room in Tillet Hall, numerous dormitory lounges, and a huge newly completed gymnasium in the rear of quads II and III.

After only four years, the student population of Livingston College has sent men and women into many leadership roles in neighboring communities, and to many graduate schools.

The student body at Livingston College also has it's own intercollegiate

athletic program, which competes with teams on a small college level. Livingston teams compete in the Metropolitan Club Football Conference, in which they are the 1972 champions, and compete in the National Club Sports Association, which has recently ranked the football club as the 13th best in America.

Livingston has grown quite a bit since that day in September 1969. The student population has grown, the physical structure has been vastly improved, the student body is a great deal more stable, and education is the main topic of discussion.

Of all the classes which came before, and that will follow the class of 1973, none deserves more credit and acclaim than they.

Following four years of trekking to classes through mud, incompleting buildings and a host of other physical and social obstacles, the class of 1973 has found the endurance to set the pace for the many classes to come.

Noah Hart, Jr., '73

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*Noah Hart, Jr., Ed.D., is the Coordinator of First Year Advising at Monmouth University.*

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## [Yours in Blackness: Livingston College's Weusi Kuumba Dancers and Drummers](#)



William Bellinger, an alumnus from Livingston College's first four-year graduating class in 1973, founded the Livingston College Weusi Kuumba Dancers and Drummers, an all-Black troupe, before the college even opened, in July 1969. Bellinger was also the student speaker at the 1973 Livingston College graduation convocation.

The 1973 Livingston College yearbook included a photo of the troupe and a description and history of the troupe by Bellinger. Below is the text (with minor edits) as it appeared in the yearbook. The original yearbook page is available [here](#).

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The spirit of Africa is upon me.  
She has annointed Me to bring good tidings.

William Bellinger 5/1/73

### **YOURS IN BLACKNESS**

The Livingston College Weusi Kuumba Dancers and Drummers, an all Black Troupe, was organized in July 1969 by William Bellinger, of Rahway, a member of the class of 1973.

Soon afterwards, the troupe took as its purpose, "promoting a language, a mode of expression, which addressed itself to the mind, through the heart, using related, relevant and significant movements which are related to our everyday activities for expression of special [and] real-life experiences in our special and rhythmic sequence."

"We as a group are striving for a dwelling and clearer insight of our way of life, labor, culture, aspirations, history, social, economic, and religious beliefs, and disbeliefs, movements and festivity, and sadness.

"In short, we are attempting to portray a heritage, a culture, conceived and felt by our troupe."

The Weusi Kuumba African Dancers and Drummers have traveled much. Among performance locations are: Somerset County College, Hilton Hotel, N.Y., Malcolm X University and Boston University.

Monies earned, or donated to the group, are used to assist needy Black students wishing to major in community development, and to assist the scientific research for a Sickle Cell disease cure.

Bill Bellinger '73

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# Music, Risk, Three-Eyed Frogs and Other Experiments: Life in Livingston College's House 15, Circa 1972-1975



By Joe Birish, LC'75

***[Read more Livingston College Students' Memories.]***

I graduated from Livingston College as part of the Class of 1975. I lived in the House 15 dorm from the fall of 1972 to June 1975. House 15 was a great dorm to live in at the time, as it had a lot of students who were into an alternative lifestyle, which was typical of that time. Most of us were advocates for the legalization of marijuana, and House 15 was a fairly safe place for students to indulge in experimenting with pot and other substances.

This dorm had a real communal feel to it, as most of the students were really into the music of the era. Quite a few of us had big record collections and we enjoyed blasting our music very loudly. Board games like "Risk" were very popular, and we played them in the House 15 lounge several times a week. (I included a line about the Risk game in my song lyrics.)

Every Thursday night we had a low-stakes poker game (penny, nickel, dime, quarter betting only). The poker games started around 9 p.m. and sometimes would continue till 2 a.m.

Since the drinking age was 18 back then, alcohol kept the poker games pretty interesting. By midnight some players were not seeing their cards correctly!

In the spring of 1973, we had "House-15" T-shirts made up, and most of us purchased one. The T-shirt included a cartoon of a green three-eyed frog as our dorm mascot.

In 1973, I wrote an original song about some House 15 experiences, and I made a home recording of the song with me on vocals and guitar that summer. In 2014, I was going through my old tapes and rediscovered this song. I liked the original recording but wanted to add to it, so I copied the recording to an eight-track tape deck and added drums, a second guitar and harmony vocals. (Listen to the

[House 15](#) song [2 minutes, 51 seconds]. See the lyrics below.)

I also found a recording of an instrumental rock jam from the spring of 1973 that was recorded in the lounge of a dorm in Quad 2. It included me on drums, a bass player from House 15, and two guitarists from Quad 2. (Listen to *Quad Rumble* [3 minutes, 47 seconds].)

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## **HOUSE 15**

*Original music and lyrics by Joe Birish (c. 1973)*

I must be out-spaced, or is it spaced out?

That hash oil flavor has confused all my doubts.

The stairs are now cushioned, as I glide smoothly down.

The lights are much cooler, as my mind spins around.

*Chorus:*

All in 15, we came to know, some quite nice times, belonging and close.

We were together, partners in crime, parties and ludes, oh what good times.

Where are they now, in how many jails, who's behind bars and who's out on bail?

What we did wrong is a mystery to me, but the system can't stand, us kids being free!

I need some sleep, I need a rest.

I want to love you, but I'm such a mess.

Been partying all night, I've got classes to miss.

Here comes the daylight, and we've just finished Risk.

*Repeat chorus twice.*

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*Joe Birish (pictured above in 2001) is a 1975 graduate of Livingston College at Rutgers University. His opinions are not necessarily those of the Livingston Alumni Association or Rutgers University.*

Email Joe (  ), and hear more of his original songs.

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# Livingston College's Challenges at Age 21

By Eric Schwarz, LC'92, SCILS'92,'07

[Read more Livingston College Alumni Memories.]

In 1990, Livingston College faced a transition as W. Robert Jenkins left as college dean. (Walton R. Johnson would be the next dean, serving from 1990 to 1993.) In a *Daily Targum* article from May 4, 1990 [PDF], Dean Jenkins noted that some of the college's achievements included coeducational residence halls, new academic departments such as anthropology, computer science and journalism, and a diverse student population. Ernest Lynton, the college's dean from its planning stages until 1973, recently had been honored by the university, which renamed the North and South Towers residence halls on campus for him. (The college opened in 1969.)

Students and administrators in 1990 hoped to secure more development on campus, such as an expanded student center, fraternity and sorority housing, and a Kilmer Village residential and shopping complex. I chronicled these events and reflections as Livingston College correspondent for the *Targum*.

It would take another 20 years before some of the visions voiced in 1990 would come to fruition at Livingston.

A student center expansion was completed in 2010, enlarging the center from approximately 35,000 square feet to more than 61,000 square feet.

The Livingston apartment complex, the largest single project Rutgers has ever built, total 650,000 square feet, including 25,000 square feet of retail space, and opened in fall 2012. The mid-rise buildings provide apartment-style living space for 1,500 students along with retail on the first level. Read a fuller description of the 2012 housing and retail project [PDF file].

Other major projects (completed or under construction) are listed in the university's Vision for Livingston Campus site; the site chronicles development on the campus far beyond what had been planned in the late 1980s/early 1990s.

*Eric Schwarz is a 1992 graduate of Livingston College and the School of Communication, Information and Library Studies (SCILS) at Rutgers University, where he majored in Journalism and Mass Media, and English. He also earned a*

## **A 1974 Graduate's Memories of a Groundbreaking College on a Diverse Campus**

By **Marian Murray**, LC'74

[This article was first posted September 20, 2010, on our old blog.]

Where to begin? I entered Livingston College in the fall of 1970 and graduated in the spring of 1974—my B.A. was in Urban Teacher Education (Secondary) and English. As Rutgers approved a double major—instead of a major and minor—one came out with a “double B.A.,” for all intents and purposes. To give you an idea of how serious this requirement was, there were 22 required courses for the Education major and 18 for the English major! And, even though there were no prerequisite courses, I took them anyway and am glad to have been rounded out as a liberal arts student.

My extra-curricular activities included eight consecutive terms as a student government representative, a formidable group composed of both faculty and students, which was imperative on the most memorable committee that I served on, the “Scholastic Evaluation and Scholastic Standing Committee.” In this committee, the fate of undergraduates literally was in the hands of we faculty and students saddled with the task of determining who could stay and who had to leave Livingston. [At our 10-year Reunion, several classmates came up to me to thank me for the compassion that I and some faculty members showed in allowing them to stay to go on to do good things, professionally and personally. Another of my activities was a wonderful memory of my participation in the glee club, as well as being a reporter/editor for the Third World Report (a paper put out by the Third World Coalition).

Because of Livingston's existence a direct result of the Newark summer rebellions (not riots), the time was thick with heavy issues, including but not limited to the lack of equal rights for African Americans (among others), Open Admissions/Enrollment was struggling to become a reality—I participated in demonstrations and rallies even though I could not qualify for the kind of financial aid that was so desperately needed by so many—, then there was the Vietnam War (or as the Vietnamese termed it “the American War”). There were mind-opening Teach-Ins about virtually every political theme one can imagine. Women's Studies got off the ground, as did Africana Studies, Asian Studies,



Puerto Rican Studies, and such.

The dormitory Quads were unique and were named by the students for their compositions: Quad 1 was called "Woodstock"; Quad 2, "Suburbia"; and Quad 3 "The Ghetto". In the last Quad were three "Black Houses" and one "Puerto Rican House". The dorms of the Black Houses were both all female/male and co-ed! Being virtually bi-lingual, I found another "home" in the Puerto Rican House. The nights were magical with Congo drumming in which women as well as men were allowed to play to their heart's content.

This was a multi-racial, multi-generational, multi-religious, and multi-ethnic campus. For the most part, we all lived in harmony and there was a solidarity that was remarkable achieve in any times, let alone the turbulent '60s and '70s. This was a time when anti-war demonstrations/protest rallies around the country were taking place. And, sadly, the National Guard was called in to "restore order" on some campuses, namely Jackson State and Ohio State where senseless student deaths occurred. What many people do not realize is the Guard is armed with the same munitions that is being used by the military during war time. Consequently, we had M-16s trained on us at some of the education-related as well as political rallies! I have never been prouder of Livingston's president, Mason Gross, who boldly and loudly refused the Govenor's call to have the National Guard come onto the Livingston campus! [I believe he paid the price in the coming years when he was ultimately removed from his post.] That was a sad day, indeed. Then there were the takeovers of the President's quarter—I was among those who sat-in until demands were met. And, after I graduated I heard of some students took over the Registrar's offices and destroyed academic records. I cannot understand how that senseless act was going to advance their cause! But, I guess, in any movement it takes all kinds!

On the political front, there were moderates, conservatives and revolutionaries. Discussions between the differinig groups were lively to say the least. But what was terrific was that we listened to one another and much was learned by all—if one was open to hear sentiments different from one's own.

Academically, it was groundbreaking to have access to all classes that the different colleges offered, Livingston, Douglass and Rutgers New Brunswick, as well as the other campuses. Getting around was made easy by the three bus lines (A, B, and C) which made the commute a breeze. Being able to attend classes at the different institutions made for meaningful and lasting friendships and relationships, not to mention the broadening of one's horizons.

It was at Livingston that some innovative teachers used dormitory lounges to conduct class when space was tight, e.g., Vertamae Grosvenor's cooking class (she went on to have her own cooking show on PBS)! On one occasion, my Spanish Translation class was held in my apartment! It was taught by Miguel Algarin, who is the founder of the Poet's Cafe in Loisaida (The Lower East Side, in New

York City). In this vein, some of my English professors would go on to international acclaim or had already established themselves, e.g., Toni Cade Bambara, Nikki Giovanni, Hattie Gossett, A.B. Spellman, Sonia Sanchez, and Marc Crawford, just to name a few. Toni Cade Bambara (who made her transition in '95) made such an indelible impression on me that I have dedicated my book to her! [I will most likely self-publish; and a renowned poet, historian and scholar, Louis Reyes Rivera, who is a good friend of mine, is doing the editing of the book.] In Women's Studies I was introduced to the remarkable Chilean singer/songwriter, Suni Paz. This association included attending her concerts in the summers, in midtown Manhattan.

Let us not forget how many couples came out of liaisons at the College—including some that would end in marriage and long-term commitments. (I was one of those fortunates.)

Livingston was ground-breaking in the artists of all hues, activists, revolutionaries, educators, international political figures (some who would find themselves known as political prisoners for the struggles for independence in their homelands. One such person who I had the honor of meeting on campus was the Puerto Rican independentista Juan Maribras (sp.) who recently made his transition. What I truly loved about, and appreciated, was the ethnic and generational diversity in my classes and throughout the campus.

It made for stimulating discussions and true education at its best! I had a wonderful time at the 10th year Reunion of Livingston College; as well as the 20th, which I attended with a long-time friend who I met in my freshman year. I must say that the 20th was particularly memorable because of the "young ones" who gave their perspective of what the Livingston Mission was.

It was heartbreaking to learn of the College's demise, it was truly unbelievable and inconceivable to me that such a drastic decision was made!

*Marian Murray is a 1974 graduate of Livingston College at Rutgers University.*

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## Joyful Memories of Livingston College from a 1972 Alumna



By Patricia Graham, LC'72



It is a pleasure to share my favorite memories of my college years at Livingston. Below is my list of joyful memories:

- 1) "The Black Woman" class (parts I and II) taught by Professor Sonia Sanchez. Professor Sanchez taught the class in a room that had a kitchen, because she often cooked for us! The setting was cozy and intimate. The guest speakers were accomplished women: poets, authors, politicians.
- 2) "Black Revolutionary Drama" class, taught by Professor Sanchez. Often the class would act-out the short plays that we were assigned. A favorite memory is when we performed, in class, "In the Wine Time," for the author Ed Bullins.
- 3) "Forgotten Black Heroes" class. The professor was excellent, of Caribbean descent. I wish I could remember his name. A memory that sticks with me is my class research topic: Kwame Nkrumah, former president of Ghana. My verbal presentation was very emotional, because Nkrumah died shortly before I completed my research.
- 4) The class trip, for "Research Techniques African American History" to Harlem, to do our

research in the Schomburg Library, which was located in the old historic building at the time. Afterwards, the professor took the class to his apartment for dinner!

5) The first Women's History Month conference, on campus. I believe it was held in 1971. It was exciting, with lots of speakers, and workshops.

6) I enjoyed the fabulous speakers, poets, writers, jazz musicians, and artists that we were exposed to, as college students. Many of these artists were our professors, such as: Nikki Giovanni, Nathan Heard, Sonia Sanchez, and Toni Cade-Bambara, to name a few. It was a cultural mecca!

Livingston provided me with the basis of a lifetime of cultural and professional interests. As a recently retired college professor, I had the opportunity to develop and teach classes that directly reflected my experiences as a student at Livingston ("Women of the African Diaspora"; and "Frederick Douglass: Social Justice").

*Patricia Graham is a 1972 graduate of Livingston College at Rutgers University. She also earned an . degree at Antioch in 1974, and an Ed.D. degree from University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 1995.*

(Contact Patricia via email.)



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## Livingston College, 1971: An 'Incredibly Radical Outlook on City Living'



By William Ciaburri, LC'76

Coming to Rutgers' Livingston College in 1971, two years after it opened, was an eye-opening experience for William (Bill) Ciaburri, a Hamden, Connecticut, native who later returned there. (His photo at right is from 2012.)



Ciaburri shared some of his most vivid memories of college life via email, on ...

*The college:*

Zen and Japanese Literature opened up a whole different world and way of thinking for a sheltered Catholic boy from the Connecticut suburbs. Also, Urban Ecology in 1971 was brand new and an incredibly radical outlook on city living.

#### *The campus:*

In 1971 Livingston College and its campus wasn't fully complete yet. Faculty and students intermingled easily. I remember trucking down to the old army barracks where many classes were held.

#### *His fellow students:*

In my freshman year, 1971-72, there were many upperclassmen in my dorm who were mentors to the freshmen, and involved us in some of the activities they were in such as working at the radio station, the coffee house, etc.

#### *Living at Rutgers (Livingston's Quad 1 his freshman year, then off-campus):*

I also recall my first day and walking to my room in the dorm in Quad 1 and everyone's name and hometown was on their room door. Mine said "Camden" (crossed out) and under it "Hamden Court." I crossed out "Court" and wrote in "Connecticut." I read everyone else's signs which all had towns I never heard of like Red Bank, Cinnaminson and even Piscataway. Yet that night when we gathered in the first floor lounge I was welcomed by everyone and was made an honorary Jerseyite!

#### *Faculty influences:*

- Dr. Janet Walker and Dr. Steven Walker, who were also student advisors/mentors and were always available to students. In many ways they were also like our big brother and sister.
- Dr. W. Robert Jenkins, who was an energetic and inspiring biology professor, later became dean of Livingston.
- Dr. J.J. Wilhelm, who taught literature so masterly one actually enjoyed reading!

#### *The experience of New York (and New Brunswick):*


I learned that the world is an exciting and diverse place. Being so close to New York City and having many field trips there for classes such as art history, religion classes and music classes also helped. For a Veteran's Day anti-war march down 7th Avenue, in the pouring rain, we took the campus bus into town and then a bus to Manhattan. We returned to New Brunswick soaking wet and had pizza and pitchers of beer at the Hungarian Club with the locals who tolerated us being there.

*William Ciaburri is a 1976 graduate of Livingston College at Rutgers University.*

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# Long Live Livingston

By Rob Snyder, LC'77

When I lived in Greenwich Village in the 1980s, residents had a habit of telling newcomers that they had arrived too late for the really interesting times. The exact date of this golden age varied with the teller of the tale, from the days of the folkies in the Sixties to the beats of the Fifties to the Wobblies before World War I. Something similar applied at my alma mater, Livingston College of Rutgers University. I was graduated in 1977, when the college was committed to educational innovation, egalitarian admissions, and urban issues. In subsequent years, when the school was centralized out of existence and fully absorbed into Rutgers, I was convinced that the old Livingston I knew died. But thanks to a forum last week [March 11, 2009] at Livingston, I'm no longer sure. 

The gathering, organized by Marty Siederer for the Livingston Alumni Association, featured three faculty members: Ed Ortiz from community development and Gerry Pomper and Gordon Schochet from political science. Together, and in different ways, they all reminded me of the innovation, improvisation, and tough-minded idealism that made Livingston a great undergraduate college. Our course offerings included urban communications, community development, women's studies and social history. (And zaniness: Where else would students hold orgies and then ask if they could get course credit for participating?)

But what inspired me was to hear more recent graduates – I'm thinking especially of one woman who was at Livingston in the early Nineties – extol "The Rock" as an enduring center for radicalism and innovation. What explains this?

Partly this happened because of an unexpected benefit of centralization: it scattered Livingston faculty and administrators all over Rutgers, where they dramatically improved the place. Also, a few faculty members and grad students really did work to maintain the spirit of the old days, even after the educational structures that supported The Rock were all but gone.

Until now, I felt that I was the graduate of a fine college that was left dead and buried. Now, I feel that some of its best legacies live on.

It wasn't always easy being at Livingston, a place where ordinary Democrats were depicted as conservatives and the left was defined by outfits like the New Jersey Workers' Organization (Marxist-Lenninist). That made a democratic socialist like me, an admirer of Michael Harrington, a flaming moderate.

But I've always cherished my Livingston years, when I received an education that was not only liberal, but liberating as well. For years I was sorry that younger people didn't get to experience that kind of learning. Now it turns out that they did, and I'm very glad for that.

*Rob Snyder is a 1977 graduate of Livingston College at Rutgers University. He is pictured above in the 1977 Livingston College yearbook, The Rock. He originally posted this article to his blog, Greater New York, on March 16, 2009. In 2018 the Livingston Alumni Association honored Snyder as a Livingston College Distinguished Alumnus.*

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## Memories of the Barracks: A Refuge for Rutgers Journalists on Livingston Campus

By Glen Weisman, LC'86

The place smelled musty.

It was drafty in the winter, hot in the summer and looked like central casting's ideal setting for a horror film – it was called “The Barracks.”

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The place smelled musty.

It was drafty in the winter, hot in the summer and looked like central casting's ideal setting for a horror film – it was called “The Barracks.”

The Barracks were a set of old U.S. Army barracks from the former Camp Kilmer which found a second life as classroom space for Rutgers' fledgling Journalism Department. Housed at the end of the Livingston College Campus, this last group of Americana used to house soldiers during World War II and had almost hauntingly survived into the 1980s.

Everything about The Barracks seemed old, broken, used up by the time I was to take residence in its hallowed halls and stuffy atmosphere.

It wasn't just the air in the classrooms that had been living there since General Pershing was a cadet or the creaky boards in the hallway, which were undoubtedly milled a century ago by men in overalls with long, dusty beards. It was also the facilities in and of itself.

The J-program was run on a shoestring budget. We were only students, but it wasn't hard to figure these things out.

There were new mainframe computers at the Hill Center on Busch, a very important thing for a university, but our equipment had lived out its glory days decades earlier in more noble settings. Our manual typewriters were hand-me-downs from The Home News, where reporters once banged out stories on crime, corruption and students high on LSD. Our radio studio was equipped with turntables, a board and monitors which may have once thrilled listeners at WCTC with the latest from Eddie Cochran or broadcast the shocking news of President Kennedy's assassination from the studios of WERA. Our TV studio, although not nearly as antiquated, was second rate at best. But there must have been some talent on hand as some of us would go on to reasonable careers.

An actor named Richard Joseph Paul was a fellow barracks dweller who I would later see in a Burger King commercial and then in Revenge of the Nerds II, where I recall his character getting that key line, "The Nerds are back! And they're bad!" (Note to self: Stop watching so many late-night reruns.)

I took at least three classes at The Barracks, and taught two there. I had keys to the place, and though I didn't abuse the privilege, it was an occasional private refuge. It was like that crusty uncle, with an Old World accent, who told stories of places in time you could never visi

It was that stifling aromatic attic where you might take refuge and take inventory of those touchstones in your life. A place you go to experience all of those items still wrought with character, smells and memories, but whose best days belong to another time.

And so it was with The Barracks. In my time there, it was an outpost for the old world of media, where ghosts inspired by the dreams of soldiers and students lingered in the rooms and hallways, hoping to be captured and given new form in the modern world. Our metaphorical compasses (Army issue, no doubt) were gifted to us in those creaky old buildings, and they pointed to the radio stations, television networks and newspapers where we hoped our careers would take root.

Today many of those media institutions are like The Barracks – looking back on their glory days, if they have survived the latest modern era intact. In today's information age, you don't really need a space like The Barracks to become what we today call a "content creator," really a much less noble name than producer, reporter, writer, director or even deejay. Television studios are now carried around in people's pockets, integrated into a telephone and at the ready to record every event – the good, the bad and the stupid.

The last time I was to Livingston, it was a radically different place. The changes that have taken place on Route 18 have erased familiar signposts at the entrance to the campus. The "back road", Cedar Lane, has also undergone a transformation. I didn't much think about The Barracks when I was there,



focusing instead on driving by The Quads and The Towers, which held those special, personal memories. (It's worth noting that I was among the first Livingston College students who moved into a floor in The Towers back in 1985. We'd returned to Livingston's high rise after many years in exile.)

So I spent some time looking for The Barracks online. I learned that there is or was a show called "Breakfast at the Barracks," but that's not at my Barracks. I've looked at some overhead views on Google maps, but I'm not sure if my Barracks is still there. And really, it doesn't matter. For me it will occupy a funky corner of my memory's attic – a place that inspired dreams.

*Glen Weisman is a 1986 graduate of Livingston College at Rutgers University.*

*Originally posted April 30, 2013*

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## [Livingston College's First Alumni Association President Reveals His Inspirations – and the Holy Grail of LC Alumni History](#)

By Leonard M. Klepner, LC'72



***[Read more Livingston College Students' Memories.]***

I am a 1972 LC graduate. I was there almost at the very beginning as a transfer student from Temple University in Philadelphia. The extensive mud that then still characterized the rudimentary campus on the Piscataway plains of the late Camp Kilmer became "Fango," the campus newspaper's initial name.

My early mentors in the political science department included the late, monumental Wilson Carey McWilliams and his wife, Nancy. I retain a personally dedicated copy of Carey's "The Idea of Fraternity in America." As possessions go, it's probably my most cherished. Both Carey and Nancy took an ongoing interest in my well-being, and I spent time at their Highland Park home. I house-sat for them on occasion before their daughters were born. During those times, my principal duties involved keeping company with their marmoset and huge parrot. The formidable parrot had a pedestal perch so substantial that it had its own room in the house. The other relic I have from this early era is an oil painting by an artist friend of the McWilliamses visiting from California.

Signed as "RDG 74," the piece is a rendering of the Albany Street Bridge and the town of New Brunswick from the Highland Park shore of the Raritan. The piece captures a remarkable scene of the bridge and the town as they were 40 years ago.

Of importance to me during this time were other political science professors, Henry Plotkin, Dennis Bathory and Gerald Pomper. Henry was the first faculty member with whom I met when I visited the Livingston Campus prior to making my decision to transfer to Livingston in 1970. About 25 years later, Henry and I had occasion to be in contact professionally in his capacity with the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission. Dennis was one of the kindest and brightest people that I ever met. Beyond the academics, however, the greatest of experiences was the Sunday pick-up softball game in Raritan Park. Students, teachers, friends and their children were welcomed players. I believe I remember a then-very young son of Professor Pomper's joining the game eventually.

Another fellow student, graduate and alumnus most deserving of recognition for his inspiration to me both during and after my association with Livingston College and as a Rutgers graduate student is the late Amos Danube. Amos was already in his mid-20s when he left Budapest in the wake of the Soviet repression of 1956. When I came to Livingston, Amos seemed ancient, but less so as I came to know him and likewise grew ancient. His many contributions to the Livingston and Rutgers communities are well known. I had the privilege of continuing contact with Amos into his all too brief retirement to Florida. Our friendship became and was at its strongest when he passed away suddenly a number of years ago. I made contact with his daughter and conveyed to her a compilation of email that Amos and I exchanged during his retirement to offer her, if she wished, a glimpse of her father's life that may otherwise have escaped her.

Most significantly for the historical documentation of the origin of the existing alumni group of Livingston College, is a copy of what is the Holy Grail of Livingston alumni history. The first of the membership ID card displayed with this article is indeed the very first card, No. 00001A, Valid 1975-1976, issued by the Livingston College Association of Graduates (the LCAG), the very first organization formed to represent, advance and benefit those few who had then graduated from Livingston and all thereafter until the present that the Alumni Association has served.

LCAG ID No. 00001A is rarer (as baseball card collectors would know) even than the multimillion-dollar Honus Wagner T206. It is special, and I knew it would be because it represented the earliest graduates that Livingston had to offer. Even then, Livingston graduates understood that the special nature and intention of Livingston required nurturing, maintenance and perpetuation. As LCAG 00001A indicates, I had the distinction of being elected the first president of the LCAG.

Imagine if George Washington were still alive to witness the unfolding of the promise for which he struggled. There is room for argument either way on the question of whether or not Washington would be pleased with the course that our country has taken. However, as the George Washington of Livingston alumni, I have been fortunate and pleased for more than 40 years now to have witnessed the unfolding and establishment of the good to which the LAA has devoted itself and achieved. Ever may it continue to be so.



Photo at top: LCAG membership card 00001A; bottom: LAA membership cards from the early 1990s.

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